

is more easy to imagine a system, than to establish a theory. Hence the Theory of the Earth, has hitherto been treated only in a vague and hypothetical manner; I shall therefore but slightly mention the singular notions of some authors who have written upon the subject.

The first hypothesis I shall allude to, deserves to be mentioned more for its ingenuity than its reasonable solidity; it is that of an English astronomer, (WHISTON) versed in the system of NEWTON, and an enthusiastic admirer of his philosophy; convinced that every event which happens on the terrestrial globe, depends upon the motions of the stars, he endeavours to prove, by the assistance of mathematical calculations, that the tail of a comet has produced every alteration the earth has ever undergone.

The next is the formation of a heterodox theologian, (BURNET) whose brain was so heated with poetical visions, that he imagined he had seen the creation of the universe. After explaining what the earth was in its primary state when it sprung from nothing; what changes were occasioned by the deluge; what it has been and what it is, he then assumes a
prophetic