

portant matter to determine the special scheme that would bring into completest harmony the course of creation, as now ascertained by the geologist, and that brief but sublime narrative of its progress which forms a meet introduction in Holy Writ to the history of the human family. The first question to which we must address ourselves in any such inquiry is of course a very obvious one,—*What are the facts scientifically determined which now demand a new scheme of reconciliation?*

There runs around the shores of Great Britain and Ireland a flat terrace of unequal breadth, backed by an escarpment of varied height and character, which is known to geologists as the old coast line. On this flat terrace most of the seaport towns of the empire are built. The subsoil which underlies its covering of vegetable mould consists usually of stratified sands and gravels, arranged after the same fashion as on the neighbouring beach, and interspersed in the same manner with sea-shells. The escarpment behind, when formed of materials of no great coherency, such as gravel or clay, exists as a sloping, grass-covered bank,—at one place running out into promotories that encroach upon the terrace beneath,—at another receding into picturesque, bay-like recesses; and, where composed, as in many localities, of rock of an enduring quality, we find it worn, as if by the action of the surf,—in some parts relieved into insulated stacks, in others hollowed into deep caverns,—in short, presenting all the appearance of a precipitous coast line, subjected to the action of the waves. Now, no geologist can or does doubt that this escarpment was at one time the coast line of the island,—the line against which the waves broke at high water in some distant age, when either the sea stood from twenty to thirty feet higher along our shores than it does now, or the land sat from twenty to thirty feet lower. Nor can the geologist doubt, that along the flat terrace beneath, with its stratified beds of sand and gravel,