

every day, by the sole agency of the operations now under consideration. In the sediments of these rivers, the animals as well as the plants of the respective countries are continually enveloped. It is therefore evident, that should these deltas become dry land, the naturalist could, by an examination of the animal and vegetable remains imbedded in the fluviatile sediments, readily determine the characters of the fauna and flora of the countries through which the rivers had flowed. We may here observe, that in tropical regions, where animal life is profusely developed, and but little under the control of man, the animal remains buried in deltas, are far more abundant than in those of European countries, which are thickly peopled, and in a high state of civilization. The enterprising, but unfortunate Lander informed me, just before he embarked on his last fatal expedition to Africa, that many parts of the Quorra, or Niger, so far as the eye could reach, teemed with crocodiles and hippopotami; and so great was their number, that he was oftentimes obliged to drag his boat on shore lest it should be swamped by these animals. But it is unnecessary for me to dwell longer on these operations; it will suffice to have shown, that by the simple effect of running water, great destruction and modification of the surface of the land are everywhere taking place; and at the same time, fluviatile deposits are forming on an extensive scale, and enveloping animal and vegetable remains. Thus, in the deltas