

same level on the opposite sides of the glen. Seen at a distance, they appear like ledges, or roads, cut artificially out of the sides of the hills; but when we are upon them, we can scarcely recognise their existence, so uneven is their surface, and so covered with boulders. They are from ten to sixty feet broad, and merely differ from the side of the mountain by being somewhat less steep.

On closer inspection, we find that these terraces are stratified in the ordinary manner of alluvial or littoral deposits, as may be seen at those points where ravines have been excavated by torrents. The parallel shelves, therefore, have not been caused by denudation, but by the deposition of detritus, precisely similar to that which is dispersed in smaller quantities over the declivities of the hills above. These hills consist of clay-slate, mica schist, and granite, which rocks have been worn away and laid bare at a few points immediately above the parallel roads. The lowest of these roads is about 850 feet above the level of the sea, the next about 212 feet higher, and the third 82 feet above the second. There is a fourth shelf, which occurs only in a contiguous valley called Glen Gluoy, which is twelve feet above the highest of all the Glen Roy roads, and consequently about 1,156 feet above the level of the sea.* One only, the lowest of the three roads of Glen Roy, is continued throughout Glen Spean, a large valley with which Glen Roy unites. (See Plate II. and map, fig. 36.) As the shelves, having no slope towards the sea like ordinary river terraces, are always at the same absolute height, they become continually more elevated above the river in proportion as we descend each valley; and they at length terminate very abruptly, without any obvious cause, or any change either in the shape of the ground or in the composition or hardness of the rocks.

* Another detached shelf also occurs at Kilfinnan. (See Map, p. 254.)