

ing earthquakes. I think, however, this excess of panic may be partly attributed to a want of habit in governing their fear, as it is not a feeling they are ashamed of. Indeed, the natives do not like to see a person indifferent. I heard of two Englishmen who, sleeping in the open air during a smart shock, knowing that there was no danger, did not rise. The natives cried out indignantly, "Look at those heretics, they will not even get out of their beds!"

I spent some days in examining the step-formed terraces of shingle, first noticed by Captain B. Hall, and believed by Mr. Lyell to have been formed by the sea, during the gradual rising of the land. This certainly is the true explanation, for I found numerous shells of existing species on these terraces. Five narrow, gently sloping, fringe-like terraces rise one behind the other, and where best developed are formed of shingle: they front the bay, and sweep up both sides of the valley. At Guasco, north of Coquimbo, the phenomenon is displayed on a much grander scale, so as to strike with surprise even some of the inhabitants. The terraces are there much broader, and may be called plains; in some parts there are six of them, but generally only five; they run up the valley for thirty-seven miles from the coast. These step-formed terraces or fringes closely resemble those in the valley of S. Cruz, and except in being on a smaller scale, those great ones along the whole coast-line of Patagonia. They have undoubtedly been formed by the denuding power of the sea, during long periods of rest in the gradual elevation of the continent.

Shells of many existing species not only lie on the surface of the terraces at Coquimbo (to a height of 250 feet), but are imbedded in a friable calcareous rock, which in some places is as much as between twenty and thirty feet in thickness, but is of little extent. These modern beds rest on an ancient tertiary formation containing shells, apparently all extinct. Although I examined so many hundred miles of coast on the Pacific, as well as Atlantic side of the continent,