

brought about by those great geological causes which, though seeming to operate at random, and wholly irrespective of either the animal or vegetable worlds, have yet been mysteriously linked with the grand onward march of life upon our globe.

In fine, the observer who has learnt to follow the trail of the ice-sheets and glaciers that once moved across the Highlands will have been taught at the same time how universally their traces are being effaced. He is, as it were, admitted within the veil of geological process and permitted to behold how one great cycle of change is succeeded and effaced by another. While this revelation is almost everywhere made to him, there are some districts where it is more especially clear and impressive. I have been often struck, for instance, with the way in which it presents itself along the shores of Loch Fyne. The hard quartzose rocks opposite Tarbert are beautifully ice-worn and smoothed; their striæ, still fresh and clear, may be seen running out to sea under the waves. The lower parts have been protected from decay, owing partly to the recentness of their upheaval into dry land, and partly to their having been shielded by a coating of boulder-clay, not yet worn away from the bays. But above high-water mark, though the track of the old ice-sheet is still strikingly shown, the rocks have begun to split up along their joints. Hence the low cliff that rises along the shore is rent into endless chinks and clefts, large angular blocks have been detached from it, and its base is strewn with the ruins. Some of the islands show well the union of the glaciated outlines with this subsequent weathering. They still rise out of the water in long flat curves, like so many whales,—the form that was impressed upon them by the ice; yet they are split across along the joints into open cracks which