

at the village of Kitzpühl in Upper Austria, is a little more than half a mile.

It may then be asked, upon what grounds we regard the distance, or to speak more correctly the thickness, of nearly ten miles of the external part of the earth as known to us by ocular observation. Not a fortieth part of this could have been excavated, or in any way penetrated, if the surface of the earth were what Dr. Thomas Burnet and some other theorists of the last century imagined to have been its pristine, and, according to their notions, beautiful, and sacred condition, before it became deformed by the sin of man ; that is, if the earth's surface were that of a perfect mathematical sphere, without seas and islands, without valley, rock, or mountain, with "not a wrinkle, scar, or fracture," (to use the learned dreamer's own words ;)—and which, he seems never to have thought, would be to the eye of a spectator a universal plain, a dead flat. Little knew those speculatists that what they deemed deformity, was the cause of all the life and beauty of our lower world ; that without it, we should have had no springs of water, no rivers, no stone or lime to build with, no metals to make tools of, no healthy condition of the atmosphere, and but a very scanty and low existence of vegetable and animal life. Happily for the human race, the Creator of the earth did not see fit to form it upon this plan. Its rind, shell, or crust, (each of which terms is used, but none of them is free from impropriety, though the last is the best,) consisting of a number of extended masses of various thickness, and spread out one over the other, has been raised up by a power acting from below ; and, from the horizontal position which originally but at different times belonged to the larger number, they have been inclined in all degrees, so that the lowest in order have been elevated to form the summits of the loftiest mountains, and their ridges constitute the edges of the