

four thousand years since they began to be formed\*.

The overwhelming of the cultivated lands of Egypt, by the sterile lands of Libya, which are thrown upon them by the west wind, is a phenomenon of the same nature with the downs. These sands have destroyed a number of cities and villages, whose ruins are still to be seen; and this has happened since the conquest of the country by the Mahometans, for the summits of the minarets of some mosques are seen projecting beyond the sand †. With a progress so rapid, they would, without doubt, have filled up the narrow parts of the valley, if so many ages had elapsed since they began to be thrown into it ‡; and there would no longer remain any thing between the Libyan chain and the Nile. Here, then, we have another natural chronometer, of which it would be as easy as interesting to obtain the measure.

*Peat-Mosses and Slips.*

THE turbaries, or peat-mosses, which have been found so generally in the northern parts of Europe, by the accumulation of the remains of

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\* See M. Bremonnier's Memoir.

† Denon, Voyage en Egypte.

‡ We might cite in confirmation all the travellers who have visited the western border of Egypt.