

## CHAPTER VI

### PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GEOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES

THE Highlands, for convenience of description, are here regarded as embracing all that part of the country which lies west and north of a line drawn along the Firth of Clyde, and thence diagonally in a north-easterly direction from the mouth of the river Clyde to the east coast at Stonehaven. Nearly the whole of this region is high ground, deeply trenched with valleys and penetrated by long arms of the sea. The only considerable area of lowland lies in the north-eastern counties, embracing the eastern part of Aberdeenshire and the northern parts of Banff, Elgin, and Nairn. Along both sides of the Moray Firth a strip of lower land intervenes between the foot of the hills and the sea, while farther north the county of Caithness is one wide plain, which is prolonged into the Orkney Islands. These low grounds neither geologically nor historically form part of the Highlands ; but they may for our present purpose be included therewith.

Seen from the south, the front or edge of the Highlands presents a well-defined chain of hills, which rise abruptly