

**THE STORY OF A PIECE OF  
COAL: WHAT IT  
IS, WHENCE IT COMES,  
AND WHITHER IT GOES**

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The Story of a Piece of Coal: What It Is, Whence It Comes, and Whither It Goes by Edward A. Martin

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**EDWARD A. MARTIN**

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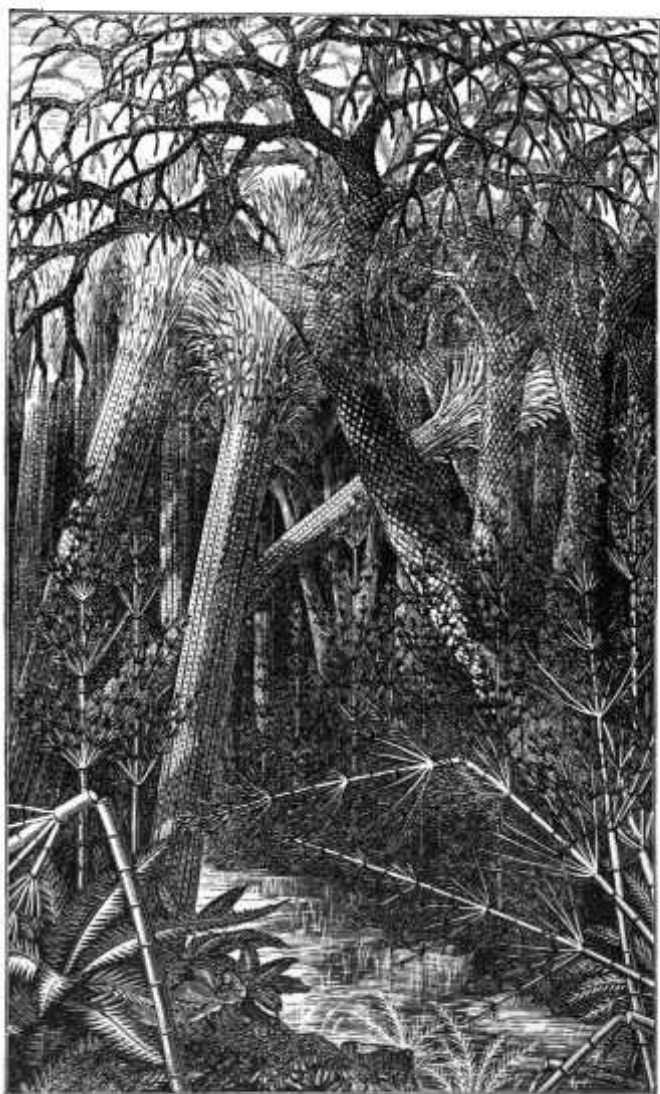


FIG. 1.—A Forest of the Coal period.

# THE STORY OF A PIECE OF COAL

WHAT IT IS, WHENCE IT COMES,  
AND WHITHER IT GOES

BY

EDWARD A. MARTIN, F.G.S.

AUTHOR OF *AMIDST NATURE'S REALMS*, ETC.



WITH THIRTY-EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS

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## PREFACE.

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THE knowledge of the marvels which a piece of coal possesses within itself and which in obedience to processes of man's invention it is always willing to exhibit to an observant enquirer, is not so widespread, perhaps, as it should be, and the aim of this little book, this record of one page of geological history, has been to bring together the principal facts and wonders connected with it into the focus of a few pages, where, side by side, would be found the record of its vegetable and mineral history, its discovery and early use, its bearings on the great fog-problem, its useful illuminating gas and oils, the question of the possible exhaustion of the world's supply, and other important and interesting bearings of coal or its products.

. In the whole realm of natural history, in the widest sense of the term, there is nothing which could be cited which has so benefited, so interested, I might almost say, so excited mankind, as have the wonderful discoveries of the various



products distilled from gas-tar, itself a distillate of coal.

Coal touches the interests of the botanist, the geologist, and the physicist; the chemist, the sanitarian, and the merchant.

In the little work now before the reader I have endeavoured to recount, without going into unnecessary detail, the wonderful story of a piece of coal.

E. A. M.

THORNTON HEATH, *February, 1896.*

NOTE.—In order to adapt the present edition of this book more closely to the needs of American readers, a few passages that were not applicable to America have been replaced by matter concerning the coal of this country. Some minor changes in phraseology have also been made.

D. APPLETON & COMPANY.

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