

contrasts with it more strongly than perhaps any other in Scotland. We have quitted the porphyritic region, and entered upon a region of granite and gneiss. Looking back from that most solitary of Scottish inns, King's House, we find that we can determine with much exactness, from the form of the hills, where the porphyry ends and the granite or gneiss begins. The last of the porphyritic hills is a noble pyramid, broken into dizzy precipices, and lined vertically, like some of our semi-columnar traps ; whereas the first of the granitic hills, placed immediately beside it, with but a narrow valley between, is of rounded outline,—a mere hummock magnified into a mountain, and wrapped round by a continuous caul of brown heath. On the other hand, we see the granite rolling out into a moory plain,—one of the dreariest in Scotland,—and forming a basin for a long, flat-shored loch, whose brown waters do not reflect a single human dwelling. Granite, however, does not always present features so little attractive. It is, in truth, a many-charactered rock. In general, the feldspar, which enters so largely into its composition, contains a considerable percentage of potash, and so decomposes readily ; and hence the rounded forms of many of our granite hills and boulders. It affects, too, on the large scale, though unstratified, a tabular arrangement, and sometimes exists, as in this instance, and in those dreary parts of the lowlands of Aberdeen where the patrimony of the redoubtable Sir Dugald Dalgetty lay, as extensive and usually very barren plains. But in other parts it has little or no potash in its composition ; and forming, in these circumstances, one of the most durable of rocks, its peaks and precipices stand up, as in Goatfell in Arran, with all the porphyritic sharpness of outline, unweathered for ages, or present, as in Ben Muich Dhui and its 'Titanic' compeers, features at once bold, broad, and sublimely impressive. Humboldt, generally so correct, in his *Views of Nature*, seems to have seized on the granite in