

but about twelve hundred feet above the level of the sea; and if the entire continent were ground to powder down to the sea-level, and distributed over an area of the ocean's bottom equal only in extent to North America, it would afford a bed of strata not one twentieth the thickness of the Laurentian system over the same region. Whence, then, the materials for so vast an accumulation of sediments? Where were the lands which must have disappeared during the Laurentian Age? Although we may not be able to indicate their location, the facts suggested serve to remind us of the gigantic scale of operations of the denuding agencies of primeval time.

Every succeeding geological age must also have had its source of supply to the contemporaneous sediments. The ever-growing continents were ever wearing down. As the increasing pressure of the accumulating oceans crowded higher the summits of the continental axes, the ceaseless demands of the insatiate sea for more sediments wore thinner and thinner their denuded scalps. It is no wonder that included fires burst forth at the summits of the highest mountains. These are the exposed points, where the earth's crust has been reduced to the greatest degree of tenuity, while the ocean's floor is the most solid portion of the globe.

The outburst along the southern shore of Lake Superior at the close of the Potsdam period developed topographical features of infinitely greater ruggedness than those which now characterize that region. Kewenaw Point, the Porcupine Mountains, and the Huron Mountains, as well as the numberless unnamed knobs still standing throughout the region, have been gnawed and battered down for hundreds of feet, and their once angular outlines have been scoured to a subdued rotundity. The Appalachians, that once lifted their multiplied folds to the heights of the An-