

fathoms at a distance of seven miles; and to the southward of 2250 fathoms at ten miles. The only direction in which there would seem to be a series of banks is along an extension of the axis of the reef to the south-west. We anchored for a night in 30 fathoms water on this line about twenty miles from the edge of the reef, and a shoal is mentioned at a still greater distance in the same direction. About three hundred miles farther on, however, a sounding is given of 2950 fathoms, and there seems little probability that there is any connection between the Bermudas reef and the Bahamas. What the basis on which the Bermudas reef rests may be, we have no means of telling; in fact, its having the form of an atoll precludes the possibility of our doing so. There seems to be little doubt, from Darwin's beautiful generalization, which has been fully indorsed by Dana and other competent observers, that the atoll form is due to the entire disappearance by subsidence of the island round which the reef was originally formed. The abruptness and isolation of this peak, which runs up a solitary cone to a height about equal to that of Mont Blanc, are certainly unusual; probably the most reasonable hypothesis may be that the kernel is a volcanic mountain comparable in character with Pico in the Açores or the Peak of Teneriffe.

There is only one kind of rock in Bermudas. The islands consist from end to end of a white granular limestone, here and there becoming gray or slightly pink, usually soft, and in some places quite friable, so that it can be broken down with the ferrule of an umbrella; but in some places, as on the shore at Hungry Bay, at Painter's Vale, and along the ridge between Harrington Sound and Castle Harbor, very hard and compact, almost crystalline, and capable of taking a fair polish. This hard limestone is called on the islands the "base rock," and is supposed to be older than the softer varieties, and to lie under them, which is certainly not always the case. It makes an excellent building stone, and is quarried in various places