

stormy and turbid shore; and a broad belt was given to the land. The torn beach, crumbling before the waves, contributed coarse rubble for the foundations of new land in some future age. The vegetation promised for the impending epoch was crowding into possession of the ground. It flung its fragments into the deep in challenge to the conflict which now sent its murmur through the world. These chips from the by standing forest were buried in the sands which loaded the sea-bottom. Every thing was ready; the curtain was about to rise.

Now came the first charge in the conflict destined to alternate during an age; another collapse of some of the stays and supports of the rigid crust. The land uprose by another notch; the bottom of the sea was lifted to the surface. The great "Carboniferous Conglomerate" was now first bathed in air and sunlight. The continent of North America received an annexation of territory which stretched from the Seaboard Land east of the Appalachians, to the Great Plains. The new territory included all the regions which had been selected as the sites of the capacious coal repositories, for the use of civilization. It was not a dry upland. It was a broad and mighty marsh. Michigan was not included in the common continental marsh, but stood apart for a special destiny.

Now, over all this breadth of bog and swale sprang up vegetable growths—trees and herbs, ferns and rushes,—with the all-engrossing airs of those who come to hold possession. Whence these forms? Some, as I said, had been nursed on the older and contiguous land, and now entered upon a new possession because it was fit. Some sprang from germs fresh planted by some unseen hand. What mean all these transformations? They mean progress. They mean man. They mean civilization. It is not alone change; it is improvement. This luxuriant crop is sustained by the carbonic acid of the atmosphere. This, as is generally supposed, was in excess. It made the air irrespirable; no terrestrial creature could live. But terrestrial animals must constitute the next step of progress. The march of improvement had now gone as far