

him no more ; and straightway made an offer of my services to Mr. Robert Chambers, by whom they were accepted ; and during the two following years I occasionally contributed to his *Journal*, on greatly more liberal terms than those on which I had labored for the other periodical, and with my name attached to my several articles. I must be permitted to avail myself of the present opportunity of acknowledging the kindness of Mr. Chambers. There is perhaps no other writer of the present day who has done so much to encourage struggling talent as this gentleman. I have for many years observed, that publications, however obscure, in which he finds aught really praiseworthy, are secure always of getting, in his widely-circulated periodical, a kind approving word,—that his criticisms invariably bear the stamp of a benevolent nature, which experiences more of pleasure in the recognition of merit than in the detection of defect,—that his kindness does not stop with these cheering notices, for he finds time, in the course of a very busy life, to write many a note of encouragement and advice to obscure men in whom he recognizes a spirit superior to their condition,—and that the compositions of writers of this meritorious class, when submitted to him editorially, rarely fail, if really suitable for his journal, to find a place in it, or to be remunerated on a scale that invariably bears reference to the value of the communications,—not to the circumstances of their authors.

I can scarce speak of my contributions to the periodicals at this time as forming any part of my education. I acquired, in their composition, a somewhat readier command of the pen than before ; but they, of course, tendered rather to the dissipation of previous stores than to the accumulation of new ones : nor did they give exercise to those higher faculties of mind which I deemed it most my interest to cultivate. My real education at the time was that in which I was gradually becoming initiated behind the bank-counter, as my experience of the business of the district extended ; and that in which I contrived to pick up in my leisure evenings along the shores. A rich ichthyolitic deposit of the Old Red Sandstone lies, as I have already said,