

suddenly arrested on a calm day, by the earth heaving and rocking beneath their feet; and in a few moments two hundred and fifty thousand of them are buried by falling houses, or the earth opening and swallowing them up. Such was the scene which that city presented in the year 526; and several times before and since that period has the like calamity fallen upon it; and twenty, forty, and sixty thousand of its inhabitants have been destroyed at each time. In the year 17 after Christ, no less than thirteen cities of Asia Minor were in like manner overwhelmed in a single night. Think of the terrible destruction that came upon Lisbon in 1755. The sun had just dissipated the fog in a warm, calm morning, when suddenly the subterranean thundering and heaving began; and in six minutes the city was a heap of ruins, and sixty thousand of the inhabitants were numbered among the dead. Hundreds had crowded upon a new quay surrounded by vessels. In a moment the earth opened beneath them, and the wharf, the vessels, and the crowd went down into its bosom; the gulf closed, the sea rolled over the spot, and no vestige of wharf, vessels, or man ever floated to the surface. How thrilling is the account left us by Kircher, who was near, of the destruction of Euphemia, in Calabria, a city of about five thousand inhabitants, in the year 1638! "After some time," says he, "the violent paroxysm of the earthquake ceasing, I stood up, and, turning my eyes to look for Euphemia, saw only a frightful black cloud. We waited till it had passed away, when nothing but a dismal and putrid lake was to be seen where the city once stood." In like manner did Port Royal, in the West Indies, sink beneath the waters, with nearly all its inhabitants, in less than one minute, in the year 1692.

Still more awful, though usually less destructive, is often the scene presented by a volcanic eruption. Imagine yourselves, for instance, upon one of the wide, elevated plains of Mexico, far from the fear of volcanoes. The earth begins to quake under your feet, and the most alarming subterranean noises admonish you of a mighty power within the earth that must soon have vent. You flee to the surrounding mountains in time to look back and see ten square miles of the plain swell up, like a bladder, to the height of five hundred feet, while numerous smaller cones rise from the surface still higher, and emit smoke; and in their midst, six mountains are thrown up