

Below and beyond the horizon of the flagstones no evidence among the Hoy cliffs remains to lead us. But in the neighbouring isles of Pomona and Gremsa, bosses of crystalline rocks—granite, gneiss, and schists—project from under the flagstones, and are wrapped round with conglomerates, doubtless representing islets with the shore-gravel heaped up around them when they rose out of the Old Red Sandstone lake.

So much for the materials out of which the Old Man has been carved. And now a few words as to the process of carving. If the traveller who has reached Stromness finds himself with even one spare day at his disposal, he cannot employ it to more conspicuous advantage than by taking a boat with a couple of stalwart Norse like Orcadian boatmen, crossing the strait to Hoy, and ascending that island by the Cam and the north-western headland, with its rock-girt corry and glacier-moraines, until he finds himself at the summit of the great western precipice, with the surface of the surging Atlantic some 1300 feet below him. The scene tells its own tale of ceaseless waste, and needs no lecture or text-book for its comprehension. Pinnacles and turrets of richly-tinted yellow and red sandstone roughen the upper edge of the cliff, often fretted into the strangest shapes, and worn into such perilous narrowness of base that they seemed doomed to go headlong down into the gulf below when the next tempest sweeps across from the west. Buttresses, sorely rifted and honey-combed, lean against the main cliff as if to prop it up; but separated from it by the yawning fissures which will surely widen until they wedge off the projecting masses, and strip huge slices from the face of the cliff. One sees, as it were, every step in the progress of degradation. It is by this prolonged splitting and slicing and fretting that the precipice has