Till some time after the discoveries in California and Australia, the chief supply of gold was from the diluvial and alluvial *drifts*, and the opinion most generally entertained was, that it originated exclusively in the Palæozoic strata, in the Lower Silurian system, and Murchison had undertaken to shew that the impregnation of the rocks of the Ural with gold, took place at a very recent geological period, as late as the drift epoch, and he gave utterance to his well known anxiom, "That it would be vain to assign limits to the productiveness of silver mines, when science had been fully applied to them, *for they increase in value as in depth*, whereas *gold diminishes as we descend to seek it*." But recent and more extended experience has modified Sir Roderick's views.

Gold there is reason to believe is equally diffused, though invisibly, through the lowest or most ancient rocks of the Azoic period, though geologists were first aware of its existence in those lower strata of the so-called Palæozoic series, which have undergone a *metamorphosis* or change of structure, by igneous agency, or some other power. These strata having been upheaved by volcanic, or some slower action, form the great mountain ranges, which by abrasion and disentegration during the glacial and diluvial periods, were the sources of supply of gold to the deposits of those epochs, and have continued to be the chief sources to the present day.

The general facts in regard to the mineralogical characters of the gold bearing rocks, will be shewn to be very nearly the same all the world over. Whatever was their original structure or composition, they have by the agency of a long train of geological events, been brought to exhibit a striking resemblance to each other. They consist most frequently of slaty rocks, more generally talcose, although occasionally