

chasm below the falls. They were slightly tinted by the rays of the rising sun, and blown slowly northwards by a gentle breeze from the pool below the cataract, which was itself invisible from this point of view. No fog was rising from the ground, the sky was clear above; and as the day advanced, and the air grew warm, the vapours all disappeared. This scene reminded me of my first view of Mount Etna from Catania, at sunrise in the autumn of 1828, when I saw dense volumes of steam issuing from the summit of the highest crater in a clear blue sky, which, at the height of more than two miles above the sea, assumed at once the usual shape and hues of clouds in the upper atmosphere. These, too, vanished before noon, as soon as the sun's heat increased.

Etna presents us not merely with an image of the power of subterranean heat, but a record also of the vast period of time during which that power has been exerted. A majestic mountain has been produced by volcanic action, yet the time of which the volcano forms the register, however vast, is found by the geologist to be of inconsiderable amount, even in the modern annals of the earth's history. In like manner, the Falls of Niagara teach us not merely to appreciate the power of moving water, but furnish us at the same time with data for estimating the enormous lapse of ages during which that force has operated. A deep and long ravine has been excavated, and the river has required ages to accomplish the task, yet the same region affords evidence that the sum of these ages is as nothing, and as the work of yesterday, when compared to the antecedent periods, of which there are monuments in the same district.