

Everybody now knows the kind of evidence from which it has been established that the present surface of the dry land has once been in a wholly different condition. In all parts of the world this evidence obtrudes itself, often so conspicuously as from earliest times to have arrested the attention of mankind, and to have suggested, or at least coloured, mythology and local superstition. In many places, for example, as soon as the layer of soil or subsoil has been removed, the rock below, with its embedded shells or corals, or other remains of marine life, is at once seen to have been the bottom of the sea. At other points we find traces of rivers which must have had their sources in mountains that have long since disappeared, and which fed lakes or watered woodlands and plains that for ages have been buried out of sight. Or, again, we come upon the earth and stones left by vanished glaciers, upon the limestone spread out by springs long ago dried up, upon the sheets of lava or heaps of ashes thrown out by volcanoes that have been extinct and effaced for ages. It is manifest, therefore, that the present surface of the land, so far from being aboriginal, is only the latest phase of a long succession of geographical revolutions, the uppermost leaf as it were, of a series of volumes that lie beneath it. Mountains and hills, valleys and plains, instead of standing out as parts of the primeval architecture of the globe, can be shown to belong to many different epochs of the earth's long history.

But the question remains, how these familiar features have come to be impressed on the surface of the land. Granted that the solid materials out of which a mountain or tableland has been built were originally accumulated as sediment on the floor of the sea, how has this hardened sediment been fashioned into the well-known lineaments of