

the most picturesque point of view, may serve to convey some notion of the form, size, and structure of this the most remarkable feature in Orkney scenery. The Old Man is a column of yellow and red sandstone more than 600 feet high. It stands well in front of the cliff, with which, however, it is still connected by a low ridge strewn with blocks. Doubtless one main cause of its impressiveness lies in the fact that its summit is considerably higher than the cliff behind it. Thus it stands out against the sky even when seen from a distance. Its base is washed on three sides by the waves which rise and fall over a low reef running out from underneath the base of the column. Formerly a huge buttress, like the Giant's Leg of Bressay in Shetland, used to project into the sea. But it has been swept away, and for many years the Old Man, with the support of but one leg, has had to keep his watch and wage his unequal battle with the elements.

Unless the ground-swell be too heavy, the steamboat usually keeps close enough to the base of the great precipices to allow the masonry of this wonderful obelisk to be distinctly seen. Like the cliff behind, it is built up of successive bars of sandstone forming portions of horizontal or very gently inclined strata. Its base, however, rests on a pedestal of different materials, consisting of two well-defined bands, both of which can be traced stretching landwards and passing under the base of the cliff. The lower of these two bands is plainly marked by lines of parallel stratification inclined at a considerably higher angle than the dip of the sandstones, and evidently composed of something quite different from them. Viewed thus from the sea in a brief and passing way, the whole structure can be recognised as composed of three distinct portions. The main pillar, of pale red and yellow sandstone, rests unconform-