

the nature of sedimentary rocks, which constitute so considerable a portion of the crust of the earth. They are nothing else than accumulations of transported and deposited matters, which often enclose relics of life, especially such as have belonged to the inhabitants of the ocean.

But if the subject be new to my reader, the account given will seem to be strange and inadequate. Whence, he will be disposed to ask, can there have been obtained a supply of sedimentary detritus sufficient to constitute the material of islands and continents? The objection is natural, but not insurmountable. Our most fertile lands bear evident marks of being transported matter. Such are the corses of the Forth and Tay, and such, on a scale more gigantic, are the plains of Assyria and Bengal, and the deltas of great rivers, as of the Niger and the Mississippi. Demerara has this character, and may be considered a carse of the Orinoco. The river Nile, alone, is estimated to carry down to the sea every year above three thousand millions of cubic feet of detritus, or as much as would build forty pyramids of the largest dimensions. In