

over yet another page. It is occupied exclusively by Ammonites of various sizes, but all of one species, as if a whole argosy, old and young, convoyés and convoyed, had been wrecked at once, and sent disabled and dead to the bottom. And here we open yet another page more. It bears a set of extremely slender Belemnites. They lie along and athwart, and in every possible angle, like a heap of boarding-pikes thrown carelessly down on a vessel's deck on the surrender of the crew. Here, too, is an assemblage of bright black plates, that shine like pieces of japan work, the cerebral plates of some fish of the ganoid order; and here an immense accumulation of minute glittering scales of a circular form. We apply the microscope, and find every little interstice in the page covered with organisms. And leaf after leaf, for tens and hundreds of feet together, repeats the same strange story. The great Alexandrian library, with its unsummed tomes of ancient literature, the accumulation of long ages, was but a poor and meagre collection, scarce less puny in bulk than recent in date, when compared with this vast and wondrous library of the Scotch Lias.

Now, this Eathie deposit is a crowded burying-ground, greatly more charged with remains of the dead, and more thoroughly saturated with what was once animal matter, than ever yet was city burying-ground in its most unsanitary state. Every limestone band or nodule yields, when struck by the hammer, the heavy fetid odour of corruption and decay; and so charged is the laminated shale with an animal-derived bitumen, that it flames in the fire as if it had been steeped in oil, and yields a carburetted hydrogen gas scarce less abundantly than some of our coals of vegetable origin. The fact of the existence, throughout all the geological ages, of the great law of death, is a fact which must often press upon the geologist. Almost all the materials of his history he derives from cenotaphs and catacombs. He finds no inconsiderable portion of the earth's crust com-