

the land? The solution of this question aroused some years ago a keen discussion, and has given rise to a portentous mass of geological literature. The combatants, as in most warfares, scientific or other, ranged themselves into two camps. There were the Convulsionists, or believers in the paramount efficacy of subterranean movement, who, starting from the universally admitted proofs of upheaval, crumpling, and fracture, sought an explanation of the present inequalities of the land in unequal disturbance from below. On the other hand, there were the Erosionists, or upholders of the efficacy of superficial waste, who maintained that besides the elevations due to subterranean causes, mountains, valleys, and all the other features of a landscape, have been gradually carved into their present shapes by the slow abrasion of the air, rain, rivers, frosts, and the other agents of subaërial erosion. The contest, which was keen enough some years ago, has for a while almost ceased among us, though an occasional shot from younger combatants, fired with the old enthusiasm, serves to keep alive the memory of the campaign.

Having long ago attached myself to the camp of the Erosionists, though by no means inclined to do battle under the extreme "quietest" banners of some of its champions, I have been led, in the course of my wanderings over this country and the Continent, to look at scenery with a peculiar interest. I have long been convinced, however, that for the proper discussion of the real efficacy of superficial erosion in the development of a terrestrial surface, the geologists of Europe have been at great disadvantage. The rocks in these regions have undoubtedly been subjected to so many changes—squeezed, crumpled, fractured, upheaved, and depressed—that the effects of unequal erosion upon their surface have been masked by those of subterranean disturb-