

gen, carbon-dioxide, or with some hydrocarbon gas. Occasionally remains of minute forms of vegetable and animal life, bituminous wood, corals, shells, crustaceans, and fish teeth are met with in it. Owing to its ready solubility, it is not found at the surface in moist climates. It has been formed by the evaporation of very saline water in inclosed basins—a process going on now in many salt-lakes (Great Salt Lake of Utah, Dead Sea), and on the surface of some deserts (Kirgis Steppe). In different parts of the world, deposits of salt have probably always been in progress from very early geological times. Saliferous formations of Tertiary and Secondary age are abundant in Europe, while in America they occur even in rocks as old as the Upper Silurian period, and among the Punjab Hills in still more ancient strata.¹⁵³

Carnallite—a chloride of potassium and magnesium (p. 144). It occurs in a bed 20 to 30 metres thick which overlies the rock-salt in the saliferous series of Stassfurt, and has been found in other old salt deposits, as well as among the “salt-erns” or “salines” along the Mediterranean coast where the water of that inland sea is evaporated in the manufacture of salt. It so closely resembles rock-salt that it was formerly included with it, but it is much less frequently met with. It is a valuable source for the manufacture of potash-salts.

Limestone (Calcaire, Kalkstein)—essentially a mass of calcium-carbonate, sometimes nearly pure, and entirely or almost entirely soluble in hydrochloric acid, sometimes loaded with sand, clay, or other intermixture. Few rocks vary more in texture and composition. It may be a hard, close-grained mass, breaking with a splintery or conchoidal fracture; or a crystalline rock built up of fine crystalline grains of calcite, and resembling loaf-sugar in color and texture; or a dull earthy friable chalk-like deposit; or a compact, massive, finely-granular rock resembling a close-grained sandstone or freestone. As its hardness is about 3, it can easily be scratched with a knife and the white powder gives a copious effervescence with acid. The specific gravity naturally varies according to the impurity of the rock, ranging from 2.5 to 2.8. The colors, too, vary extensively, the most common being shades of blue-gray and cream-color passing into white. Some limestones are highly siliceous, the calcareous matter having been accompanied with silica

¹⁵³ On salt deposits of various ages, see A. C. Ramsay, Brit. Assoc. Rep. 1880, p. 10; also Index, sub voc. “Salt Deposits.”