

any wonder then that we resume our hasty examination of the rock and gloat in our imaginations over the former mission of this weed upon earth? Shift the circumstances but a little. Employ an expert sculptor. Let him tax his powers to the utmost that he may rival nature in perfection. A faultless impression of a similar fern is the result. We admire, we wonder, at the human ingenuity displayed. Time passes by and this object of our fancy is cast aside. It finds its way into the woods, where it becomes mingled with others of its kind. Years slip away; the rains have eroded the surface of the stone upon which the impression was made. It bears upon its face those distinctive features that Time's ravages alone can impress, those lineaments that lend this class of objects their peculiar charm. A strolling geologist, following the bent of his scientific inclinations, wanders in that direction. His eye, ever keen to detect such objects, alights upon this fern-impressed stone. He is enraptured, visions of Carboniferous, Sub-Carboniferous, and Devonian, flit hurriedly through his brain. The stone is seized and examined. His practised eye detects no flaw. The family *hymenophyllitis alatus* is enriched by the presence of an additional member, and the fortunate discoverer adds another to the many proofs which tend to substantiate his theories. To this person the two stones would suggest the same idea; the old and the new fossil are so much alike that they are confounded by him who knows not the recent origin of the one. Upon the minds of those, however, who are acquainted with the facts, quite a different impression would be produced. While we would admire the skill of the modern artist, our minds would revert with much greater pleasure to the object upon which Time had set its seal. We would be filled instantly with a feeling of reverence for the majesty and power of Nature's operations, and our thoughts would be transferred back far beyond mortal ken.