

regions of eternal snow, or in torrid climes—in the rocks and mountains, or in the verdant plains—by the agency of heat, or by the effect of cold—of drought, or of moisture—of steam, or of vapour—by the abrasion of torrents and rivers—by inundations of the ocean—or by volcanic eruptions—still the work of destruction, in every varying character, was apparent. And on the other hand we perceived that amidst all these processes of decay and desolation, perpetual renovation was at the same time going on,—and that Nature was repairing her ruins, and accumulating fresh materials for new islands and continents; and that innumerable living instruments were employed to consolidate, and build up the rocky fabric of the earth; and that even the most terrific of physical phenomena, the earthquake, and the volcano, were but salutary provisions of the Supreme Cause, by which the harmony and integrity of our planet were maintained and perpetuated. The occurrence of human skeletons in modern limestone—of coins and works of art in recent breccia—and the preservation of the bones of existing species of animals, and of the leaves and branches of vegetables, in the various deposits that are in progress, incontestably prove that enduring memorials of the present state of animated nature will be transmitted to future ages. When the beds of the existing seas shall be elevated above the waters, and covered with woods and forests—when the deltas of our rivers shall be converted into