

From the fumeroles and suffiones, as the orifices of the jets forming the solfataras are called, steam or gas is often driven with a hissing noise, which may be heard some miles away, and around them crusts of sublimated sulphur may frequently be found several inches in thickness. Approach, however, is always more or less dangerous, as the crust may give way, and cause one's feet and legs to plunge into a bath of scalding mud, an event which has been by no means unknown in the past. However, a board or two may be found, and laid across, so as to secure firm footing. For years the Icelanders had secured the purer portions of the crust, and the beautiful crystals of sulphur underneath, which they bartered in exchange for needed goods, but



AMONG THE SULPHUR SPRINGS AT KRÍSUVÍK.

only of late years have attempts been made to work the deposits as a regular commercial undertaking. Unfortunately these attempts have failed, and nothing is being done at present. The difficulties are, the slow rate of deposition; the wet, muddy nature of the material, which prevents part of it from being burnt in kilns, to melt the rest, as is done in Sicily; and the long distance and bad roads which separate the beds from Hafnarfjörður, where the product may be shipped.

West of Krísuvík, a ragged track leads through a desert of slags, and sand, and lava, to Grindavík, where a number of cottages inhabited by fishermen centre round the little church of Stathr. Some years ago a furious storm burst on the wintry sea, on a dark December day, and hurled