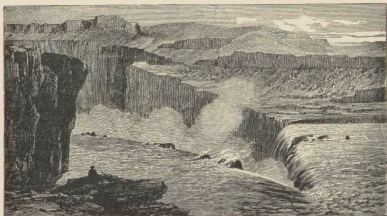


from which it takes its name, in a stream whose total length is one hundred and twenty miles, during the later sixty-five of which it receives not a single tributary worth the name. It is this noble river which forms the Dettifoss. Turning southward at Ás, the track leads through another birch and heather wood, and after an hour descends to the level of the water. 'The scenery here is really grand—a wild, weird spot that would charm an artist. Between us and the river rose almost as it were from the very bed of the rushing torrent, the Hljóthaklettur (sounding, or echoing cliffs), a nest of prehistoric craters, which have poured out alternately lava and stones, and ashes.'



THE DETTIFOSS.

'The cliffs rise to a height of about two hundred feet perpendicularly, and present a wall-like appearance. The erosion of some of the softer parts has well exposed the contorted and picturesque forms of the inter-jacent lava.'

In another half-hour the farm of Svinadalr, a convenient halfway-house, is reached. Two or three miles above it, the river runs through a fine gorge, two hundred and fifty feet in depth, and about as far beyond the gorge a rising cloud of curling mist-wreaths proclaims the presence of the waterfall. Passing at first a basalt ledge, the flood breaks up into rapids, and dashes on to a spot where a rift in the lava has split its bed into a vast ravine, one hundred and eighty feet in perpendicular depth and five hundred feet across. Into this V shaped cleft, the already milk-white river hurls itself with a deafening roar, in a sheet four hundred yards in width. Midway