

it is possible, ancient craters. The rock of hard clinkstone on which the Castle of Edinburgh stands is one of these ; but the long inclined plane of sedimentary deposits which it shielded from the wear of the western current interferes with its column-like outline. The Bass Rock is an example of the same kind, with no sedimentary tail to mar the effect of its natural outline. The dike is another and yet more characteristic form of trap rock : it is a rock that was moulded in a longitudinal crack or rent, as the other was moulded in a well-like crater ; and when the original matrix in which it was cast has been washed from its sides, and it remains standing up over the level, it assumes the wall-like or *dike*-like form to which it owes its name. In sailing along the west coast of Scotland in a clear sunny day, that gives to each projecting crag its deep patch of shadow, these fragments of walls, of vastly more ancient date than the oldest and most venerable of our Scottish ruins, may be seen rising from the beach along the faces of grassy banks or rounded tuff-formed precipices, and communicating to the general scenery one of its most characteristic features. But one of the main scenic peculiarities of the trap districts is derivable from their trap beds. We find in this neighbourhood, among the hills of the Queen's Park, bed rolled over bed, with bands of shale, or sandstone, or soft trap-tuff, between ; and these beds, ranged often in nearly parallel lines, and bared by the denuding agencies, present not unfrequently, seen in profile, the appearance of a flight of steps. Hence the generic name for this class of rocks,—*trappa*, a stair : the traps are the stair-like rocks. As seen in a calm, clear morning, from nearly the eastern termination of Regent Terrace, the Arthur Seat group of hills exhibits three of these beds ranged for considerable distances in nearly parallel lines, and, with these, well-marked fragments of several others. First, reckoning from the west or south, there is the continuous greenstone bed of Salisbury Crags ; next, the