

already observed, that, as it is very rare to find in America nephrite, jade, or compact feldspar, in its native place, we may well be astonished at the quantity of hatchets which are everywhere discovered in digging the earth, from the banks of the Ohio as far as Chile. We saw in the mountains of Upper Orinoco, or of Parime, only granular granites containing a little hornblende, granites passing into gneiss, and schistoid hornblendes. Has nature repeated on the east of Esmeralda, between the sources of the Carony, the Essequibo, the Orinoco, and the Rio Branco, the transition-formation of Tucutunemo reposing on mica-schist? Does the Amazon-stone come from the rocks of euphotide, which form the last member of the series of primitive rocks?

We find among the inhabitants of both hemispheres, at the first dawn of civilization, a peculiar predilection for certain stones; not only those which, from their hardness, may be useful to man as cutting instruments, but also for mineral substances, which, on account of their colour and their natural form, are believed to bear some relation to the organic functions, and even to the propensities of the soul. This ancient worship of stones, these benign virtues attributed to jade and hæmatite, belong to the savages of America as well as to the inhabitants of the forests of Thrace. The human race, when in an uncultivated state, believes itself to have sprung from the ground; and feels as if it were enchained to the earth, and the substances contained in her bosom. The powers of nature, and still more those which destroy than those which preserve, are the first objects of its worship. It is not solely in the tempest, in the sound that precedes the earthquake, in the fire that feeds the volcano, that these powers are manifested; the inanimate rock; stones, by their lustre and hardness; mountains, by their mass and their solitude; act upon the untaught mind with a force which, in a state of advanced civilization, can no longer be conceived. This worship of stones, when once established, is preserved amidst more modern forms of worship; and what was at first the object of religious homage, becomes a source of superstitious confidence. Divine stones are transformed into amulets, which are believed to preserve the wearer from every ill, mental and corporeal. Although a distance of five hundred leagues separates the banks of the