

it is needful that I should first enter on some rudimentary points, so as to make the remainder intelligible to all. Therefore I begin with an account of the nature of rocks; because it is impossible to understand the causes that produced the various kinds of scenery of our country, and to account for the classification of its mountains and plains, without first explaining the nature of the rocks which compose them.

To this will be added a concise account of the British strata in serial order, that the reader may understand something of the nature and history of the various stratified formations which, together with igneous rocks, form our island.

In doing this I will endeavour to get and to give some idea of the scenery of our region during the successive geological epochs, so as to give the reader some glimpses of those older stages of physical geography, each of which in its time, had man been there to see it, would have seemed as enduring as that passing phase of the Earth's history in the midst of which we live.

All rocks, in the broadest sense, are divided into two great classes—AQUEOUS and IGNEOUS; and there is a sub-class, which mostly consists of aqueous, but sometimes of igneous rocks that have been altered, and which in their characters often approach and even by insensible gradations pass into some of those rocks that are termed igneous, though in many respects very different from ordinary volcanic products such as lavas. In this chapter I shall, however, confine myself to a general description of the two great classes of rocks, those of *aqueous* or watery origin, and to those easily recognised as of *igneous* origin, which are products of subterranean heat.