

the mechanical and chemical laws, which govern inorganic matter, appear to have undergone no change. The wasting away of the solid rocks by water, and the subsequent deposition, and consolidation of the detritus by heat; the subsidence of the dry land beneath the sea, and the elevation of the ocean-bed into new islands and continents; the decomposition of animal and vegetable substances on the surface, and their conversion into stone or coal, under circumstances in which the gaseous principles were confined; the transmutation of mud and sand into rock, and of earthy minerals into crystals,—these physical changes have constantly been going on under the influence of those fixed and immutable laws, established by Divine Providence for the maintenance and renovation of the material universe.

And although among the sentient beings which have from time to time inhabited the earth, we discover at successive periods the appearance of new forms, which flourished awhile and then passed away, while other modifications of life sprung up, and after the lapse of ages, in their turn were annihilated; yet the laws which governed their appearance and extinction, were in perfect harmony with those which regulate inorganic matter. Every creature was especially adapted to some peculiar state of the earth at the period of its development; and when the physical conditions were changed, and no longer favourable for the existence of such a