

gently and slowly, and consequently their accumulation required a space of time much longer than a year.

The surface of the earth, it is evident, must have been before or after the deluge very differently disposed to what it is at present, that the sea and continent had another arrangement, and formerly there was a great gulph in the middle of Touraine. The changes which are known from history, or even ancient fable, are inconsiderable, but they give us room to imagine those which a longer time might bring about. M. de Reaumur supposes that Touraine was a gulph of the sea which communicated with the ocean, and that the shells were carried there by a current ; but this is a simple conjecture laid down in room of the real unknown fact. To speak with certainty on this matter, we should have geographical maps of all the places where shells have been dug from the earth, to obtain which would require almost an infinity of time and observation, yet it is possible that hereafter science may accomplish it.

This quantity of shells, considerable as it is, will astonish us less if we consider the following circumstances: first, shell fish multiply prodigiously, and are full grown in a very