

to secondary formations; and if there were only formations without fossils, no one could prove that these formations were not simultaneously produced.

Again, it is to fossils, small as has been our acquaintance with them, that we owe the little knowledge we have attained respecting the nature of the revolutions of the globe. They have taught us, that the layers which comprise them have been undisturbedly deposited in a liquid; that their alterations have corresponded with those of the liquid; that their exposure was occasioned by the removal of this liquid; that these exposures have taken place more than once. None of these facts could have been decided on without these fossils.

The study of the mineral portion of geology, which is not less necessary, which is even of still greater utility with regard to the mechanical arts, is yet much less instructive with relation to the object of which we are treating.

We are in positive ignorance regarding the causes which can have produced the changes of the substances composing the layers; we do not even know the agents which could have held certain of them in solution; and it is yet a matter of controversy, whether certain of them owe their origin to water or fire. To come at once to the point, we observe that there is a general agreement on one point only; namely, that the sea has changed its situation. And how should we know that if we had no fossils?

Fossils, which have given birth to the theory of the earth, have also furnished it with its principal lights, the only ones which have been generally recognised down to the present period.

It is this idea which has encouraged us to take up the subject; but the field is immense; a single person