

rose sluggish and heavy to the oars of the rowers, and they saw all around them, in the indented shores scooped into far withdrawing arms of the sea, evidences of its ponderous and irresistible force. Buchanan must have had the passage in his mind when he drew the bay of Cromarty. He tells us how "the waters of the German Ocean, opening to themselves a way through the stupendous cliffs of the most lofty precipices, expand within into a spacious basin, affording certain refuge against every tempest, and in which the greatest navies may rest secure from winds and waves." The Court of Session, in the wise exercise of its legislative functions, reverses the very basis of this description. The rowers of Agricola must have been miserably in error: the old shrewd historian must have fallen into a gross mistake. The Frith of Cromarty is not the inlet of a mighty sea: it is merely the outlet of an inconsiderable river. It is not an arm of the German Ocean: it is simply a prolongation of the Conon. Prolongation of the Conon! Why, we know a little of both. We have waded a hundred times mid-leg deep across the one, and picked up the large brown pearl mussels from the bottom without wetting our sleeve. We have guided our little shallop a thousand times along the green depths of the other, and have seen the long sea-line burying patch after patch, as it hurried downwards, and downwards, and downwards, till, far below, the lead rested in the darkness, amid shells, and weeds, and zoophites, rare indeed so near the shore, and whose proper habitat is the profound depths of the ocean. We have seen the river coming down, red in flood, with its dark whirling eddies and its patches of yellow foam, and then seen it driven back by the tidal wave, within even its own banks, like a braggart overmastered and struck down in his own dwelling. We have seen, too, the frith agitated by storm, the giant waves dashing against its stately portals, to the height of an hundred feet; and where on earth was the power