

*ning of the deposition of the Lias down to the present day.*<sup>1</sup>

When portions of geological history can be reduced to some such form as this, it seems to possess a kind of human interest in its resemblance more or less to the physical geography of to-day.<sup>2</sup>

THE RHÆTIC BEDS occupy only a small space in England, estimated by superficial area; for in general they run in a mere narrow strip between the New Red Marl and the Lower Lias, and in fact form true beds of passage from the Marl to the Liassic strata. To make this statement clear it is necessary to allude to a part of the geology of the Alps and of Italy.

Professor Stoppani has described a series of strata on the river Esino, in Italy, which he considers to be equivalent in geological time to the Red Keuper Marls north of the Alps. These strata, which he calls the *Infra-Lias*, contain about 200 species of fossils, chiefly mollusca, with a few Echinodermata and sponges, and at the top lie the well-known beds called the *Avicula contorta zone*, by Oppel, a name adopted in England for these strata by Dr. Wright, when he separated them from the ordinary beds of the Lias limestone and clay, and correlated them with their continental equivalents.

On the north side of the Tyrolese Alps, the Lower

<sup>1</sup> 'Proceedings of the Royal Society,' No. 152, 1874: Ramsay, 'On the Comparative Value of certain Geological Ages; or, Groups of Formation considered as Items of Geological Time.'

<sup>2</sup> Though I had often lectured on some of the questions respecting these old lakes and other points connected with the terrestrial conditions of the times, it was not till 1871 that I published anything on the subject in the papers alluded to in notes, and later, in 1874, in the 'Proceedings of the Royal Society.' Little or nothing is to be found in any Manual of Geology on the subject, except in the third edition of 'The Student's Manual of Geology,' by Professor Jukes, edited by Archibald Geikie, published in 1872.