

incline to one side, by which motion, the perpendicular cracks become extended.

I have not yet mentioned those large openings which are found in rocks and mountains, and which must have been produced by great sinkings, as of immense caverns, unable longer to support the weight they were encumbered with, but these intervals were very different from perpendicular fissures; they appear to be vacancies opened by the hand of Nature for the communication of nations. In this manner all vacancies in large mountains and divisions, by straits in the sea, seem to present themselves; such as the straits of Thermopylae, the ports of Caucasus, the Cordeliers, the extremity of the straits of Gibraltar, the entrance of the Hellespont, &c. these could not have been occasioned by the simple separation by drying of matter, but by considerable part of the lands themselves being sunk, swallowed up, or overturned.

These great sinkings, though produced by accidental causes, hold a first place in the principal circumstances in the history of the earth, and not a little contributed to change the face of the globe; the greatest part of them have been produced by subterraneous fires, whose
explosions