process by which any large proportion of flint can be held in solution by water, yet we have unquestionable proofs, that the solution of silicious earth has been effected by natural processes, on a very extensive scale. At the present moment, Nature, in her secret laboratories, is still carrying on a modification of the same process; and of this fact we have a remarkable instance in the Geysers of Iceland, and in the springs of Carlsbad, in Bohemia. Professor Silliman remarks, that "the sulphuret of silicon, which is the base of silex, is very soluble, and that silicious earth itself is taken up by fixed alkalies, and by fluoric acid; and that these agencies, like most of those which are chemical, are rendered more active by heat." A high temperature therefore appears necessary to enable water to dissolve a large proportion of silex, &c.; hence, we find that the thermal springs of volcanic regions are the principal agents by which silicious depositions and incrustations, are at present produced.

58. THE GEYSERS.—The Geysers, or boiling fountains, of Iceland, have long been celebrated for possessing this property in an extraordinary degree; holding a large proportion of silex in solution, and depositing it, when cooling, on vegetables and other substances, in a manner similar to that in which carbonate of lime is precipitated by the incrusting springs of which we have already spoken. Iceland may be considered as a mass of volcanic matter; the only substances not of volcanic origin in the