

accompany steep rocks and narrow ravines, a sombre tone in the colouring of the landscape. When, however, for a few days the atmosphere has been dry and the sky serene, the dark rocks seem in many parts as if strewed over with an exceedingly slight covering of new-fallen snow,—the effect of the weathering of a thin film of the compact feldspar, which forms the basis of the porphyry into a white porcelanic earth. It is, however, in the form of the rocks that we detect the more striking peculiarities of the porphyritic formation. They betray their igneous origin in their semi-columnar structure. Every precipice is scarred vertically by the thick-set lines which define the thin irregular columns into which the whole is divided; and as the columnar arrangement is favourable to the production of tall steep precipices, deep narrow corries, and jagged and peaked summits, the precipices on either side are tall and steep, the corries are deep and narrow, and the summits are sharp, spine-like, and uneven. A hill of primary porphyry, where not too much pressed upon by its neighbour hills, as trees press upon one another in a thick wood, so that each checks the development of each, generally affects a pyramidal form; and we find fine specimens of the regularly pyramidal hill in the upper part of the valley, just as we enter on the open moor. I may mention, ere we quit Glencoe, that the more savagely sublime scenery of Scotland is almost all porphyritic. There is only one other rock,—hypersthene,—which at all equals the primary porphyry in this respect; and hypersthene is of comparatively rare occurrence in Scotland. It furnishes, however, one very noble scene in the Isle of Skye: the stern and solitary valley of Corriskin, so powerfully described in the *Lord of the Isles*, is a hypersthene valley.

Emerging from Glencoe, we enter upon a scene that, in simple outline, abstracted from the dingy tone of the colouring, and the bleak and scanty vegetation common to both,