

accumulated in lakes or estuaries. In other cases large forests must have been submerged where they grew. Accumulating vegetable matter for many a year and many an age, they enjoyed profound and secure solitude; animals, of which we may have no traces, lodged among their branches and foliage, and exemplified the habits characteristic of their different natures, through many successive generations. The sea slumbered afar off; its broad expanse was probably far out of sight, and the noise of its breakers still farther out of hearing. At length terrestrial revolutions supervened, and disturbed the quiet; agitated by volcanic heavings, the earth rose and sunk; the ocean displaced by the elevation of its channel, invaded the dry land, till the goodly trees were covered like sea-weed by its overflowing waters, and were ultimately bent, and crushed, and buried, by accumulating sediment. Or a powerful and violent torrent swept the forest from its place, uplifted it root and branch, and hurried it along with its own tumultuous swellings, till on the far off sea it became heavy with imbibed water, and sunk to be embedded in the fathomless abysses. On any