

to those that have been mentioned respecting the unconformity of the Cambrian on the Laurentian rocks. *In both a great interval of time is indicated unrepresented by stratified formations.* The bottom beds of the Lower Silurian strata consist of quartz-rock and two beds of limestone (3), the latter so altered that the fossils are sometimes with difficulty distinguishable, even by those most skilled in the determination of genera and species. Above the upper limestone we have a vast series of beds of mica-schist and gneissose rocks (4), mostly flaggy in the north-western region, but, in the eastern parts of Sutherland and Aberdeenshire, often so highly contorted and metamorphosed that they are, in some respects, similar to the more ancient Laurentian gneiss.

Now these metamorphosed Silurian rocks, here and there associated with bosses of granite and syenite (*g*), form by far the greater part of that rocky region known as the *Highlands* of Scotland, which stretches over brown heaths and barren mountain ranges, all the way from Loch Eribol on the north shore, far south across the Grampians, to the Firth of Clyde on the west, and Stonehaven on the east.

In Sutherland, as a whole, the Silurian strata dip eastward, and in Caithness we have the Old Red Sandstone (5) lying quite unconformably upon the Silurian gneiss, and dipping towards the sea. At its base the Old Red Sandstone consists of conglomerate, not formed merely of small pebbles, like those of an ordinary shingle-beach, but frequently of huge masses, suggestive of ice-borne boulder-beds, mingled with others of smaller size. All of them have evidently been derived from the partial destruction of those ancient Silurian