tively small. As shown in Fig. 20, it rises somewhat steeply from the west, its chief area and drainage lying towards the east. I have visited those tracts of the Highlands where the rocks approach nearest to the type of the ancient gneiss, and where the conditions have been most favourable for intense glaciation. No more promising locality for a comparison of this kind could be found than the deep defiles of Glen Shiel and Kintail. The rocks have there been extremely metamorphosed, and have been exposed to the action of ice descending from some of the highest uplands in the West of Scotland. Yet we look in vain among them for any semblance of the bare bossy surface of the old gneiss.

A further difficulty arises when we reflect that in the general erosion of the country the gneiss, being covered by later formations, would be the last to be attacked, and in so far as it was so covered, must have been exposed to the erosive action of the ice for a shorter time than the overlying rocks. We might therefore have presumed that instead of being more, it would have been less trenchantly worn down than these. Its great toughness and durability, which have enabled it to retain the ice-impress so faithfully, must have given it considerable powers of resistance to the grinding action of the glacier.

Every fresh excursion into these northern wilds has increased my difficulty in accounting for the peculiar contours of the gneiss ground by reference merely to the work of the Glacial Period. A recent visit, however, seems at last to have thrown some light on the matter. I had long been familiar with the fact that the platform of gneiss on which the red sandstones and conglomerates were laid down abounded in inequalities even at the time of the deposit of these strata. Its uneven surface rose here and there into