

mark the surrounding basaltic rocks. It is coated with a short scrubby grass, save in those places where the amount of waste is too great and rapid to allow the vegetation to take root. Crossing a short interval of this ground, at the height of about 2400 feet above the sea, we arrived at the basalt that caps the ridge of Pradelle.

From this height we commanded a wide view of the Limagne, from which the morning sun had now dispelled the floating mists; we could judge better of the disposition of the volcanic cones, or puy, and of the aspect of some of the basaltic plateaux and lava-streams. But the most impressive part of the scene was not in the traces of old igneous eruptions, but in the evidence of the power of running water. I had wandered long among the basalt hills of the Hebrides, and now recognised the repetition of many features of their landscapes; but nothing I had seen or read of had prepared me for such a stupendous manifestation of the power of rain and rivers. No one, indeed, whose observations have been confined to a country which has been above the sea only since the glacial period, or the contours of which have been smoothed over by the ice-sheets of that time, can readily form an adequate idea of the denuding effect of water flowing over the surface of the land. Standing on the plateau of Pradelle, with its remnant of a lava-current, and looking down into the valley of Villar—a deep gorge, excavated by a rivulet through that lava-current, and partially choked up by a later *coulée* of lava which the stream is now wearing away—I received a kind of new revelation, so utterly above and beyond all my previous conceptions was the impression which the sight of this landscape now conveyed. The ridge of Pradelle is a narrow promontory of granite, extending eastward from the main granitic chain, and cut down on either side, but more