Our lower assumption of 130,000 feet thickness would give only 20,000,000 years—a rate of 1 foot in 154 years.

Again, if we prefer round numbers to start with, we have only to assume that the age of the whole Tertiary period, with its 3,000 feet thickness, is 3,000,000 years (*i.e.*, 1,000 feet in 1,000,000 years, or 1 foot in 1,000 years, surely an excessively slow rate); then 130,000,000 years would bring us to the bottom of the Laurentian or pre-Cambrian deposits. Of course, it is a pure assumption that the same rate of destruction and sedimentation applies to the whole of the strata; but we know nothing to the contrary, especially if we consider the average periods, the quick periods of extra activity, taken with the slow periods or those of standstill.

Dana estimated the length of the whole Tertiary period at one-fifteenth of the Mesozoic and Palæozoic combined. If we take the duration of the Tertiary period, as before, as 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 years, the total