

emblems, not only of grandeur but of immutable permanence.

And yet the mountains bear on their fronts the memorials of change which have not altogether failed to catch the eye even of the most untutored races. Their grim, naked cliffs and splintered precipices, their yawning defiles and heaps of ruins, have always appealed to the fancy and the fears of men. These striking natural features in old days suggested legends and superstitions which are of interest, not only as the characteristic mental efforts of an early stage of human progress, but as embodying the special parts of mountainous landscape that most potently excite the imagination in the childhood of a people. The days of legend and superstition have passed away, but the lonely glens and dark precipices of a mountainous region still make their mute appeal to us, as they did to our forefathers. We have cast aside the old fables and romances, but the same ineradicable desire to find an explanation of natural appearances, which prompted these fanciful inventions, still burns within us, and compels us to ask in our own way the same questions. We cannot shake off the feeling of vague awe which falls upon us in a great mountain range, as we stand face to face with some of the sublimest scenery on the earth's surface. The magnitude of the scale of nature and the utter loneliness of the vast mountain-world powerfully affect us. But deep beneath the feelings thus evoked lies the mental unrest in presence of the mystery of the cause of such stupendous features. The gentle undulations of a lowland landscape may never start in the mind a passing thought as to how they came into existence. The stern broken features of the mountains, however, arrest our attention and press home upon us the question of their origin.

To such a question, now that fable and legend no longer