the slow rate of two or three feet in a century: there an elevation or a depression, of several feet through hundreds of miles, takes place in a few hours. On our own coasts are many examples of ancient sea-beaches, even several in superposition, but far above the highest tide-level of the present day. In places innumerable of the British Isles, the early and secondary and tertiary beds have been upraised, fractured, and pierced through by the melted rocks from below; parts of which, having become solid, as necessarily and speedily they would, form our most magnificent mountains, and other parts have run in lines of many miles in length, filling up the cracks and chasms which the up-bursting force had rent. In many parts of the ocean which covers three-fourths of the surface of our globe, new islands have been raised up; some of which have soon sunk down, or have been washed away, leaving dangerous shallows, and others continue to this day and have become the abodes of life and action. The vestiges of ancient volcanoes stand up in their unquestionable demonstration, in countries next to our own. At distances a little greater, we find volcanic vents, either in never-ceasing though temperate action, or at uncertain periods breaking forth in terrible magnificence. Fifty-six years ago, in the island geographically near to us, Iceland, the eruption of the mountain Skáptar Jokul, which was prolonged through two years, dried up rivers and filled their beds, covered valleys of five hundred feet in depth and overflowed their mountain-limits, and spread its lava-torrents over areas of country from seven to fifteen miles in breadth, in length forty to fifty, and in various thickness from one hundred feet to six hundred. Twenty villages were destroyed, and nearly the fifth part of the population perished.

In 1797, the old city Riobamba, in Peru, was destroyed in one day by an earthquake; and, in a few minutes,