

the peasants stack their peats. It is a thoroughly volcanic rock, having been poured forth as a molten lava and having assumed these columnar forms as it cooled and consolidated.

At either end of the long ridge, this pitchstone is seen to lie upon a hollow eroded out of the underlying level sheets of basalt and filled up with compacted shingle. Among the rounded stones of this shingle-bed there is an abundance of coniferous wood, in chips and broken branches, yet so well preserved that, when newly taken out and still damp, it might be taken, but for its weight, for the relics of some old pine-forest buried in a peat-bog.

The hollow in which the shingle lies is evidently the channel of an ancient stream, which had eroded the older plateau-basalts. At the time when this stream was flowing, the island of Eigg must have been joined to some higher land, probably to the west or north-west, for the stream brought down with it blocks of hard Cambrian sandstone—a rock not found in Eigg, but abundant on the opposite island of Rum. Where now is the ridge of the Scur there was therefore a valley, watered by a stream that flowed with considerable volume to be able to carry along the blocks, sometimes two or three feet in diameter, which are found in its shingle. A long interval had passed away since the eruption of the basalts, and these rocks had been much abraded by atmospheric waste and running water. But the volcanic eruptions had not finally died out in the west of Scotland. Eventually an eruption of black glassy pitchstone took place. The stream of molten rock rolled along the river-channel, and ascended for a short way the courses of some tributary streams, burying the whole under a mass of solid rock.

But denudation was not arrested by this renewed manifestation of volcanic activity. The process of disinte-