

the local militia hastened to recover the treasure which had been plundered under such singular circumstances. To prevent a resumption of the emigration, the magistrates levied a severe fine from every rich family which attempted to quit the town, and punished the poor with imprisonment. But the gradual cessation of the subterranean turmoil proved still more effective in checking the emigrating tendencies of the population.

No shock or convulsion had accompanied these alarming sounds ; nor was any movement felt, either on the surface of the soil or in the neighbouring mines, at a depth of 1598 feet. But a proof that they proceeded from the earth's interior was the fact, that in the mines they were infinitely louder than above ground.

Nothing of a similar kind has since occurred at Guanaxuato.* But at Meleda, one of the islands of the Adriatic, situated off the Dalmatian coast, subterranean noises were prolonged over a period of four years ; from March 1822 to September 1826. They succeeded one another so frequently, that more than a hundred subterranean explosions were heard in one night (the 2nd to 3rd of September 1823). And so exactly did they resemble discharges of artillery, that they were at first attributed to some naval battle ; but, still continuing, were supposed to be forewarnings of an impending earthquake, which, however, did not occur. Only a slight shock was felt, which did no injury to the houses, but detached a fragment of rock from a neighbouring mountain.

The inhabitants of the island, alarmed by this accident, and dreading a volcanic outburst, demanded permission from the Austrian Government to transfer themselves in a body to the mainland. The Viennese authorities despatched on a preliminary mission of inquiry two naturalists, Franz Riepel and Paul Partsch, who succeeded in relieving the popular mind from its apprehensions of danger.

At Nakous, on the Red Sea coast, underground noises, like the tinkling of a bell, are heard at frequent intervals.

SUPERFICIAL EXTENT OF EARTHQUAKES.

An earthquake, being in reality an oscillation or progressive movement of the terrestrial crust, cannot be confined to a single point on the globe's surface, but must necessarily spread over a considerable space. There are numerous instances of its effects extending to an almost incredible distance.

Thus : the earthquake of Lisbon propagated itself over nearly a whole hemisphere ; and it has been computed that its shocks were perceptible over an extent of country four times as large as the European continent.† On the same day the ground was agitated,

* [Full details of this remarkable event are given by Alexander von Humboldt in his "Kosmos."]

† [The area disturbed was estimated at 3300 miles in length and 2700 in breadth, or nearly 9,000,000 square miles.]