

CHAPTER XXI.

RESURRECTION OF THE CONTINENT.

IT seemed like a failure of the plan of creation. The land gained by unnumbered throes of the continent was lost. The higher summits only held their heads above the level of the careering waves. Deposits bearing the marks of oceanic action reach to an elevation of six thousand feet on Mount Washington, two thousand or more on the Green Mountains, and three thousand on Monadnock. But this deep submergence was not of long continuance. Slowly the continent rose again from its deep sea-burial. As summit after summit lifted its gravel-covered brow above the sea, the retiring waves, lingering, dallied with the pebbles on the widening beach. As the continent rose, every inch became, in succession, the ocean shore, and was subjected to the assorting action of the waters. As a consequence, the finer materials were left upon the surface, and a most suitable substratum for the soil was thus provided. During the preceding epoch, Nature robbed the Northern States of their finer material for the benefit of the Southern. Now she made amends by raking up the deep deposits, and selecting and strewing over the surface a new supply of finer detritus for the benefit of the Northern States.

Before the resurrection was completed, Nature made several pauses in her work, and the sea was permitted to stand, perhaps for ages, over districts that had been marked out as the dwelling-place for man. The first pause occurred when the waters still stood four hundred feet above their