

verse to the rapidity desirable in an itinerary; but it appears to me that, in a narrative, the principal end of which is the progress of physical knowledge, every other consideration ought to be subservient to those of instruction and utility. By isolating facts, travellers, whose labours are in every other respect valuable, have given currency to many false ideas of the pretended contrasts which Nature offers in Africa, in New Holland, and on the ridge of the Cordilleras. The great geological phenomena are subject to regular laws, as well as the forms of plants and animals. The ties which unite these phenomena, the relations which exist between the varied forms of organized beings, are discovered only when we have acquired the habit of viewing the globe as a great whole; and when we consider in the same point of view the composition of rocks, the causes which alter them, and the productions of the soil, in the most distant regions.

Having treated of the volcanic substances of the isle of Teneriffe, there now remains to be solved a question intimately connected with the preceding investigation. Does the archipelago of the Canary Islands contain any rocks of primitive or secondary formation; or is there any production observed, that has not been modified by fire? This interesting problem has been considered by the naturalists of Lord Macartney's expedition, and by those who accompanied captain Baudin in his voyage to the Austral regions. Their opinions are in direct opposition to each other; and the contradiction is the more striking, as the question does not refer to one of those geological reveries which we are accustomed to call systems, but to a positive fact.

Doctor Gillan imagined that he observed, between Laguna and the port of Orotava, in very deep ravines, beds of primitive rocks. This, however, is a mistake. What Dr. Gillan calls somewhat vaguely, mountains of hard ferruginous clay, are nothing but an alluvium which we find at the foot of every volcano. Strata of clay accompany basalts, as tufas accompany modern lavas. Neither M. Cordier nor myself observed in any part of Teneriffe a primitive rock, either in its natural place, or thrown out by the mouth of the Peak; and the absence of these rocks characterizes almost every island of small extent that has an unextinguished volcano. We know nothing positive of the mountains of