

their channels. And now, incredible as it may seem, these streams have actually cut their way down through the solid basalt, and a great part of the old lake formations. They have, in short, excavated a series of valleys, several hundred feet deep, and sometimes of considerable width, along the sides of which are exposed the remaining edges of the strata that have been worn away. Standing on the summit of the Montagne de Denise, and looking round upon the valleys and ravines on every side, each traversed by what seemed such an insignificant stream, I felt as if a new geological agent were for the first time made known to me. Striking as are the proofs of erosion in the country of the Limagne, they fall far short of these in the Haute-Loire. To be actually realised, such a scene must be visited in person. No amount of verbal description, not even the most careful drawings, will convey a full sense of the magnitude of the changes to one who is acquainted only with the rivers of a glaciated country such as Britain. The first impression received from a landscape like that round Le Puy is rather one of utter bewilderment. The upsetting of all one's previous estimates of the power of rain and rivers is sudden and complete. It is not without an effort, and after having analysed the scene, feature by feature, that the geologist can take it all in. But when he has done so, his views of the effects of subaerial disintegration become permanently altered, and he quits the district with a rooted conviction that there is almost no amount of waste and erosion of the solid frame-work of the land which may not be brought about in time by the combined influence of springs, frost, rain, and rivers.

The volcanic phenomena of the neighbourhood of Le Puy are likewise full of interest, and, owing to the numerous deep ravines, they can be easily studied in admirable natural