

"Puddock-spue is fu' o' e'en,
An' every e'e's a pu-head." *

Higher authorities than the quarriers,—among the rest, the late Dr Mantell,—have been disposed to regard these polygonal markings as the fossilized spawn of ancient Batrachians ; but there now seems to be evidence enough from which to conclude that they are the remains, not of the eggs of an animal, but of the seed of a plant. Such was the view taken many years ago by Dr Fleming,—the original discoverer, let me add, of fossils both in those Upper and Middle Old Red Sandstone deposits that lie in Scotland to the south of the Grampians. "These organisms," we find him saying, in a paper published in "Cheek's Edinburgh Journal" (1831), "occur in the form of circular flat patches, not equalling an inch in diameter, and composed of numerous smaller contiguous pieces. They are not unlike what might be expected to result from a compressed berry, such as the bramble or the rasp. As, however, they are found adjacent to the narrow leaves of gramineous [looking] vegetables, and chiefly in clay slate, originally lacustrine silt, it is probable that they constituted the conglobate panicles of extinct species of the genus *Juncus* or *Sparzanium*." From specimens subsequently found by Dr Fleming, and on which he has erected his species *Parka decipiens* [and still better, from a specimen in the private collection of Lord Kinnaird, at Rossie Priory], it seems evident that the nearly circular bodies (which in all the better preserved instances circumscribe the small polygonal ones) were set in receptacles somewhat resembling the receptacle or calyx of the strawberry or rasp. Judging from one of the specimens, this calyx appears to have consisted of five pieces, which united in a central stem, and were traversed by broad irregularly diverging striæ. And the spawn-like patches of Carmylie appear to

* "Frog-spawn is full of eyes [*i. e.*, black eye-like points], and every eye is a tadpole."