

ert country, with its wide wastes of unprofitable sand, its broken citadels and temples, its solitary battle-plains, and its gloomy streets of caverned and lonely sepulchres ; and quite another to record its history during its days of smiling fields, populous cities, busy trade, and monarchical splendor. We pass from the dead to the living — from the cemetery, with its high piles of mummies and its vast heaps of bones, to the ancient city, full of life and animation in all its streets and dwellings.

Two great geological periods have already come to their close ; and the floor of a widely-spread ocean, to which we can affix no limits, and of whose shores or their inhabitants nothing is yet known, is occupied to the depth of many thousand feet by the remains of bygone existences. Of late, the geologist has learned from Murchison to distinguish the rocks of these two periods — the lower as those of the Cambrian, the upper as those of the Silurian group. The lower — representative of the first glimmering twilight of being — of a dawn so feeble that it may seem doubtful whether in reality the gloom had lightened — must still be regarded as a period of uncertainty. Its ripple-marked sandstones, and its half coherent accumulations of dark-colored strata, which decompose into mud, show that every one of its many plains must have formed in succession an upper surface of the bottom of the sea ; but it remains for future discoverers to determine regarding the shapes of life that burrowed in its ooze, or crept through the incumbent waters. In one locality it would seem as if a few worms had crawled to the surface, and left their involved and tortuous folds doubtfully impressed on the stone. Some of them resemble miniature cables, carelessly coiled ; others, furnished with what seem numerous legs, remind us of the existing *Nereidina* of our sandy