

number as in other matters ; whereas the truth is, that they are very rare in all vitrifiable or purely inflammable substances ; and, on the contrary, are in prodigious abundance in chalk, marl, and marbles, insomuch that we cannot absolutely pretend to say, that the lightest and heaviest shells are found in corresponding strata, but only that in general they are oftener found so than otherwise. They are all filled with the substance which surrounds them, whether found in horizontal strata or in perpendicular fissures, because both have been formed by the waters, although at different times and in different manners. Those found in horizontal strata of stone, marble, &c. have been deposited by the motion of the waves of the sea, and those in flints, cornelians, and all matters which are in the perpendicular fissures, have been produced by the particular motion of a small quantity of water, loaded with lapidific or metallic substances. In both cases these matters were reduced into a fine and impalpable powder, which has filled the shells so fully and absolutely, as not to have left the least vacuum.

There is therefore in stone, marble, &c. a great multitude of shells which are whole, beautiful, and so little changed, that they may  
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