

There are, however, at least two families of plants which bear, not a loose and general, but a minute and thorough resemblance, to families which also existed during the great Secondary and Tertiary periods, and which still continue to occupy a large space among the recent vegetable forms. And these are the Fern and the Pine families. All the species have become extinct over and over again ; but the families, and many of the genera, are ever reproduced ; and, so far as we know, this earth never possessed a terrestrial flora that had not its ferns and its pines. In all the other divisions and classes of the organic world there are also favourite families, such as the Tortoises among reptiles, the Cestracions among fishes, the Nautilus among Cephalopodes, and the Terebratula among Brachipods. There are few geologic formations in which either the remains or the footprints of tortoises have not been detected ; there seems never to have been an ocean that had not its cestracion ; the nautilus lived in every age from the times of the Lower Silurian deposits down to the present day ; and, after disinterring specimens of fossil terebratula from our Grauwackes, our Mountain Limestones, our Oolites, and our Chalk Flints, we may cast the drag in the deeper lochs of the Western Highlands, and bring up the living animals, fast anchored by their fleshy cables to stones and shells. We can scarce glance over a group of fossils of the two earlier divisions, the Secondary and the Palæozoic, which we do not find divisible into two classes of types,—the types which still remain, and the types which have disappeared. But why the one set of forms should have been so repeatedly called into being, while the other set was suffered to become obsolete, we cannot so much as surmise. In visiting some old family library that has received no accession to its catalogue for perhaps more than a century, one is interested in marking its more vivacious classes of works,—its Shakespeares, Robinson Crusoes, and Pilgrim's