

## CHAPTER X.

## THE GARDEN OF STONE LILIES.

WE have wandered down through the fiery mazes of the præsedimentary ages of the world, and have seen the granite, the quartz, feldspar, and mica, the hornblende, and other first-born products of primeval refrigeration organizing themselves in obedience to the molecular forces of Nature; we have witnessed the floods descending, and cubic miles of sediments settling in the bed of the Eözoic sea; we have gazed upon the first flickerings of animated existence, and have noted the fact that while Nature established the procession of organic being with the four sub-kingdoms of animals nearly abreast of each other, the van of each was led by some of the weakest and most abnormal forms which have ever appeared within the circle of their respective types.

The conditions of existence during the St. John's and Potsdam periods must have been somewhat uniform under all meridians. No continents existed to divert the tidal current into cooler or warmer latitudes, or unequalize the temperature of the atmosphere by their superior power of absorbing and radiating heat. The leading types of existence were trilobites—exhibiting a close relationship with each other on whichever side of the world we exhume their mummied forms—and some inferior brachiopods, which are almost identical in species at St. Petersburg, and at Keeseville, New York. We have seen that the central portions of the American continent constituted at this time a vast basin of shallow water, the rim of which extended all