

find that, along these old Oolitic shores of Scotland, as along the shores of our country in the present day, the rocks were inhabited by their hermit shells, — the *Edomites* of the molluscous world, as a modern naturalist poetically terms them, — that spent silent lives in excavating for themselves cells in the stone, in which they watched in patience for the food brought them by wavelet and current, and which, like the cells of so many other anchorites and recluses, were ultimately to prove their sepulchres. The idea that stones and rocks should be thus inhabited is an idea old as eternity: it must have had being *as an idea* ere the existence of rock, or coral, or molluscous life; for He from whom it emanated saw the end from the beginning, and makes no accessions to his fund of thought; and to be permitted thus to trace it towards its source, and to detect it embodied in a creation whose last surviving organism perished myriads of ages ago, enables us in some degree to conceive of the fact, and to conceive also of the fixed character, of that Master Existence, the Author of all, who said, in a long posterior age, when revealing Himself to man, “I am the Lord; I change not.”