

ing and evening of mammalian life. The mammals of its early Eocene ages were comparatively small in bulk and low in standing; in its concluding ages, too, immediately ere the appearance of man, or just as he had appeared, they exhibited, both in size and number, a reduced and less imposing aspect.

and examined, they have been found to bear the unique characteristic to which the system owes its name,—they have been found charged with the carbon, existing usually as great beds of coal, which was elaborated of old by its unrivalled flora from the elements. And as this evidence is certain and positive, no one would be entitled to set off against it, as of equal weight, the merely negative evidence of some one or two deposits of the carboniferous age that did not bear the carboniferous character, even were such known to exist; far less is any one entitled to set off against it the *possibly* negative evidence of deposits of the carboniferous age not yet discovered nor examined; for that would be simply to set off against good, positive evidence, what is no evidence at all. It would be to set off the *possible* evidence of the absent witnesses, not yet precognosced in the case, against the express declarations of the witnesses already examined, and strong on the positive side.

Surely an American, before appealing, in a question of this kind, to the bare possibility of the existence somewhere or other of barely negative evidence, ought to have bethought him of the very extraordinary positive evidence furnished by the carboniferous deposits of his own great country. The coal-fields of Britain and the European continent had been wrought for ages ere those of North America were known, and for ages more after it had been but ascertained that the New, like the Old World, has its Coal Measures. And during the latter period the *argument* of Mr Foulke might have been employed, just as now, and some member of a learned society might have urged that, though the coal-fields of Europe bore evidence to the former existence of a singularly luxuriant flora, beyond comparison more vast than the European one of the present day, the same could not be predicated of the American coal-fields, whose carbonized remains *might* be found representative of a flora which had been at least not more largely developed than that existing American flora to which the great western forests belong. Now, however, the time for any such argument has gone by: the American coal-fields have been carefully explored; and what is the result? The geologist has come to know, that even the mighty forests of America are inconsiderable, compared with its deposits of coal; nay, that all its forests gathered into one heap would fail to furnish the materials of a single coal-seam equal to that of Pittsburg; and that centuries after all its thick woods shall have disappeared before the axe, and it shall have come to present the comparatively bare, unwooded aspect of the long-civilized countries of Southern Europe, it will continue to derive the elements of its commercial greatness, and the cheerful blaze of its many