

French philosopher had become a learned naturalist before he had even looked upon the world of Nature. This singular contrast it is not difficult to explain. With a sickly constitution and a delicate frame, the youthful Cuvier wanted that physical activity which the observation of Nature demands. Our Scottish geologist, on the contrary, in vigorous health, and with an iron frame, rushed to the rocks and the sea-shore in search of the instruction which was not provided for him at school, and which he could find no books to supply.

After receiving this measure of education, Mr. Miller set out in February, 1821, with a heavy heart, as he himself confesses, "to make his first acquaintance with a life of labor and restraint:"—

"I was but a slim, loose-jointed boy at the time, fond of the pretty intangibilities of romance, and of dreaming when broad awake; and woful change! I was now going to work at what Burns has instanced in his 'Twa Dogs' as one of the most disagreeable of all employments—to work in a quarry. Bating the passing uneasiness occasioned by a few gloomy anticipations, the portion of my life which had already gone by had been happy beyond the common lot. I had been a wanderer among rocks and woods,—a reader of curious books, when I could get them,—a gleaner of old traditionary stories,—and now I was going to exchange all my day-dreams and all my amusements for the kind of life in which men toil every day that they may be enabled to eat, and eat every day that they may be enabled to toil. The quarry in which I wrought lay on the southern shore of a noble inland bay, or frith, rather, (the Bay of Cromarty,) with a little, clear stream on the one side, and a thick fir wood on the other. It had been opened in the Old Red Sandstone of the district, and was overtopped by a huge bank of diluvial clay, and which rose over it in some places to the height of nearly thirty feet."—*Old Red Sandstone*, p. 4.

After removing the loose fragments below, picks and wedges and levers were applied in vain by our author and his brother workmen to tear up and remove the huge strata beneath. Blasting by gunpowder became necessary. A mass of the diluvial clay came tumbling down, "bearing with it two dead birds, that in a recent storm had crept into one of the deeper fissures, to die in the shelter." While admiring the pretty cock goldfinch, and the light-blue and grayish-yellow woodpecker, and moralizing on their fate, the workmen were ordered to lay aside their tools, and thus ended the first day's labor of our young geologist. The sun was then sinking behind the thick fir wood behind him, and the long dark shadows of the trees stretch-