

of the earth, they are none the less equally governed by invariable laws."

Seneca appears to have been much impressed by the earthquake which did so much damage in Campania on 5th February A.D. 63, for he refers to it again and again, and furnishes from the lips of eye-witnesses some interesting particulars regarding it. Thus he tells how a flock of 600 sheep were killed in the district of Pompeii, a fate which he attributes to the rise of pestilential vapours from the ground. He was informed by a most learned and serious friend that when he was in the bath the tiles on the floor were separated from each other and were then driven together again, while the water at one moment sank through the opened joints of the pavement, and thereafter boiled up again and was jerked out. The philosopher's account is the earliest detailed description of an earthquake, which has come down to us. The recentness of the event, the serious nature of the damage done, and the abundant narratives of those who had been in the midst of the calamity led him to consider the effects and causes of earthquakes more at large than had been done before his time.

After giving a graphic picture of the terror of the human mind when the ground beneath our feet is convulsed, and the one thing in the world that seemed securely fixed gives way beneath us, he ridicules the action of those who from fright deserted Campania and vowed they would never return. Where, he asks, can they promise themselves to find a more steadfast soil?¹

¹ Little did he realise the volcanic nature of the ground and the potential possibilities of destruction which were to be manifested