

exceedingly interesting, as we had now arrived upon the extreme verge of the terrace, which broke down suddenly into a horseshoe-shaped amphitheatre, the steep sides covered with bushes and trees, to the bottom of a valley some 300 feet below, which drained through a narrow and richly-wooded gorge into the neighbouring sea.

This scooping-out of the country was due to the action of water, and the same process was gradually wearing away the upper plateaux, which by absorbing rain became undermined as it percolated through and dissolved the marly substratum. The foundation of the rock surface being softened by the water, oozed in the form of mud, and was washed down the steep declivities, followed by the breaking-down of the unsupported upper stratum. This district was an admirable illustration of the decay and denudation of surface which has produced the plain of Messaria, to which I have already alluded, but as no sufficient area exists at a lower level the deposit of soil is carried to the sea. We now arrived at a dangerous pass that defied all attempts to descend by carts. A succession of zigzags at an inclination of about one foot in two and a half led down the soil of a cliff into a succession of exceedingly narrow valleys about three hundred feet below. In many places this narrow path had been washed away by the same natural process that was gradually reducing the upper level, and in the sharp angles of the zigzags there were awkward gaps with only a few inches of slippery soil rendered soapy by the morning's rain, a slip of the original path having crumbled down the precipice below. The animals were wonderfully careful, and although a nervous person might have shuddered at some