

and shade lay, as the sun declined, in strongly-contrasted patches, that betrayed the abrupt inequalities of the ground, and bore, when all around was warm, tinted and bright, a hue of cold neutral gray; while immediately over and beyond this rough sombre base there rose two noble pyramids of red sandstone, about two thousand feet in height, that used to flare to the setting sun in bright crimson, and whose nearly horizontal strata, deeply scored along the lines, like courses of ashlar in an ancient wall, added to the mural effect communicated by their bare fronts and steep rectilinear outlines. These tall pyramids form the terminal members, towards the south, of an extraordinary group of sandstone hills, of denudation unique in the British islands, to which I have already referred, and which extends from the northern boundary of Assynt to near Applecross. But though I formed at this time my first acquaintance with the group, it was not until many years after that I had an opportunity of determining the relations of their component beds to each other, and to the fundamental rocks of the country.

At times my walks were directed along the sea-shore. Naturalists well know how much the western coasts of Scotland differ in their productions from its eastern ones; but it was a difference wholly new to me at this time; and though my limited knowledge enabled me to detect it in but comparatively few particulars, I found it no uninteresting task to trace it for myself in even these few. I was first attracted by one of the larger sea-weeds, *Himanthalia lorea*,—with its cup-shaped disc and long thong-like receptacles,—which I found very abundant on the rocks here, but which I had never seen in the upper reaches of the Moray Frith, and which is by no means very common on any portion of the east coast. From the sea-weeds I passed to the shells, among which I detected not only a difference in the proportions in which the various species occurred, but also species that were new to me,—such as a shell, not rare in Gairloch, *Nassa reticulata*, but rarely if ever seen in the Moray or Cromarty Friths; and three other shells which I saw here for the first time, *Trochus umbilicatus*,