

animals, more or less rolled,—with boulders formed of fragments of rocks, transported by torrents from the hills, or washed out of the banks by the streams. Let us now suppose that by agencies already explained, a river has disappeared, that the sea also has changed its place, and that the bed and the delta of the river have become dry land; that towns and villages have been built upon the consolidated delta, and that its surface is either clothed with woods and forests, or under cultivation. If sections of the strata were exposed, either by natural or artificial means, and the bones of men and animals, with works of art, and remains of plants and shells, were visible in the clay or sandstone, such appearances would excite in us no surprise, because we are acquainted with the processes by which such accumulations are formed. Should an inhabitant of the new country express his wonder how brittle shells, delicate leaves, and bones, had become imbedded in the solid rock, and if when we stated the manner in which those changes had been effected, he should not only refuse his assent, but insist that the shells, leaves, and bones, were merely accidental forms of the stone, should we not feel astonished at his ignorance and prejudice? yet not a century since, and such an opinion almost universally prevailed, and is even still entertained by many!\* And farther, if our

\* "At Hawkhurst, in the weald of Kent, these stones (Sussex marble) abound. They consist of several laminæ, between