

up the passes of the Grampians, as a sort of disloyal Destructives of a peculiar type, who make it their vocation to divest her people of their patriotism, and who virtually teach them that a country no longer theirs is not worth the fighting for, it might be very safely concluded that she was but manifesting, in one other direction, the strong good sense which has ever distinguished her. Though shut out, however, from the neighboring fields and policies, the Niddry woods were open to me; and I have enjoyed many an agreeable saunter along a broad planted belt, with a grassy path in the midst, that form their southern boundary, and through whose long vista I could see the sun sink over the picturesque ruins of Craigmillar Castle. A few peculiarities in the natural history of the district showed me, that the two degrees of latitude which lay between me and the former scenes of my studies were not without their influence on both the animal and vegetable kingdoms. The group of land-shells was different, in at least its proportions; and one well-marked mollusc,—the large tortoise-shell helix (*helix aspersa*), very abundant in this neighborhood,—I had never seen in the north at all. I formed, too, my first acquaintance in this woody, bush-skirted walk, with the hedgehog in its wild state,—an animal which does not occur to the north of the Moray Frith. I saw, besides, though the summer was of but the average warmth, the oak ripening its acorns,—a rare occurrence among the Cromarty woods, where, in at least nine out of every ten seasons, the fruit merely forms and then drops off. But my researches this season lay rather among fossils than among recent plants and animals. I was now for the first time located on the Carboniferous System: the stone at which I wrought was intercalated among the working coal-seams, and abounded in well-marked impressions of the more robust vegetables of the period,—stigmaria, sigillaria, calamites, and lepidodendra; and as they greatly excited my curiosity, I spent many an evening hour in the quarry in which they occurred, in tracing their forms in the rock; or—extending my walks to the neighboring coal-pits—I laid open with my hammer, in quest of organisms, the blocks of shale or stra-