

of the glen on the right. In this sharp form the ridge divides, one arm sweeping round the head of the glen on the north-east side, while the other circles westwards to the shoulders of Ben Nevis.

A more impressive lesson of the waste of a mountain-side and the lowering of a mountain-top could hardly be found. The narrow ridge is a mass of ruin, like the shattered foundations of an ancient rampart, and its fragments have been thickly strewn on the steep declivities below. The larger pieces lie, as a whole, nearest the crest, though many a huge block has toppled down into the depths of the glens. When detached from the solid granite, they still remain a prey to the same ceaseless wear and tear. Rain, frosts, and snows split them up yet further, and then, as they slowly tumble over each other in their downward course, they become by degrees smaller, though still retaining their dry, angular surface. At last, broken up many times in succession, they find their way down into the stream that threads the bottom of the glen. There, chafed against each other and the rocky channel, they are rolled into shingle and gravel. At last, in the form of fine silvery sand, the waste of the far granite peaks is either spread out in the quiet reaches of the stream, as it winds through the valley, or hurried thence by the floods, and swept out into the Atlantic waters of Loch Eil. The various agencies of erosion thus work steadily in concert. Those that wear down the flanks of the mountains cast no more debris into the streams than these can in the end sweep away. Hence each glen is insensibly widened and deepened, and each mountain, as it decreases in circumference and in height, silently proclaim,

‘The memorial majesty of Time,
Impersonated in its calm decay.’