

This rapid sketch, presents but an outline of the most striking changes observable in the organic forms, preserved in the several formations of the sedimentary deposits. In this view—setting apart the infusoria—a few fuci, mollusca, and polyparia are the first evidence of organic existence; these are followed by a larger development of the same orders, and the addition of crinoidea, crustacea, and fishes; in the succeeding period reptiles and insects appear, with sauroid fishes, and an immense development of vegetable life, particularly of the cryptogamic class. Large reptiles next prevail to an extraordinary degree; and one genus of birds, and two genera of mammalia, attest the existence of the higher orders of animals. The vegetable kingdom is greatly modified; and plants related to the zamia and to the liliaceæ preponderate, with coniferæ and dicotyledonous trees. The next remarkable change is in the sudden increase of mammiferous animals, and the reduction of the reptile tribes; the large pachydermata, as the mammoth, elephant, &c. first appear. From this period till the creation of man, there are no striking general modifications in the various orders of animal and vegetable existence.

It was from this *apparent* successive development of living beings, from the most simple to the most complex organizations, that the geological theory which once prevailed took its rise;* but I scarcely

* See Organic Remains of a Former World, vol. iii. p. 449.