

of the leaves curious pieces of incident seem recorded. We see fleets of minute terebratulæ, that appear to have been covered up by some sudden deposit from above, when riding at their anchors; and whole argosies of ammonites, that seem to have been wrecked at once by some untoward accident, and sent crushed and dead to the bottom. Assemblages of bright black plates, that shine like pieces of Japan work, with numerous parallelogrammical scales bristling with nail-like points, indicate where some armed fish of the old ganoid order lay down and died; and groupes of belemnites, that lie like heaps of boarding pikes thrown carelessly on a vessel's deck on the surrender of the crew, tell where *sculls* of cuttle-fishes of the ancient type had ceased to trouble the waters. I need scarce add, that these spear-like belemnites formed the supposed thunderbolts of the deposit. Lying athwart some of the pages thus strangely inscribed, we occasionally find, like the dark hawthorn leaf in Bewick's well-known vignette, slim-shaped leaves colored in deep umber; and branches of extinct pines, and fragments of strangely fashioned ferns, form their more ordinary garnishing. Page after page, for tens and hundreds of feet together, repeat the same wonderful story. The great Alexandrian library, with its tomes of ancient literature, the accumulation of long ages, was but a meagre collection,—not less puny in bulk than recent in date,—compared with this marvellous library of the Scotch Lias.

Who, after once spending even a few hours in such a school, could avoid being a geologist? I had formerly found much pleasure among rocks and in caves; but it was the wonders of the Eathie Lias that first gave direction and aim to my curiosity. From being a mere child, that had sought amusement in looking over the *pictures* of the stony volume of nature, I henceforth became a sober student, desirous of reading and knowing it as a book. The extreme beauty, however, of the Liasic fossils made me pass over at this time, as of little interest, a discovery which, if duly followed up, would have probably landed me in full in the midst of the Old Red Sandstone ichthyolites fully ten years ere I learned to know them. In