

some of the animal groups whose remains enter most largely into the chalk both old and new, makes his opinion on such a question particularly valuable.

On our return from the 'Lightning' cruise, during which we believed that our speculation had received strong confirmation, we used the expression,—perhaps somewhat an unfortunate one since it was capable of misconstruction,—that we might be regarded in a certain sense as still living in the cretaceous period. Several very eminent geologists, among whom were Sir Roderick Murchison and Sir Charles Lyell, took exception to this statement; but it seems that their censure was directed less against the opinion than the mode in which it was expressed; and I think I may say that the doctrine of the continuity of the chalk, in the sense in which we understood it, is now very generally accepted.

I do not maintain that the phrase 'we are still living in the cretaceous epoch,' is defensible in a strictly scientific sense, chiefly because the terms 'geological epoch' and 'geological period' are thoroughly indefinite. We speak indifferently of the 'Silurian period,' and the 'Glacial period,' without consideration of their totally unequal value; and of the 'Tertiary period,' and of the 'Miocene period,' although the one includes the other. The expression is intended rather in a popular sense to meet what was certainly until very lately the general popular impression, that a geological period has, in the region where it has been studied and defined, something like a beginning and an end; that it is bounded by periods of change—elevation, denudation, or some other evidence of the lapse of