

present bed of the sea, and the former bed of the sea has become the present dry land, then, according to the present state of geography, *though only conjectural*, we should be able to point out such portions of the earth as were overwhelmed by the catastrophe; and yet we have never heard that any one has hazarded such an experiment. In the constitution of the present habitable globe, we find no proofs remaining of such a revolution.

Among these revolutions of nature, we never reckon common inundations, such as take place at present from water overflowing its boundaries, though these also may produce devastation whose effects remain visible for an hundred years. But, in mountainous districts, another kind of aqueous eruption makes its appearance, and may be classed along with the traditions of a deluge. We very frequently, for instance, observe the valleys of high mountains forming a range of basins separated from one another by shorter or longer defiles, and opening through the last defile into a wider valley, or a marsh. The shape of these basins, or cauldrons, commonly lying above one another like so many stories, and the level surface of their water, leave no doubt of their being once enclosed lakes which were formerly blocked up by the barriers of the defiles, and which flowed towards the level country, as soon as the defiles were broken down by the waters. If no kind of historical monuments in the west of Europe bears evidence of those events, which, at least on a small scale, occur in our own times, this intimates that it was inhabited, not by an original population, but by a foreign or modern race of people; whereas those revolutions extended to remote antiquity. The numerous masses of rock found on both sides of the Alps to the height of