

3. *Proofs of geological changes in the past.* Throughout the Mediterranean basin the profusion of well-preserved marine shells in the upraised younger formations which underlie the lowlands and crop out along the sides of the hills, must have attracted the notice of the earliest inhabitants. Accordingly we find in Greek literature frequent allusion to them and to the inference deduced from them that many tracts of land had once lain beneath the sea. Xenophanes of Colophon (B.C. 614) is recorded to have written concerning sea-shells found among the inland hills in Malta and elsewhere, and to have concluded from them that they prove periodical submergences of the dry land, wherein man and his dwelling-places have been involved. Xanthus the Lydian (B.C. 464) is quoted by Strabo as having seen shells like cockles and scallops, far from the sea, in Armenia and Lower Phrygia, and having inferred, from this evidence and that of scattered salt-lakes, that these regions had once been submerged beneath the sea.¹ Herodotus noticed petrified sea-shells in the hills of Egypt, especially those near the oasis of Jupiter Ammon, and he too concluded from them, and from the saline crust on the ground, that the sea had once spread over Lower Egypt.² Some centuries later these observations were confirmed by Eratosthenes (B.C. 276-196) who noted vast quantities of marine shells 2000 or 3000 stadia from the sea and for a distance of 3000 stadia along the road to the Ammon oasis, together with beds of salt and saline springs.³ Strato (B.C. 288) also is quoted by Strabo as having come to the

¹ Strabo, I. iii. 4.

² II. 12.

³ Quoted by Strabo, *loc. cit.*