

tinuance, and extinction of the lost races of animals and plants on the surface of our planet.

In the "Wonders of Geology" will be found a comprehensive sketch of the composition and arrangement of the different formations or groups of strata; and the subject is treated of in detail by Mr. Lyell in the "Elements;" a reference to these works will afford the student full information on this branch of Geology. For the convenience of the general reader I subjoin a tabular view of the characters and relations of the principal formations.

The entire series of rocks within the scope of human examination, is estimated at a thickness of from fifteen to twenty miles, reckoning from the summit of the highest mountains to the greatest depth hitherto penetrated; and as this thickness scarcely equals 1-400ths of the diameter of our globe, it is familiarly termed the earth's crust. The substances of which the strata are composed appear to have been deposited by the action of water, and subsequently more or less modified in structure and composition by heat, and by electrochemical forces. When these materials occur as irregular accumulations of waterworn detritus, consisting of gravel, boulders, sand, clay, &c. they are termed *Drift*, or *alluvial* and *diluvial* deposits. When the layers or strata in which they were successively thrown down are obvious, they are said to be *stratified*; when the nature of the materials has been altered by igneous action or high temperature,