

preservation of shells, and we find that it contains nothing organic. We again remove to the inner recesses of the cave. Mark, first, that peculiar appearance along the sides. There stands out, at the height of about four feet from the present floor, what seems a rude projecting cornice of rock-gravel, bound together by the stalactitical cement: the projection at one point somewhat exceeds eighteen inches; and we find it bearing short-stemmed stalagmites atop, just like the rugged pavement below. To use a homely but apt illustration, the appearance is that presented by the lower part of a tallow-candle that had been burning exposed to a current of air, with its grease running down in ridges on the sides, and then spreading out on the margin of the meta-socket, when, after raising it out of the candlestick, we see the lower accumulation projecting from it like a cornice. That line of projecting gravel indicates the level at which the floor of the cavern once stood. If we remove the looser parts of the present floor, we shall find its place indicated by just a similar line of projection. The loose sea-gravel could have adhered to the sides only by having formed the part of the floor in contact with them, until the stalagmitical substance had taken effect upon it, by binding it into a mass, and fixing it where it had lain. Let us break into one of the projections. We find it a true breccia, thickly interspersed with such fragments of shells as we may pick up by hundreds in the neighbouring sea-caves, where the incessant beat of the surf on the hard rocks against which it dashes breaks them into rounded fragments. There, for instance, is a massy little bit of the strong smooth buckie (*Fusus Antiquus*), the largest of British univalves; and there a fragment equally massy of the Icelandic Venus, —both of them productions of the oceans, and of such rivers as the Firths of Cromarty and Dornoch. The materials of the projecting cornice are those of a cavern-beach much exposed to the roll of the surf.