

actually cut in places a second narrow gorge through the lava, sometimes of considerable depth. But part of the stream still appears to flow down the old channel beneath the lava by which that channel has been usurped, for at the abrupt termination of the lava-current an abundant gush of water issues from under the black rugged crags.

In the town of Clermont itself there is not much of interest. It is built round the sides of a gently-sloping hill, and thus the towers of the old church, rising to a considerable height above the surrounding plain, can be seen from a great distance. This church, like most of the rest of the town, is built of a dark, compact lava, that gives a somewhat sombre hue to the building. The same tone of colouring would also characterise the street architecture, but for a plentiful use of whitewash. One cannot but admire the sharpness with which this lava has retained for centuries its chisel-marks and sculpturings; even staircases, that have been trodden so long day after day, seem well-nigh as fresh as ever. So black and dingy, indeed, and so sharp in outline, are some of the tall pillars, that they might readily be mistaken for so many shafts of cast-iron. Along the roadsides, too, you constantly pass crosses made of the same material—black, sombre things, rising sometimes from the edge of a vineyard, sometimes standing up alone in a solitary part of the way, among broken walls and thickets of brushwood. It was not uninteresting to remember that some three hundred years ago the roadsides at home were studded with similar crosses, of which the pedestals and parts of the stems may still, here and there, be seen; and that these were in many cases made of an old lava, just as in Auvergne. The Scottish rock, however, had been erupted many a long geological period ere the Auvergne volcanoes broke forth; and though the crosses