

of a very fine white. Let us not say with one of our most celebrated naturalists, that these stones are imperfect flints of different ages, which have not acquired their perfection; for why should they be all imperfect? Why should they be imperfect only on the side exposed to the weather? It, on the contrary, appears to me more reasonable that they are flints changed from their original state, gradually decomposed, and assuming the form and property of clay or bole. If this is thought to be only conjecture, let the hardest and blackest flint be exposed to the weather, in less than a year its surface will change colour; and if we have patience to pursue this experiment, we shall see it by degrees lose its hardness, transparency, and other specific characters, and approach every day nearer and nearer the nature of clay.

What happens to flint happens to sand; each grain of sand may possibly be considered as a small flint, and each flint as a mass of extremely fine grains of sand. The first example of the decomposition of sand is found in the brilliant opaque powder called Mica, in which clay and slate are always diffused. The entirely transparent flints, the Quartz, produce, by decomposition, fat and soft talks, such as those of