

*Orthoceratite, Pl. 44, Fig. 4.*

The Orthoceratites (so called from their usual form,—that of a straight horn) began their existence at the same early period with the Nautili, in the seas which deposited the Transition strata; and are so nearly allied to them in structure, that we may conclude they performed a similar function as floats of Cephalopodous Mollusks. This genus contains many species, which abound in the strata of the Transition series, and is one of those which, having been called into existence amongst the earliest inhabitants of our planet, was at an early period also consigned to almost total destruction.\*

An Orthoceratite (see Pl. 44, Fig. 4) is, like the Nautilus, a multilocular shell, having its chambers separated by transverse plates, concave externally, and internally convex; and pierced, either at the centre or towards the margin, by a Siphuncle, (a.) This pipe varies in size, more

\* See D'Orbigny's *Tableau Méthodique des Céphalopodes*.

There are, I believe, only two exceptions yet known to the general fact, that the genus Orthoceratite became extinct before the deposition of the Secondary strata had commenced. The most recent rocks in which they have been noticed, are a small and problematical species in the Lias at Lyme, and another species in Alpine Limestone of the Oolite formation, at Halstadt, in the Tyrol.