

and commence our examination of the relics of a former world, with a view to ascertain how far the fossil members of the animal and vegetable kingdoms may, or may not, be related to existing genera and species, as parts of one great system of creation, all bearing marks of derivation from a common author.*

Beginning with the animal kingdom, we find the four great existing divisions of *Vertebrata*, *Mollusca*, *Articulata*, and *Radiata*, to have been coeval with the commencement of organic life upon our globe.†

* In Plate 1, I have attempted to convey some idea of the organic remains preserved in the several series of formations, by introducing over each, restored figures of a few of the most characteristic animals and vegetables that occupied the lands and waters, at the periods in which they were deposited.

† “ It has not been found necessary, in discussing the history of fossil plants and animals, to constitute a single new class; they all fall naturally into the same great sections as the existing forms.—We are warranted in concluding that the older organic creations were formed upon the same general plan as at present. They cannot, therefore, be correctly described as entirely different systems of nature, but should rather be viewed as corresponding systems, composed of different details. The difference of these details arises mostly from minute specific distinctions; but sometimes, especially among terrestrial plants, certain crustacea, and reptiles, the differences are of a more general nature, and it is not possible to refer the fossil tribes to any known recent genus, or even family. Thus we find the problem of the resemblance of recent and fossil organic beings to resolve itself into a general analogy of system, frequent agreement in important points, but almost universal distinction of minute organization.”—Phillips’s Guide to Geology, p. 61-63, 1834.