

seed-cone or catkin of a large extinct kind of club-moss; but, in the meantime, Tom had declared it to be a fish, and a fish it must assuredly be.

The halo that broke forth from the Wizard's tomb when William of Deloraine and the Monk of St. Mary's heaved at midnight the ponderous stone was surely not brighter, certainly not so benign in its results, as the light that now seemed to stream into my whole being, as I disinterred from their stony folds these wondrous relics. Like other schoolboys, I had, of course, had my lessons on geology in the usual meagre, cut-and-dry form in which physical science was then taught in our schools. I could repeat a "Table of Formations," and remembered the pictures of some uncouth monsters on the pages of our text-books—one with goggle-eyes, no neck, and a preposterous tail; another with an unwieldy body, and no tail at all, for which latter defect I had endeavoured to compensate by inserting a long pipe into his mouth, receiving from our master (Ironsides, we called him) a hearty rap across the knuckles, as a recompense for my attention to the creature's comfort. But the notion that these pictures were the representations of actual, though now extinct monsters, that the matter-of-fact details of our text-books really symbolised living truths, and were not invented solely to distract the brains and endanger the palms of schoolboys; nay, that the statements which seemed so dry and unintelligible in print were such as could be actually verified by our own eyes in nature, that beneath and beyond the present creation, in the glories of which we revelled, there lay around us the memorials of other creations not less glorious, and infinitely older, and thus that more, immensely more, than our books or our teachers taught us could be learnt by looking at nature for ourselves—all this was strange to