

I simply observed and recorded, because I found it pleasant to observe and record. And yet one of the wild dreams of Maillet in his *Telliamed* had given a certain degree of unity, and a certain definite direction, to my gleanings of fact on the subject, which they would not have otherwise possessed. It was held by this fanciful writer, that the vegetation of the land had been derived originally from that of the ocean. "In a word," we find him saying, "do not herbs, plants, roots, grain, and all of this kind that the earth produces and nourishes, come from the sea? Is it not at least natural to think so, since we are certain that all our habitable lands came originally from the sea? Besides, in small islands far from the Continent, which have appeared a few ages ago at most, and where it is manifest that never any men had been, we find shrubs, herbs, and roots. Now, you must be forced to own that either those productions owed their origin to the sea, or to a new creation, which is absurd." And then Maillet goes on to show, after a manner which—now that algæology has become a science—must be regarded as at least curious, that the plants of the sea, though not so well developed as those of the land, are really very much of the same nature. "The fishermen of Marseilles find daily," he says, "in their nets, and among their fish, plants of a hundred kinds, with their fruits still upon them; and though these fruits are not so large nor so well nourished as those of our earth, yet their species is in no other respects dubious. There they find clusters of white and black grapes, peach trees, pear trees, prune trees, apple trees, and all sorts of flowers." Such was the sort of wild fable invented in a tract of natural science in which I found it of interest to acquaint myself with the truth. I have since seen the extraordinary vision of Maillet revived, first by Oken, and then by the author of the "Vestiges of Creation;" and when, in grappling with some of the views and statements of the latter writer, I set myself to write the chapter of my little work which deals with this special hypothesis, I found that I had in some sort studied in the school in which the education necessary to its production was most thoroughly to be acquired. Had the ingenious author