

great Secondary class of rocks, holds exactly the middle place. The Triassic system and the Lias lie beneath it ; the Cretaceous system and the Weald rest above. Smith, while yet a child, had his attention attracted by the Oolitic fossils ; and it was observed, that while his youthful contemporaries had their garnered stores of marbles purchased at the toy-shop, he had collected, instead, a hoard of spherical fossil terebratulæ, which served the purposes of the game equally well. The interest which he took in organic remains, and the deposits in which they occur, influenced him in the choice of a profession ; and, when supporting himself in honest independence as a skilful mineral surveyor and engineer, he travelled over many thousand miles of country, taking as his starting point the city of Bath, which stands near what is termed the Great Oolite ; and from that centre he carefully explored the various Secondary formations above and below. He ascertained that these always occur in a certain determinate order ; that each contains fossils peculiar to itself ; and that they run diagonally across the kingdom in nearly parallel lines from north-east to south-west. And, devoting every hour which he could snatch from his professional labours to the work, in about a quarter of a century, or rather more, he completed his great stratigraphical map of England. But, though a truly Herculean achievement, regarded as that of a single man unindebted to public support, and uncheered by even any very general sympathy in his labours, it was found to be chiefly valuable in its tracings of the Secondary deposits, and strictly exact in only that Oolitic centre from which his labours began. It was remarked at an early period, that he ought to have restricted his publication to the formations which lie between the Chalk and the Red Marl inclusive ; or, in other words, to the great Secondary division. The Coal Measures had, however, been previously better known, from their economic importance, and the number of the