

of a high standing in their division, and represented in the present day by the nautilus and the cuttle-fish, that we recognise in its fullest extent this extinct peculiarity of type and form. Its Brachipods, chiefly terebratulæ, not unfrequent in the Sutherland Oolites, and in the Lias of Cromarty and Skye,—its periwinkles, whelks, aviculæ, pinnæ, pectens, oysters, and mussels, few of them wanting in any of our Scotch Liassic or Oolitic deposits, and many of them very abundant, though all specifically extinct, present us, though with a large admixture of strange and exotic forms, with many other forms with which, generically at least, we are familiar. But among the Cephalopods all is strange and unwonted; and their vast numbers—greater at this period of the world's history than in any former or any after time—have the effect of imparting their own unfamiliar character to the whole molluscan group of the Oolite. I need but refer to two families of these,—the Belemnite family and the family of the Ammonites; both of them so remarkable, that they attracted in their rocks the notice of the untaught inhabitants of both England and Scotland, and excited their imagination to the point at which myths and fables are produced, long ere Geology existed as a name or was known as a science. The Belemnites are the old thunder-bolts of the north of Scotland, that, in virtue of their supposed descent from heaven, were deemed all potent in certain cases of bewitchment and the evil-eye; and the Ammonites are those charmed snakes of the mediæval legend,

‘ That each one
Was changed into a coil of stone,
When holy Hilda prayed.’

The exact affinities of the Belemnite family have formed a subject of controversy of late years among our highest authorities,—men such as Professor Owen taking up one side, and men such as Dr. Mantell the other. But there