

GEOLOGY.

CHAP. XXII.

On changes in the disposition of the Sea and Land.

HAVING thus brought down the history of the Globe to the period at which we must believe that it had undergone its last important changes, and was, fundamentally at least, what we know it now, it remains to pursue those which it has since experienced, and is still undergoing; exclusively however of the production of coral and the agency of volcanoes, already discussed. I have shown the difficulty of ascertaining the exact nature of the last great marine emergence of the land, especially as it relates to Time; as also that a long period must have been occupied in minor and posterior revolutions; but although proving, therefore, that the received notion of one brief and complete Emergence, determining the present face of the sea and land, is incorrect and careless, this subject must be treated from such an imaginary condition; that I may avoid a complication as intolerable, as it must be, in its details, conjectural.

Under such a view, the dry land must have been a desert of rocks, without other soil than such alluvium as might have been brought up from the bottom of the sea; without plants, and without animals; the formless and void earth which anteceded the recorded Creation. In what manner to modify this simple and abstract view, by any conjectures worth making, is not now within the power of Geological information. But under any views of later and partial changes, a consider-