

CHAPTER XII

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

FROM the iron-bound coast of St. Abb's Head, on the one side of the island, to the cliffs of Portpatrick on the other, there stretches a continuous band of high ground, sometimes called the South Highlands, and which for the sake of clearness has been referred to in the foregoing chapters as the Southern Uplands. This tract forms the most southerly of the three transverse belts in Scottish topography, and though a well-defined region of hilly ground, presents a striking contrast to the Highlands in its lower elevation, and still more in its general configuration. Nevertheless, when looked at from the plains on either side, it rises with conspicuous abruptness into a long line of hills. Its north-western limit in particular is as well marked as the line that separates the Highlands from the Lowlands between the Clyde and Stonehaven. In East Lothian and Edinburghshire, it mounts into the long chain of the Lamermuir, whose steep bare front, flanked by a line of fault that lets down the rocks of the lowland, seems to project headland after headland into the fertile plains and woodlands below, as a high river-bank rises out of its alluvial haugh, or as a lofty cliff sweeps upward in promontory and