

wall of Antoninus, which stretched between the Friths of Forth and Clyde, was built at its terminations with reference to the existing levels; and ere Cæsar landed in Britain, St. Michael's Mount was connected with the mainland, as now, by a narrow neck of beach laid bare by the ebb, across which, according to Diodorus Siculus, the Cornish miners used to drive, at low water, their carts laden with tin. If the sea has stood for two thousand six hundred years against the present coast-line,—and no geologist would fix his estimate of the term lower,—then must it have stood against the old line, ere it could have excavated caves one-third deeper than the modern ones, three thousand nine hundred years. And both sums united more than exhaust the Hebrew chronology. Yet what a mere beginning of geologic history does not the epoch of the old-coast line form! It is but a starting point from the recent period. Not a single shell seems to have become extinct during the last six thousand years. The organisms which I found deeply imbedded in the soil beneath the old-coast line were exactly those which still live in our seas; and I have been since told by Mr. Smith of Jordanhill, one of our highest authorities on the subject, that he detected only three shells of the period with which he was not familiar as existing forms, and that he subsequently met with all three, in his dredging expeditions, still alive. The six thousand years of human history form but a portion of the geologic day that is passing over us: they do not extend into the *yesterday* of the globe, far less touch the myriads of ages spread out beyond. Dr. Chalmers had taught, more than a quarter of a century previous to this time, that the Scriptures do not fix the antiquity of the earth. "If they fix anything," he said, "it is only the antiquity of the human species." The Doctor, though not practically a geologist at the time, had shrewdly weighed both the evidence adduced and the scientific character of the men who adduced it, and arrived at a conclusion, in consequence, which may now be safely regarded as the final one. I, on the other hand, who knew comparatively little about the standing of the geologists, or the weight which ought to attach to their testimony, based