

its eruptions, The Catanians regarded as a fable all mention of the former activity of Etna, when, in 1669, half their town was overwhelmed by its lava currents.”\*

41. EXTINCT VOLCANOES OF AUVERGNE.—The country which is the site of the extinct volcanoes to which I am about to call your attention, may be described as a vast plain, situated in the department of the Limagne d’Auvergne: it is so remarkable for its fertility, that it is called the Garden of France; a quality attributable to the detritus of volcanic rocks, which enters into the composition of the soil. It is inclosed on the east and west by two parallel ranges of gneiss and granite. Its average breadth is twenty miles, its length between forty and fifty, and its altitude about 1,200 feet above the level of the sea. The surface of this plain is formed of alluvial deposits, composed of granitic and basaltic pebbles, and boulders, reposing on a substratum of limestone. Hills, of various elevations, composed of calcareous rocks, are scattered over the plain; and the river Allier flows through the district, over beds of limestone or sandstone, except where it has excavated a channel to

\* Geology of Central France, by G. Poulett Scrope, Esq. F.R.S., 1827. Mr. Bakewell was the first English geologist who directed attention to this remarkable district; (Travels in the Tarentaise, by Robert Bakewell, Esq. 2 vols. 8vo. 1823;) subsequently Dr. Daubeny, Messrs. Scrope, Lyell, and Murchison, have severally published highly interesting treatises on the subject.