

answering fault immediately over it; and the fault where the triple bars and the conglomerate meet is merely a fault whose step of granitic gneiss stopped short ere it reached the surface. But the accompanying section (see Frontispiece, sect 4) will better illustrate the geology of this interesting ravine, than it can be illustrated by any written description. I may remark, ere taking leave of it, however, that its conglomerates exhibit a singularly large amount of false stratification at an acute angle with the planes of the real strata, and that a bed of mouldering sandstone near the base of the system may be described, from its fissile character, as a tilestone.*

* There is a natural connection, it is said, between wild scenes and wild legends; and some of the traditions connected with this romantic and solitary dell illustrate the remark. Till a comparatively late period, it was known at many a winter fireside as a favorite haunt of the fairies — the most poetical of all our old tribes of spectres, and at one time one of the most popular. I have conversed with an old woman, who, when a very little girl, had seen myriads of them dancing, as the sun was setting, on the further edge of the dell; and with a still older man, who had the temerity to offer one of them a pinch of snuff at the foot of the cascade. Nearly a mile from where the ravine opens to the sea, it assumes a gentler and more pastoral character; the sides, no longer precipitous, descend towards the stream in green, sloping banks; and a beaten path, which runs between Cromarty and Rosemarkie, winds down the one side and ascends the other. More than sixty years ago, one Donald Calder, a Cromarty shopkeeper, was journeying by this path shortly after nightfall. The moon, at full, had just risen; but there was a silvery mist sleeping on the lower grounds, that obscured her light; and the dell, in all its extent, was so overcharged by the vapor, that it seemed an immense, overflowed river winding through the landscape. Donald had reached its farther edge, and could hear the rush of the stream from the deep obscurity of the abyss below, when there rose from the opposite side a strain of the most delightful music he had ever heard