

and every one must be convinced that the beaver, elk, panther, buffalo, and other quadrupeds of North America are approaching extinction by perceptible steps. The fact is, we are not so far out of the dust, and chaos, and barbarism of antiquity as we had supposed. The very beginnings of our race are still almost in sight. Geological events which, from the force of habit in considering geological events, we had imagined to be located far back in the history of things, are found to have transpired at our very doors. Our own race has witnessed the dissolution of those continental glaciers which we have so long talked of as incidents of pre-Adamic history. Our own race has witnessed the submergence of Southern Europe; the detachment of the British Islands and Scandinavia from the continent; the wanderings of the great rivers of Eastern Asia; the submergence of thousands of square miles of the coast of China, so that the seats of ancient capitals are now rocky islets far at sea; the emergence of the ancient country of Lectonia; the drainage of the vast lake which once overspread the prairies of Illinois; the alternations of forests, and many other events which we once associated with high antiquity. It is the opinion of Hooker and Gray that the Falkland Islands, and others in the vicinity, have formed a part of the continent of South America during recent times, and that during this connection they acquired the continental fauna and flora. The Straits of Behring may even have been cut through since the early migrations of man and his contemporaries, the mammoth and reindeer; as in some distant future age the Isthmus of Darien, which now connects North and South America, may become a strait separating them. There is no more reason in this day than fifty years ago to claim a hundred thousand years for the past duration of our race.

I can not refrain from noting the peculiar relief which