

less bold and rugged, and affects often long horizontal lines that stretch away without rise or depression, amid the surrounding inequalities of the landscape for miles and leagues, and that decline to either side, like roofs of what the architect would term a low pitch. The ridge of the Leys in the eastern opening of the Caledonian Valley, so rectilinear in its outline, and so sloping in its sides, presents a good illustration of this peculiarity. The rectilinear ridge which runs from the Southern Sutor of Cromarty far into the interior of the country, and which has been compared in a former chapter to the shaft of a spear, furnishes another illustration equally apt.\* Where the sloping sides of these roof-like ridges decline, as in the latter instance, towards an exposed sea-coast, we find the slope terminating often in an abrupt line of rock dug out by the waves. It is thus a roof set on walls, and furnished with eaves. A ditch just finished by the laborer presents regularly sloping sides; but the little stream that comes running through gradually widens its bed by digging furrows into the slopes, the undermined masses fall in and are swept away, and, in the course of a few months, the sides are no longer sloping, but abrupt. And such, on a great scale,

---

\* The valleys which separate these ridges form often spacious friths and bays, the frequent occurrence of which in the Old Red Sandstone constitutes, in some localities, one of the characteristics of the system. Mark in a map of the north of Scotland, how closely friths and estuaries lie crowded together between the counties of Sutherland and Inverness. In a line of coast little more than forty miles in extent, there occur four arms of the sea—the Friths of Cromarty, Beaully, and Dornoch, and the Bay of Munlochy. The Frith of Tay and the Basin of Montrose are also semi-marine valleys of the Old Red Sandstone. Two of the finest harbors in Britain, or the world, belong to it—Milford Haven, in South Wales, and the Bay of Cromarty.