

century to century, and the insensible rate of variation in the geographical distribution of organic beings in our own times, we may presume that an extremely lengthened period was required, even for so slight a modification in the range of the molluscous fauna, as that of which the evidence is here brought to light. There are also other independent reasons for suspecting that the antiquity of these deposits may be indefinitely great as compared to the historical period. I allude to their present elevation above the sea, some of them rising, in Norway, to the height of 600 feet or more. The upward movement now in progress in parts of Norway and Sweden, extends, as I have elsewhere shown*, throughout an area about 1000 miles north and south, and for an unknown distance east and west, the amount of elevation always increasing as we proceed towards the North Cape, where it is said to equal five feet in a century. If we could assume that there had been an average rise of two and a half feet in each hundred years for the last fifty centuries, this would give an elevation of 125 feet in that period. In other words, it would follow that the shores, and a considerable area of the former bed of the North Sea, had been uplifted vertically to that amount, and converted into land in the course of the last 5000 years. A mean rate of continuous vertical elevation of two and a half feet in a century would, I conceive, be a high average; yet, even if this be assumed, it would require 24,000 years for parts of the sea-coast of Norway, where the post-tertiary marine strata occur, to attain the height of 600 feet.

* Principles, 9th ed. ch. xxx.