

rupeds with their flesh and skin; which have thrown on dry land those testaceous remains, still as perfect as if they contained living fish; which have, in fine, destroyed whole species and genera.

These arguments have struck the majority of naturalists: and amongst those who have sought to explain the present state of the globe, there is scarcely one who has attributed it entirely to slow causes, still less to causes operating before our eyes. The necessity they have experienced of discovering different causes from those now in action has given rise to many extraordinary speculations, and has involved them in so many and so contrary suppositions, that the very name of their science has been long a subject of raillery for some prejudiced persons, who only look at the various systems that have been broached, and forget, or are ignorant of the long and important series of positive facts that have been developed. (1)

ANCIENT SYSTEMS OF GEOLOGISTS.

For a long time only two events, only two changes of the globe, have been admitted—the creation and the deluge; and all the labours of geologists have tended to explain the present state, by imagining a certain primitive state, afterwards modified by the deluge, and to which each speculist assigned his own causes, action, and effects.

Thus, according to one, (2) the earth at first had

(1) When I say this, I announce a fact daily proved, but I have not pretended to express my own opinion, as some geologists have thought. As some ambiguity in my speech has given rise to the error, I must apologize for it.

(2) Burnet *Telluris Theoria Sacra*. 1681.