

Shortly after the sheet containing page 61 had been printed, I learned from the public papers that Dr. W. Smith died [at Scarborough?] on Aug. 28, in his 71st year.

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[C.]

*Referred to in page 138.*

THE longevity of trees is a subject of great interest. There are species which, in this respect, strongly attract our attention. The tree, called in our version an oak, but we have reason to believe that it was the terebinth,\* under which Joshua deposited the ratification of the covenant made by his countrymen, was probably the very tree made memorable by events in the life of Abraham and that of Jacob. Our English oak attains to the age of a thousand years, and instances have been ascertained of one thousand five hundred.† To the yew more than two thousand, even above three thousand years are on good grounds attributed.‡ But there are other trees possessing a higher longevity, and individuals of which have been ascertained to go back from our times to dates long prior to the Noachian deluge. Of the Baobab (*Adansonia digitata*), a tree of stupendous magnitude§ growing in Senegal and other parts of Africa within the tropics, one specimen has been subjected to the process which scientific men of the first ability have invented, and the age has been brought out to be 5232 years, and there is every reason to expect many centuries of

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\* *Pistacia terebinthus*; אֵילֵךְ unhappily rendered *plain* in Gen. xii. 6, and other places.

† Prof. Henslow's *Princip. of Descr. and Physiol. Botany*; p. 248: 1835.

‡ *Ib.* p. 245; and Mr. Bowman's papers on the Yew, in Mr. Charlesworth's *Magazine* for 1837; in which the admirable methods of obtaining sections for determining the age of trees, without injuring them materially, are clearly described.

§ Called by Dr. Lindley, "the largest tree in the world;—the trunk has been found with a diameter of 30 feet." *Nat. Syst. Bot. sec. ed.* p. 94. The traveller M. Russeger, in the interior of Africa, as far as 10 N. L., saw "Adansonias measuring 56 feet in circumference,—exciting the astonishment of the beholder." *Charlesworth's Mag. Nat. Hist.* Feb. 1838, p. 108.