being memorials of primeval convulsions, are monuments of prolonged denudation. But while these deductions compel our assent, they by no means exclude all influence of subterranean movement upon external features. It will be my aim in subsequent chapters to bring forward abundant proof of that influence, and to show how it can be traced even where the proofs of stupendous denudation are clearest. The positions into which the rocks were thrown by contortions and dislocations have, in many cases, materially guided the powers of waste in the long process of superficial degradation. Larger features, such as hill ranges and lines of valley, have had their general trend determined by that of the anticlinal and synclinal foldings of the strata. Minor details, which give individuality to the forms of cliff, crag, and mountain, have been largely dependent upon the several structures superinduced by underground movements upon rocks. But alike in the greater and the lesser elements of the scenery, there has been a presiding power of erosion, which, though its working has been modified by local circumstances, has laid its finger on every rood of the surface, and has carved out for itself the present system of glen and mountain, valley and hill.

The levelling down of the ancient table-land of the Highlands is shown to be of high geological antiquity. The process was begun before the Lower Old Red Sandstone, and has been continued with many interruptions from that time until to-day. That the table-land should now be traceable only in fragments, that it is cut down by wide straths and deep glens, and that its general surface has been most unequally eroded, need not be matter for surprise. When we reflect on its extreme age and on the long cycle of geological revolutions that have befallen it, the wonder rather is that any trace of it should now remain.