

heights approximately as high as the summit level of the limestone gorge through which the Avon flows below Bristol.

The vulgar notion respecting the Avon and its gorge is, that before that ravine was formed all the low ground through which the river and its tributaries flow was a large lake, that 'a convulsion of nature' suddenly

FIG. 103.



Gorge of the Avon at Clifton, Bristol, looking down the river.

rent the rocks asunder and formed the gorge through which the river afterwards flowed, and so drained the hypothetical lake. It is scarcely necessary to add, that had there been a large lake in that area, we might expect to find lacustrine deposits and organisms in some parts of these valleys, but none exist.

The true explanation is, that in some late tertiary period of geological history, the surface of the country on either side of the river above the gorge formed a