

Europe was represented only by islands rising here and there above the sea, America already stretched an unbroken line of land from Nova Scotia to the Far West."

There are some subjects on which the philosopher is obliged to exercise as much license as the poet. Such is exemplified in the study of geology, a science the direct object of which is to unfold the solid crust of the earth and explain, as far as possible, the agencies at work in the formation and compilation of the Great Stone Book of Nature. The records of this Stone Book can only be perfectly understood by patient and careful observation, and a moderate acquaintance with the most prolific of all languages, the *language of nature*. In the study of geology, every thing has been photographed and preserved for use and reference, in a manner far exceeding in interest the records even of the historian. Each year that passes, brings to light new discoveries in this department of science, and the material yet unknown is so great that it will afford ample opportunity for the development of the intellectual power of man for many years to come.

Nature offers many of her books for our perusal. Every department of such knowledge may be considered a volume. Astronomy supplies not a few, Chemistry many, Zoology and Botany a more than ordinary share. Notwithstanding the attractions of geology, the history of the earth, what it is and how it became so, having as it were wrapped up in its crust the remains of many strange animals and plants, still how few comparatively study this interesting department of science. To understand anything of rocks, we must learn how they have been formed and to thoroughly master this we must observe the nearest approach to such formations at the present day. Such, also, is the case with fossils; for in order to understand them, we require to familiarise ourselves with the plants and animals now living. In all cases where the book of nature is to be studied it matters little where or how that study begins. In every locality there is enough, yes, more than enough, to amuse, suggest thought, interest and instruct.