

in the 'unfossiliferous' Morte Slates. A few years later (1896-97), he announced that *Stricklandia* and other fossils of Silurian character had been found in the same rocks. The fossils were described by the Rev. G. F. Whidborne, who has so largely furthered our knowledge of the Devonian fossils of Devonshire, and Hicks then contended that the Morte Slates were older rocks thrust up by faults. Thus again the Devonian question was brought into prominence; and although the identification of the fossils, which were poorly preserved, has been severely criticised, it was admitted that doubt had been thrown on the regularity of the North Devon succession.

The sculpturing of scenery has ever been an interesting subject of study, albeit one of controversy. Ramsay in 1846 had published his essay 'On the Denudation of South Wales and the adjacent counties of England,' in which the probability of great plains of marine erosion was first broached.¹

Jukes in 1862 brought before the Society his celebrated paper on the mode of formation of some of the river-valleys in the south of Ireland, wherein he explained that the streams must have originated on a plain, uplifted so as to give initial direction to their flow. Across this plain the main channels were excavated, while the bordering features were due to the effects of subaërial denudation on rocks of different lithological character.

In a postscript to that paper he mentioned, among other instances, the ravine of the Avon at Bristol as likely to have originated in a similar way. He also referred to the Weald of Kent, and asked

whether the Chalk, when once bared by marine denudation, which perhaps removed it entirely from the centre of the district, has not been largely dissolved by atmospheric action, and whether the lateral river-valleys that now escape through ravines traversing the ruined walls of Chalk that surround the Weald, may not be the expression of the former river-

¹ *Mem. Geol. Survey*, i. 297, 327.