

## Section IX.

### *Attempt to trace the arenaceous formations through the Midland counties. \**

The iron sand cannot, it is believed, be pursued in Dorsetshire much to the west of the point to which it has been traced in the last section, its line of basset being entirely overlaid in that direction by the green sand, which thus becomes immediately incumbent upon older formations: nor is it again to be distinctly recognised until we arrive at the neighbourhood of Devizes in Wiltshire. The course of the green sand through this interval has been already sufficiently indicated in the section dedicated to that formation; but at this point, where both the sands are again distinctly to be traced, it becomes important to bestow on them a more particular attention, in order to connect the history of these formations in the southern and midland counties. We regret, however, that we can do little more at present than point out the subject for future examination.

The green sand here extends throughout the vale of Pewsey; and its lowest beds may be seen in the canal locks near Devizes, resting on the Weald clay. The iron sand may be traced farther to the west, rising on the banks of the hills of the coral rag range towards Bowood.

Proceeding to the north-east, under the northern foot of the Marlborough downs, the traces of these formations become much obscured.

Beneath the great escarpment of the chalky range, is a sub-escarpment, or lower terrace, occupied by beds very analagous to those which occur in the chalk marle at Merstham and at Selborne. Beneath this sub-escarpment may be traced beds of green sand, well characterised both by their texture and fossils, but unimportant in thickness and extent. In the valley beneath, where we should naturally look for the course of the iron sand, almost every thing is concealed by alluvial debris, and a few insulated points of this formation are alone visible.

The same condition of things extends through the whole vale of the White horse; but the traces of decided green sand cannot be observed much farther east than Wantage. Here the sub-escarpment of the indurated chalk marle beds assumes a greater height and importance, rising on the banks of the Thames opposite Dorchester into two conspicuous conical hills,

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