CHAPTER II.

THE STRATIGRAPHY OF THE COASTAL PLAIN OF NORTH CAROLINA.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

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The geology of North Carolina as well as its physiography shows an intimate relationship to the adjacent areas on the north and south, so that its complete interpretation can be gained only by taking into consideration the great eastern border region of which the State is not only geographically but geologically a part. Frequent references will, therefore, be made in the succeeding pages to the general distribution and relations of the geological formations found represented within the limits of the State, although the detailed description will be confined to those features particularly characteristic of the North Carolina area. The most ancient rocks which make up the earth's crust as well as those still in the process of deposition are found within the State's confines, while between these wide limits there is hardly an important geological epoch which is not represented.

Geology in its broadest aspects must be regarded as the science of the earth from its earliest beginnings down to the present day, and as such stands in close relationship to the science of astronomy in its study of the origin of the solar system. In the absence of any other satisfactory theory, most geologists to-day accept the nebular hypothesis of Kant and Laplace to explain the evolution of the solar system. According to this hypothesis, the solar system was developed from a mass of nebulous matter, which extended far beyond the present orbit of the most distant planet, and was rotating slowly in the direction in which the planets now rotate. As a result of rotation this mass gradually contracted and increased in speed of rotation. It was formerly thought that successive rings were thrown off which broke and contracted into