

a similar nodule during our stay at this delightful quarry, and there were few of them in which I did not detect some organism of the ancient world,—scales of fishes, groupes of shells, bits of decayed wood, and fragments of fern. At the dinner hour I used to show my new-found specimens to the workmen; but though they always took the trouble of looking at them, and wondered at times how the shells and plants had “got into the stone,” they seemed to regard them as a sort of natural toys, which a mere lad might amuse himself in looking after, but which were rather below the notice of grown-up people like themselves. One workman, however, informed me, that things of a kind I had not yet found,—genuine thunderbolts,—which in his father’s times were much sought after for the cure of bewitched cattle,—were to be found in tolerable abundance on a reach of the beach about two miles further to the west; and as, on quitting the quarry for the piece of work on which we were to be next engaged, Uncle David gave us all a half-holiday, I made use of it in visiting the tract of shore indicated by the workman. And there, leaning against the granite gneiss and hornblend slate of the Hill of Eathie, I found a Liasic deposit, amazingly rich in its organisms,—not buried under the waves, as at Marcus’ shore, or as opposite our new quarry, but at one part underlying a little grass-covered plain, and at another exposed for several hundred yards together along the shore. Never yet did embryo-geologist break ground on a more promising field; and memorable in my existence was this first of the many happy evenings that I have spent in exploring it.

The Hill of Eathie, like the Cromarty Sutors, belongs, as I have already had occasion to mention, to what De Beaumont would term the Ben Nevis system of hills,—that latest of our Scottish mountain systems which, running from south-west to north-east, in the line of the great Caledonian valley, and in that of the valleys of the Nairn, Findhorn, and Spey, uptilted in its course, when it arose, the Oolites of Sutherland, and the Lias of Cromarty and Ross. The deposit which the Hill of Eathie disturbed is exclusively a Liasic one. The upturned