

The changes in the level of the waters have not, therefore, consisted solely in a more or less gradual, or more or less general retreat; there have been various successive irruptions and retreats, the final result of which, however, has been a universal depression of the level of the sea.

*Proofs that these Revolutions have been sudden.*

It is of much importance to remark, that these repeated irruptions and retreats of the sea have neither all been slow nor gradual; on the contrary, most of the catastrophes which have occasioned them have been sudden; and this is especially easy to be proved, with regard to the last of these catastrophes, that which, by a twofold motion, has inundated, and afterwards laid dry, our present continents, or at least a part of the land which forms them at the present day. In the northern regions, it has left the carcases of large quadrupeds which became enveloped in the ice, and have thus been preserved even to our own times, with their skin, their hair, and their flesh. If they had not been frozen as soon as killed, they would have been decomposed by putrefaction. And, on the other hand, this eternal frost could not previously have occupied the places in which they have been seized by it, for they could not have lived in such a temperature. It was, therefore, at one and the same moment