

plainly discernible. From the fact that these globule vesicles become immediately colored, whilst the other parts of the animalculite remained unchanged, Ehrenberg inferred that they performed the office of stomachs. They had previously been considered by naturalists as *ova*, and some yet claim that the mobility of these vesicles, and the absence of a connecting canal refute the theory of Ehrenberg, with reference to their character and office. Dr. E., however, asserts that in some species he has discovered a tube or canal connecting the different stomachs. He also states that he has distinctly seen the particles of coloring matter pass through these canals. There are other plausible theories to account for the presence and action of these sacs, but a discussion of them would not be profitable at present, therefore I return to the *N. viridis* and its associates.

The engraving, as I before intimated, exhibits the marking of the *skeleton* of the animalcule rather than its exact appearance when living. Our knowledge of the structure of this and other animalcular forms, depends in a great measure upon the observations made upon fossil specimens: therefore, I may be allowed to direct the attention of the reader briefly to the distribution of *fossil infusoria*.*

Vast earthy deposits occur in various localities in all parts of the world, that are made up entirely of the skeletons of infusoria. These are found in the ancient beds of lakes, ponds and marshes, and similar deposits are continually being formed in bodies of water now existing. They are produced by the rapid destruction of animalcular life. The skeletons or shields being composed of hard mineral substances, such as silica, lime, and oxide of iron, do not readily suffer decomposition, but, after the death of the animalcule and disappearance of the decomposable part, retain their original form for ages.

Thus many a fertile plain or quiet vale, over which once rolled the waters of lake or sea, is one vast charnel house,—“one grand mausoleum to the *mite-y* dead.” Thus, whilst man’s proudest monuments decay, and crumble into dust, nature has reared many a proud memorial to the beauty and elegance of those creatures of the invisible world, that once sported in our waters, but are now unknown except in that history which is written as with a “pen of iron” upon the rocky page of the vast volume of the Earth.

The polishing slate, found at Bilin, Germany, made up entirely of infuso-

* The term *infusoria* is applied to animalcules generally, since from their abundance, they form a kind of *infusion* in water.