

Indians, who kneel upon its banks to thaw their half-frozen limbs. The Mormons pretend that in purifying virtues it surpasses the rivers of ancient Judæa.

Some mineral waters possess the property of depositing on any objects exposed to their action a calcareous sediment proceeding from the carbonate of lime which they hold in solution. These are called *incrusting waters*. It is owing to the free carbonic acid gas which they contain, and the effect of the pressure to which they are subjected in the interior of the earth, that the carbonate of lime is dis-

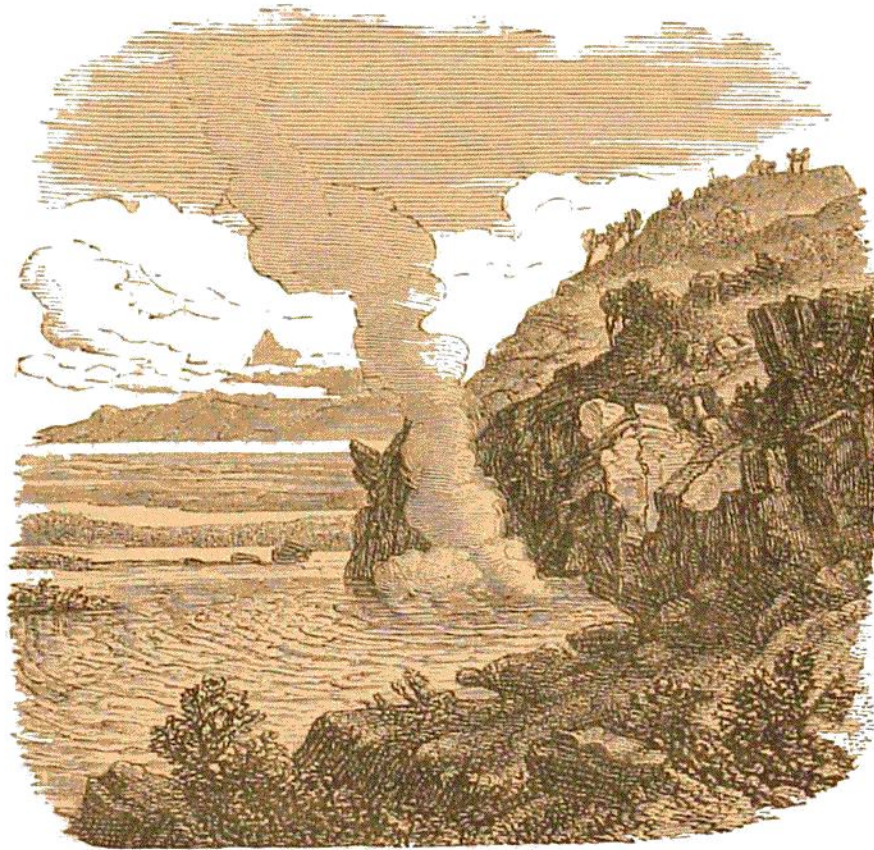


FIG. 164.—HOT SPRINGS NEAR UTAH (NORTH AMERICA).

solved in their waters. But when they reach the surface of the soil, the excess of carbonic acid is disengaged, owing to the diminished pressure; accordingly, the carbonate of lime is deposited in the form of earthy sediments, which harden into solid incrustations.

It is by this kind of chemico-physical process that the waters of Saint Alyre, at Clermont-Ferrand (in Auvergne), *petrify*; that is to say, cover with a crust of carbonate of lime the foreign bodies which are deposited in their basin, and which of old produced the curious natural bridge beneath whose span they flow to-day. The waters of