

ancient lands. As the forces of rains, torrents, and inundations have conveyed this detritus into lakes, estuaries, and seas, it is probable that many carcasses of terrestrial and amphibious animals, should also have been drifted to great distances by currents which swept such enormous quantities of abraded matter from the lands; and accordingly we find, that strata of aqueous formation have become the common repository not only of the Remains of aquatic, but also of terrestrial animals and vegetables.

The study of these Remains will form our most interesting and instructive subject of inquiry, since it is in them that we shall find the great master key whereby we may unlock the secret history of the earth. They are documents which contain the evidences of revolutions and catastrophes, long antecedent to the creation of the human race; they open the book of nature, and swell the volumes of science, with the Records of many successive series of animal and vegetable generations, of which the Creation and Extinction would have been equally unknown to us, but for recent discoveries in the science of Geology.