

became transferred to a new estate among the members of the mineral kingdom. A long interment followed, during which a course of chemical changes, and new combinations of their vegetable elements, converted them to the mineral condition of coal. By the elevating force of subterranean agency, these beds of coal have been uplifted from beneath the waters, to a new position in the hills and mountains, where they are accessible to the industry of man. From this fourth stage, coal has been removed by the labours of the miner, assisted by the arts and sciences, that have co-operated to produce the steam-engine, and the safety-lamp. Returned once more to the light of day, and a second time committed to the waters, it has, by the aid of navigation, been conveyed to the scene of its next and most considerable change by fire; a change during which it becomes subservient to the most important wants and conveniences of man. In this seventh stage of its long eventful history, it seems, to the vulgar eye, to undergo annihilation; its elements are, indeed, released from the mineral combinations which they have maintained for ages, but their apparent destruction is only the commencement of new successions of change and of activity. Set free from their long imprisonment, they return to their native atmosphere, from which they were absorbed by the primeval vegetation of the earth. Tomorrow they may contribute to the substance of