

hillock rises a few yards over the general level, we see groups of noble Araucarians raising their green tops a hundred and fifty feet over the plain. And yet, rich as the flora of the period may seem in individuals, and though it cumbered the soil with a luxuriance witnessed in our own times only among the minuter forms, it is, in all save size and bulk, a poor and low flora after all. The Pines and Araucarians form its only forest-trees. We fail to meet on its plains a single dicotyledonous plant on which a herbivorous mammal could browse. Its Lycopodiaceæ are covered over with catkin-like cones; there are cones on its Ulodendra, cones on its Equisetaceæ, cones on its Araucarians, cones on its Pines; but not a single fruit have we yet found good for the use of man. Nor, after the first impression of novelty has passed away, is there much even to gratify the sight. The marvel of ornately-carved trunks and well-balanced fronds soon palls on the sense; and the prevalence of those spiky rectilinear forms in the scene which Wordsworth could regard as such deformities in landscape, and which James Grahame so deprecates in his *Georgics*, 'lies like a load on the weary eye.' Nature labours in the productions of huge immaturities; neither man the monarch, nor his higher subjects the mammals, have yet appeared; and it is all too palpable that that garden has not yet been planted, out of the ground of which there shall grow 'every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.'

Some of the gigantic forms of these primeval forests we can only vaguely and imperfectly illustrate by the dwarf productions of our present moors and morasses; and some of them we fail to connect, by the links of general resemblance, with aught in the vegetable kingdom that now lives. Regarded as a whole, the flora of the Carboniferous age seems as remote in its analogues from that which now exists, as remote in the period during which it flourished.