

might find it no dull or useless employment to begin reading for themselves the shell inscriptions borne by the Pleistocene deposits. It would at once form an excellent exercise in Conchology and a first lesson in Geology, which, from the interest it excited, would scarce fail to lead on to others. With their eyes educated to the work too, they would find, we doubt not, the beds in many a new locality in which they had not been detected before; and enjoy the same sort of pleasure in falling upon a fresh deposit, as that enjoyed by an Egyptian or Assyrian antiquary when he discovers a catacomb of unrolled mummies never before laid open, or a series of sculptures or of inscriptions in the cuneiform character, unseen since the days of Semiramis or Sennacherib. We ourselves once enjoyed such a pleasure at Fairlie;—we laid open a noble bed, previously unknown, about a quarter of a mile to the north of the village; and from amid great scalps of *Pecten Islandicus*, roughened on their upper valves by huge *Balonidæ*, and from beside thick-lying groups of *Cypinidæ*, we disinterred many a curious boreal shell,—great massive *Panopea*, graceful *Veneridea*, the Greenland *Mya*, and the *Tellina* of the North Cape; and beneath all we detected grooved and dressed rock-surfaces, that bore their significant markings as freshly as if the grating ice had passed over them but yesterday. We would specially call the explorer's attention to the corroborative evidence borne by appearances of mechanical origin such as these to the mute testimony of the shells. We have already incidentally referred to the interesting deposits of Balnakaillie Bay. A stream falls into the sea at its upper extremity, and exhibits, in the section which it supplies, a bed charged with the old boreal shells, from where it creeps out along the beach, till where we lose it in the interior, far above the reach of the tide. As it passes inwards, we find the old coast line deposits resting over it; in one place assuming the ordinary char-