

## DEVONIAN ERA.

**SYNONYMY.** — Old Red Sandstone Series (from the rocks in Scotland), British Geologists before 1839. Devonian system, Sedgwick and Murchison, in a paper on the Classification of the older rocks of Devonshire and Cornwall, *Ann. Phil.*, April, 1839. Old Red Sandstone, or Devonian system, Lyell, *Elements of Geol.*, 1841. Devonian, of later geologists, Système Devonien, or Période Devonienne, Beudant, D'Orbigny, Lapparent. Devonische Formation, of the Germans. Devonian, International Congress of Geologists.

As the era of the Upper Silurian passed quietly into that of the Devonian, no mountain range marks the interval between them, and no abrupt transition is apparent in the rocks or in the world's fauna. The Devonian was eminently a transition era as regards land vegetation, but the culminant time of aquatic Vertebrates — Fishes. The land population was low grade, it comprising only Myriapods, Spiders with the related Scorpions, and Insects; and not the higher Insects, since there were no conspicuous flowers over the land. Terrestrial Mollusks also may have been in existence, but evidence of this has not yet been reported. The Devonian seas contained, in general, similar Invertebrate forms to those of the Silurian, but with proportionally fewer Trilobites, a profusion of Corals and Brachiopods, along with new forms of Cephalopods in the Goniatites and related species.

## NORTH AMERICAN.

## GENERAL FEATURES OF THE CONTINENT.

The map of North America, representing its condition at the commencement of the Upper Silurian, gives a good general idea, so far as has been learned, of the continental seas and land at the opening of the Devonian era. There is the same uncertainty, or error, it may be called, with regard to the emerging lands over the Western Interior and Rocky Mountain region; the map fails to indicate them, because the limits of such areas have not been fully ascertained. These limits will in part always remain in doubt, unless determined by deep borings; because absence of formations from the region of outcrops about Archæan mountains is far from being proof of absence beneath the plains between the mountains, or 50 miles or so distant from the mountains. It is, however, almost certain that in the Devonian era the Silurian island, covering much of Missouri, extended southward and westward over a large part of Arkansas and Texas, and beyond, as referred to on page 537. The Silurian islands of Tennessee and the Cincinnati region (C and T on the map, page 536) were still islands. A marked feature of the Continental seas is the half-confined Northeast Bay, of the *Eastern Interior*; and it has special importance in this era, since a large part of the described Devonian beds were deposited within it and owe to its varying conditions their characteristics.