

of unquestionable ingenuity, but very imperfectly skilled in mineralogy, inferred, from his observations, that the present world has been formed from the debris of two former worlds, inhabited by numerous tribes of animals, and clothed with a profusion of the most magnificent vegetables. According to this strange hypothesis, even gneiss, mica-slate and clay-slate are but mechanical deposits, which have been softened by the action of heat, so as to permit their being elevated, without breaking, from their supposed original horizontal position, to their present vertical one.

It is admitted by all geognosts, except the Huttonians, that there exists a great class of rocks, denominated Primitive, which forms the oldest part of the earth, and contains no materials more ancient than itself, but is a true chemical deposition; consequently that this world cannot be considered as deriving any of its materials from one or more worlds antecedent to it. If the truth of this fact can be established, it is evident, that the Huttonian Theory, notwithstanding the powerful eloquence used in its support, must be rejected as groundless.

As Gneiss and Mica-slate are part of this primitive series, and are considered by the Huttonians to be the oldest rocks at present known; let us inquire, if there be any evidence in favour of the supposition that they are mechanical deposits. These two rocks, like granite, have a granular