

The Appalachians of the Eastern Townships follow the normal northeast-southwest course, but in Gaspé, as every one knows, they swing about into a curve like a swan's neck or the upper line of the letter S. There the northern mountains end at Cape Gaspé on the land but their vanishing point can be followed some 15 miles off to sea southeast, to the rocky shoal known on the charts as the "American Bank". This mountain ridge or orogenic axis at the north is unlike that of the Appalachian ranges at the south. The ridges of these ancient mountains cross Nova Scotia in the normal trend; their southwesterly extension off New England is largely buried beneath the sea, and to the northeast they continue on their course across Newfoundland. Looking at the sketch map adjoining, one sees the different curves of these mountain axes at north and south and between them an area which we must believe was less involved in the profounder or axial movement of these disturbances—the region of central and northern New Brunswick. We are speaking of times and conditions when there was no Gulf of St. Lawrence, when the elevation of the mountains had brought, if not quite all, at least most of the land now at the bottom of the Gulf, above the water line and the continent extended without break from the present eastern shores out to the islands and across to Newfoundland. For long this ancient coast line was a series of mountain folds between which the ocean waters entered in broad channels southwestward, laying down the deposits of their own time in their due succession. But from the time the most ancient of these mountain folds were made, when the ridges at the north took on their singular curvature, the whole area between their end and the mountain axes to the south became an area of weakness and instability. This sigmoid curve at the north in a factor of profound meaning in the making of the Gulf. It seems to be due to the recoil, as one might say, of the softer rocks in their pressure against the irresistible Canadian Shield, so that the line of fracture or fault was deflected at its outer end southward in such a