

down western Inverness-shire and Argyllshire. In journeying westwards across the tops of the Highland mountains, we pass, as it were, over successive stages in the history of the origin of Highland scenery. The oldest types of form lie on the east side, and the newest on the west. From the larger fragments of the denuded table-land, we advance to ridges with narrow tops, which pass by degrees into sharp rugged crests. The ridges too are more and more trenched, until they become groups of detached hills or mountains, such as the peaks of Loch Hourn, Glen Shiel (Fig. 41), Glen Nevis, and Glencoe, and the gnarled craggy summits of Argyll's Bowling Green. These characteristics of West Highland scenery are best seen from some inland summit. An excellent point of observation is the top of Ben Iadain—a hill which has already been described and figured (Fig. 33). From that height the eye can sweep over a wide array of ridges, crests, and peaks from Ardnamurchan on the north, eastwards across Sunart, Ardgower, and Morven, and can catch the summit of Ben Nevis towering in the far distance above every other eminence (Fig. 42). A greater contrast could hardly be found than between this deeply trenched region of hills and the long bare sweep of hill-tops in the Eastern Highlands. The reader may judge of this contrast by comparing the two panoramas depicted in Figs. 23 and 42. A somewhat similar but less marked contrast is traceable in the Southern Uplands between the broad, smooth, moory summits of Peeblesshire and the more rugged and precipitous heights of Galloway.

No satisfactory reason for these contrasts can be found in geological structure alone. Perhaps the key to them is to be sought mainly in differences of rainfall and consequent rapidity of denudation. The western mountains, exposed to the fierce dash of the Atlantic rains, sustain the