

such as the lancelet, want, — a brain enclosed in a cartilaginous cavity in the head, and perfectly formed organs of sight ; they possess, too, what is found in no other mollusc, — organs of hearing ; and in sagacity and activity they prove more than matches for the smaller fishes, many of which they overmaster and devour. With this highest class there contrasts an exceedingly low molluscous class at the bottom of the scale, or, at least, at what is now the bottom of the scale ; for they constitute Cuvier's *fifth* class ; while his *sixth* and last, the Cirrhopodes, has been since withdrawn from the molluscs altogether, and placed in a different division of the animal kingdom. And this low class, the Brachiopods, are creatures that, living in bivalve shells, unfurnished with spring hinges to throw them open, and always fast anchored to the same spot, can but thrust forth, through the interstitial chinks of their prison-houses, spiral arms, covered with cilia, and winnow the water for a living. Now, it so happens that the molluscan group of the Silurian system is composed chiefly of these two extreme classes. It contains some of the other forms ; but they are few in number, and give no character to the rocks in which they occur. There was nothing by which I was more impressed, in a visit to a Silurian region, than that in its ancient graveyards, as in those of the present day, though in a different sense, the high and the low should so invariably meet together. It is, however, not impossible that, in even the present state of things, a similar union of the extreme forms of the marine mollusca may be taking place in deep-sea deposits. Most of the intermediate forms provided with shells capable of preservation, such as the shelled Gasteropoda and the Conchifers, are either littoral, or restricted to comparatively small depths ; whereas the Brachiopoda are deep-sea shells ; and the Cephalopoda may be found voyaging