

Dispose, however, of the etymologies as we may, there are facts enough on record which render it more than probable that, though the general change of level to which we owe the old coast line in Scotland does not lie within the historic ages, it is comprised within the human period. But we cannot, as has been shown, fix upon a date for the event.

Were the case otherwise,—could we fix with any certainty the time when this change of level took place, and the platform of the lower coast line was gained from the sea,—there might be an approximation made to the anterior space of time during which the line of high water had been the willow-crowned escarpment beyond Portobello and the green bank near Rutherglen, and the sea rose far beyond its present limits in our firths and bays. There are portions of the coast that at this early period presented to the waves lines of precipices that are now fringed at their bases by strips of verdure, and removed far beyond their reach. There are other portions of coast in the immediate neighbourhood of these, where similar lines of precipices, identical in their powers of resistance, were brought by the same movement within that very influence of the waves beyond which the others had been raised. And each line bears, in the caves with which it is fretted,—caves hollowed by the attrition of the surf in the direction of faults, or where masses of yielding texture had been included in the solid rock,—indices to mark, proportionally at least, the respective periods during which they were exposed to the excavating agent. Thus, the average depth of the ancient caves in an exposed line of coast, as ascertained by dividing the aggregate sum of their depths by their number, and the average depth, ascertained by the same process, of the recent caves, equally exposed on the same coast, and hollowed in the same variety of rock, could scarce fail to represent their respective periods of exposure, had we but a given number of years, historically determined, to set off against the average measurement of the recent excava-