

A third supposes the liquid divided into a multitude of lakes, amphitheatrically one above another, which, after having deposited our layers of shells, have successively broken down their banks to fill the basin of the ocean. (1)

It is the theory of a fourth that the tides of seven or eight hundred fathoms have, on the contrary, carried off from time to time the bottoms of the sea, and cast them as mountains and hills in the valleys, or on the primitive plains of the continent. (2)

A fifth has thought that meteoric stones have fallen successively from heaven, which have been the component parts of the earth, and which bear the imprint of their strange origin in the unknown beings whose relics they contain. (3)

A sixth makes the earth hollow, and places in the centre a diamond, which conveys itself by intervention of comets from one pole to another, drawing with it the centre of gravity and the mass of waters, and thus alternately drowning the two hemispheres. (4)

We could quote twenty other systems, equally contradictory with these. And do not let us be understood as criticising the authors of them; on the contrary, we know that these opinions have generally been elicited from men of genius and understanding, who were not ignorant of facts to examine which many of them had travelled far and long, and have added many and important truths to the science.

(1) Lamanon, in many parts of the *Journal de Physique*, after Michaelis, and many others.

(2) Dolomieu, *ibid.*

(3) MM. de Marschall: *Recherches sur l'Origine et le Developpement de l'Ordre actuel du Monde.* Giessen 1802.

(4) M. Bertrand: *Renouvellement Periodique des Continens Terrestres.* Hambourg, 1799.