

The description concludes, like a terrific dream, with his wanderings through the labyrinths of the dead forest, where all was dry and sapless above, and mud and marsh below, and with his exclamations of grief and terror at finding himself hopelessly lost in a scene of prodigies and evil spirits. And such was one of the wilder fancies in which a youthful Scottish poet of the days of Flodden indulged, ere taste had arisen to restrain and regulate invention.

Shall I venture to say, that the ichthyolites of the Old Red Sandstone have sometimes reminded me of the "fisch of the laithlie flood?" They were hardly less curious. We find them surrounded, like these, by a wilderness of dead vegetation, and of rocks upcast from the sea; and there are the footprints of storm and tempest around and under them. True, they must have been less noisy. Like the "griesly fisch," however, they exhibit a strange union of opposite natures. One of their families — that of the *Cephalaspis* — seems almost to constitute a connecting link, says Agassiz, between fishes and crustaceans. They had, also, their families of sauroid, or reptile fishes — and their still more numerous families that unite the cartilaginous fishes to the osseous. And to these last the explorer of the Lower Old Red Sandstone finds himself mainly restricted. The links of the system are all connecting links, separated by untold ages from that which they connect; so that, in searching for their representatives amid the existences of the present time, we find but the gaps which they should have occupied. And it is essentially necessary from this circumstance, in acquainting one's self with their peculiarities, to examine, if I may so express myself, the sides of these gaps, — the existing links at both ends to which the broken links should have pieced, — in short, all those more striking peculiarities of the exist