

ancient coralline rocks hereafter to be noticed. I now resume the geological argument from which we have for a while digressed, and hasten to the consideration of the carboniferous system, which in the stratigraphical arrangement (page 194, Pl. VII.) succeeds the saliferous deposits described in the fifth lecture.

The strata comprised in the carboniferous system, so named from its being the great depositary of that important substance called coal, consist of sandstones more or less felspathic, of dark bituminous shales, and coal; and of grey limestones: they admit of three natural divisions. The uppermost is composed of a vast number of alternations of coal, shale, ironstone, and sandstone; the middle, of chert, sandstone, quartzose conglomerates, and limestone, with immense quantities of shells, polyparia, crinoidea, and other marine exuviae; and the lowermost, of sandstones and conglomerates, generally of a dull red colour, and resembling, in their lithological characters, those of the new or upper red sandstone. I propose to describe—firstly, the general characters of the strata, and their geographical distribution; secondly, the nature of the coal and of the fossil plants, which are scattered through the carboniferous rocks; thirdly, the animal remains; and lastly, review the flora of the ancient world.

2. THE CARBONIFEROUS SYSTEM.—The following tabular arrangement will convey a general idea