

Marshall—barely enumerated the epochs of two great periods of the world's organic history, the Silurian and Devonian. Who has considered the measureless intervals which have been so glibly hurried over—the rising and setting suns, the passing tempests, the lonely-budding tree, the sands worried to and fro upon the uncertain beach, the lives of myriads of conscious forms in a long succession of populations, the heaving shore, the rise of continents, the burial of beautiful but senseless ruins beneath acres of sediments from which they shall never be exhumed? Let me commend the sublimity of the theme to the reader's attention.

We are now on the threshold of another great period of the world's history. Graceful tree-ferns are waving in the distance, and giant club-mosses are uttering from their fronds a breezy murmur refreshing to the mind wearied with the contemplation of the uncouth and sombre forms which vegetated in the earlier seas. Looking through the vistas of the future, we behold lazy reptiles reposing upon banks protected by the tangled stems of lepidodendra and calamaria, or floating in the tepid bayous of a tropical jungle. The novelty and interest of the prospect invite us onward, but the vastness of the field bids us pause and refresh ourselves before we venture upon our jottings from the scenes of the Carboniferous Period.