

I.

PRINCIPLES OF MODERN GEOLOGY.

I propose to explain the Principles of Modern Geology.—Some acquaintance with it, as I have already said, is a requisite preparation for the disquisitions which are to follow. At the same time, as the main design of this Treatise is not to expound Geology, strictly and simply considered, I will make my explanations of it as few and as brief as possible. If, in my extreme solicitude to make myself intelligible to the non-geological section of society, I may sometimes deviate from a technical accuracy, I hope that the more informed reader will excuse this occasional looseness of expression.

A proper understanding of the nature of Rocks, may be regarded as a key to the comprehension of the whole subject. When we speak of rocks, we must not think merely of isolated blocks, strewing a sea-shore, or heaped upon one