

- SILICATE.** A chemical compound of silica and another substance, such as silicate of iron. Consult elementary works on chemistry.
- SILICEOUS.** Of or belonging to the earth of flint. *Etym.*, *silex*, which see. A siliceous rock is one mainly composed of *silex*.
- SILICIFIED.** Any substance that is petrified or mineralized by *siliceous* earth.
- SILT.** The more comminuted sand, clay, and earth, which is transported by running water. It is often accumulated by currents in banks. Thus the mouth of a river is silted up when its entrance into the sea is impeded by such accumulation of loose materials.
- SIMPLE MINERAL.** Individual mineral substances, as distinguished from rocks, which last are usually an aggregation of simple minerals. They are not simple in regard to their nature; for when subjected to chemical analysis, they are found to consist of a variety of different substances. Pyrites is a simple mineral in the sense we use the term, but it is a chemical compound of sulphur and iron.
- SINTER, CALCAREOUS or SILICEOUS.** A German name for a rock precipitated from mineral waters. *Etym.*, *sintern*, to drop.
- SLATE.** See "Cleavage" and "Schist."
- SOLFATARA.** A volcanic vent from which sulphur, sulphureous, watery, and acid vapours and gases are emitted.
- SPORULES.** The reproductory corpuscula (minute bodies) of cryptogamic plants. *Etym.*, *σπορα*, *spora*, a seed.
- STALACTITE.** When water holding lime in solution deposits it as it drops from the roof of a cavern, long rods of stone hang down like icicles, and these are called *stalactites*. *Etym.*, *σταλαζω* *stalazo*, to drop.
- STALAGMITE.** When water holding lime in solution drops on the floor of a cavern, the water evaporating leaves a crust composed of layers of limestone: such a crust is called *stalagmite*, from *σταλαγμα*, *stalagma*, a drop, in opposition to *stalactite*, which see.
- STATICAL FIGURE.** The figure which results from the equilibrium of forces. From *στατος*, *statos*, stable, or standing still.
- STERNUM.** The breast-bone, or the flat bone occupying the front of the chest.
- STILBITE.** A crystallized simple mineral, usually white, one of the Zeolite family, frequently included in the mass of the Trap-rocks.
- STRATIFIED.** Rocks arranged in the form of *strata*, which see.
- STRATIFICATION.** An arrangement of rocks in *strata*, which see.
- STRATA, STRATUM.** The term *stratum*, derived from the Latin verb *struo*, to strew or lay out, means a bed or mass of matter spread out over a certain surface by the action of water, or in some cases by wind. The deposition of successive layers of sand and gravel in the bed of a river, or in a canal, affords a perfect illustration both of the form and origin of stratification. A large portion of the masses constituting the earth's crust are thus stratified, the successive strata of a given rock preserving a general parallelism to each other; but the planes of stratification not being perfectly parallel throughout a great extent like the planes of *cleavage*, which see.
- STRIKE.** The direction or line of bearing of strata, which is always at right angles to their prevailing dip.
- STUFAS.** Jets of steam issuing from fissures in volcanic regions at a temperature often above the boiling point.
- SUBAPENNINES.** Low hills which skirt or lie at the foot of the great chain of the Apennines in Italy. The term Subapennine is applied geologically to a series of strata of the Older Pliocene Period.
- SYENITE.** A kind of granite; so called, because it was brought from Syene in Egypt.
- TALUS.** When fragments are broken off by the action of the weather from the face of a steep rock, as they accumulate at its foot, they form a sloping heap, called a *talus*. The term is borrowed from the language of fortification, where *talus* means the outside of a wall of which the thickness is diminished by degrees, as it rises in height, to make it the firmer.
- TARSI.** The feet in insects, which are articulated, and formed of five or a less number of joints.
- TERTIARY STRATA.** A series of sedimentary rocks, with characters which distinguish them from two other great series of strata—the secondary and primary—which lie *beneath* them.