

along the northern shores of the Solway, and in the line of boundary between the two kingdoms, where it can boast, among its other celebrities, of the famous village of Gretna Green, and the whole of Gretna parish. In England it is chiefly remarkable, in a scenic point of view, for its extreme flatness : its *main feature* is a want of *features*. It was, however, at one time notorious for its ponds and marshes, consequents of the imperfect drainage incident to flat low surfaces when of great extent ; and in Scotland, though so much more limited in area, it bears this character still. No fossil organisms have yet been found in this deposit in Scotland : it contains, however, in abundance, traces of the ancient inhabitants, even more curiously imprinted on the stone than if they had left in it remains of their framework ; and is interesting as the field in which, from the sedulous study of these, and undeterred by the scepticism of some of our highest authorities, the late Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell laid the first foundations of that curious and instructive department of geologic science since known as *Ichnology*. The strange reptiles of this ancient time, in passing over the tide-uncovered beaches of the district, left their footsteps imprinted in the yielding sand ; and in this sand, no longer yielding, but hardened long ages ago into solid rock, the footsteps still remain. And with truly wonderful revelations,—revelations of things the most evanescent in themselves, and of incidents regarding which it might seem extravagant to expect that any record should remain, do we find these strange markings charged. They even tell us how the rains of that remote age descended, and how its winds blew.

Let us see whether we cannot indicate a few of at least the simpler principles of this department of science. The artificial sheet of water situated among the Pentlands, and known as the Compensation Pond, was laid dry, during the warm summer of 1842, to the depth of ten fathoms ; and as