

seen plum-pudding stone in England, had knew it to be a sort of rough conglomerate of various components; whereas my stone was composed of a finely-grained silvery substance, and the crystals which it contained were, he was sure, gems like those in the brooch, and, so far as he could judge, real garnets. This was a great decision; and, much encouraged in consequence, I soon ascertained that garnets are by no means rare among the pebbles of the Cromarty shore. Nay, so mixed up are they with its sands even,—a consequence of the abundance of the mineral among the primary rocks of Ross,—that after a heavy surf has beaten the exposed beach of the neighboring hill, there may be found on it patches of comminuted garnet, from one to three square yards in extent, that resemble, at a little distance, pieces of crimson carpeting, and nearer at hand sheets of crimson bead-work, and of which almost every point and particle is a gem. From some unexplained circumstance, connected apparently with the specific gravity of the substance, it separates in this style from the general mass, on coasts much beaten by the waves; but the garnets of these curious pavements, though so exceedingly abundant, are in every instance exceedingly minute. I never detected in them a fragment greatly larger than a pin-head; but it was always with much delight that I used to fling myself down on the shore beside some newly-discovered patch, and bethink me, as I passed my fingers along the larger grains, of the heaps of gems in Aladdin's cavern, or of Sinbad's valley of diamonds.

The Hill of Cromarty formed at this time at once my true school and favorite play-ground; and if my master did wink at times harder than master ought, when I was playing truant among its woods or on its shores, it was, I believe, whether he thought so or no, all for the best. My Uncle Sandy had, as I have already said, been bred a cartwright; but finding, on his return, after his seven years' service aboard man-of-war, that the place had cartwrights enough for all the employment, he applied himself to the humble but not unremunerative profession of a sawyer, and used often to pitch his saw-pit, in the