

rivers—a fertile soil gradually accumulated over the cooled lava currents and the beds of scoriæ, to which the sediments of the ancient lakes, borne down by the streams, largely contributed. Another vegetation sprang up—the mammoth and mastodon, with enormous deer and oxen, now quietly browsed in the verdant plains—other changes succeeded—those colossal forms of life in their turn passed away, and at length the earlier races of mankind took possession of a country, which had once more become a scene of fertility and repose.

To those who have favoured me with their attention through these discourses, it cannot be necessary to insist that the changes in organic and inanimate nature, which I have thus rapidly portrayed, are supported by proofs so incontrovertible, and traced in language so intelligible, as to constitute a body of evidence with which no human testimony can compete. It is true that the time required for this succession of events must have extended over an immense period; but, as I have before remarked, time and change are great only in relation to the beings which note them, and every step we take in geology shows the folly and presumption of attempting to measure the operations of nature by our own brief span. “There are no minds,” says Mr. Scrope, “that would for one moment doubt that the God of Nature has existed *from all eternity*; but there are many who would reject as preposterous, the idea of tracing back the history of *His works* a million