

as it were for absorbing the granite masses. In consequence of its weak cohesion, the primitive crust of the globe would be rent and penetrated in all directions, as represented in the following section of Cape Wrath, in Sutherlandshire, in which the veins of granite ramify in a very irregular manner across the gneiss and hornblende-schist, there associated with it. (Fig. 3.)

Granite, when it is sound, furnishes a fine building-stone, but we

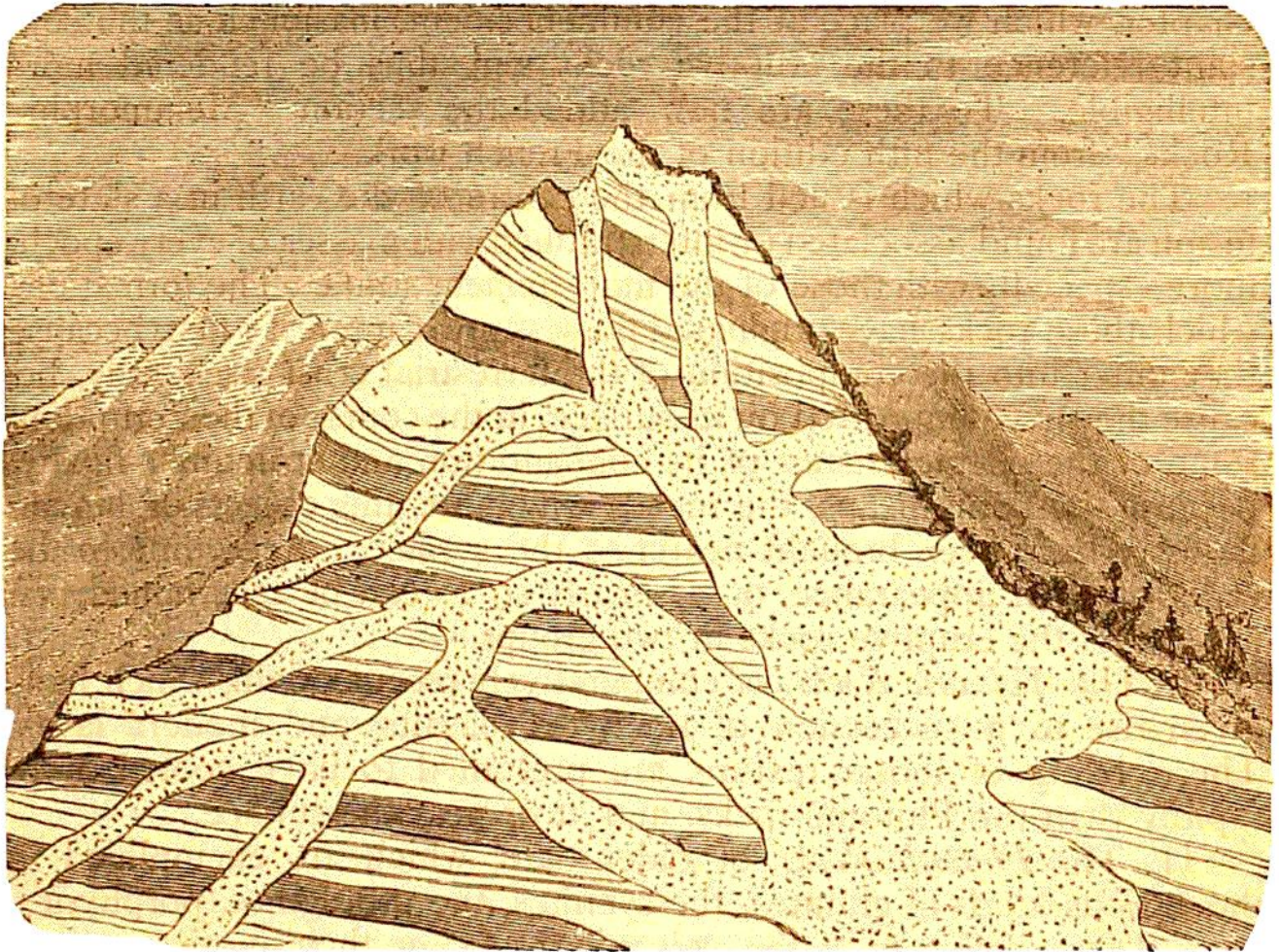


Fig. 3.—Veins of granite traversing the gneiss of Cape Wrath.

must not suppose that it deserves that character of extreme hardness with which the poets have gratuitously gifted it. Its granular texture renders it unfit for road-stone, where it gets crushed too quickly to dust. With his hammer the geologist easily shapes his specimens ; and in the Russian War, at the bombardment of Bomarsund, the shot from our ships demonstrated that ramparts of granite could be as easily demolished as those constructed of limestone.

The component minerals of granite are felspar, quartz, and mica,