

10. And, apart from any violent changes in the place of the Ocean, it must be obvious that the surface of the Globe is not in a state of permanency. There is a constant wearing of the land. Even its hardest materials could not resist for ever the incessant operation of the air and the moisture and the frost to which they are subjected. The mighty continent would at length wax old and disappear; and the world that we now live in become a howling solitude of waters.

11. To this it now tends, and thus to all appearance must it remain through eternity, but for a change in the place of the Ocean; and a change that may happen long before the degradation of the land to its own level. A slight change in the axis of the Earth would be altogether adequate for such an effect. It is to the diurnal revolution of the Earth round its axis, that we owe the deviation of its figure from a perfect sphere. The Earth is so much flattened at the poles and so much elevated at the equator, that the former are nearer to the centre of the Earth than the latter by so many English miles. What would be the effect then if the axis of the Earth were suddenly shifted? If the polar and equinoctial regions were to change places there would be a tendency towards an elevation of these miles in the one region, and as great a depression in the other—and the more transferable parts of the Earth's surface would be the first to obey this tendency. The Ocean would rush towards the new equator. The cohesion of the solid parts, would, it is likely, offer a feeble resistance, and give way to this