

and have evidently been reduced to their present state by igneous agency. They are the lowermost rocks, and constitute the foundation, on which all the newer strata have been deposited; they also attain the highest elevations on the surface of the globe. They were termed primitive, because it was inferred, from the entire absence of organic remains, that they had been formed before the creation of animals and vegetables; but it is now ascertained that granite and its associated rocks are of various ages, and are sedimentary deposits altered by exposure to a very high temperature.

14. TRANSITION STRATA.—2d. *The Transition Strata.* These are super-imposed on the primitive, are more or less distinctly stratified, and contain the fossilized remains of animals and plants. They received the name of *transition*, because it was assumed that they had been formed at a period when the surface of the earth and the seas were passing into a state fit for the reception of organized beings. Modern researches have, however, shown that they are, like the primary rocks, strata modified by the effects of heat under great pressure.

15. SECONDARY STRATA.—3d. *The Secondary.* These have clearly originated from the destruction of the more ancient rocks, and have been deposited in hollows or depressions, by the action of rivers and seas. They abound in the mineralized remains of animals and plants; the most ancient inclosing