

must remember, that they have been deposited in succession, and that each of them was at one time the uppermost, receiving the deposits which fell on it from superincumbent waters, till these new deposits formed a new stratum, and added another to the ascending series. It must also be kept in mind, that though all the groups of strata, so far as they have been observed in Western Europe, are exhibited in the table, the series is not understood to be actually complete in any one part of the globe. Where land was in a state of elevation above the sea, it could not receive the sediment thrown down by its waters, and it must be consequently devoid of the formations of that period. Even where strata have been formed, what is called denudation has often taken place, and the newer strata have been swept away, leaving others which are older uncovered. Geologists hold themselves justified in their classification, if so often as a stratum appears it is always found in the place assigned to it relatively to the others. The strata have been distributed into three great divisions. The lowermost, which are of course the oldest, have been called the Primary; the next of depth and age