

IV.

RECENT APPEARANCE OF MAN.

Although resting chiefly on negative evidence, the recent origin of man is one of the best established facts in geological science. The absence of human remains from all but the most modern and superficial deposits, although very remarkable, is only a fragment of the evidence we can adduce. Man, even in the most savage condition, leaves memorials behind him still more durable than the hardest parts of his frame; stone hatchets, flint arrow-heads, and fragments of pottery, may be preserved for untold ages, when embedded in aqueous deposits; but no such relics have ever been observed in any but the most modern formations. While the purely geological argument is free from exception, and neither bones of man, nor the rudest productions of human art, are to be found in ancient strata, this is only a portion of the induction. If the human race had existed not from eternity, but even for a few myriads of years, we may well wonder at the small progress which has been made in science, and that it is not yet four centuries since America and Australia became known to Europe. This argument is well put by Hume, in one of his most objectionable works: 'It is not two thou-