

Norway can hardly realise that he is not skirting the coast-line of Inverness, Ross, or Sutherland. Such a form of coast forbade easy communication by land between valley and valley. Detached settlements arose in the more sheltered bays, where glens, opening inland, afforded ground for tillage and pasture. But the intercourse between them would be almost wholly by boat, for there could be no continuous line of farms, villages, and roads like those for which the Old Red Sandstone selvages afforded such facilities on the eastern coast. Hence, though the Norsemen possessed themselves of every available bay and inlet, driving the Celts into the more barren interior, the natural contours made it impossible that their hold of the ground should be so firm as that of their kinsmen in the east. When that hold began to relax, the Gaelic natives of the glens came down once more to the sea, and all obvious trace of the Norse occupation eventually disappeared, save in the names given by the sea-rovers to the islands, promontories, and inlets—the “ays,” “nishes,” or “nesses,” and “fords” or fjords—which, having been adopted by the Celtic natives, show that there must have been some communication and probable intermarriage between the races. Among the outer islands the effects of the Norwegian occupation were naturally more enduring, though even there the Celtic race has long recovered its ground. Only in the Orkney and Shetland group have the Vikings left upon the physical frame and the language of the people the strong impress of their former presence. To this day a Shetlander speaks of going to Scotland, meaning the mainland, much as a Lowland Scot might talk of visiting England, or an Englishman of crossing to Ireland.

But besides governing in no small degree the distribution of races in Britain, the geological structure of the