

around the frontier of the Middle and Northern States. In this magnificent lagoon the Iron Mountain of Missouri loomed up, as it now does—an island of metal—the apex of an iron cone, whose base rests broadly and deeply on the molten ocean which floats kingdoms and continents from the past eternity to the future. Around its sloping flanks the sediments of the Potsdam period accumulated in horizontal layers, which to-day may be witnessed abutting against the dark sides of the emerging cone of metal. A few other isolated points had thus early been born from the abyss.

In such a sea—a shoreless sea—lived, and lived in happiness, those problematical forms called trilobites, whose remains have been opened from the solid rocks of Wisconsin, Vermont, Canada, and hundreds of other localities. Rather, on such a submarine *platform* they sported their day, for on all sides—certainly toward the east, south, and west—the waters deepened, as now, to an almost unfathomable depth, to whose dark recesses life never gropes its way (Fig. 38).

In the progress of the earth's preparation this act of the drama closed, and the curtain fell upon the scene. "The curtain rose, and the scene was changed." The beings which teemed in the waters of the preceding epoch were buried in the ruins of a convulsion which marked the advent of a new æon. Not an individual of any of the former species outrode the storm. But the sea is now quiet again—more quiet than before. The waters are clearer. The floor of the ocean has settled a few hundred feet deeper, and the conditions of our planet are changed. Lo! now the clearer and quieter waters are teeming with myriads of new existences, some of which reproduce the family features of the beings of the preceding period, while others are forms now first revealed upon our planet. Whence come