

and there a strange verdigris-like green. These strata extend nearly horizontally for hundreds of square miles. But they have been most unequally eroded. Here and there isolated flat-topped eminences or "buttes," as they are styled in the West, rise from the plain in front of a line of bluff or cliff to a height of several hundred feet. On examination, each of these hills is found to be built up of horizontal strata, and the same beds reappear in lines of terraced cliff along the margin of the plain. A butte is only a remnant of the original deep mass of horizontal strata that once stretched far across the plain. Its sides and the fronts of the terraced cliffs, utterly verdureless and bare, have been scarped into recesses and projecting buttresses. These have been further cut down into a labyrinth of peaks and columns, clefts and ravines, now strangely monumental, now uncouthly irregular, till the eye grows weary with the endless variety and novelty of the forms. Yet beneath all this chaos of outlines there can be traced everywhere the level parallel bars of the strata. The same band of rock, originally one of the successive floors of the old lake, can be followed without bend or break from chasm to chasm, and pinnacle to pinnacle. Tumultuous as the surface may be, it has no relation to underground disturbances, for the rocks are as level and unbroken as when they were laid down. It owes its ruggedness entirely to erosion.

But there is a further feature which crowns the repulsiveness of the Bad Lands. There are no springs or streams. Into the soil, parched by the fierce heats of a torrid summer, the moisture of the sub-soil ascends by capillary attraction, carrying with it the saline solutions it has extracted from the rocks. At the surface it is at once evaporated, leaving behind a white crust or efflorescence, which covers the bare ground and encrusts the pebbles