

After sloping gradually to a depth of 500 fathoms to the westward of the coast of Ireland in lat. 52° N., the bottom suddenly dips to 1,700 fathoms at the rate of about fifteen to nineteen feet in the 100; and from this point to within about 200 miles of the coast of Newfoundland when it begins to shoal again, there is a vast undulating submarine plain, averaging about 2,000 fathoms in depth below the surface—the ‘telegraph plateau.’

A valley about 500 miles wide, and with a mean depth of 2,500 fathoms, stretches from off the southwest coast of Ireland, along the coast of Europe dipping into the Bay of Biscay, past the Strait of Gibraltar, and along the west coast of Africa. Opposite the Cape de Verde Islands it seems to merge into a slightly deeper trough, which occupies the axis of the South Atlantic and passes into the Antarctic Sea. A nearly similar valley curves round the coast of North America, about 2,000 fathoms in depth off Newfoundland and Labrador, and becoming considerably deeper to the southward; where it follows the outline of the coast of the States and the Bahamas and Windward Islands, and finally joins the central trough of the South Atlantic off the coast of Brazil, with a depth of 2,500 fathoms. A wide nearly level elevated tract with a mean depth below the surface of 1,500 fathoms, nearly equal in area to the continent of Africa, extends southwards from Iceland as far as the 20th parallel of north latitude. This plateau culminates at the parallel of 40° north latitude in the volcanic group of the Açores. Pico, the highest point of the Açores, is 7,613 feet (1,201 fathoms) above the level of the sea, which gives from