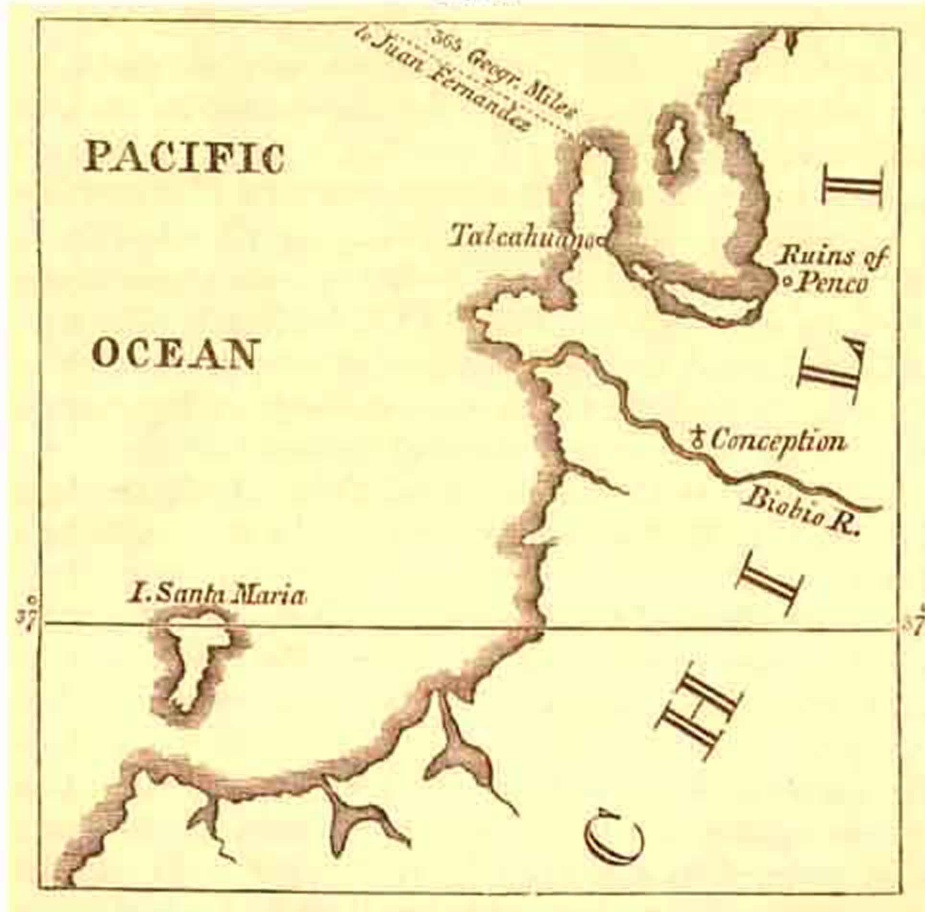


not uniform, though generally from south-east to north-west. The earth was not quiet for three days after the great shock, and more than 300 shocks were counted between the 20th February and the 4th of March. The loose earth of the valley of the Biobio was everywhere parted from the solid rocks which bound the plain, there being an opening between them from an inch to a foot in width.

Fig. 53.



“For some days after the 20th of February, the sea at Talcahuano,” says Captain Fitz Roy, “did not rise to the usual marks by four or five feet vertically. When walking on the shore, even at high water, beds of dead mussels, numerous chitons, and limpets, and withered sea-weed, still adhering, though lifeless, to the rocks on which they had lived, every where met the eye.” But this difference in the relative level of the land and sea gradually diminished, till in the middle of April the water rose again to within two feet of the former high-water mark. It might be supposed that these changes of level merely indicated a temporary disturbance in the set of the currents or in the height of the tides at Talcahuano; but, on considering what occurred in the neighbouring island of Santa Maria, Captain Fitz Roy concluded that the land had been raised four or five feet in February, and that it had returned in April to within two or three feet of its former level.

Santa Maria, the island just alluded to, is about seven miles long and two broad, and about twenty-five miles south-west of Concepcion. (See Map, fig. 53.) The phenomena observed there are most important. “It appeared,” says Captain Fitz Roy, who visited Santa Maria twice, the first time at the end of March, and afterwards in the be-