

to be the detached plates of some such crustacean as the lobster of Balruddery. (See Note H 2.)

The ability displayed by Cuvier in restoring, from a few broken fragments of bone, the skeleton of the entire animal to which the fragments had belonged, astonished the world. He had learned to interpret signs as incomprehensible to every one else as the mysterious handwriting on the wall had been to the courtiers of Belshazzar. The condyle of a jaw became in his hands a key to the character of the original possessor; and in a few mouldering vertebræ, or in the dilapidated bones of a fore-arm or a foot, he could read a curious history of habits and instincts. In common with several gentlemen of Edinburgh, all men known to science, I was as much struck with the skill displayed by Agassiz in piecing together the fragments of the huge crustacean of Balruddery, and in demonstrating its nature as such. The numerous specimens of Mr. Webster were opened out before us. On a previous morning I had examined them, as I have said, in the company of Mr. Murchison and Dr. Buckland; they had been seen also by Lord Greenock, Dr. Traill, and Mr. Charles M'Laren; and their fragments of new and undescribed fishes had been at once recognized with reference to at least their class. But the collection contained organisms of a different kind, which seemed inexplicable to all—forms of various design, but so regularly mathematical in their outlines that they might be all described by a ruler and a pair of compasses, and yet the whole were covered by seeming scales. There were the fragments of scaly rhombs, of scaly crescents of scaly circles, with scaly parallelograms attached to them, and of several other regular compound figures besides. Mr. Murchison, familiar with the older fossils, remarked the close resemblance of the seeming scales to those of the *Ser-*