

pany of England, — committing itself to the anti-geologists on this question. At the meeting of the British Association which

the full-grown and the mature, there exists no reason whatever for the creation of the ruined and the broken. It is a very indifferent argument to allege that the poetic sentiment demanded the production of fractured shells on the shores, or of deserted crows' nests in the trees. If sentiment demanded the creation of broken shells that had never belonged to molluscous animals, how much more imperatively must it have demanded the creation of broken human skeletons that had never belonged to men ! or, if it rendered necessary the creation of deserted crows' nests, how much more urgent the necessity for the creation of deserted palaces and temples, sublime in their solitude, or of desolate cities partially buried in the sands of the desert ! There is a vast deal more of poetry in the ancient sepulchres of Thebes and of Luxor, with their silent millions of the embalmed dead, than in the comminuted shells of sea-beaches ; and in Palmyra and the pyramids, than in deserted crows' nests. Nor would the creation of the one class of productions be in any degree less probable, or less according to the principles of human belief, than the other. And mark the inevitable effects on human conduct ! The man who honestly held with Chateaubriand in this passage, and was consistent in following out to their legitimate consequences the tenets which it embodies, could not sit as a jurymen in either a coroner's inquest or a trial for murder, conducted on circumstantial evidence. If he held that an old crow's nest might have been called into existence as such, how could he avoid holding that an ancient human dwelling might not have been called into existence as such ? If he held that a broken patella or whelk-shell might have been created a broken shell, how could he avoid holding that a human skull, fractured like that of the murdered Clark, might not have been created a broken skull ? To him Paley's watch, picked up on a moor, could not appear as other than merely a curious stone, charged with no evidence, in the peculiarity of its construction, that it had been intended to measure time. The entire passage is eminently characteristic of that magnificent work of imagination, "The Genius of Christianity," in which Chateaubriand sets himself to reconvert to Romanism the infidelity of France. He ever attempts dealing by the reasoning faculty in his countrymen, as the Philistines of old dealt by the Jewish champion : instead of meeting it in the open field, and with the legitimate weapons, he sends forth the exquisitely beautiful Delilah of his fancy to cajole and set it asleep, and then bind it as with green withes.