

Now, we find the Geology of what may be termed the second age of vertebrated existence (for the Lower Old Red Sandstone was such) coming curiously in to confirm the reasonings of Johnson. It shows us the greater part of the fish of an entire creation thus insinuated between two of the links of our own.

It is now several years since I was first led to suspect that the condition of the ichthyolites of the Old Red Sandstone was intermediate. I have alluded to the comparative indestructibility of the osseous skeleton, and the extreme liability to decay characteristic of the cartilaginous one. Of a skeleton in part osseous and in part cartilaginous, we must, of course, expect, when it occurs in a fossil state, to find the indestructible portions only. And when, in every instance, we find the fossil skeletons of a formation complete in some of their parts, and incomplete in others — the entire portions in-

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“To these meditations humanity is unequal. But yet we may ask, not of our Maker, but of each other, since on the one side creation, whenever it stops, must stop infinitely below infinity, and on the other infinitely above nothing, what necessity there is that it should proceed so far either way — that being so high or so low should ever have existed. We may ask, but I believe no created wisdom can give an adequate answer.

“Nor is this all. In the scale, wherever it begins or ends, are infinite vacuities. At whatever distance we suppose the next order of beings to be above man, there is room for an intermediate order of beings between them; and if for one order, then for infinite orders, since every thing that admits of more or less, and consequently all the parts of that which admits them, may be infinitely divided; so that, as far as we can judge, there may be room in the vacuity between any two steps of the scale, or between any two points of the cone of being, for infinite exertion of infinite power.” — *Review of “A Free Inquiry.”*