

*More recent Systems.*

In our own times, men of still bolder imaginations have exercised their minds upon this great subject. Some writers have revived and greatly extended the ideas of Demaillet. They suppose that every thing was originally fluid; that this fluid gave existence to animals, which were at first of the most simple kind, such as the monads and other infusory and microscopic species; that, in process of time, and by assuming different habits, the races of animals became complicated, and assumed that diversity of nature and character in which they now appear. By means of those various races of animals, part of the waters of the sea have gradually been converted into calcareous earth; while the vegetables, concerning the origin and metamorphoses of which these writers are totally silent, have, on their part, converted a portion of the same water into clay: 'These two earths, on being stripped of the characters which life had impressed upon them, are resolved, by a final analysis, into silex; and hence the reason that the oldest mountains are more siliceous than the rest. All the solid parts of the earth, therefore, owe their existence to life, and, without life, the globe would still be entirely liquid \*.

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\* See *La Physique de Rodig.* p. 106, Leipsic, 1801; and