

found lying on the top of any other thing, furnishes no presumption whatever that the thing below stands in the relation of parent to the thing above. And the evidence which the well-ranged organisms of the ditch-side do not furnish, the organisms of the entire geologic scale, even were they equally well ranged, would fail to supply. The fossiliferous portion of the ditch-side of my illustration may be, let us suppose, some five or six *feet* in thickness; the fossiliferous portion of the earth's crust must be some five or six *miles* in thickness. But the mere circumstance of space introduces no new element into the question. Equally in both cases the fact of superposition is not *identical* with the fact of parental relation, nor even in any degree an *analogous* fact.

As, however, the succession of remains in the fossiliferous series of rocks is infinitely less favorable to the development hypothesis than that of the organisms of the ditch-side, it is not very surprising that the disciples of the development school should be now evincing a disposition to escape from the ascertained facts of Geology, and the legitimate conclusions based upon these, unto unknown and unexplored provinces of the science; or that they should be found virtually urging, that though some of the ascertained facts may seem to bear against them, the facts not yet ascertained may be found telling in their favor. Such, in effect, is the course taken by the author of the "Vestiges," in his "Explanations," when, availing himself of a difference of opinion which exists among some of our most accomplished geologists regarding the first epochs of organized existence, he takes part with the section who hold that we have not yet penetrated to the deposits representative of the dawn of being, and that fossil-charged formations may yet be detected beneath the oldest rocks of what is now regarded as the lowest fossilifer-