

prophetic style, and predicts what will be its state after the destruction of the human race.

The third comes from a writer (WOODWARD) certainly a better and more extensive observer of nature than the two former, though little less irregular and confused in his ideas; he explains the principal appearances of the globe, by an immense abyss in the bowels of the earth, which in his opinion is nothing more than a thin crust that serves as a covering to the fluid it encloses.

The whole of these hypotheses are raised on unstable foundations; have given no light upon the subject, the ideas being unconnected, the facts confused, and the whole confounded with a mixture of nature and fable; and consequently have been adopted only by those who implicitly believe opinions without investigation, and who, incapable of distinguishing probability, are more impressed with the wonders of the marvellous than the relation of truth.

What we shall say on this subject will doubtless be less extraordinary, and appear unimportant, if put in comparison with the grand systems just mentioned; but it should be remembered that it is an historian's business to describe, not invent;