that they once formed parts of a continuous bed, which ere the operation of the denuding agencies, had overlaid, to the depth of from two to three thousand feet, the gneiss and quartz deposits below. They now exist, however, as a group of magnificent pyramids, compared with which those of Egypt are but the toy erections of children; and yet, from the rectilinear character of their abrupt and mural precipices, coursed as if with tiers of ashlar,—from their general regularity of form, their utter bareness of vegetation, and their rich warm colour, which contrasts as strongly with the cold grey tints of the rocky platform on which they rest, as the warm colour of our fresher public buildings with the cold grey of our paved streets or squares,—they seem rather works of human contrivance than productions of Nature. Seen from the west in a clear summer evening, when the red level light falls on the still redder stone, but at a sufficient distance to admit of those softening influences of the atmosphere which mellow the harsher reds into crimson and purple, there is a gorgeous beauty in these pieces of Nature's masonry which it is scarce possible to exaggerate in description. Beneath and in front we see a tumbling sea of craggy hills, which even the warm gleam of sunset scarce relieves from their sober tint of neutral grey; while rising over them abrupt and bold, and lined with their horizontal bars, appear the noble pyramids in their rich vestures of regal purple,—the monuments of an antiquity compared with which that of Nineveh and Babylon belong to the morning hours of a day not yet come to its close.[1]

But it is peculiarly in the southern Silurian portions of the kingdom that 'scarce a mountain lifts its head unsung.'

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[1] The above description of the scenery of the West Highlands is, in fact, that of the Silurian, although written before Sir Roderick Murchison discovered his error in laying down these mountains as Old Red. It is inserted here to fill up the hiatus in description which would else occur.—L. M.