

My original inquiry having thus conducted me to the conclusion, *that silicious organization is not destructible by the agency of heat*, I thought it not unreasonable to infer that a careful and more extended microscopic examination into the condition of silica, might lead to the discovery of elementary organic forms, even in the primitive strata themselves. It was obviously not necessary to exclude granite from this examination, under the common and apparently natural impression, that the igneous fusion which preceded the present arrangement of its particles, would destroy every trace of organization; for I had before me too many manifest proofs, that an intense white heat, though capable of fusing glass, was incapable of effecting any change in the minute silicious organization both of plants and animals. Moreover, there appeared to be a strong suspicion in some minds, that every successive surface of our globe had been characterised by its own minute living forms; and you, yourself, had more than once contended for the existence of life during the granitic period. To give a reality, however, to a *first condition*, thus pronounced to be *probable*, we must discover the skeletons of animalcules even in granite itself. But here arises a difficulty which it will baffle our utmost ingenuity to remove; for, though, on the one hand, I meet with silicious corpuscles in the primitive rocks, and find, on the other hand, that the indestructible organic skeletons of recent infusoria exhibit, even under a power of 900 linear, a striking similarity of form, yet the entire absence of external structure precludes me from assigning a common animal origin to the ancient and recent organisms. Still, the inquiry, even in its present state, is far from being fruitless; for it cannot but be a matter of surprise, that immense mountain masses should have been found to consist of an aggregation of symmetrical bodies, between $\frac{1}{5,000}$ and $\frac{1}{10,000}$ th of an inch in diameter, articulated together in the form of rings, as in chalk, or of slender threads, as in limestone, and the quartz of granite; and that an exact counterpart of this curious structure in the mineral kingdom should be exhibited in the vegetable, by the mouldiness of paste, and in the animal by the *Gaillonella ferruginea*.

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