

with two or three thin beds of red marl sometimes containing gypsum. The scarp edge of this limestone, which is sparsely fossiliferous, faces west, and overlooks the lower undulations of the Coal-measure area.

There are other patches of Permian sandstones, marls, breccias, and conglomerates, in the South of Scotland, the Vale of Eden, and the West of Cumberland, and they are also here and there present on the borders of the Lancashire, North Wales, Shropshire, and all the Midland coal-fields, and on the Silurian rocks of the Abberley and Malvern Hills. Throughout all the districts enumerated above, these Permian strata chiefly consist of red sandstones, conglomerates, and marls, and part of them, in the districts of the Malvern and Abberley Hills, near Enville, and at Bromsgrove, consist of consolidated true Permian glacial boulder-clays.

The Permian beds form the uppermost members of the so-called Palæozoic or old-life period—a term somewhat unphilosophical, in so far that it partly conveys a false impression of a life essentially distinct from that of later times. But it is at present convenient, for all geologists know when the word palæozoic is used what formations are meant, embracing all the strata from those of Permian date down to the lower Laurentian. During the time they were forming, this and other parts of the world suffered many oscillations of level, accompanied by denudations, as shown in previous chapters.

Before the end of this Palæozoic epoch, the Permian beds were deposited in great inland salt lakes, analogous to the Caspian Sea and other salt lakes in Central Asia, at the present day. That area gives the best modern idea of the state of much of the world during Permian times.