

rities in this country,—the land rose, apparently during several interrupted paroxysms of upheaval, so that there was a fringe of comparatively level sea-bottom laid dry, and added to the country's area, considerably broader than that which we now see exposed by the ebb of every stream tide. And what I must deem indubitable marks of this change of level can be traced all around Scotland and its islands. The country, save in a few interrupted tracts of precipitous coast, where the depth of the water, like that beside a steep mole whose base never dries at ebb, precluded any accession to the land, presents around its margin a double coast line,—the line at present washed by the waves, and a line now covered with grass, or waving with shrubs, or skirted by walls of precipice perforated with caves, against which the surf broke for the last time more than two thousand years ago. These raised beaches form a peculiar feature in our Scottish scenery, which you must have often remarked. In passing along the public road between Portobello and Leith, the traveller sees upon the left hand a continuous grassy bank, with a line of willows atop, which he may mark in some places advancing in low promontories, in others receding into shallow bays, and which is separated from the present coast line, which in general flatness it greatly resembles, by a strip of rich meadow land, varying from one to three hundred yards in breadth. That continuous grassy bank is the old coast line ; and the gently sloping margin of green meadow is the strip of flat sea-beach along which the tides used to rise and fall twice every twenty-four hours, ere the retreat of the sea within its present bounds. Should it be low ebb at the time, one may pass from the ancient to the recent sea-beach ; the one waving with grass, the other brown with algæ ; the one consisting, under its covering of vegetable mould, of stratified gravels and sand, blent with the decayed shells of mollusca that died more than twenty centuries since,—the other formed of exactly the same sort of lines of stratified sand and gravel,