appearance of probability, that the condition of the earth, previous to the existence of organic matter, depended upon fusion; and that the primitive rocks are of igneous origin. Since, however, granite has been found above rocks of various kinds which contain the remains of organic bodies, we are under no necessity of ascribing to primitive rocks an origin different from that of subsequent formations; and, without having recourse to other arguments, the fact, that aquatic animals are the most abundant of fossil organic remains from the earliest of the transition to the latest of the secondary and tertiary formations, affords evidence that they are precipitates from water.

Notwithstanding the great and daily advancement of science, our knowledge of chemistry is still too imperfect for us to arrive at an adequate knowledge of the state of this water, or rather sea, as, from its universal expansion, it must be denominated. Did it contain dissolved in it at the same time all the materials from which the various beds of rock were formed; what were the solvents of those materials which we find, either insoluble in water, or at least not easily soluble; by what means were the precipitates produced; and whence came this prodigious mass of waters? Upon these unanswered questions depend others no less important. The aquatic animals of a former world undoubtedly lived in this sea; otherwise, we must admit of another sea free from heterogeneous materials. But did these animals continue to live in it during the whole process of precipitation; and did this process proceed so slowly and imperceptibly, that animal life was not interrupted by it, and that only remains of dead animals, such as the skeletons of fishes, and the covering