

sand, provided no change of circumstances either exposes it to decay or calls its vital properties into activity. Hence, where seeds have been buried deep in the earth, not by human agency, but by some geological change, it is impossible to say how long anteriorly to the creation of man they may have been produced and buried, as in the following curious instance: Some well-diggers in a town on the Penobscot River, in the State of Maine, about forty miles from the sea, came, at a depth of about twenty feet, upon a stratum of sand. This strongly excited their curiosity and interest, from the circumstance that no similar sand was to be found any where in the neighborhood, and that none like it was nearer than the sea-beach. As it was drawn up from the well it was placed in a pile by itself, an unwillingness having been felt to mix it with the stones and gravel which were also drawn up. But when the work was about to be finished, and the pile of stones and gravel to be removed, it was necessary also to remove the sand-heap. This, therefore, was scattered about the spot on which it had been formed, and was for some time scarcely remembered. In a year or two, however, it was perceived that a number of small trees had sprung from the ground over which the heap of sand had been strewn. These trees became, in their turn, objects of strong interest, and care was taken that no injury should come to them. At length it was ascertained that they were Beach-plum-trees; and they actually bore the Beach-plum, which had never been seen except immediately upon the sea-shore. The trees had therefore sprung from seeds which were in the stratum of sea-sand that had been pierced by the well-diggers." It can not be doubted, as Carpenter concludes, that the seeds of the Beach-plum had lain buried since the remote period when that part of the state was the shore of the slowly-receding sea.