

others — sufficiently denote the sterile character of the region. We were now among the head-waters of the great Colorado River on the Pacific slope of the continent. But of visible slope there is for a long way no trace. It is a bare, treeless, verdureless waste, crumbling under the fierce glare of a cloudless sky and the hot blast of a parching wind. Yet for long ages these deserts were the site of a succession of lakes vaster in size than any now existing on the American continent. The water has disappeared, and out of the hardened clay and marl of the lake bottoms the elements are carving some of the weirdest scenery on the face of the earth. Every mile of the dusty journey now brought with it new and still stranger proofs of this marvelous erosion. At one moment we were looking out on what might have been taken for the bastions of a fort that had stood a long siege. Another curve of the line brought into view seemingly the mouldering battlements and decayed acropolis of some early heroic city; at the next turn the array of rock-forms could find no adequate parallel in human architecture. Scenery more indescribable can hardly be conceived. As yet, indeed, all we could see or know of these "Bad Lands" was from the windows of the car. But we saw clearly enough by their level lines of stratification that their forms had been sculptured out of horizontal rocks by surface agents. League after league this lesson of utterly inconceivable waste rose out impressively on either side, until at last, when we reached Carter Station, we almost felt that we had seen about as much as our faculties could very well assimilate. But much more was in store for us.

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