

it nevertheless has but a degree of hardness sufficient to resist powerful strokes without splitting; for friction easily reduces it into sand, excepting certain black pieces found therein, and which are so very hard, that the best files cannot touch them. Rock is vitrifiable as free-stone, and of the same nature, only it is harder and the parts more connected. This also contains many hard pieces, as may easily be remarked on the summits of high mountains, which cut and tear the shoes of travellers. This rocky stone, which is found at the top of high mountains, and which I look upon as a kind of granite, contains a great quantity of talky leaves, and is so hard as not to be worked but by an infinite deal of labour.

I have narrowly examined these sharp pieces which are found in free-stone and rock, and have discovered it to be a metallic matter, melted and calcined by a very violent fire, and which perfectly resembles certain substances thrown out by the volcanos, of which I saw a great quantity when I was in Italy, where the people called them Schiarri. They are very heavy black masses, on which neither water nor the file can make any impression, and the mat-