

respecting the geology of our Indian possessions, as well as of every other point where English intellect and research can penetrate.

(324.) Nothing can be more desirable than that every possible facility and encouragement should be afforded for such researches, and indeed to the pursuits of the enlightened resident or traveller in every department of science, by the representatives of our national authority wherever our power extends. By these only can our knowledge of the actual state of the surface of the globe, and that of the animals and vegetables of the ancient continents and seas, be extended and perfected, while more complete information than we at present possess of the habits of those actually existing, and the influence of changes of climate, food, and circumstances, on them, may be expected to render material assistance to our speculations respecting those which have become extinct.

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## CHAP. IV.

### OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE MATERIAL CONSTITUENTS OF THE WORLD.

#### *Mineralogy.*

(325.) THE consideration of the history and structure of our globe, and the examination of the fossil contents of its strata, lead us naturally to consider the materials of which it consists. The history of these materials, their properties as objects of philosophical inquiry, and their application to the useful arts and the embellishments of life, with the characters by which they can be certainly distinguished one from another, form the object of mineralogy, taken in its most extended sense.

(326.) There is no branch of science which presents so many points of contact with other departments of physi-