

the solid bitumens. The nature of common amber is too well known to need remark; its electrical properties, odour, combustion, and the fact of its inclosing insects, leaves, and other foreign bodies, indicate its origin and former condition. This substance is found in nodular masses, which are sometimes eighteen inches in circumference; it occurs in beds of lignite, and on the coast of Prussia in a subterranean forest, probably of the newer tertiary epoch. Mr. G. B. Sowerby mentions having seen, at Baden, the branch of a tree converted into jet, the centre being filled with amber.* In the brown coal of Muskaw, amber occurs in the fossil coniferous wood, partly in disseminated portions, and *partly in the resin-vessels themselves*; and fir-cones are frequently discovered which contain this substance on and between the scales. Amber has also been found in coniferous plants associated with ferns, in coal that is referred to the upper secondary formations. There can be no doubt that amber is an indurated resin, derived from various coniferous trees, and which occurs in a like condition in all zones, because its usual original depositories, the beds of brown coal, have been formed almost everywhere under similar circumstances.†

A mineral substance, called *Mellite*, or honey-stone, from its colour, is found among the bituminous

* Phillips's Mineralogy, p. 374.

† M. Goppert; Jameson's Edinburgh Journal.