

by the engineers for military works. The softer limestones are more frequently used for ordinary buildings. The stone is cut out of the quarry in rectangular blocks by means of a peculiarly constructed saw, and the blocks, at first soft, harden rapidly, like some of the white limestones of the Paris basin, on being exposed to the air.

As I have already indicated, this limestone is entirely what General Nelson aptly calls an "Æolian formation." The fine coral-sand, which surrounds the islands to a distance of about twenty miles, is washed in by the sea; it is then caught at certain exposed points by the prevailing winds and blown into sand-hills, often forty or fifty feet in height. The sand is spread over the surface in a certain sense uniformly, but that uniformity is liable to be interfered with by any thing which for a moment affects the direction or force of the wind; for instance, the sand is blown up and heaped round any obstacle, or it may be swept out by irregular gusts into hollows which are afterward filled up by a secondary series of layers, or a total change may be made on the whole arrangement of the surface by a subtropical rain-flood. All the appearances produced with great rapidity by such causes are, of course, perpetuated in the rock which is formed by the consolidation of the sand, so that we have often repeated again and again in the distance of a quarter of a mile all the phenomena—denudation, unconformability, curving, folding, synclinal and anticlinal axes, etc.—which are produced in real rocks, if I may use the expression, by combined aqueous and metamorphic action, extending over incalculable periods of time. The principal roads, which are extremely good, as they are laid out and maintained partly with a view to military operations, frequently pass through deep cuttings, and give excellent geological sections, exhibiting an amount of confusion sufficient to perplex the most experienced geologist, if he did not hold the key. The general tendency of the layers of sand to wrap themselves