

already imparting comfort to millions of the inhabitants, and giving life and energy to every variety of manufacture through the almost entire length of this country, and destined to pour out their wealth through all coming time, long after the forests shall all have been levelled; and irresistible must be the conviction upon his mind, that here is a beautiful example of prospective benevolence on the part of the Deity. In those remote ages, while yet the earth was unfitted for the higher races of animals that now dwell upon it, it was eminently adapted to nourish that gigantic flora which would produce the future fuel of the human race, when that crown of all God's works should be placed upon the earth. Ere that time, those forests must sink beneath the ocean, be buried beneath deposits of rock thousands of feet thick. But during all that period, all those chemical changes which are essential to convert them into coal would be accomplished, and, at last, man would find access, by his ingenuity and industry, to the deep-seated beds whence his fuel might be drawn. Nor would these vast repositories fail him till the consummation of all things. Surely there was no waste, but there was a far-reaching plan of benevolence in the profusion of vegetable life in the earlier periods of our planet.

Essentially the same remark will apply to the limestone, gypsum, rock salt, and several other mineral products of the earth, which are almost indispensable to man in a civilized state. For these, too, were produced by slow processes, during those vast periods of duration that preceded man's existence. Limestone has been chiefly elaborated by the organs of animals, many of them of microscopic littleness. Yet lofty ranges of mountains and immense deposits in the intervening valleys have been the result. Nearly one seventh part of the crust of the globe, it has been said, is thus constituted of the works or remains of animals. And can we doubt but that these rocks are thus spread over the surface of the globe because they are needed by all mankind, like air and water? It must have been benevolence that so arranged the agencies by which they were produced, during the revolution of primeval ages, that they have this wide diffusion. Gypsum and fossil salt are more sparingly diffused; but still enough is always to be found to meet the demand. Nor is it reasonable to doubt that the same prospective goodness which provided for coal