

counties, published in 1796, has also a regular though of course imperfect geological map of the west of England.

These are certainly the earliest published geological maps of any part of this island; but it is probable that Mr. Smith had already commenced the manuscript of his own, which after many delays at length made its appearance in 1815, and was succeeded by various county maps on a larger scale, sections, &c.

D'Aubuisson has liberally said of this great performance of an unassisted individual—

“ Ce que les minéralogistes les plus distingués ont fait dans une petite partie de l'Allemagne, en un demi-siècle, un seul homme (M. William Smith, ingénieur des mines) l'a entrepris et effectué pour toute l'Angleterre; et son travail, aussi beau par son résultat, qu'il est étonnant par son étendue, a fait conclure que *l'Angleterre est régulièrement divisée en couches, que l'ordre de leur superposition n'est jamais interverti; et que ce sont exactement des fossiles semblables qu'on trouve dans toutes les parties de la même couche et à de grandes distances.*——

“ Tout en payant au travail de M. Smith le tribut d'admiration qui lui est dû, il me sera permis de désirer que des observations ultérieures en confirment l'exactitude, et déjà, sur plusieurs points, les travaux des minéralogistes anglais l'ont confirmée.”

Nor is this praise in any respect too high; to say indeed that the first geological map of any country is likely to be free from material imperfections, is to maintain a position which every one acquainted with the ordinary progress of science must feel to be untenable. This is an object only to be gained by a series of gradual approximations, and it is by no means a small tribute of commendation to say that Mr. Smith has commenced that series with a performance, in which the trifling errors of detail which it may exhibit, bear no proportion in importance to the great general views which it correctly lays down. If we cast a rapid glance over this and his other publications, beginning with his representations of the more recent strata, and descending the geological series, we shall at once see what he has achieved, and added to our previous information, and what he has left for others. The tertiary beds above the chalk he has represented only generally, their more accurate division having been reserved for the researches of Mr. Webster, &c.: the chalk formation he has laid down with great precision, but its limits had, as we have seen, been before generally stated by many authorities: hence through the series of sands and oolites, down to the new red sandstone or red ground, the whole field is, with few and immaterial exceptions, entirely his own. Before his researches it would have been known only under the vague designation of a district of secondary shell limestones and sandstones,