

ago overflowed the mountains of Europe." Were there not, however, real shells of the Syrian type in France and Italy? Perhaps so. But ought "we not to recollect," he asked, "the numberless bands of pilgrims who carried their money to the Holy Land, and brought back shells? or was it preferable to think that the sea of Joppa and Sidon had covered Burgundy and Milanais?" As for the seeming shells of the less superficial deposits, "are we sure," he inquired, "that the soil of the earth cannot produce fossils?" Agate in some specimens contains its apparent sprigs of moss, which, we know, never existed as the vegetable they resemble; and why should not the earth have, in like manner, produced its apparent shells? Or are not many of these shells mere lake or river petrifications?—one never sees among them "true marine substances"!! "If there *were* any, why have we never seen bones of sea-dogs, sharks, and whales?"!!! And thus he ran on, in the belief apparently that he had to deal with but an ignorant priesthood, too little acquainted with the facts to make out a case against him in behalf of the Mosaic narrative, and whom at least, should argument fail him, he could vanquish with a joke.

There was, however, a young German who had not at the time quite made up his mind either for the French school or against it, who was no uninterested reader of Voltaire's disquisitions on fossil-shells. And this young man was destined to be in the coming age what the Frenchman had been in the closing one,—the leading mind of Europe. He, too, had been looking at fossils; and having no case to make out either for or against Moses, or any one else, he had received in a fair and candid spirit the evidence with which they were charged. And the gross dishonesty of Voltaire in the matter formed so decided a turning point with him, that from that time forward he employed his great influence in bearing down the French school of infidelity, as a school detestably false and