

remains, which, it is held, they would have done had they owed their origin to sea-water. I am, however, not sure that the objection is particularly strong. Let us remember that the organisms of the entire system in England are but few and ill preserved, and that the marls which alternate with the salt have failed to preserve organisms at all; while the shells of the superior band occur but as mere casts in an incoherent clay. Let us further remember what takes place in the upper pots and hollows of our rocky shores, when, at the height of a stream-tide, they receive their fill of sea-water mingled with sea-wrack, and are then left during the neaps to present their festering contents undisturbed and undiluted to the influence of the sun. Their waters assume a turbid blue color and a strong fetid odor, and become in this state so powerful a solvent, that a few warm days converts the wrack which they contain into an impalpable mud. Further, it may be deemed a fact worthy of consideration, as at least not hostile to the sea-water theory, that the rock-salt of England contains, like the bilge-water of these tide-forsaken pots, a considerable admixture of iodine,—a substance which enters largely into the composition of the sponges and marine algæ.

Single masses of salt, like those of Cordova, might come to be elaborated by a greatly more simple process. The Mediterranean is not an intertropical sea; but what, notwithstanding, would be the probable result, were it to be cut off from the Atlantic by some such bar of rock as severed the *Bahr Assal* from the Gulf of Tadjura? There is no other inland sea that, in proportion to its extent of surface, receives such scanty contributions of river water; and, to supply the waste of evaporation from its million of square miles of surface, its deep throat is continually gulping up the waters of the Atlantic at the rate of many thousand tons hourly. A powerful current flows