

towards the south, and enters the uplands through a narrow and deep defile. Looking up this straitened valley the cultivated country lies all behind us, while in front are the lonely hills. The change of scenery takes place so suddenly that no sooner do we plunge into the chain of hills than the rich woods and cornfields disappear, steep grassy and rocky declivities descend abruptly upon the narrowed strip of alluvial soil that borders the river; trees occur only at intervals, and chiefly down the watercourses; the herbage grows more and more heathy, and traces of cultivation more and more scanty, until, as we wind up the valley, we at last take leave of all signs of human habitation, and enter upon a region of wide, desolate, treeless moorland, and gray craggy mountain. The lower parts of the course of the Girvan lie chiefly upon the various members of the Carboniferous series of rocks. But the upper portion, which winds through the high grounds, has been hollowed out of the northern margin of the wide band of Silurian rocks stretching entirely across the south of Scotland from the Irish Sea to the German Ocean. These Silurian strata, bent and broken like crumpled parchments, presenting at the surface every variety of crag and knoll, dingle and dell, rounded hill, steep precipice, and rough, rugged mountain, form the whole of the wide uplands of Carrick and Galloway, where they mount to a height of more than 2700 feet above the sea. It is on the northern flank of the highest chain of the great central group of hills that the Girvan has its source. Following its course upwards from the lowland country, we find the same abundance of boulders in the narrowed valley as in the more open parts towards the sea. Still we fail to trace any granite forming a solid part of a hill. Conglomerate, shale, grit, porphyry, and other kinds of rock, crop out along the sides of the glens, but without