

CHAPTER XL.

The two Aspects in which Matter can be viewed; Space and Time. — Geological History of the Earlier Periods. — The Cambrian System. — Its Annelids. — The Silurian System. — Its Corals, Encrinurites, Molluscs, and Trilobites. — Its Fish. — These of a high Order, and called into Existence apparently by Myriads. — Opening Scene in the History of the Old Red Sandstone a Scene of Tempest. — Represented by the Great Conglomerate. — Red a prevailing Color among the Ancient Rocks contained in this Deposit. — Amazing Abundance of Animal Life. — Exemplified by a Scene in the Herring Fishery. — Platform of Death. — Probable Cause of the Catastrophe which rendered it such.

“THERE are only two different aspects,” says Dr. Thomas Brown, “in which matter can be viewed. We may consider it simply as it exists in space, or as it exists in time. As it exists in space we inquire into its composition, or, in other words, endeavor to discover what are the elementary bodies that coexist in the space which it occupies; as it exists in time, we inquire into its susceptibilities or its powers, or, in other words, endeavor to trace all the various changes which have already passed over it, or of which it may yet become the subject.”

Hitherto I have very much restricted myself to the consideration of the Old Red Sandstone as it exists in *space* — to the consideration of it as we now find it. I shall now attempt presenting it to the reader as it existed in *time* — during the succeeding periods of its formation, and when its existences lived and moved as the denizens of primeval oceans. It is one thing to describe the appearance of a forsaken and des.