

the scenery usually associated with the trap rocks,—a subject which should possess some little interest to an Edinburgh audience, seeing that their most magnificent of cities owes almost all that is imposing and peculiar in its aspect and appearance to this cause. The scenery of a trap district may be resolved into two components. In an ancient ruin we frequently see stones hollowed by decay into a sort of fantastic fretwork, not very unlike that which roughens some of our more ancient runic obelisks; and we recognise as the cause of these irregularities of surface on which the effect depends, certain original inequalities in the texture of the mass, and certain weathering influences, which, while they wore away the softer portions, spared such as were harder and more durable. And such, on a larger scale, are the two elements operative in the production of the peculiarities of trap scenery. The hard trap rocks injected into the comparatively soft sandstones and shales of a district, such as that which surrounds the Scottish capital, compose a mass of very various texture and solidity, which, if operated upon *equally* by some power analogous to the weathering one in the case of the fretted stone, would necessarily yield *unequally*; and the weathering influences we find represented on the large scale by the denuding agencies. The noble eminences which give character and individuality to our city were literally scooped out of the general mass by tides, and waves, and deep-acting currents, as the sculptor chisels out his figures, in executing some piece in *alto rilievo*, by chipping away the surrounding plane. The bold figure of the poet Hogg becomes almost a literality here:—

‘ Who was it scooped these stony waves?
 Who scalped the brows of old Cairngorm,
 And dug these ever-yawning caves?
 ’Twas I, the Spirit of the Storm.’

The masses of enclosed trap are of various forms. Sometimes they occur as deeply-based pillar-like masses, filling up,