

packed away among the solid rocks; and there is no explanation so natural and so consonant with what we know of the history of the world as the doctrine of evaporated sea-waters. How the waters of the sea came into possession of their saltiness is a question of primeval chemistry to which allusion has heretofore been made. It was the resultant of the chemical actions which took place between the fire-born rocks and the atmospheric acids washed down by the primeval rains, and gathered with "the gathering together of the waters."

Salt lakes, or detached outliers of the great ocean, have existed in all ages since the continents began to shed the ocean's waters from their backs. In the age just preceding the last, an inland sea occupied the region of the upper waters of the Missouri River; and, a little earlier, the same sea extended a few hundred miles farther south, over the country of the "Bad Lands" of Dakotah. In the middle ages of the world's history, the evaporation of salt lakes or bays more or less shut off from the ocean, and the bedding of their saline constituents, was a phenomenon of so frequent occurrence as to constitute the most prominent feature of an entire group of strata. This group has consequently been styled the "Saliferous system." The saliferous beds of this group are extensively worked for rock-salt over a territory stretching along both sides of the Carpathians, embracing the mines of Wallachia, Transylvania, Galicia, Upper Hungary, Upper Austria, Styria, Salzburg, and the Tyrol. In England they are mined in the counties of Cheshire and Worcestershire. In the United States we find saliferous beds of the same age extensively distributed over the region between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains.

Descending in the series of American strata, we find the Coal-measures in certain regions—or rather the conglomer-