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Tavernier affirms, that there are but two mines of Turcoifes known in all the earth, and thofe both in Perfia; the one called the old rock, near a town called Neaburg, three days journey to the north-eaft of Meched; the other, called the new rock, is five days journey.

He fays the new rock is but little valued, and the king of Perfia has for many years prohibited the digging in the old rock for any but himfelf. And M. Reaumur fuppofes the old rock to be now exhausted.

In reality, the common divifion of Turcoifes into thofe of the old rock or oriental, and new rock or occidental, is very arbitrary and precarious.

All the beft and moft perfect, wherever they grow, either in India or Europe, are reckoned among the former, and the reft among the latter.

There are feveral confiderable mines of Turcoifes near Simore in lower Languedoc; but that fine blue colour admired in the Turcoifes is not natural to thefe rocks; the prevailing colour being fometimes white, and fometimes much like that of Tripoli and Venice.

The other precious ftones are dug out of the mine with all their colour, to the force whereof nothing can be added, though it may frequently be diminished; as we fee fire bring down the too deep colour of the fapphire, and take that of a pale fapphire quite away.

Thefe Turcoifes, on the contrary, are naturally whitifh, or yellowifh, of a colour as common as that of a free-ftone; and, by oppofing them for fome time to the action of the fire, they afsume a blue colour.

Though it feems a paradox, yet M. Reaumur has made it exceeding probable, that Turcoifes are originally the bones of animals.

In the mines of France, pieces have feveral times been found in the figure of teeth, bones of the arms, legs, &c.

And Turcoifes, which are yet imperfect or ill formed, are apparently compofed of laminæ, or leaves, like thofe of bones, between which fome petrifying juice infinuating itfelf, binds them clofe together; and ftill the fofter and more imperfect the ftones are, the more diftinguifhable are the different direftions of the fibres and laminæ with their interfections; and the greater reffemblance they bear to fractured bones, and the lefs to any kind of ftones known.

To give them the blue colour, they dry them a while in the air, and afterwards heat them gradually in a furnace, made after a particular manner.

If they are heated too haftily, the humidity between the la-

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