

days of the Romans or of the Heptarchy, and with a literature considerably more modern than that of Lord Lyttelton or Mr. Moss; and it is on this more ancient history, as recorded in this more modern literature, that I shall attempt fixing the attention of the reader. When Signor Sarti exhibits his anatomical models, he takes up one cover after another, — first the skin, then the muscles, then the viscera, then the greater blood-vessels and deeper nerves, — until at length the skeleton is laid bare. Let us, in the same way, strip the vast landscape here of its upper integuments, coat after coat, beginning first with the vegetable mould, — the scarf-skin of the country, — wherein its beauty lies, with all its fields and hedge-rows, houses and trees; and proceed downwards, cover after cover, venturing a few remarks on the anatomy of each covering as we go, till we reach those profound depths which carry within their blank folds no record of their origin or history.

The vegetable mould is stripped away, with all its living inhabitants, animal and vegetable; man himself has disappeared, with all that man has built or dug, erected or excavated; and the vast panorama, far as the eye can reach, presents but a dreary wilderness of diluvial clays and gravels, with here a bare rock sticking through, and there a scattered group of boulders. Now mark a curious fact. The lower clays and gravels in this desert are chiefly of local origin; they are formed mainly of the rock on which they rest. These quartz pebbles, for instance, so extensively used in this part of the country in causewaying footways, were swept out of the magnesian conglomerate of the *Lower New Red*; these stiff clays are but re-formations of the saliferous marls of the *Upper Red*; these darkened gravels are derived from the neighboring coal-field; and yonder gray, mud-colored stratum, mixed up with fragments of limestone, is a deposit from the rather