

of all the earths and stones of every sort, in short, of solid matter everywhere.

When he thus threw aside as error all that had then been ascertained as to the chemistry of minerals, he found no difficulty in accounting for all rocks as the results of the decay of organic bodies. He looked on granite, for example, not as the "primitive" rock which mineralogists had called it, nor as directly connected with the material that forms the interior of the globe, but as due to the transport of the decaying debris of organisms by rivers, and to the accumulation of this detritus on the floor of the sea. He believed that all argillaceous materials come from the decay of plants and all calcareous materials from the remains of animals, and that from these two chief sources the most important and abundant earthy and stony bodies are derived, all the other mineral substances being only mixtures or modifications of these. Even metals appeared to him divisible into two series, according as their earthy base has been supplied by animals or by plants. Here again he generalised from the undoubted precipitation of some metallic salts by organic matter to the production of all metallic substances from the same cause. His discussion ends with a pungent attack on the chemists of his day and their methods, and he declares that though all the world may believe them, he is content to be alone in his disbelief.

There can be little doubt that this spirit of opposition to many of the prevalent opinions of the time, together with the apparent extravagance of some of his doctrines, conspired to detract from the position