

that some evidence of it should have been found in the shape of intermediate forms in the rocks. He regarded species as permanent, though varieties might arise. He offered a detailed argument to prove, from physical facts and from the history of nations, that the present continents are of modern date, and he entered into an elaborate refutation of the alleged antiquity of some peoples. He believed, with De Luc and Dolomieu, in opposition to the opinions so well expressed by Lamarck, that if any conclusion has been well-established in geology, it is that a great and sudden catastrophe befell the surface of the earth some five or six thousand years ago, whereby the countries inhabited by man were devastated and their inhabitants were destroyed. At that time portions of the sea-floor were upraised to form the present dry land. But the rocks show that this land had previously been inhabited, if not by man, at least by land-animals, and thus that one preceding revolution, if not more, had submerged these tracts and swept away their population.

But it was the relation of such terrestrial revolutions to the organic world which chiefly attracted the great French naturalist. He could foresee the deeply interesting problems that awaited solution in regard to the alternation of sedimentary materials and the succession of organic remains in the great series of stratified formations, and he concludes his discourse with these eloquent words: "What a noble task it would be were we able to arrange the objects of the organic world in their chronological order, as we have arranged those of the mineral world. Biology would