

knolls, and dotted over with tarns and lochans, which, by their stillness, heighten the loneliness and solitude of the scene. Only at one locality on the mainland does it rise into an eminence that can rank with the more prominent hills of the younger rocks. In Ben Stack in Sutherlandshire, it reaches a height of 2364 feet, and in its rugged declivities of crag and scar, shows its conspicuous veins of dark hornblendic rock and pink pegmatite. In the island of Harris, however, it shoots out of the Atlantic in a group of extremely rugged and jagged mountains, which attain an elevation of 2662 feet. The lower slopes of these heights are intensely ice-worn, and consequently present the hummocky bossy character of the gneiss-belt in Sutherland and Ross (Fig. 43). But their upper parts, scarped by long ages of frost and storm, show the irregular craggy forms which the rock naturally assumes under ordinary sub-aërial disintegration.

The general character of the red Cambrian sandstones, which lie upon the fundamental gneiss, and the great contrast in outline which they present to that rock, were referred to in Chapter VI. As this contrast is not only one of the most impressive in the Highlands to the observer of landscape, but also one of the most striking and instructive to the student who seeks to understand the origin of such diversities, I may be pardoned for again calling the reader's attention to it. The bleak, bare gneiss, with its monotonous undulations, tarns, and bogs, is surmounted by groups of cones, which, for individuality of form and independence of position, better deserve to be called mountains than most of the eminences to which that name is given in Scotland. These huge pyramids, rising to heights of between 2000 and 4000 feet, consist of dark red strata, so little inclined that their edges can be traced by the