

The cliffs on the north of the island are about 200 feet high, and consist of clay, abounding in *septaria*, which are washed out of the cliffs by the action of the sea, and are collected for cement. The organic remains are, however, unfortunately so strongly impregnated with pyrites, that the collector often finds the choicest fossil fruits in his cabinet, like the fabled apples of the Dead Sea, one moment perfect and brilliant, and the next decomposed and changed to dust, leaving only an efflorescent sulphate of iron. The same species of animal and vegetable remains that are found in the blue clay of the metropolis, abound in profusion in the Isle of Sheppey.

20. FOSSIL FRUITS OF THE TERTIARY STRATA.—Seed-vessels, and stems and branches of trees, of a tropical character, probably drifted by currents into the gulf of the London basin, occur in such abundance and variety, that the existence of a group of spice islands seems necessary to account for so vast an accumulation of vegetable productions. The seed-vessels found at Sheppey are referable to several hundred species; some are related to the cardamom, date, areca, cocoa; and one species of berry bears much resemblance to the fruit of the coffee. The wood found in the Sheppey clay is generally of a dark colour, with the ligneous fibres and circles of growth well developed; it is often veined with brilliant pyrites, and the fissures and cavities are frequently filled with that mineral. It