

Thus, to take the most familiar, and perhaps the most important instance, almost all natural soils consist principally of mixtures of the three earths called *silex*, *lime*, and *alumine*; none of which, unmixed with either of the other two, or at least with some equivalent substance, would serve the purposes of agriculture.

Again, all the common forms of clay consist principally of various combinations of the two earths called *silex* and *alumine*; and although many of those properties which make clay valuable are communicated by the alumine, the *silex* contributes very considerably towards the general utility of the compound.

SECT. II.

Application of Minerals to Architecture and Sculpture.

AMONG the earliest arts of civilized life may be justly reckoned the rudiments of architecture: for it may be with truth affirmed that, with very few exceptions, wherever man exists in a state of society, he is found to protect himself from the vicissitudes of the weather, not only by the immediate clothing of his body, but by means of independent habitations; to which, if at no other time, at the close of the day at least, he betakes himself; in order to enjoy that periodical rest which is requisite for the renewed exertion of his bodily powers: and very few are the situations which do not afford con-