

## CHAPTER 8

### LIMESTONE REVEALING THE PAST

Most people in North America have long been familiar with limestone as it comes from the many quarries which are found in most of the United States and Canada. An occasional person notices the presence of some fossils in the pieces he examines, but those who have been sufficiently inquisitive to wonder about the origin and nature of this form of rock have been all too few. Information on the nature of both limestone and dolostone is almost completely missing from current Bible-science writings. These types of rocks are often thought of as having been formed merely by the rapid piling up of huge numbers of seashells and other skeletal materials by flood waters. Some, not knowing the extent or fossiliferous nature of the deposits of these rock types in the earth, have even suggested that they were rapidly precipitated out of the water during the Biblical Flood. Neither of these methods could produce even a small proportion of the limestone and dolostone which we know exists in the crust of the earth. The latter method (rapid precipitation) is not only completely inadequate to produce the known quantities of rock, but could not form the many very pure deposits which exist. Pure layers of rock can not be precipitated out of muddy flood waters, nor can fossils be formed in this manner. There are occasional, small deposits of precipitated limestone known, but these give every evidence of having been formed in very clear, quiet water, over considerable periods of time. (This variety is called "lithographic limestone," because of its uniform and pure nature, which makes it suitable for lithographic printing.)

Both the wide distribution and the abundance of limestone and dolostone upon the earth are truly amazing. Most of us know of at least a few places where "limerock" is obtained from open pit quarries, but we usually are oblivious to the fact that there are thousands of feet of thickness of it deeply buried underneath large parts of the continents and in parts of the sea floors. It is appropriate at this point to explain that the term "limerock" is commonly used for both limestone and dolostone, in industrial and agricultural circles. However, the chemical difference between the two, which has been pointed out in previous sections of this book, is significant.

Numerous calculations of the abundance and distribution of carbonate rocks (limestone and dolostone) have been made during the past half-century. These estimates are based largely on the amounts which are observed in limestone outcrop areas, and in deep-well drilling records. Sanders and Friedman give the following informative statement (using "limestone" in the general sense which includes dolostone):

Limestone occurs in all parts of the world and at all levels in the stratigraphic column, though probably it is less common in ancient Precambrian strata. Limestones have been