

from paying any regard to these correct assertions of a simple and healthy human understanding; it was not till the end of the last century that it was generally accepted, in consequence of the foundation of the Neptunian geology by Werner.

The foundation of a more strictly scientific palæontology, however, belongs to the beginning of our century, when Cuvier published his classic researches on petrified Vertebrate animals, and when his great opponent, Lamarck, made known his remarkable investigations on fossil Invertebrate animals, especially on petrified snails and clams. In Cuvier's celebrated work "On the Fossil Bones" of Vertebrate animals—principally of mammals and reptiles—we see that he had already arrived at the knowledge of some very important and general palæontological laws, which are of great consequence to the history of creation. Foremost among them is his assertion that the extinct species of animals, whose remains we find petrified in the different strata of the earth's crust, lying one above another, differ all the more strikingly from the still living kindred species of animals the deeper those strata lie—in other words, the earlier the animals lived in past ages. In fact, in every perpendicular section of the stratified crust of the earth we find that the different strata, deposited by the water in a certain historical succession, are characterized by different petrifications, and that these extinct organisms become more like those of the present day the higher the strata lie; in other words, the more recent the period in the earth's history in which they lived, died, and became encrusted by the deposited and hardened strata of mud.

However important this general observation of Cuvier's