such remarks concerning them, as may serve to illustrate their importance or the interest connected with them, whether of a general or local character.

Turning our attention, in the first place, to that portion of our state usually designated as the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and overlooking all those subjects, in which it abounds, of a merely speculative interest in Geology, the observer cannot fail to be struck with the immense advantages which its *agricultural* interests would derive from a minute investigation of the mineral constitution of its soil, and a careful research into the nature and extent of the resources which it offers within itself for improvement or amendment. If the observation be confined for the present, to that portion of the Eastern Shore which lies south of the river Elk, it is found comprising an extensive and irregular deposite of gravel, sand and clay; supported, perhaps, in its whole extent, by a substratum of clay, enveloping innumerable reliquiæ of many genera of testaceous animals. This substratum, the value of which is to a certain extent known, is commonly denominated, and not improperly so, *beds of shell marl;* its utility for agricultural purposes—according to the species of shells which it encloses, the degree of decomposition of these shells, and the nature of the cement by which they are held together—being in some instances greater than, in most equal to that of the mineral species, described in systematic works as offering two varieties; namely, indurated or *stone marl* and *earthly marl.*

These beds of shell marl occur at variable depths. They are sometimes covered by a thick stratum of gravel or sand, measuring from ten to thirty feet and upwards in thickness. At other times they reach