

perature of the globe is either diminishing or increasing ;—none of these causes could have overturned our strata ; enveloped in ice large animals, with their flesh and skin ; laid dry marine testacea, the shells of which are, at the present day, as well preserved as if they had been drawn up alive from the sea ; and, lastly, destroyed numerous species, and even entire genera.

These considerations have struck most naturalists ; and among those who have endeavoured to explain the present state of the globe, hardly any one has attributed it entirely to the agency of slow causes, still less to causes operating under our eyes. The necessity to which they are thus reduced, of seeking for causes different from those which we see acting at the present day, is the very circumstance that has forced them to make so many extraordinary suppositions, and to lose themselves in so many erroneous and contradictory speculations, that the very name of their science, as I have elsewhere remarked, has long been a subject of ridicule to prejudiced persons, who have only looked to the systems which it has been the means of hatching, and have forgotten the extensive and important series of authentic facts which it has brought to light\*.

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\* When I formerly mentioned this circumstance of the science of geology having become ridiculous, I only expressed a fact, to the truth of which every day bears witness ; but in