

through all their defiles; has laid open to our view the entire disorder of the primitive formations, and has distinctly traced the limits by which they are distinguished from the secondary formations. The other, taking advantage of the numerous excavations made in the most ancient mining district in the world, has fixed the laws by which the succession of the strata are regulated, pointing out the relative antiquity of these strata, and tracing each of them through all its metamorphoses. It is from him, and from him alone, that we date the commencement of real geology, in so far as concerns the mineral nature of the strata: but neither he nor Saussure have determined the fossil organic species occurring in each kind of stratum, with the accuracy which has become necessary, now that the number of animals already known is so great.

Other naturalists, it is true, have examined the the fossil remains of organised bodies; they have collected and figured them by thousands, and their works will serve as so many precious collections of materials. But, considering these animals and plants more with reference to their own nature, than as connected with the theory of the earth; or regarding these petrifications as curiosities, rather than as historical documents; or, lastly, contenting themselves with practical explanations regarding the position of each frag-