

tacea and of larger animals, minute examination discloses occasionally prodigious accumulations of microscopic shells that surprise us no less by their abundance than their extreme minuteness; the mode in which they are sometimes crowded together, may be estimated from the fact that Soldani collected from less than an ounce and a half of stone found in the hills of Casciana, in Tuscany, 10,454 microscopic chambered shells. The rest of the stone was composed of fragments of shells, of minute spines of Echini, and of a sparry calcareous matter.

Of several species of these shells, four or five hundred weigh but a single grain; of one species he calculates that a thousand individuals would scarcely weigh one grain. (*Saggio Oritografico*, 1780, pag. 103, Tab. III. fig. 22, H. 1.) He further states that some idea of their diminutive size may be formed from the circumstance that immense numbers of them pass through a paper in which holes have been pricked with a needle of the smallest size.

Our mental, like our visual faculties, begin rapidly to fail us when we attempt to comprehend the infinity of littleness towards which we are thus conducted, on approaching the smaller extremes of creation.

Similar accumulations of microscopic shells have been observed also in various sedimentary deposits of freshwater formation. A striking