

eye in long level bars on the steeper hillsides and precipices, like lines of masonry. Here and there the hand of time has rent them into deep rifts, from which long screes descend into the plains below, as stones are loosened from the shivered walls of an ancient battlement. Down their sides, which have in places the steepness of a bastion, vegetation finds but scanty room along the projecting ledges of the sandstone beds, where the heath and grass and wild flowers cluster over the rock in straggling lines and tufts of green. And yet, though nearly as bare as the gneiss below them, these lofty mountains are far from presenting the same aspect of barrenness. The prevailing colour of their component strata gives them a warm red hue which, even at noon, contrasts strongly with the grey of the platform of older rock. But it is at the close of day that the contrast is seen at its height. For then, when the sun is dipping beneath the distant Hebrides, and the shadows of night have already crept over the lower grounds, the gneiss, far as we can trace its corrugated outlines, is steeped in a cold blue tint that passes away in the distance into the haze of the evening, while the sandstone mountains, towering proudly out of the gathering twilight, catch on their giant sides the full flush of sunset. Their own warm hue is thus heightened by the mingling crimson and gold of the western sky, and their summits, wreathed perhaps with rosy mist, glow again, as if they were parts, not of the earth, but of the heaven above them. Watching their varying colours and the changes which the shifting light seems to work upon their strange forms, one might almost be tempted to believe that they are not mountains at all, but pyramids and lines of battlement—the work, perhaps, of some primeval Titan, who once held sway in the north.

These huge isolated cones are among the most striking