

the sea, a long line of surf tumbled incessantly over a continuous reef of coral.

I picked up one very fine specimen, which, though it weighed nearly a hundredweight, I resolved on getting transported to Edinburgh, and which now lies on the floor before me. It is a transverse cut of a portion of a large tree, including the pith, and measures twenty-three inches across. In the sections of trees figured by Mr. Witham in his interesting and valuable work, the original structure seems much disorganized : a granular radiating spar occupies the greater portion of the interior ; and the tissue is found to exist in but detached portions. Here, on the contrary, the tissue exists unbroken from the pith to the outer ring. We may see one annual circle succeeding another in the average proportion of about ten per inch ; and though we cannot reckon them continuously, for there are darker shades in which they disappear,—shades which the polisher of the marble-cutter may yet succeed in dissipating,—the number of the whole must rather exceed than fall short of a hundred. However obscure the geologist may be in his eras generally, here at least is the record of one century. But how were its years filled? I sat beside the root of a newly-felled fir some six or eight seasons ago, and amused myself, when the severed vessels were throwing up their turpentine in minute transparent globules, in reckoning the years by the rings, from the bark inward. Here, I said, is the year in which the Reform Bill passed ; and this the year in which Canning died ; and this the year of the great commercial crisis ; and this the year of Waterloo ; and this of the burning of Moscow. The yearly rings of the Oolite have no such indices of recollection attached to them : we see their record in the marble, but know no more of contemporary history than that, when forests showed their fringes of lighter green on the hill-sides, and cell and fibre swelled under the rind, the promptings of instinct were busy all around and beneath,—that the pearly