

quarries almost in every part, the surface of the earth has therefore consisted, in all these places, of mud and slime, at least to certain depths. The shells found in most quarries prove that this mud was an earth diluted by the water of the sea, and consequently that the sea covered all these places; and it could not cover them without also covering all that was level with or lower than it: and it is plain that it could not cover every place where there were quarries, without covering the whole face of the terrestrial globe. We do not here consider the mountains which the sea must also at one time have covered, since quarries and shells are often found in them.

“The sea,” continues he, “therefore, covered the whole earth, and from thence it proceeds that all the beds of stone in the plains are horizontal and parallel; fish must have also been the most ancient inhabitants of the globe, as there was no sustenance for either birds or terrestrial animals. But how did the sea retire into these vast basins which it at present occupies? What presents itself the most natural to the mind is, that the earth, at least at a certain depth, was not entirely solid, but intermixed with some great vacuums, whose