

CHAPTER X

BIRTH of Experimental Geology. Sir James Hall. Decay of
Wernerianism.

AMONG the friends with whom Hutton associated in Edinburgh there was one to whom allusion has already been made, but who demands more special notice here, seeing that to him a distinguished place must be assigned among the founders of geology. To Sir James Hall of Dunglass we owe the establishment of experimental research as a powerful aid in the investigation and solution of geological problems.¹ Inheriting a baronetcy and a landed estate in East Lothian, not far from the picturesque cliffs of St. Abb's Head, and possessed of ample leisure for the prosecution of intellectual pursuits, he was led to interest himself in geology. His father, a man of scientific tastes, became acquainted with Hutton when the future philosopher was a farmer in the neighbouring county of Berwick. From these early days Hutton found the hospitality of Dunglass always open to him. It will be remembered that the famous

¹The previous experiments of De Saussure have already been referred to (*ante* p. 189) but they were not continued and led to no satisfactory conclusions.