

the tongue and even to the fingers: it is dull, opaque, soft, light (its specific gravity being only 2.3), and it always occurs massive. A specimen analysed by Bucholz, yielded lime 56.5, carbonic acid 43, water 0.5. Magnesia has been detected in some of the French chalk, and may perhaps occasionally occur in that of England. Such are its mineralogical characters, and in its purest state it may be considered only as a carbonate of lime, liable, from the slight cohesion of its particles, to absorb a small quantity of moisture. Sometimes however it has been found to contain a very small proportion of alumine, but it frequently involves a considerable portion of sand, of which it may be freed by pounding and washing. The less pure varieties are yellowish and even yellow, and are sometimes so hard as to return a ringing sound to a blow from the hammer, as will be perceived in the subsequent account of some of the beds near Dover. Occasionally some of the lower beds of this formation are of a reddish or red colour, probably derived from the presence of a small quantity of iron, as in Lincolnshire, and at its northern termination in Yorkshire. (P.)

The specks of green earth more commonly found in the lower than in the upper beds, are probably derived, like the red variety, from the presence of iron in different states of oxidation. The lower beds of the chalk occasionally increase in hardness\* until they afford a tolerably compact limestone; sometimes, however, these harder beds alternate, even near the bottom of the series. C.)

Pliny describes this substance under the title 'Creta argentaria,' and adds, 'petitur ex alto in centenas pedes actis plerumque puteis, ore angustatis intus, ut in metallis spatiente vena. Hac maxime Britannia utitur.' This very method is used in Hertfordshire, and other parts of the kingdom at present. The farmer sinks a pit, and, in the terms of the miner, drives out on all sides, leaving a sufficient roof, and draws up the chalk in buckets through a narrow mouth. Pliny informs us in his remarks on the British marles, that they will last 80 years, and that there is not an example of any person being obliged to marle the same land twice in his life. An experienced farmer, whom Mr. Pennant met with in Hertfordshire, assured him that he had about 30 years before made use of this manure on a field of his, and that were he to live the period mentioned by the Roman naturalist, he should have no occasion to repeat it. Pennant's Chester, p. 303—(G. Notes.)

According to Smeaton, chalk, when well burnt, will make as good lime as the hardest marble. The harder kinds are used in building, as in the Isle of Wight. (G. Notes.) That of the