

in Palæozoic time have entirely vanished, that conjecture is hardly even possible as to what may have been the configuration of the country after the plication and dislocation of the Highland rocks, and that since these early ages the land has probably been reduced more than once to a base-level of denudation beneath the sea-level. A platform of erosion, thus cut across the various rocks of a country, may remain with but little change for an indefinite period, protected by the sea from further abrasion, and not deep enough below the sea-level to receive a permanent deposit of sediment. But if subsidence should intervene, the platform may be slowly carried down into quiet depths, and a thick accumulation of sedimentary materials may be laid down upon it. That this has happened again and again over the site of the Highland hills, since their rocks were bent and dislocated into their present condition, is made certain by the geological structure of the country. The region, after being extensively denuded, was buried under the conglomerates of the Lower Old Red Sandstone. It was subsequently planed down and partially covered over with accumulations of the Upper Old Red Sandstone. In Carboniferous, Permian, Jurassic, Cretaceous, and Tertiary times similar denudation, depression, and entombment were in progress.

The geologist who realises the true meaning of these statements can only smile when he hears confident reference made to the aboriginal scenery of the Highlands, as if the present hills and glens had retained the forms impressed by subterranean disturbance during Palæozoic time. There cannot be the least doubt that the existing ridges and hills, like the valleys that surround them, are entirely the work of erosion, variously modified and guided by the influence of geological structure. In not a single instance can any so-