

the various classes of organized beings: but the limits of a single lecture will not allow me to be more diffuse, and I trust it is unnecessary to offer further remarks, to show that the conclusions of geologists, as to the ancient inhabitants of our globe, are not vague assumptions, as those unacquainted with the science might suppose, but the legitimate deductions of laborious and patient investigations. A few teeth and bones—sometimes but a single relic of this kind—are the elements by which the comparative anatomist is enabled, not only to restore the forms of creatures now banished from the face of the earth, but also to ascertain their habits and economy, and even arrive at positive conclusions respecting the nature of the country of which they were once the inhabitants. If we find the remains of animals which lived on vegetables, it follows that there must have been vegetables for their subsistence, and a condition of nature calculated for the growth of vegetable productions; a soil fitted for their existence, and a country diversified by hills, valleys, and plains, with streams and rivers to carry off its superfluous waters. The same laws, under certain modifications, apply to other classes of beings. In birds, the form of the feet is modified according to the habits of the different orders. In the parrot, (Tab. 22, fig. 3,) the claws are adapted to climb trees and perch on the branches; but in the eagle they are widely different, for its talons are constructed to