

In a geological point of view, dry land may be considered as so much of the crust of the earth as is now above the level of the water, beneath which it may again disappear. From accurate calculations it is proved that the present land might be distributed over the bed of the ocean, in such manner that the surface of the globe would present an uninterrupted sheet of water. Thus we perceive that every imaginable distribution of land and water may take place; and consequently that every variety of organic life may find at different periods suitable abodes.

S. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ANIMALS.

—The investigation of the laws which govern the geographical distribution of animals and vegetables is highly interesting; but as my limits compel me to be brief, I must refer you to the third volume of Mr. Lyell's "Principles of Geology," for more ample details. It will be sufficient for our present purpose to state, that although it might have been expected that, all other circumstances being equal, the same animals and plants would have been found in places of like climate and temperature, this identity of distribution does not exist. When America was first discovered, the indigenous quadrupeds were all dissimilar to those of the old world. The elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, giraffe, camel, horse, buffalo, lion, tiger, &c. were not met with on the new continent; while the American species of mammalia, as the llama, jaguar, paca, coati, sloth, &c.