

Meanwhile, as the ice retreated, its contained masses of earth and stones were deposited at random on the surface of the country, only to become submerged, either in the great inland seas of fresh water, or in arms of the ocean which everywhere began to invade the country. Here they were sorted, rearranged, and deposited in beds of clay, sand, or of sand and bowlders mixed, according as the water was still, running, or torrential. Thus the immense arable plains which line the banks of the St. Lawrence were accumulated, and the same origin may be ascribed to all the rich river-bottoms of New England.

As for the terraces of drift which mount, step by step, to heights of five hundred feet on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the highest of them, like their smaller representatives on New England streams, are but the remains of deposits of the Champlain age, laid down at a time when the quantity of water escaping from the ice, together with the subsidence of the land, were both at their maxima. Later on, a second upheaval of the continent took place. The ocean withdrew to its present level, the lakes emptied themselves of their surplus waters, and the rivers, digging, with more powerful streams than those of the present day, through the detritus which filled their valleys, scooped out their existing beds, leaving upon their banks the terraces which witness to their earlier and prodigious volume. Concluding this short sketch of the origin of arable soil in Canada and New England, we arrive at the present or "recent" period of the geologist, having reviewed a lapse of time which sober estimates measure by at least two hundred thousand years. Such was the character of Nature's preparations for the use and occupation of North America by man, whose way in the New World has been smoothed for him chiefly by ice.

But, some reader may ask, is not this story a work of the imagination, a pure fancy, having no solid basis in fact? Well, we are out upon the Atlantic now, the blue Laurentides, with their softly rounded contours and stair-like terraces, are left far behind, and already we have passed the snow-crowned coasts of Labrador, Anticosti, and Newfoundland. Although it is mid-July, a cold sea is under our keel, a biting wind nips us on deck, and, night after night, we shiver while we watch and wonder at the arch of pale aurora crowning the northern sky. Yet we are scarcely north of the latitude of London, and only a few degrees south of us, the *Adriatic*, as we learn later, is enduring tropical heat while measuring steps with us on the voyage from New York to Liverpool. Meanwhile certain conclusive answers to the question I have put in the reader's mouth come upon us unawares. It was on July 10th, in lat. 50° 41' N., and long. 58° 2' W., that the *Polynesian* fell in with a train of magnificent icebergs, floating majestically with the polar current right