



The mean depth of the ocean is probably between two and three miles. Fig. 1 represents the configuration of the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean between Southern Mexico and Northern Africa.

Occasionally parts of the interior of a continent are below the ocean level. The Caspian Sea is 84 feet below the Black Sea, and the Dead Sea is 1,350 feet below the Mediterranean.

Hence it appears that the present dry land might be spread over the bottom of the ocean, so that the globe would be entirely covered with water. For nearly three-fourths of the surface is at present submerged.

The dry land is mostly situated in one hemisphere. For if we place the north pole at London, as may be illustrated upon an artificial globe, the northern hemisphere will be seen to embrace most of the land, while there will be little but water in the southern hemisphere.

In carrying out the order already indicated, we shall treat of the general structure and arrangement of the materials composing the exterior crust of the earth in Section I.; their chemical and mineralogical characters in Sections II. and III. The remainder of Part I. will relate to the forces which have modified these mineral masses.