

diminution or destruction of some forms of vegetation, the introduction of plants and animals useful to himself, and especially the enormous predominance given by him to the cereals and to the spread of sheep and cattle. But no such extensive disturbance of the normal conditions of the distribution of life can take place without carrying with it many secondary effects, and setting in motion a wide cycle of change and of reaction in the animal and vegetable kingdoms. For example, the incessant warfare waged by man against birds and beasts of prey, in districts given up to the chase, leads sometimes to unforeseen results. The weak game is allowed to live, which would otherwise be killed off and give more room for the healthy remainder. Other animals, which feed perhaps on the same materials as the game, are from the same cause permitted to live unchecked, and thereby to act as a further hindrance to the spread of the protected species. But the indirect results of man's interference with the régime of plants and animals still require much prolonged observation.³⁹¹

This outline may suffice to indicate how important is the place filled by man as a geological agent, and how in future ages the traces of his interference may introduce an element of difficulty or uncertainty into the study of geological phenomena.

³⁹¹ See on the subject of man's influence on organic nature, the paper by Prof. Rolleston, quoted on p. 830, and the numerous authorities cited by him.