

text-books were of little service. So, thrown back upon ourselves, we allowed our fancy to supply what we could obtain in no other way. The ferns and other land-plants found in the limestone, together with the minute cyprids, of which the rock seemed in some places almost wholly composed, and the scales, bones, and teeth of ganoid fishes, indicated, as far as we could learn, that the deposit had accumulated in fresh water, perhaps in a lake or in the estuary of a river. But of course it was natural that we should try to discover what might have been the general aspect of the country when the animals and plants of the limestone were alive. We asked ourselves if the same hills existed then as now; if perchance the old river that swept over the site of the quarry took its rise among yonder pastoral glens; if the same sea rolled in the distance then as now, curling white along the same green shore. Happily ignorant of how far we had here ventured beyond our depth, it was not until after much questioning and disappointment that I found these problems to require years of patient research. The whole country for many miles round had yet to be explored, and minute observations to be made before even an approximation to a reliable answer could be given. But a boy's fancy is an admirable substitute for the want of facts. I did feel at times a little sorry that no evidence turned up on which to ground my restoration of the ancient topography of the district, or rather that such a world of work seemed to rise before me ere I could obtain the evidence that was needed. But the feeling did not last long. And so I conjured up the most glorious pictures of an ancient world, where, as in the land of the lotus-eaters, it was always afternoon, and one could dream away life among isles clothed with ferns and huge club-mosses, and washed by lakes and rivers that lay with-