

have been found. It is possible, however, that in the Laurentian period the vegetation of the land may have consisted wholly of cellular plants, as, for example, mosses and lichens; and if so, there would be comparatively little hope of the distinct preservation of their forms or tissues, or of our being able to distinguish the remains of land-plants from those of Algæ.

We may sum up these facts and considerations in the following statements: First, that somewhat obscure traces of organic structure can be detected in the Laurentian graphite; secondly, that the general arrangement and microscopic structure of the substance corresponds with that of the carbonaceous and bituminous matters in marine formations of more modern date; thirdly, that if the Laurentian graphite has been derived from vegetable matter, it has only undergone a metamorphosis similar in kind to that which organic matter in metamorphosed sediments of later age has experienced; fourthly, that the association of the graphitic matter with organic limestone, beds of iron-ore, and metallic sulphides greatly strengthens the probability of its vegetable origin; fifthly, that when we consider the immense thickness and extent of the Eozoonal and graphitic limestones and iron-ore deposits of the Laurentian, if we admit the organic origin of the limestone and graphite, we must be prepared to believe that the life of that early period, though it may have existed under low forms, was most copiously developed, and that it equalled, perhaps surpassed, in its results, in the way of geological accumulation, that of any subsequent period.

Many years ago, at the meeting of the American Association in Albany, the writer was carrying into the room of the Geological Section a mass of fossil wood from the Devonian of Gaspé, when he met the late Professor Agassiz, and remarked that the specimen was the remains of a Devonian tree contemporaneous with his