

more was told at considerable length, with many a flourish of the fist, to the great apparent comfort and satisfaction of his brother-workmen.

And there was some truth in the reasoning. His facts, indeed, would not stand a very close scrutiny; even the little experience I had at the time enabled me to see their erroneousness; but his deductions, had the premises been sound, were fair enough. They showed, at least, a habit of thoughtfulness and observation much rarer among this class of men than we should expect to find it.

Such were my earliest clinical instructors in geology. With the help of their crude notions, added to our own boyish fancies, those of our number who cared to think out the subject at all strove to solve the problems that the quarry suggested. I cannot recall the process of inquiry among my comrades. But I well remember how it went on with myself. Our early identifications of all that we saw in the rock with something we had seen in living nature were unconsciously abandoned. I gradually came to learn the true character of most of the fossils, and recognised, too, that there was much which I did not understand, but might fairly attempt to discover. The first love of rarities and curiosities passed away, and in its place there sprang up a settled belief that in these gray rocks there lay a hidden story, if one could only get at the key.

There was no one within our circle of acquaintance from whom any practical instruction in the subject could be obtained. Probably this was a piece of good fortune for those of us who had the courage to persevere in the quest for knowledge. I can remember the long communings we had as to the nature of this or that organism, and its bearing on the history of the limestone. The