

could, at pleasure, control its ascent to the surface, or descent to the bottom of the sea.

To creatures that sometimes floated, a thick and heavy shell would have been inapplicable; and as a thin shell, inclosing air, would be exposed to various, and often intense degrees of pressure at the bottom, we find a series of provisions to afford resistance to such pressure, in the mechanical construction both of the external shell, and of the internal transverse plates which formed the air chambers. First, the shell is made up of a tube, coiled round itself, and externally convex. Secondly, it is fortified by a series of ribs and vaultings disposed in the form of arches and domes on the convex surface of this tube, and still further adding to its strength. Thirdly, the transverse plates that form the air chambers, supply also a continuous succession of supports, extending their ramifications, with many mechanical advantages, beneath those portions of the shell which, being weakest, were most in need of them.

If the existence of contrivance proves the exercise of mind; and if higher degrees of perfection in mechanism are proof of more exalted degrees of intellect in the Author from whom they proceeded; the beautiful examples which we find in the petrified remains of these chambered shells, afford evidence coeval and co-extensive with the mountains wherein they are entombed, attesting