

termed by geologists the Jurassic, we can trace back the origin of a large part of the rock now forming the surface of the continent, from the low plains of Central England up to the crests of the northern Alps, while in the Mediterranean basin, rocks of the same age cover a large area of the plateau of Spain, and form the central mass of the chain of the Apennines. It is interesting to know that the north-west of Britain continued still to rise as land in spite of all the geographical changes which had taken place to the south and east. We can trace even yet the shores of the Jurassic sea along the skirts of the mountains of Skye and Ross-shire.

The next long era, termed the Cretaceous, was likewise more remarkable for slow accumulation of rock under the sea than for the formation of new land. During that time the Atlantic sent its waters across the whole of Europe and into Asia. But they were probably nowhere more than a few hundred feet deep over the site of our continent, even at their deepest part. Upon their bottom there gathered a vast mass of calcareous mud, composed in great part of foraminifera, corals, echinoderms, and molluscs. Our English chalk which ranges across the north of France, Belgium, Denmark, and the North of Germany, represents a portion of the deposits of that sea-floor, probably accumulated in a northern, somewhat isolated basin, while the massive hippurite limestone of Southern Europe represents the deposits of the opener ocean. Some of the island spaces which had remained for a vast period above water, and had by their degradation supplied materials for the sediment of successive geological formations, now went down beneath the Cretaceous sea. The ancient high-grounds of Bohemia, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Spanish tableland were either entirely submerged, or at