

CHAPTER X.

*Relations of the Earth and its Inhabitants
to Man.*

FROM the statements which have been made in the preceding chapters, it appears that five principal causes have been instrumental in producing the actual condition of the surface of our globe. First, The passage of the unstratified crystalline rocks, from a fluid to a solid state.—Secondly, The deposition of stratified rocks at the bottom of the ancient seas.—Thirdly, The elevation both of stratified and unstratified rocks from beneath the sea, at successive intervals, to form continents and islands.—Fourthly, Violent inundations; and the decomposing Power of atmospheric agents; producing partial destruction of these lands, and forming, from their detritus, extensive beds of gravel, sand, and clay.—Fifthly, Volcanic eruptions.

We shall form a better estimate of the utility of the complex disposition of the materials of the earth, which has resulted from the operations of all these mighty conflicting forces, if we consider the inconveniencies that might have attended other arrangements, more simple than