

preserving life, law, and property, therefore, had to be devised by more practical people, who, though not "scientists," had some common sense, and could translate their thought into action.

The elevation did not cease for all the papers delivered at the convention, and the next curious feature to frighten us was the gradual change in the water-shed of many tracts. As the land kept rising along the indicated line, which was soon seen to be a new and important anticlinal axis in the course of development, it turned the drainage of many a lake basin and plateau from the Atlantic towards the west, and when heavy rains occurred, it was made evident by the behaviour of numerous brooks and rivers that novel hydrographical features would have to be reckoned with. As the St. Lawrence was shoaling at a place called the Traverse, below Quebec, it seemed certain that the trend of the waters from the great lakes of the interior would soon take a southern direction, and it was hoped this might happen without submerging extensive areas, though it was on the other hand feared that if the new discharge through Lake Champlain should not be sufficient, Montreal would be inundated, and Lake Ontario be filled to the level of its old beaches. . . . But why should the ever changing apprehensions be recounted when the results are known? The fact soon thrust itself upon us that as New York was rising, New Orleans was sinking, that the whole northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico was subsiding, and the unwelcome conviction that the sea was about to invade the Mississippi valley sent a shudder through all who thought of the calamities that must ensue.

The Governments of the United States and Canada acted in this emergency with commendable vigor and promptness. They formed a united committee for joint action, called out their militia and volunteers, seized the railroads and other means of trans-

portation, organized a continental commissariat, and forcibly conveyed most of the population of the threatened lowlands to the regions of highest elevation. No pen can describe the scenes which occurred meanwhile. The whole proceeding was too deliberate to give occasion to panic; the masses moved in obedience to orders, with dull resignation, taxing to excess the carrying capacity of the rolling stock, of the steam-boats on rivers, and every other species of conveyance. Many, of course, preferred to await events, and thousands of these were afterwards lost. Many prepared to move by easy stages, on foot and in their own vehicles. The deaths from exposure, from over-fatigue and even famine, as well as from excitement and anxiety, were indeed countless. There was woe to the maimed, lame, halt, puny, weak in body. Diseases of old and new forms swept off untold multitudes, young and old, white and colored. The soldiery behaved with self-sacrificing bravery; they formed, of course, a sort of rear guard between the fleeing population and the stealthily advancing waters. The observers at the signal stations of the weather bureaux were in constant communication with headquarters, and the movement of the millions was therefore on the whole well directed by competent authority. The map which recent travellers have made may well be presented here, as an examination of it in comparison with the old map of the continent will save many words. It shows no more Mississippi; the Gulf of Mexico and Hudson Bay are united by a new Mediterranean, whose billows cover what were the undulating fields of Indiana and Ohio, the prairies, too, of Kansas, Illinois, Iowa, Dakota, Minnesota and Manitoba, not to speak of Louisiana and the States on the lower Mississippi. This new sea has only been explored of late, for its features have only just begun to be established with permanency, its gulfs are uncharted still, and only here and there