

very few exceptions, belong to species still living in the adjacent seas; a proof that when the limestone was formed, the same condition of the basin of the Mediterranean existed as at present, and continued uninfluenced by the elevation of this portion of its ancient bed. In other parts of Sicily, limestone, blue marl, with shelly calcareous breccia, and gypseous clay, intermingled with volcanic products, occur. The *Val di Noto* is particularly mentioned by Mr. Lyell, as presenting a remarkable assemblage of deposits; * and I will quote his lucid and highly graphic description. "The rising grounds of the Val di Noto are separated from the cone of Etna, and the marine strata on which it rests, by the plain of Catania, which is elevated above the level of the sea, and watered by the Simeto. The traveller passing from Catania to Syracuse, by way of Sortina and the valley of Pentalica, may observe many deep sections of these modern formations, which rise into hills from one to two thousand feet in height, entirely composed of sedimentary strata, with recent shells; these are associated with volcanic rocks. The whole series of strata, exclusively of the volcanic products, is divisible into three principal groups. 1. The *uppermost*, compact limestone in laminated strata, with recent shells; total thickness, from 700 to 800 feet. 2. Calcareous sandstone, with schistose limestone. 3. Laminated marls and blue clays."

* Principles of Geology, vol. iii. p. 388.