

and keen-eyed geologist began a series of investigations of the coast-sections of the Isle of Wight and of Dorset, and continued them for three years. They were published in 1815, the same year that Smith's map made its appearance.¹ They were thus independent of that work. Webster had already studied the Tertiary formations of the Isle of Wight and had published a remarkable memoir upon them in which he recognised their alternations of fresh-water and marine strata,² as had been done in the Paris basin. He now threw into tabular arrangement the whole succession of strata from the upper fresh-water (Oligocene) group through the Lower Tertiary series to the Kimmeridge shale in the Jurassic system. He clearly defined each of the leading subdivisions of the Cretaceous series, and prepared the way for the admirable later and more detailed work of William Henry Fitton (1780-1861)³ much time to geological enquiry. In 1826 he became House-secretary and Curator to the Geological Society, and in 1841 was appointed Professor of Geology in University College, London.

¹ See Englefield's *Isle of Wight* (1815), p. 117.

² *Trans. Geol. Soc.* vol. ii. This and his other memoirs are classic contributions to the Secondary and Tertiary geology of England.

³ Fitton, though of English lineage, was born in Dublin. After distinguishing himself at Trinity College there, he at first proposed to enter the church, but his predilection for natural science turned him into medicine, and he finally took the degree of M.D. and for some years practised as a physician in Northampton. Early in life he studied at Edinburgh, and acquired there under Jameson a love of geological pursuits. Eventually, having married a lady possessed of ample means, he retired from his profession, and established himself in London, where his house became one of the scientific centres of his time. From 1817 down to the middle of last century he continued at intervals to contribute articles to the *Edinburgh Review* on the