

frequent ague-fits and earth-waves ; and, after some mightier earthquake, had billowed the landscape, dashing together the crests of tall trees and gigantic shrubs, there would be a roar, as of many waters, heard from the distant outskirts of the scene, and one long wall of breakers seen stretching along the line where earth and sky meet,—stretching inwards and travelling onwards with yet louder and louder roar,—Calamite and Ulodendron, Sigillaria and Tree-fern, disappearing amid the foam,—until at length all would be submerged, and only here and there a few Araucarian tops seen over a sea without visible shore. Such was the character, and such were the revolutions, of the land of the Carboniferous era,—a land that seems to have been called into being less for the sake of its own existence than for that of the existences of the future.