

in the arms of various religious houses, as well as of individual palmers and crusaders of rank: but it was adopted among the insignia of more than one medieval order, and as such re-appeared in a form analogous to the more ancient collars and necklaces of primitive British graves. The knights of the Order of St. Louis, instituted by that royal crusader, Louis IX., received from their escallop badge, the title *du navire et des coquilles*; and those of St. Michael, another French order instituted by Louis XI., wore a golden collar of scallop shells, and thence were styled *chevaliers de la coquille*.

A reference to these relics of medieval pilgrimage would not be complete without noticing the convenient argument resorted to by Voltaire, to upset the evidence adduced by the geologists of the eighteenth century, from the abundance of fossil shells found in the interior of continents, and at high elevations, in proofs of a universal deluge. Compared with the conclusions of the diluvial geologist, even the exploded theories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries recovered favor in the estimation of the sceptical philosopher. "Perhaps," says Dr. Plot, in his *Natural History of Oxfordshire*,* "they may have remained from the creation, when God dispersing the seminal virtue of animals through the universe, where it met with an agreeable matrix, as in the waters, there it produced shell fish in their perfection, and where it met with an improper matrix, as in the earth, imperfection only. However, as Gaffarell thinks, it proceeded as far forth as it could, and gave the same shape to stones, earths, &c., as it should have done to the shellfish!" Shifting his ground, however, from such pleasant fancies of older philosophers, which, like the ingenious analogies of the modern author of *Omphalos*, thus easily accounted for fossils as the abortions or mere sports of nature: Voltaire admitted the marine origin and genuineness of fossil shells gathered on the Alps and other elevated inland regions, but with specious sophistry accounted for their presence in such unlikely localities, by affirming that they were eastern specimens dropped by pilgrims returning from the Holy Land! The sophistical argument, could it only be maintained, would furnish evidence of an antiquity and universality of pilgrimage to eastern shrines, such as never entered into the most enthusiastic dream of medieval hagiologist, or monkish chronicler of palmers' adventures.

*Plot's Nat. His. of Oxfordshire, 2d edition, p. 144. N. & Q., 2d series, p. 82, Jan. 31, 1858.