

We say for the *last* time, because, if we examine with still greater care those remains of organised bodies, we discover, in the midst of even the oldest strata of marine formation, other strata replete with animal or vegetable remains of terrestrial or fresh-water productions ; and, amongst the more recent strata, or, in other words, those that are nearest the surface, there are some in which land animals are buried under heaps of marine productions. Thus, the various catastrophes which have disturbed the strata, have not only caused the different parts of our continents to rise by degrees from the bosom of the waves, and diminished the extent of the basin of the ocean, but have also given rise to numerous shiftings of this basin. It has frequently happened, that lands which have been laid dry, have been again covered by the waters, in consequence either of their being ingulphed in the abyss, or of the sea having merely risen over them. The particular portions also, of the Earth, which the sea abandoned in its last retreat,—those which are now inhabited by man and terrestrial animals,—had already been once laid dry, and had then afforded subsistence to quadrupeds, birds, plants, and land productions of all kinds : the sea which left it had, therefore, covered it at a previous period *.

* See Note C.