

it appeared evident, of their being strung to form necklaces; and a vegetable fibre, serving this purpose, was also discovered, a portion of which was through the shell." Alongside of these also lay a knife, or arrowhead, of flint, and a small fibula of bone, but no traces of metallurgic arts.

Sir Thomas Browne has remarked in one of his quaint, beautiful fancies: "Time conferreth a dignity upon the most trifling thing that resisteth his power;" and as the uses to which the primitive British savage applied the commonest and least attractive of the shells of his Island coasts, for the purposes of personal adornment, confer an interest on them for us, as illustrations of the universal prevalence of certain innate ideas which may almost be characterised as instincts in man: so too may we discover, even in the rudest traces of primeval culinary arts, some glimpses of forgotten truths, that will help to illuminate the past history of the human race. Amid the widening clearings of this new continent, where the natural forest still bounds our horizon, and the rude Indian savage who once found in it his free hunting-grounds, has not yet entirely disappeared from our midst, it requires no great stretch of imagination to picture to our own minds what the researches of the archæologist have disclosed relative to Europe's primeval human era. From evidence of a very varied kind, for example, it has been deduced, that, many ages prior to the earliest authentic historical notices, the British islands were occupied by a human population, even more imperfectly furnished with the means of coping with the difficulties and privations of savage life than the rude tribes of our north-western wilds. Nor was it man alone that then existed in a savage state. Searching amid the records of that debateable land to which the geologist and the antiquary lay equal claim, we learn that vast areas of the British islands were covered at that remote era with the primitive forest; that oaks of giant height abounded where now the barren heath and peat-bog cumber the land; and that even at a period recent, when compared with that primeval era, the fierce Caledonian bull, the wolf, and the wild boar, asserted their right to the old forest glades. The scanty human population was thinly scattered along the skirts of this continuous range of forest, occupying the coasts and river valleys, and retreating only to the heights, or the dark recesses of the forest, when the fortunes of war compelled them to give way before some more numerous or warlike rival tribe. Thus confined