

Older Systems of Geologists.

During a long time, two events or epochs only, the Creation and the Deluge, were admitted as comprehending the changes which have been operated upon the globe; and all the efforts of geologists were directed to account for the present existing state of things, by imagining a certain original state, afterwards modified by the deluge, of which also, as to its causes, its operations, and its effects, each entertained his own theory.

Thus, according to one*, the earth was at first invested with an uniform light crust, which covered the abyss of the sea; and which being broken up for the production of the deluge, formed the mountains by its fragments. According to another †, the deluge was occasioned by a momentary suspension of cohesion among the particles of mineral bodies; the whole mass of the globe was dissolved, and the paste thus formed became penetrated with shells. According to a third ‡, God raised

this I did not profess to give my own opinion, as some respectable geologists seem to have believed. If their mistake has arisen from any thing equivocal in my expressions, I here apologize to them.

* Burnet, *Telluris Theoria Sacra*. Lond. 1681.

† Woodward, *Essay towards the Natural History of the Earth*. Lond. 1702.

‡ Scheuchzer, *Mém. de l'Acad.* 1708.