

XII.

THE SCOTTISH SCHOOL OF GEOLOGY.¹

FOR the first time in the history of University Education in Scotland, we are to-day met to begin the duties of a Chair specially devoted to the cultivation of Geology and Mineralogy. Though Science is of no country nor kin, it yet bears some branches which take their hue largely from the region whence they sprang, or where they have been most sedulously nurtured. Such local colourings need not be deprecated, since they are both inevitable and useful. They serve to bring out the peculiarities of each climate, or land, or people, and it is the blending of all these colourings which finally gives the common neutral tint of science. This is in a marked degree true of Geology. Each country, where any part of the science has been more particularly studied, has furnished its local names to the general nomenclature, and its rocks have sometimes served as types from which the rocks of other regions have been classified and described. The very scenery of the country, reacting on the minds of the early observers, has sometimes influenced their observations, and has thus left an impress on the general progress of the science. As we enter to-day upon

¹ The Inaugural Lecture at the opening of the Class of Geology and Mineralogy in the University of Edinburgh, 6th November 1871.