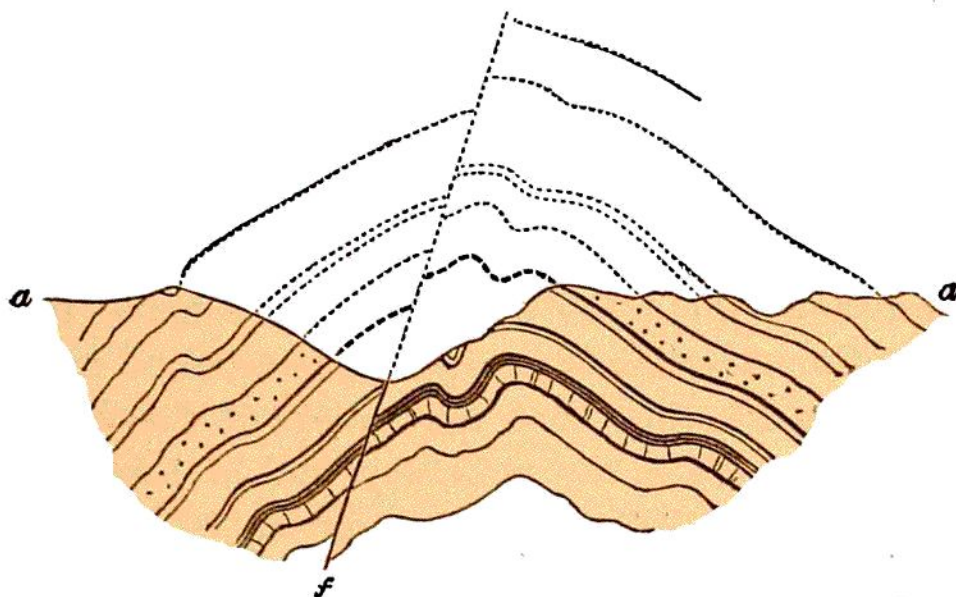


in some of the valleys, these faults when formed were, as far as regards the present surface, thousands of feet deep in the earth. All they could do might have been

FIG. 98.



*a* Present surface of the ground.

The dotted lines show the continuation of an anticlinal curve broken by a fault *f*.

The dotted lines above the surface *a a* represent a certain amount of strata removed by denudation.

to establish lines of weakness along which subsequent denudation may have excavated valleys.

The real explanation of such cases as those of the Wye and the Usk is this. At some period, now uncertain, the beds of the Old Red Sandstone, well seen in the escarpment of the Beacons of Brecon, *a*, and the Caermarthen Fans, once spread much farther westward, forming a great plain, *b b* (fig. 99), the result of earlier denudations. This plain sloped gently eastward, and the dotted line shows the general state of old outcrops of the strata. The river then ran over ground perhaps even higher than the tops of the hills of the present escarpment, and by degrees it cut itself a