

with difficulty by the hammer ; and which is used in the construction of churches and houses. Upon examining the stone with a lens, it appears to be principally made up of comminuted shells ; and it is worthy of remark, that the shelly particles are frequently found to be spherical, from the previous operation of water, and some portions of the rock closely resemble the ancient limestone called *oolite*, which will hereafter come under our notice. The rocks upon which the sandstone reposes are clay, slate, and slaty limestone ; and the water effecting their decomposition may have thus obtained the iron, alumina, and other mineral matters by which the loose sand has been converted into sandstone.

The infiltration of water thus impregnated, Dr. Paris observes, is a common and extensive cause of lapidification : at Pendean cove, granitic sand is gradually hardening into breccia, by this process ; and in the island of St. Mary, is becoming indurated by the slow action of water impregnated with iron.

57. SILICIOUS DEPOSITIONS.—Silicious earth, or the earth of flint, is another abundant mineral, and constitutes so large a proportion of the rocks and strata, that it is computed to form, either in a pure or combined state, nearly one-half of the solid crust of the globe. The flints from our cliffs, the boulders and gravel on our shores, and the pebbles of agate, quartz, and chalcedony, are