

doubt once prominent crags have been ground down into undulating or pillow-shaped knolls, while deep hollows and gentler depressions have been worn in the solid rock. It may seem paradoxical to speak of the well-known rugged Highland mountains as showing traces of a general smoothing of their surface. But such is really the case. There may be places, indeed, where from height, or steepness, or some other cause, the smooth surface was never communicated ; and there is everywhere a constantly progressing destruction of that peculiar outline : the rains, springs, and frosts are re-asserting their sway, and carving anew upon the country its ancient ruggedness. Nevertheless, to an eye which has learnt to distinguish the characteristic flowing lines, there are not many landscapes in the kingdom where they cannot be traced. Even in the wildest Highland scenery, where the casual tourist may see nothing but thunder-riven crags and precipices, and glens blocked up with their ruins—

‘ Precipitous black, jagged rocks,  
For ever shattered and the same for ever,’—

an eye trained to observe it can detect the same universal smoothing and moulding. Nay, it is precisely amid such scenes that the geologist is most vividly impressed with the fact that the general surface of the country has been ground down, for he there sees the natural outlines which the rocks assume when left to the ordinary attacks of the elements. The smooth undulating outlines are there replaced by craggy precipices and scars, here and there red and fresh, where the last winter’s frosts have let loose masses of rock into the valleys below. He can trace how, in this way, the hand of nature is once more roughening the landscape, restoring to the hard rocks their cliffs and