

were often opened to be as often abandoned, shows that they must have occasionally fallen somewhat below even this low line. Latterly, at least, it was rather the deficient quality of the coal that militated against the speculation, than any deficiency in the quantity found. It burned freely, and threw out a powerful flame ; but it was accompanied by a peculiar odour, that seemed to tell rather of the vegetable of which it had been originally composed than of the mineral into which it had been converted, and then sunk into a white light ash, which every breath of air sent floating over carpets and furniture. And so, when brought into competition, in our northern ports, with the coal of the Mid-Lothian and English fields, it failed to take the market. The speculation of Williams was singularly unlucky. He became lessee of the entire field about the year 1764, and wrought it for nearly five years. There occurs near the centre of the main seam a band of pyritiferous concretions, which here, as elsewhere, have the quality of taking fire spontaneously when exposed in heaps to air and moisture, and which his miners had not been sufficiently careful in excluding from the coal. A cargo which he had shipped from Portsoy, in Banffshire, took fire in this way, in consequence, it has been said, of the vessel springing a leak ; and such was the alarm excited among his customers, that they declined dealing with him any longer for a commodity so dangerous. And so, after an ineffectual struggle, he had to relinquish his lease.

LONDON MUSEUM OF ECONOMIC GEOLOGY.

IN the Museum of Economic Geology now in the course of forming in London, there are specimens exhibited of not only the various rude materials of art furnished by the mine and the quarry, but also of what these can be converted into by the chemist and the mechanic. Not only does it