the free bold sweep of crag and slope so characteristic of other mountains.

The depth of these sandstones must amount to several thousand feet. Even in a single mountain, such as Ben Leagach in Glen Torridon (Fig. 20), a thickness of more than 3000 feet can be taken in at a glance of the eye from base to summit. Yet when this massive formation is followed along the strip of country in the west of the counties of Ross and Sutherland, where it occurs, it is found to thin out and disappear in a most remarkable way. No doubt it was originally of somewhat unequal thickness, being laid down upon an uneven platform of gneiss, but its rapid attenuation is probably referable to extensive and unequal denudation before the next group of rocks was deposited. The huge pyramidal mountains into which it rises are, in truth, colossal monuments of denudation to which fuller reference will be made in a later chapter.

Above the red sandstones, but separated from them by a great geological hiatus, for the filling up of which there is as yet no evidence, lies an interesting series of strata, which extends from the Kyle of Durness and the mouth of Loch Eribol to the west side of Skye. The lowest member of this series is a group of white quartzites, then come some dolomitic shales, followed by limestones and dolomites, the whole having a thickness of at least 2000 feet in the Durness district. From the evidence of the numerous fossils yielded by the limestones, these strata have been assigned to the Lower Silurian period, though the general assemblage of organisms in them recalls none of the Lower Silurian formations of Wales, but rather some of the still older groups of the Lower Palæozoic series of Canada. These quartzites and limestones are of the utmost importance as furnishing a definite and recognisable horizon, and