

If, during a flood, a rupture takes place in the banks of a river, where it is contracted, a part of the stream will flow out by the lateral opening, and carry along with it rolled masses, even when the opening in the bank does not reach to the bottom of the bed of the river; for the mountain stream, loaded with boulders, carries them not merely in single masses along its bottom, but the flood-water of the stream generally attacks large sandbanks, or older beds of rolled masses, and carries along with it, accompanied with a terrible noise, whole masses, forces them over the lower banks, or through the chasm in the bank, and often deposits them several feet high, on an immediately succeeding widening of the river's course.

In the same manner, we observe loose blocks deposited on high situations in the lateral valleys of the great transverse valleys, and dispersed over the passes into the neighbouring valleys. The height of the lateral deposits of loose blocks, and their position in the passes, and their passing into neighbouring valleys, are facts which assist us in judging of the extent of the power that may have acted during their transportation.

The striking agreement observable in the phenomena of the distribution of the loose blocks from the interior Alpine valleys to the interior valleys of the Jura, with those in the rolled masses carried along by rivers, must lead every one, who reflects on this interesting phenomenon, to the hypothesis, that these blocks may have been deposited in their present situations by an overwhelming flood, which burst from the Alps. It is true that this opinion is liable to many objections; but still it contains a more plausible explanation of the phenomenon than any other with which we are acquainted.