

3. WEST COAST ROUTE

**Carlisle to Edinburgh by Beattock and
Carstairs**

In leaving Carlisle, the train crosses the Triassic plain of the Eden, and turns to the north-west across the drift-covered low grounds that border the Solway Firth. Much of this plain was formerly covered with peat, and even yet, in spite of the progress of agriculture, large remnants of the famous 'Solway Moss' are still to be seen. The small streams, crossed by the railway, have cut deep ravines in the red Permian and Lower Carboniferous strata, as well as in the overlying drift. Numerous boulders of grey granite, scattered about the surface, show that the ice which transported them came eastwards from Galloway. The most conspicuous hill to the right is Birrenswark—a portion of the great escarpment of volcanic rocks which here lie at the base of the Carboniferous system. [285, 309]. Below these rocks are the highly inclined and convoluted Silurian greywacke and shale of the Southern Uplands, which are entered to the south of Lockerbie, and are seen in the cuttings beyond Lockerbie Station. A little farther north, the line of railway passes into the old Permian valley which was the forerunner of the present valley of Annandale [307, 310]. No sections of the Permian sandstones are to be seen from the train, for the whole plain through which the River Annan winds is deeply covered with drift, much of which is arranged in groups of Kames [369]. The famous quarries of Corncocklemuir, from which so many Permian labyrinthodont footprints have been obtained, lie a few miles to the west.

From **Beattock** Junction a good view is obtained of some of the higher parts of the Southern Uplands. To the west or left hand the highest eminence visible for a long way from the south is Queensberry Hill (2285 feet), which owes its prominence and more rugged surface to the hard massive bands of grit of which it is composed. Due north from Beattock the highest summit visible is that of Hartfell (2651 feet). The scenery of Moffatdale and the head of Annandale is more particularly referred to on pp. 440, 441.

To the north of Beattock the railway ascends the valley of