

destroy the sinful world with fire or water, and at length decided for water *, may not be so justly considered the author of these appearances, as Saturn, who devoured his children. Or, to be less metaphorical in our language, it may perhaps have been with the origin of conglomerates, as it is in our own day with the origin of fragments of rock and boulders, in which the rock being fractured in various places by the alternations of heat and cold, by the influence of air and atmospheric water, falls into pieces of greater or smaller magnitude, which are carried forward by the water, and gradually rounded in their progress, so that they assume a more perfectly globular shape the farther they are removed from their original situation. Therefore, as regards the foregoing enquiry, it is not an unimportant circumstance, that the long but continual rolling of the boulders during their rounding, appears to be much more efficacious than a rapid and violent impetus, and that, in this case, as in many other geognostic appearances, time rather than force is to be taken into account. Another circumstance, perhaps, corresponds with this, that the change produced by the weather, not only by the first disunion, but also by the progressive disintegration of the rocks, by the blunting of the edges and corners, by the diminution of the fragments, and generally in the origin of the boulders and fragments of rocks of every description, has just as much influence as

* “ Jamque erat in totas sparsurus fulmina terras.

“ Tela reponuntur, manibus fabricata Cyclopium :

“ Pœna placet diversa ; genus mortale sub undis

“ Perdere, et ex omni nimbos dimittere cœlo.”