

creation — I had almost said is the most recent in geology. From thence we wander back through a duration which can be measured only by the succession of events, and not by chronological cycles, except to ascertain from existing agencies that the intervening periods have been vastly long. Then, too, the records, which the geologist digs from the rocks, of animal and vegetable existence at immeasurably remote periods, are often as fresh as if intombed yesterday. Their most delicate parts — even the eye in some instances — are as perfect as when the animal was alive, and the footmarks, which he sees following one another in succession, are as distinct as those of living animals passing over the mud or snow before his eyes; while the pattering of a shower, that fell on the same surface thousands of ages ago, is as fresh before him as if every drop had been instantly petrified.

How many millions of men have spent their days, and finally sacrificed their lives, in order to leave some memento of their labors that would go down to posterity! and yet not a vestige of their existence remains upon the earth! But the birds and reptiles that passed over the surface long before the globe was fit for the residence of man, have left marks of their transit which can never be effaced. The proudest monuments of human art will moulder down and disappear; but as long as there are eyes to behold them, the sandstone of the Connecticut valley will never cease to remind future generations of the gigantic races that passed over it when in a half formed state.

Reptiles and birds, a problem ye have solved
Man never has — to leave a trace on earth
Too deep for time and fate to wear away.

It would be appropriate to my subject to indulge the imagi-