

antiquity—there is another set of professional men, even the anatomists or comparative anatomists, who in the course of their independent researches have by the study of fossil remains ascertained, they think, many of the species and genera of living creatures by which the world has been peopled during the respective eras of its physical history. It is certainly conceivable that a few stragglers may have survived the operation of one catastrophe—and transmitted their own proper genera and species to the era which immediately succeeded it, so as to leave a thin sprinkling of the same remains over the next formation in the series of the world's changes. But it would appear from the observations of Cuvier and others—that though in this way an occasional species may have survived one or two of these destructive revolutions; yet that each catastrophe annihilated the great majority of the existing genera, and that a very few more swept every trace of them away from the surface of the globe. In none of the old formations hath he ascertained the vestige of the human skeleton—marking the recent origin of our own species. It is only in the latest of these formations that he discovered traces indeed of any of our existing genera of animals. And, in proportion as he carries his observation upward among the senior formations, does he lose sight of all resemblance to any of the known living creatures by which our earth is peopled. But there is still, it is affirmed, a most distinct and various and perfectly ascertained population; and these older formations are crowded with the remains of it. But they are