

" I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled,
For thou wert dead and buried, and embalmed,
Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled ;
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run."

Again, in a poem by Ebenezer Elliott, we find a similar thought ; in addressing the Deity, he says :

" Ere the eagle flew, ere the worm crawl'd,
Or man, erect, before thee stood and smil'd,
Thou hadst existed an eternity
Of thoughtful ages."

Or, to come still nearer to my present aim, the American poet Brainard, in his lines addressed to the " Falls of Niagara," thus sings :

" The thoughts are strange which crowd into my brain,
While I look upward to thee. It would seem
As if God poured thee from his "hollow ban,"
And hung his bow upon thy awful front ;
And spoke in that loud voice, which seemed to him
Who dwelt in Patmos for his Saviour's sake,
'The sound of many waters,' and had bade thee
To chronicle the ages back,
And notch the centuries in the eternal rocks."

It seems, therefore, that the very name " Antiquity " is sufficient to set us thinking.

Nothing but the impression of a fern leaf on a piece of weather-worn sandstone, with its delicate tracings preserved entire ; nothing but this, and yet this fragile evidence is sufficient to corroborate the most astounding statements. It is sufficient to confirm the geologist in his most imaginative theories, and to cause his scientific heart to throb with delight. This simple plant transports us back hundreds, nay, thousands, of years, to those periods of which geologists say so much and know so little, when order was developing from chaos, and the coal was forming which now warms us. Is it