

times their rocks, suddenly approaching from each side, form transverse dikes, over which the waters tumble in cataracts. The dissevered strata, while they shew on one side their edges perpendicularly raised, on the other present large portions of their surface lying obliquely; they do not correspond in height, but those which, on one side, form the summit of the cliff, often dip underneath on the other, and are no longer visible.

Yet, amidst all this confusion, distinguished naturalists have been able to demonstrate, that there still reigns a certain order, and that those immense deposits, broken and overturned though they be, observe a regular succession with regard to each other, which is nearly the same in all the great mountain chains. According to them, Granite, of which the central ridges of the greater number of these chains consist, and which thus surmounts every other rock, is also the rock which is found deepest in the solid crust of the globe. It is the most ancient of those which we have found means of examining in the place assigned them by nature; and we inquire not at present, whether it owes its origin to a general fluid, which formerly held every thing in solution, or may have been the first consolidated by the cooling of a great mass in fusion, or even in a state of vapour*.

* The conjecture of the Marquis de la Place, that the