

er of the transporting currents grew feebler, they bore forward only the finer sands and aluminous sediments which repose generally upon the surface of the Southern States.

The rushing torrents born of the dissolving glacier busied themselves also with the work of excavation. Many an existing valley and river course was determined by the active erosions of this epoch. Many a cut through the rocky ribs of mountains had now to be executed to make way for the escape of imprisoned waters. Many a broad and rock-floored valley became filled, and converted into an alluvial plain, by the rubbish which the torrent deposited in its quieter mood. Many a basin was now scooped out which, in the next epoch, became a lake of standing water. The basins of all the larger lakes that have been excavated by erosive action conform in their longitudinal extent to the strike of the underlying formations. A line running through the centres of the great lakes from Chicago to Oswego, runs approximately along the winding strike of the formations of a certain age. This line shows the configuration of the shore of the continent when those formations were accumulating. It is worthy of particular note that the shore-line was always substantially parallel to the axis of these fresh waters during all paleozoic time. In the Lower Silurian it lay to the north of these waters. During the Devonian it was to the south of the waters. During the Upper Silurian it was to the south in the eastern region, and to the north (or northwest) in the western region. We may here seize upon a *key* to carry with us, and unlock at any time the geological map of the country before the mind's eye (compare Fig. 58). Every one locates instantly and definitely the Niagara Falls and Niagara River. The Niagara limestone was named from the falls, and its outcropping belt trends east and west at that point. This is the great limestone mass of the Upper Silurian. As in