

of fish from the Lower Silurian formations, — than purely negative evidence is, from its nature as such, suited to bear ; that only a very few years had passed since it was known that vertebrate remains occurred in the *Upper* Silurian, and only a few more since they had been detected in the Old Red Sandstone ; nay, that within the present century their frequent occurrence in even the Coal Measures was scarce suspected ; and that, as his argument, had it been founded twelve years ago on the supposed absence of fishes from the Upper Silurian, or twenty years ago on the supposed absence of fishes from the Old Red Sandstone, would have been quite as plausible in reference to its negative data then as in reference to its negative data now, so it might now be quite as erroneous as it assuredly would have been then. Or it might be urged, that the fact of the absence of fish from the Lower Silurians, even were it really a fact, would be in no degree less reconcilable with the theory of creation by direct act, than with the hypothesis of gradual development. The fact that Adam did not exist during the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth days of the introductory week of Scripture narrative, furnishes no argument whatever against the fact of his creation on the sixth day. And the remark would of course equally apply to the non-existence of fishes during the Lower Silurian period, had they been really non-existent at the time, and to their sudden appearance in that of the Upper. But the objection admits of a greatly more conclusive answer. “ I fix my opponents down,” says the author of the “ Vestiges,” “ to the consideration of this fact,” *i. e.* that of the absence of fishes from the earliest fossiliferous formations. And I, in turn, fix you down, I reply, to the consideration of the antagonist fact, not negative, but positive, and now, in the course of geological discovery, fully established, that fishes