parallel edges of the beds protrude in successive lines of terrace. As the ground rises into conical mountains, the covering of heather grows more and more scant, but the same terraced bars of rock continue to rise even to the summits, so that these vast solitary cones, standing apart on their platform of gneiss, have rather the aspect of rudely symmetrical pyramids than the free, bold sweep of crag and slope so characteristic of other Scottish mountains.

The depth of these sandstones must amount to several thousand feet. Even in single mountains a thickness of more than 3400 feet can be taken in at a glance of the eye from base to summit (Fig. 19). Yet when this massive formation is followed along the belt of country in which it lies it is found to thin out rapidly and even for some distance to disappear. Such a disappearance might arise either because the sandstone was not continuously deposited, or more probably because it was unequally worn down before the next group was accumulated upon it. Evidently the solution of this question has an important bearing on any reconstruction of the early geography of the region.

Above the red sandstones and creeping transgressively across them lies the deep pile of white quartzites, limestones, and schists, which Mr. C. W. Peach's discovery of recognisable fossils in them at Durness showed to be of Lower Silurian age. Another well-marked contrast of scenery is presented where these rocks abut upon those just described. The quartzites rise into long lines of bare white hills which, as the rock breaks up under the influence of the weather, are apt to be buried under their own *débris* even up to the summits. Here and there outlying patches of the white rock may be seen gleaming along the crests of the dark sandstone mountains, like fields of snow or nascent glaciers (Fig. 19). Quartzites, limestones, and schists dip