

The great abundance of these organisms,—for so abundant are they, that visitors to the Carmylie quarries find they can carry away with them as many specimens as they please,—may be regarded as of itself indicative of a vegetable origin.\* It is not in the least strange, however, that they should have been taken for patches of spawn. The large-grained spawn of fishes, such as the lump-fish, salmon, or sturgeon, might be readily enough mistaken, in even the recent state, for the detached spherical seed-vessels of fruit, such as the bramble-berry, the stone-bramble, or the rasp. “Hang it!” I once heard a countryman exclaim, on helping himself at table to a spoonful of Caviare, which he had mistaken for a sweet-meat, and instantly, according to Milton, “with sputtering noise rejected,”—“Hang it for nasty stuff!—I took it for bramble-berry jam.”

Along with these curious remains Dr Fleming found an organism which in form somewhat resembles the spike of one of the grasses, save that the better preserved bracts terminate in fan or kidney-shaped leaflets, with a simple venation radiating from the base. It is probably a fern, more minute in its pinnules than even our smaller specimens of true maiden-hair. Its stipes, however, seems proportionally stouter than that of any of the smaller ferns with which I am acquainted. But the state of keeping of the specimen is not good, nor do I know that another has yet been found. Further, in the same beds Dr Fleming found a curious nondescript vegetable, or rather part of a vegetable, with smooth narrow stems resembling those of the smooth-stemmed organism of the Caithness flagstones, but unlike it in the circumstance that its detached nearly parallel stalks anastomose

\* Mr Page figures, in his “Advanced Text Book of Geology” (p. 127), a few circular markings from the Forfarshire beds, which he still regards as spawn, probably that of a Crustacean, and which certainly differ greatly in appearance from the markings found inclosed in the apparent spathes.