

the Air, expressed by the contours or relief of the land. Second, with the Sea, expressed by coast-lines.

(1.) **Contours or Relief of the Land.**—While the surface of the land presents endless diversities of detail, its leading features may be generalized as mountains, table-lands, and plains.

Mountains.—The word “mountain” is, properly speaking, not a scientific term. It includes many forms of ground utterly different from each other in size, shape, structure, and origin. It is popularly applied to any considerable eminence or range of heights, but the height and size of the elevated ground so designated vary indefinitely. In a really mountainous country the word would be restricted to the loftier masses of ground, while such a word as hill would be given to the lesser heights. But in a region of low or gently undulating land, where any conspicuous eminence becomes important, the term mountain is lavishly used. In Eastern America this habit has been indulged in to such an extent, that what are, so to speak, mere hummocks in the general landscape, are dignified by the name of mountains.

It is hardly possible to give a precise scientific definition to a term so vaguely employed in ordinary language. When a geologist uses the word, he must either be content to take it in its familiar vague sense, or must add some phrase defining the meaning which he attaches to it. He finds that there are three leading and totally distinct types of elevation which are all popularly termed mountains. 1. Single eminences, standing alone upon a plain or table-land. This is essentially the volcanic type. The huge cones of Vesuvius, Etna, and Teneriffe, as well as the smaller ones so abundant in volcanic districts, are examples of it. There