

they will rise ; if the bed of the sea receive additional weight, it will sink. The bottom of the Pacific *is* sinking, in point of fact. Not that the Pacific is becoming *deeper*. This seems a paradox ; but it is easily explained. The whole bed of the sea is in the act of being pressed down *by the laying on of new solid substance over its bottom*. The new bottom then is laid upon the old, and so the actual bed of the ocean remains at or nearly at the same distance from the surface water. But what becomes of the islands ? They form part and parcel of the old bottom ; and Dr Darwin has shown, by the most curious and convincing proofs, that they *are sinking*, and *have been sinking for ages*, and are only kept above water—by what, think you ? By the labours of the coral insects, which always build up to the surface !

(18.) It is impossible but that this increase of pressure in some places and relief in others must be very unequal in their bearings. So that at some place or other this solid floating crust must be brought into a state of strain, and if there be a weak or a soft part, a crack will at last take place. When this happens, down goes the land on the heavy side, and up on the light side. Now this is exactly what took place in the earthquake which raised the Ullah Bund in Cutch. I have told you of a great crack drawn across the country, not far from the coast line ; the inland country rose ten feet, but much of the sea-coast, and probably a large tract in the bed of the Indian Ocean, sank considerably below its former level. And just as you see when a crack takes place in ice, the water oozes up ; so this kind of thing is always,