

GRANITIC ROCKS.

The term granite is derived from the word *geranites*, and Tournefort, the celebrated naturalist, was the first modern author who employed it ; but, at the time in which he wrote, it had a much wider signification than it has now, and was used to designate a granular stone.

The minerals which commonly enter into the composition of granite are quartz, feldspar, mica, and hornblende, and the combination of any two or more of these constitutes a granite. It must therefore be evident that granite differs greatly in its composition. Feldspar is generally the most abundant ; but this mineral, as well as others, varies in its proportions, and is sometimes absent. A granite of Mount Blanc is composed of feldspar, quartz, and chlorite ; one in Aberdeenshire consists of feldspar and hornblende ; and another in Perthshire, of quartz, feldspar, and actinolite. Mr. Poulett Scrope, in his splendid work on Central France, speaks of a granite, constituting a very extensive tract in the department of Haute Loire and Ardèche, which contains so much pinite, that it is estimated to form a third part of the rock. It must then be evident that the composition of this rock is various, and its colour will depend upon that of the preponderating mineral. Granite was formerly supposed to be the primary rock, that upon which all others were formed. This opinion is now found to be erroneous ; for although it frequently has its place beneath all the stratified rocks, yet it not uncommonly takes a higher position. Werner arranges the granites in three classes. First, the primitive, or that which is the basis of all other rocks ; secondly, that which traverses other rocks in veins, as may be seen in Iona, Barra, Tirey, and others of the Western Isles ; and thirdly, that which superposes other rocks, as at St. Gothard, where it rests on mica slate, and at Kielwig, in Norway, where it lies above clay slate.

Granite is not abundant in England, but in Scotland and Ireland it occupies a considerable extent of country. The granitic region of the eastern mountain chain of Ireland commences on the south side of Dublin Bay, and stretches continuously to Blackstairs and Brandon. Those countries which consist of granite are generally mountainous and rugged, and abound in sublime scenery. Glendalough, in Ire-