

several hundred feet high, are seen from base to summit to consist of thin parallel bands of horizontal or gently-inclined strata. These beds, though everywhere singularly durable, vary slightly in their powers of resistance to the elements. The less tenacious layers are eaten away, while the harder project beyond them. Hence the precipices

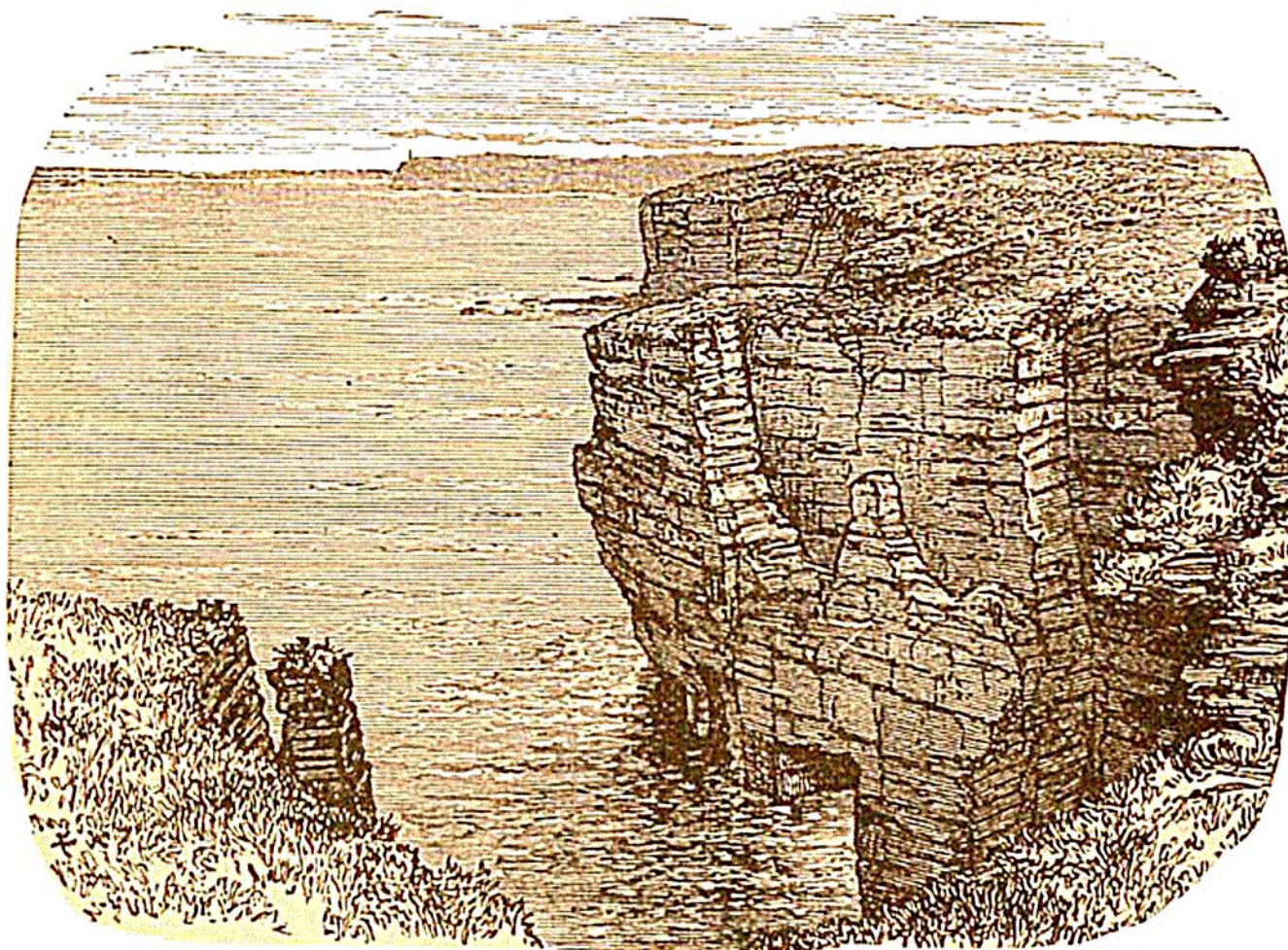


Fig. 2.—View of the Flagstone Cliffs of Holburn Head, Caithness, showing how their vertical face is produced by the wedging off of successive slices of rock along lines of joint.

are fretted into alternate lines of cornice and frieze, which can be followed by the eye from buttress to buttress along the front of these grim cliffs.

That the flagstone must, however, be endowed on the whole with exceptional durability is shown by the striking verticality which the precipices maintain. Their perpendi-