

tain in Europe, rising fifteen thousand six hundred and eighty feet above the level of the sea, or nearly five times higher than any mountain in England or Wales. It was first ascended by Dr. Pacard, in 1786, and afterwards, by Saussure, who has published a very interesting account of his ascent. Several persons have since ascended this mountain, but Saussure is the only traveller who has given us any information respecting its structure. I shall, therefore insert a brief account of his observations; they are highly interesting. He set out from the priory of Chamouni, the distance from which to the summit of the mountain, in a direct line, is not more than two French leagues and a quarter: but, owing to the difficulty of the ascent, it requires eighteen hours continued labor, exclusively of the time necessary for repose and refreshment. The first day's journey was comparatively easy, the route being over soil covered with vegetation, or bare rocks. The ascent, on the second day, was over snow and ice, and more difficult: at four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day, Saussure and his attendants pitched their tent on the second of the three great plains of snow which they had to traverse. Here, they passed the night, fourteen hundred and fifty five toises (or three thousand one hundred yards) above the level of the sea, and ninety toises higher than the Peak of Teneriffe. The barometer stood at seventeen inches. The next morning, they proceeded with much difficulty and fatigue, arising, principally, from the extreme rarity of the atmosphere, which affected their respiration. The upper parts of Mont Blanc are above the limits of perpetual snow, and it is only on the sides of the nearly perpendicular peaks and escarpments that the bare rock is visible. They gained the summit by eleven o'clock A. M. "From this elevated observatory," says Saussure, "I could take in at one view, without changing my place, the whole of the grand phænomenon of these mountains; namely, the position and arrangement of the beds of which they are composed. Wherever I turned my eyes, the beds of rock in the chains of secondary mountains, and even in the primary mountains of the second order, rise toward Mont Blanc and the lofty summits in its neighborhood: the escarpments of these beds of rock were all facing Mont Blanc, but, beyond these chains, were others, whose escarpments were turned in a contrary direction. Notwithstanding the irregularity in the forms and distribution of the great masses that surround Mont Blanc, and those which constitute the mountain itself, I could trace some features of resemblance not less certain than important. All the masses which I could see were composed of vertical plates (*feuilletts*;) and the greater part of these plates were ranged in the same direction, from north-east to south-west. I had particular pleasure in observing the same structure in the lofty peak of granite called the *Col du Midi*, which I had formerly endeavored, but in vain, to approach, being prevented by inaccessible walls of granite. After the second day's ascent, this lofty pinnacle was beneath me; and I fully