

The present duty of a systematical inquiry, is to describe objects and actions which cannot all yet be classed under general divisions and laws; and it cannot avoid proposing analogies and inferences which it is unable to prove; while it must also make use of proofs which are themselves to be proved hereafter, or prove several laws by one or more facts, or the reverse; thus necessarily becoming entangled among future and retrospective references. Hence, the order which would be desired, cannot be adopted. And hence also it may be useful to give a sketch of an order, which, however dry and repulsive it may appear, will serve to indicate the catenation of the facts and inferences.

The materials of this inquiry are **Objects and Actions**; the result constitutes **Inferences**; and these are retrospective, as well as present and future. The **Retrospect** is the material for a **Theory of the Earth**.

OBJECTS.

The **Objects** are the **MATERIALS** of the **Earth**.

The **Materials** are, **ROCKS** and **FRAGMENTS**.

The **Rocks** are, **STRATIFIED** and **UNSTRATIFIED**.

ROCKS and **FRAGMENTS** are formed of the same substances.

The substances are simple earths, including oxydes, or minerals.

Rocks, and the larger **Fragments**, are composed of **Earths** or of **Minerals**, and of **Animal** and **Vegetable** matters compacted.

They are compacted by **Mechanical** approximation, or by **Chemical** action, or by both united.