

celebrated lily encrinite. The mountain limestone, and the Silurian and Cambrian formations, are the grand repositories of these remains; upwards of fifty species, belonging to twenty-five genera, have been obtained from those ancient deposits. The preponderance of these forms of existence in the ocean of those remote epochs, and their almost entire exclusion from the tertiary and modern seas, seem to indicate some remarkable change in the physical condition of the waters during these later periods, inimical to that great development of the crinoidea which existed in the oceans of the transition era.

47. CONCLUDING REMARKS.—From this review of the organization and economy of the polyparia, we learn that an atom of living jelly, floating in the ocean, and at length becoming affixed to a rock, may be the first link in a chain of events, which, after the lapse of ages, may produce important modifications in the physical geography of our globe. We have seen that the living polypi in their rocky habitations enjoy all the blessings of existence, and at the same time are the unconscious instruments of stupendous operations, which in after ages may determine the destinies of mighty nations; and that the materials of their dwellings, consolidated by chemical and mechanical agency, may become the foundations of islands and continents, and thus constitute new and favourable sites for the abode of the human race. When we bring