

about 500 or 600 feet the land consisted of a soft clay mixed with lumps of a red-brown clay sandstone, in which lumps the fossils chiefly abounded. But the earth was so overstrewn with loose stones, which had rolled down from the basalt walls above, that it was difficult to reach it. For a long time I maintained that all this clay was only a comparatively late strand formation; but the doctor was indefatigable in his efforts to convince me that it really was an old and very extensive formation, stretching right under the superimposed basalt. At last I had to yield, when we arrived at the topmost stratum of the clay and I saw it actually going under the basalt, and found some shallower strata of basalt lower down in the clay. An examination of the fossils, which consisted for the most part of ammonites and belemnites, convinced me that the whole of this clay formation must date from their Jassic period. At several places Dr. Koetlitz had found thin strata of coal in the clay. Petrified wood was also of common occurrence. But over the clay formation lay a mighty bed of basalt 600 or 700 feet in height, which was certainly not the least interesting feature of the country. It was distinguished by its coarse-grained structure from the majority of typical basalts, and seemed to be closely related to those which are found in Spitzbergen and Northeast Land.* The basalt, however, seems to vary a good deal in appearance

* Where they are generally called diabases.