

knowledge when engaged in a mineralogical examination for the Earl of Moira, in the vicinity of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in Leicestershire: it will evince how cautious we ought to be in drawing general conclusions in geology, from single facts. A thick bed of coal belonging to his lordship, at a place called Ashby Wolds, is worked at the depth of two hundred and twenty-five yards; it is covered with various strata of iron-stone, coal, and solid sandstone. On an estate adjoining to his lordship's manor, in the same bed of coal (which is ninety-seven yards below the surface), the entire skeleton of a man was found imbedded. No appearance existed of any former sinking for coal; but the proprietor ordered passages to be cut in different directions, until the indication of a former pit was discovered, though the coal had not been worked. Into this pit the body must have fallen, and been pressed and consolidated in the loose coal by an incumbent column of water, previously to the falling in of the sides of the pit.

The imperfect skeleton of a woman, imbedded in a kind of calcareous sandstone, brought from Guadaloupe, and exhibited in the British Museum, may appear to invalidate what was asserted in the first edition of this work, that no instances have been known of human bones being found in regular stratified rocks, nor even in undisturbed alluvial ground, where the remains of extinct species of quadrupeds are not unfrequently met with.\* Due attention to all the circumstances, will reconcile that assertion with the present fact. The skeleton from Guadaloupe is described as having been found on the shore, below the high-water mark, among calcareous rocks formed of madrepores, and not far from the volcano called the Souffriere. The bones are not petrified, but preserve the usual constituents of fresh bone, and were rather soft when first exposed to the air. Specimens of the stone which I have in my possession, that were chipped from the same block, present, when examined with a lens, the appearance of smooth grains, consisting of rounded fragments of shells and coral, aggregated and united without any visible cement.

We have an example of a similar formation of calcareous sandstone on the north coast of Cornwall, composed entirely of minute

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\* Since the publication of the first and second editions of this work, I have seen, in the possession of a gentleman at Plymouth, one of two human skulls that were found in digging a stream work, forty or fifty feet below the level of the river at Carnon in Cornwall. Nuts, and the horns of some animal allied to the stag, were discovered in the same situation.—In a note which I made at the time, (1816,) it is stated, that the forehead was remarkably low and narrow, and the part of the skull which contained the cerebellum unusually prominent. That these skulls were ancient there can be little doubt, but there are no sufficient data to enable us to approximate to the period of their deposition.

The bone was not mineralised, though very hard. The absence or extreme rarity of human bones in these beds of gravel and clay, or in caves that contain the remains of large land quadrupeds, is far more extraordinary than their non-occurrence in the regular strata that cover our present continents.