

hills, and their generally calcareous waters precipitated, by degrees, a bed of fine calcareous mud. To this were added the dead shells of myriads of little molluscs that flourished upon the lime held by the waters. The bottom of each lakelet became a bed of marl. But all around the margins of the lakelet the grasses and sedges were vying with each other in venturing into the water. The amphibious rushes put them both to shame by raising their dirty heads sheer through the slime of the lakelet's bottom. And there they stood—the rushes up to their knees in water, and the sedges and grasses scarcely over shoe. And every leaf and stem which fell upon the water or found its way to the shore, became entangled in the herbage, and lay down and rotted there; and the rush, and the sedge, and grass, when shrill November came,

“ With wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sear,”

bowed their heads in his presence, and wrapped themselves in the cerements that had gathered about them. Thus a soft bed of vegetable mould fringed the lakelet, and overlapped the deposit of marl which was growing beneath the water. From year to year, as the water shallowed about the margins, encroaching vegetation crowded farther and farther toward the centre of the lakelet. I have not seen the beginning of this process; but at that period of time in which I have been permitted to begin my observations, I find these changes in progress. I have detected Nature *in mediis rebus*. The little herb standing by the water's brink this year, dies, and forms a deposit exactly like that which was formed in the year before my eyes—or any human eyes—detected the character of these vicissitudes; and my logic compels me to reason from that which I have seen to that which no man has seen. And so it is of the changes upon the ocean's shore, until the facts of the passing world