

to the upper part of Arthur's Seat at Edinburgh. In each case a column of lava is surrounded by an outer envelope of loose ashes, over which various currents of lava have rolled down from the crater.

With no little reluctance, and not until the sun had dipped behind the western hills, did we quit the slopes of Mont Denise. The evening, after a day of mingled storm and sunshine, was beautiful, and the whole of that wondrous landscape lay bright and clear around. It was the last evening, too, which we had to spend in the volcanic region of Central France; nor could we have secured a more auspicious sky or a more favourable locality for taking a last view of the scenery and summing up the results of the journey. Sitting on a pile of loose cinders on the top of the hill, we watched the level rays lighting up the vast basalt plateau that stretched away for miles to the west, while each of the many cones that dotted the plain cast its long shadow towards us. With undiminished wonder we gazed again at the deep ravines and valleys by which the plateau is broken up, each with its streamlet meandering like a silver thread between the slopes. The sunlight lay warm and bright on the town of Le Puy in the valley below, with its isolated crag of La Vièrge, and its church-crowned pinnacle of St. Michel—two rocks that remain to record the enormous erosion of these valleys. The castle of Polignac—built on another outlying crag farther down the plain—stood up in the deep shadow of Mont Denise. Eastward, the gorges that open into the Loire gleamed white as the sunset fell along their bars of pale marls and limestones, and their capping of basalt. Beyond these, cone rose behind cone, amid piles of lava-currents of many different ages; each sunward slope and crest was now flushed with a rosy hue deepening into purple in the dis-