

thousands of tons of sediment may be washed off the surface of a single parish. If now we allow the multiplying power of time to tell upon this process, we can easily perceive how vast must be the result even within a comparatively brief geological period.

It is evident that apart from the varying nature of the rocks, and their rapidity or slowness in weathering, the lowering of the surface of a country by this action of air and rain cannot possibly proceed equally over the whole. Other things being equal, the rate of degradation will be regulated by the angle of declivity, being greatest where the slopes are steepest, and where, consequently, the mechanical force of descending rain is most powerful. On flat ground it must be reduced to a minimum, not only because the motion of the rain is there feeblest, but also because in many places it is over these lower tracts that the detritus swept down from higher ground is strewn.

But we have by no means exhausted all the various ways in which nature makes use of the air and meteoric influences in the sculpture of the land. Besides its action in the slow disintegration of rocks, air plays a notable part when it blows across a country. A high gale, by prostrating trees, will sometimes lay bare a whole hillside to the elements. The blowing down of woods upon low ground has so intercepted the surface-drainage that marshes have been formed, which have subsequently grown into peat-mosses.

The most familiar geological operation of wind is seen when, in dry weather, the dust is raised from roadways and fields and borne along in the air. We probably do not adequately realise the extent to which this process contributes to the removal and redistribution of disintegrated rock and soil upon the surface of the land. More obvious are the results where prevalent breezes from the sea blow across low