require to be carefully sought for, and in many cases only a trained geologist can discover the traces of them. By bringing hard and soft rocks next each other, and by re-arranging the constituent masses of the land, these subterranean movements have undoubtedly influenced the progress of denudation. But they have not done so in any masterful fashion. On the contrary, they have rather influenced local details of topography than the main physical features of the country. Even where they have been most powerful, they have left so little trace of their action in any outward topographical feature, that they were not only not recognised, but were completely misread, by some of the most experienced geologists of the day, who regarded as evidence of undisturbed and continuous deposition of sediment what we now know to be evidence of the most gigantic upthrusts of which any memorial remains in the British Islands.

In dealing with the evidence of such great terrestrial displacements, as I shall do more in detail in later chapters, we must always bear in mind the lapse of time that has intervened between their geological period and our own. So ancient are some of them, such as those of the north-west Highlands of Scotland, that the land may have been reduced to a submarine plain several times over in the long interval. Any effect they may originally have had upon the surface has been utterly effaced long ago, and before the present valley-system began to be carved out. How this statement can be substantiated will, I hope, appear clearly enough in later parts of this volume. I make it now at the outset, in order that the reader may recognise that a belief in the paramount efficacy of superficial denudation in the origin of the features of the land is compatible with the fullest admission of the existence and potency of subterranean disturbance. Inability to make this recognition has led to absurd misconceptions and mis-