

and who overlooks it, a thousand years are as but a single day, and a single day as a thousand years.*

We have entered the Coal Measures. For seven formations together—from the Lower Silurian to the Upper Old Red Sandstone—our course has lain over oceans without a visible shore, though, like Columbus, in his voyage of discovery, we have now and then found a little floating weed, to indicate the approaching coast. The water is fast shallowing. Yonder passes a broken branch, with the leaves still unwithered; and there floats a tuft of fern. Land, from the mast-head! land! land!—a low shore, thickly covered with vegetation. Huge trees, of wonderful form, stand out far into the water. There seems no intervening beach. A thick hedge of reeds, tall as the masts of pinnaces, runs along the deeper bays, like water-flags at the edge of a lake. A river of vast volume comes rolling from the interior, darkening the water for leagues with its slime and mud, and bearing with it, to the open sea, reeds, and fern, and cones of the pine, and immense floats of leaves, and now and then some bulky tree, undermined and uprooted by the current. We near the coast, and now enter the opening of the stream. A scarce penetrable phalanx of reeds, that attain to the height and well nigh the bulk of forest trees, is ranged on either hand. The bright and glossy stems seem rodded like Gothic columns; the pointed leaves stand out green at every joint, tier above tier, each tier resembling a coronal wreath or an ancient crown, with the rays turned outwards; and we see a-top

belonged to an individual of the species, is $18\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length; and it is furnished with teeth, one of which, from base to point, measures five inches, and another four and a half.

* See, on this subject, the introductory note to the present edition, and note p. 154.