

any where yet known, that fossiliferous portion of the Old Red Sandstone which I purpose first to describe, and which will yet come to be generally regarded as an independent formation, as unequivocally characterized by its organic remains as the formations either above or below it.

The county of Sutherland stretches across the island from the German to the Atlantic Ocean, and presents, throughout its entire extent, — except where a narrow strip of the Oolitic formation runs along its eastern coast, and a broken belt of Old Red Sandstone tips its capes and promontories on the west, — a broken and tumultuous sea of primary hills. Scarce any of our other Scottish counties are so exclusively Highland, nor are there any of them in which the precipices are more abrupt, the valleys more deep, the rivers more rapid, or the mountains piled into more fantastic groups and masses. The traveller passes into Caithness, and finds himself surrounded by scenery of an aspect so entirely dissimilar, that no examination of the rocks is necessary to convince him of a geological difference of structure. An elevated and uneven plain spreads around and before him, league beyond league, in tame and unvaried uniformity, — its many hollows darkened by morasses, over which the intervening eminences rise in the form rather of low moory swellings, than of hills, — its coasts walled round by cliffs of gigantic altitude, that elevate the district at one huge stride from the level of the sea, and skirted by vast stacks and columns of rock, that

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schistose system of the county, containing the fossil fish, is in geological character and position intermediate between the Old and New Red Sandstone formations, but not identical with the Carboniferous Limestone, or the true Coal Measures, although probably occupying the place of one or other of them." — p 198