

currents and waves. This serves, in some measure, as a protection to the solid rock below, and must be cut away by the ocean before that rock can be exposed anew. While, therefore, elevatory movements tend on the whole to accelerate the action of subaerial denudation, they in some degree check the natural and ordinary influence of the sea in wasting the land. Again, the influence of movements of depression will probably be found to tend in an opposite direction. The lowering of the general level of the land will, as a rule, help to lessen the rainfall, and consequently the rate of subaerial denudation. At the same time, it will aid the action of the waves, by removing under their level the detritus produced by them and heaped up on the beach, and by thus bringing constantly within reach of the sea fresh portions of the land-surface. But even with these advantages in favor of marine denudation, the balance of power will, on the whole, remain always on the side of the subaerial agents.

4. *Marine Denudation—its final result*

The general result of the erosive action of the sea on the land is the production of a submarine plain. As the sea advances, the sites of successive lines of beach pass under low-water mark. Where erosion is in full operation, the littoral belt, as far down as wave-action has influence, is ground down by moving detritus. This result may often be instructively observed, on a small scale, upon rocky shores where sections like that in Fig. 176 occur. We can conceive that, should no change of level between sea and land take place, the sea might slowly eat its way far into the land, and produce a gently sloping, yet apparently almost horizontal selvage of plain, covered permanently by the