

the microscope the peculiarities of its original structure. We find in it an unfallen *Adam*,—not a half-developed savage.*

The olive leaf which the dove brought to Noah established at least three important facts, and indicated a few more. It showed most conclusively that there was dry land, that there were olive trees, and that the climate of the surrounding region, whatever change it might have undergone, was still favorable to the development of vegetable life.

* On a point of such importance I find it necessary to strengthen my testimony by auxiliary evidence. The following is the judgment, on this ancient petrification, of Mr. Nicol of Edinburgh,—confessedly one of our highest living authorities in that division of fossil botany which takes cognizance of the internal structure of lignites, and decides, from their anatomy, their race and family:—

“Edinburgh, 19th July, 1845.

“DEAR SIR,—I have examined the structure of the fossil wood which you found in the Old Red Sandstone at Cromarty, and have no hesitation in stating, that the reticulated texture of the transverse sections, though somewhat compressed, clearly indicates a coniferous origin; but as there is not the slightest trace of a disc to be seen in the longitudinal sections parallel to the medullary rays, it is impossible to say whether it belongs to the Pine or Araucarian division. I am, &c.,

“WILLIAM NICOL.”

It will be seen that Mr. Nicol failed to detect what I now deem the discs of this conifer,—those stippled markings to which I have referred, and which the engraver has indicated in no exaggerated style, in one of the longitudinal sections (*b*) of the wood-cut given above. But even were this portion of the evidence wholly wanting, we would be left in doubt, in consequence, not whether the Old Red lignite formed part of a true gymnospermous tree, but whether that tree is now represented by the pines of Europe and America, or by the araucarians of Chili and New Zealand. Were I to risk an opinion in a department not particularly my province, it would be in favor of an araucarian relationship.