

ground one of those long, flat, sandy spits, products of the last upheaval, which, stretching far into the sea, bear amid the light of day an air of even deeper loneliness than our woods and fields when embrowned by the gathering night. When the insulated stacks of an old coast line are at once tall and attenuated, and of a white or pale-coloured rock, the effect, especially when viewed by moonlight, is singularly striking. The valley of the Seine, as described by Sir Charles Lyell,—now a valley, but once a broad firth,—is flanked on each side, in its lower reaches, by tall stacks of white chalk, of apparently the same age as those of the ancient coast line of our own country ; and, seen ranged along their green hill-sides, in the imperfect light of evening, or by the rising moon, they seem the sheeted spectres of some extinct tribe of giants.

The date of that change of level which gave to Scotland this flat fringe of margin-land, with its picturesque escarpment of ancient coast, we cannot positively fix. We find reason to conclude that it took place previous to the age of the Roman invasion. It has been shown, from evidence of a semi-geologic, semi-archæologic character, by one of our highest authorities on the subject, Mr. Smith of Jordanhill, that the land must have stood at a not lower level than now, when the Roman wall which connects the firths of Forth and Clyde was completed. For, had it been otherwise, some of the terminal works which remain would have been, what they obviously were not, under the sea line at the time. In the sister kingdom, too, which has also its old coast line, St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, which was connected with the mainland at low water by a strip of beach in the times of Julius Cæsar,—a fact recorded by Diodorus Siculus,—is similarly connected with the mainland at low water still. But though the upheaval of the old coast line is removed thus beyond the historic period, it seems to have fallen, as I have said, within the human