

does it occur twenty-three feet above the surface of the water? There evidently has been a time when the whole column, to the height of these *Lithodomi*, was submerged. The oscillations of the surface, therefore, as shown by these indications, were, first, a subsidence and submergence of the original foundation, requiring the construction of the second one six feet above the other; the continuation of the subsidence till the original pavement was twenty-seven feet beneath the surface, at which depth it remained a sufficient time for the little stone-borers to penetrate to the heart of the pillar—a work which they required a lifetime to accomplish. Next occurred an elevation, raising the *Lithodomi* out of the water, and thus ending their existence. Nor is this all. Observations made since the beginning of the present century show that the foundations of this temple are again sinking at the rate of one inch per year.

Such an example, thus authenticated, throws a flood of light upon the problems of geology. It establishes the doctrine of the unstable condition of the land. The rock is no longer the emblem of firmness and stability. We have here a monument which perpetuates the remembrance of secular oscillations in the level of a continent. The little *Lithodomus* has graven the inscriptions upon the marble pillar, even at the cost of its own life. Such care has Providence ever exercised to leave in our hands a key by which to unlock the mysteries of past ages.

It is established, then, that the level of the land may vary—that the shores of a continent may be submerged, and that at a subsequent period they may rise again from the waves. But the doctrine does not rest upon an isolated example. The oscillations recorded upon the temple of Jupiter Serapis are only a clear and beautiful illustration of the nature of the proofs which exist upon every shore.