

the surface, to be again displaced but by mollusca and other animals similar to those of our present seas ; the relations of these diversified beings to the plants the remains of which accompany theirs, the connection of these two kingdoms with the mineral strata in which they are deposited ; the greater or less uniformity existing between these different orders of beings in the different basins ;—these are phenomena which appear to me imperiously to demand the attention of philosophers.

Rendered interesting by the variety of the products of the partial or general revolutions of this epoch, and by the abundance of the various species that figure alternately on the stage, this study is divested of the dryness of that of the primordial formations, and does not, like it, almost necessarily launch into hypotheses. The facts are so direct, so curious, and so evident, that they are sufficient, so to speak, to satisfy the most ardent imagination ; and the conclusions to which they lead from time to time, however scrupulous the observer may be, having nothing vague in them, are equally free of any thing arbitrary. In fine, it is in those events that approach nearer to our own times, that we may hope to find some traces of more ancient events, and of their causes ; if, indeed, after so many fruitless attempts as have been already made, one may be permitted to flatter himself with such a hope.