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ON THE
ORIGIN AND CLASSIFICATION
OF
ORIGINAL OR CRYSTALLINE ROCKS.

BY THOMAS MACFARLANE.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

"All attempts to separate sharply from each other the various rocks or mineral aggregates of which the earth's crust is composed, and to arrange them systematically, have failed." "We cannot consider the rocks as species, nor arrange them in a system corresponding to their nature, nor even, in describing them, treat them all in the same manner." *

So wrote Bernhard Von Cotta in 1862. On reading such sentences we are tempted to ask: Are species always sharply defined in other sciences? Are all systems perfect or natural? Why should lithology be an exception to other sciences, and its

* Cotta; Die Gesteinslehre, pp. 1, 4.