

NOTE D, p. 19.

FORMATION OF PRIMITIVE MOUNTAINS.

Mitscherlich, in a memoir read before the Royal Academy of Berlin, but not yet published, enters fully into the illustration of the igneous origin of mountains, especially those of the primitive class, deducible from his experiments on the formation of minerals by fusion. As the view is interesting, we shall here give a short sketch of it.

Have the primitive mountains of our globe, whose form necessarily supposes a fluid state, been dissolved in water; or has the temperature of our earth been raised to such a degree, that the substances of which our primitive mountains are formed have become fluid? This question has been differently answered, and the solutions given have been attempted to be supported in proportion as the observation of geological facts, and the inquiries instituted with reference to the chemical combinations which compose the earth, have been developed. New observations, and the discovery of unknown laws in chemistry and mineralogy, must, at the same time, open a new field for speculation and observation in geology. Of the discoveries of our own times, there certainly is none which has exercised a greater influence upon mineralogy than that of determinate proportions, and especially the result of the researches of Berzelius, that the chemical combinations which nature produces, are formed according to the laws which he has discovered with regard to artificial combinations; a result which