

it had witnessed the disaster at Pinkie, and the headlong flight of the dragoons of Cope. But, passing over the more recent scenes, the vision of a forest-covered country rose before me,—a vision of the ancient aboriginal woods rising dusky and brown in one vast thicket, from the windings of the Esk to the pale brow of the Pentlands. Nor was the landscape without its human figures. The grim legionaries of the Proconsul of Augustus were opening with busy axes a shady roadway through the midst; and the incessant strokes of the axe and the crash of falling trees echoed in the silence throughout the valley. And then there arose another and earlier vision, when the range of semicircular heights which rise above the ancient Saxon borough, with its squat tower and antique bridge, existed as the coast line, and the site of the town itself as a sandy bay, swum over by the sea-wolf and the seal; and the long ridge now occupied by garden and villa, church and burying-ground, as a steep, gravelly bar, heaped up in the vexed line, where the tides of the river on the one hand contended with the waves of the firth on the other; and the Esk, fed by the glaciers of the interior, whose blue gleam I could mark on the distant Lammermuirs and the steeper Pentlands, rolled downwards, a vast stream, that filled from side to side the ample banks which, even when heaviest in flood, it scarce half-fills now; while a scantier and dingier foliage than before, composed chiefly of taper spruce and dark pine, roughened the lower plains, and flung its multitudinous boughs athwart the turbid and troubled eddies. And then there arose yet other and remoter scenes. From a foreground of weltering sea I could mark a scattered archipelago of waste uninhabited islands, picturesquely roughened by wood and rock; and near where the Scottish capital now stands, a submarine volcano sent forth its slim column of mingled smoke and vapour into the sky. And then there rose in quick succession scenes of the old Carboniferous