

## P A R T I.

*Of Earths and Stones.*

THE term earth denotes a tasteless, inodorous, dry, brittle, unflammable, substance whose specific gravity does not exceed 4,9, and gives no tinge to borax in fusion. Yet quicklime is usually called an earth, though it has a pungent taste, and is very perceptibly soluble in water, and some sorts lately discovered in very considerable proportion: so also is *Gypsum*, which is also in some degree soluble in water, and even contains a saline principle: perhaps, in strictness, there is no earth which is not in some degree soluble. However, since a line must be drawn between salts and earths, I think it should begin where solution is scarcely perceptible; salts terminating, and earths, in strictness, commencing, where the weight of water requisite for the solution exceeds that of the solvend 1000 times. But, not to depart too widely from the commonly received import of words that are in constant use, substances that require 100 times their weight of water to dissolve them, and have the other sensible appearances of earths, may be so styled in a loose and popular sense.

*Stones* differ from earths principally in cohesion and hardness, and therefore are included under the same general name: yet diamond is also called a stone, though it probably contains no earth of any kind.

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