

a-kin to those of the present day; those land animals and mollusca, and other fresh-water animals, also unknown, which next occupy the places, to be again displaced, but by mollusca, and other animals similar to those of our own seas; the relations of these various beings with the plants, whose remains accompany theirs; the relations of these two kingdoms with the mineral layers which contain them; the more or less their uniformity with one another in different basins; all these are a series of phenomena which appears to me to call imperiously for the profound attention of philosophers.

Made interesting by the variety of the productions of the partial or universal revolutions of this epoch, and by the abundance of the various species which alternately figure on the stage, this study is divested of the dryness of that of the primordial formations, and does not, like it, plunge itself into hypotheses. The facts are so close, so curious, and so evident, that they suffice in a measure for the most ardent imagination; and the conclusions which they arrive at from time to time, however scrupulous the observer may be, not having any thing indefinite, at the same time have nothing arbitrary. Finally, it is in the events which are nearer to our times that we can hope to find any traces of the more ancient events and their causes, if it be indeed allowed, after so many trials, to flatter ourselves with such a hope.

These ideas have beset, I may say, have tormented me, whilst I have been engaged in making researches amongst fossil bones, the results of which I have lately made public; researches which only comprise so small a portion of these phenomena of the last age but one of the earth, and which, notwithstanding, are united to all the others in an intimate