It has already been pointed out, that though conformable rocks may usually be presumed to have followed each other continuously without any great disturbance of geographical conditions, we cannot always be safe in such an inference. But an unconformability leaves no room to doubt that it marks a decided break in the continuity of deposit. Hence no kind of geological structure is of higher importance in the interpretation of the history of the stratified formations of a country. In rare cases, an unconformability may occur between two horizontal groups of strata. On the left side of Fig. 322, for instance, the beds *d* follow horizontally upon the horizontal beds (*a*). Were merely a limited section visible, disclosing only this relation of the rocks, the two groups *a* and *d* might be mistaken for conformable portions of one continuous series. Further examination, however, would lead to the detection of evidence that the limestone *a* had been upraised and unequally denuded before the deposition of the overlying strata *b c d*. This denudation would show that the apparent conformability was merely local and accidental, the older rock having really been upraised and worn down before the formation of the newer. In such a case, the upheaval must have been so uniform over some tracts as not to disturb the horizontality of the lower strata, so that the younger deposits lie in apparent conformability upon them.

As a rule, however, it seldom happens that movements of this kind have taken place over an extensive area so equably as not to produce a want of coincidence somewhere between the older and newer rocks. Most frequently, the older formations have been tilted at various angles, or even placed on end. They have likewise been irregularly and often enormously worn down. Hence in-