

The surface of the rock is for the most part in a crumbling state, and the hills are often surmounted by piles of stones like the remains of a stratified mass, as in the annexed figure, and sometimes like heaps of boulders, for which they have been mistaken. The exterior of these

Fig. 681.

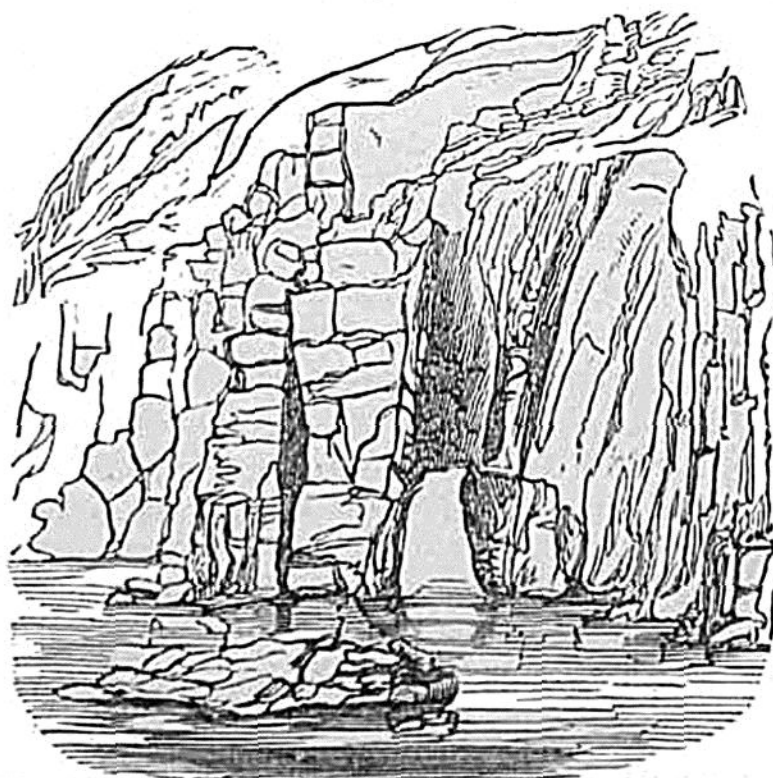


Mass of granite near the Sharp Tor, Cornwall.

stones, originally quadrangular, acquires a rounded form by the action of air and water, for the edges and angles waste away more rapidly than the sides. A similar spherical structure has already been described as characteristic of basalt and other volcanic formations, and it must be referred to analogous causes, as yet but imperfectly understood.

Although it is the general peculiarity of granite to assume no definite shapes, it is nevertheless occasionally subdivided by fissures, so as to assume a cuboidal, and even a columnar structure. Examples of these appearances may be seen near the Land's End, in Cornwall. (See figure 682.)

Fig. 682.



Granite having a cuboidal and rude columnar structure, Land's End, Cornwall.

The plutonic formations also agree with the volcanic, in having veins or ramifications proceeding from central masses into the adjoining rocks,