

their very different shells, that they belong to different genera.

The French call these shells *pelerines*, or pilgrims; they are also in Catholic countries, especially in Spain and Portugal, called shells of St. James, because the pilgrims to the shrine of St. James of Compostella, in Galicia, were accustomed to ornament their cloak and hat with them.

I shall next make some observations upon the bivalve just mentioned, the oyster, which of all shell-fish, though it is one of the rudest and least sightly, has from every age been most in request, as a favourite article of food. This gift of Providence is widely dispersed, being found on the coasts of Europe, Asia, and Africa; those that frequent our own are reckoned the best of all. They are not a roving animal; but when they leave the matrix, they fix themselves to rocks or any substance that falls in their way, which they seldom quit. Like other Molluscans, they are hermaphrodites, and are stated by Poli, the great luminary of conchology, to contain 1,200,000 eggs, so that a single oyster might give birth to 12,000 barrels!! Providence has thus taken care that the demands made upon them to gratify the appetite of his creature man shall not annihilate the race. These also are the only shell-fish that man has thought it worth his while to cultivate, by keeping them in certain pits formed for the purpose, called amongst us *beds*, and to which the salt water is admitted only at high tides; and in these the green oysters are said to be produced; marine plants of that colour, the growth of which is favoured by the tranquillity of the water in these tanks, generate a vast number of seminiform germs, which, entering the shells of the oysters when they open them to take their food—so it is stated—stain them with their own hue.

They have other enemies besides man: whoever has observed their shells will often see them quite covered with a