

ous eminence lies the low plain of Caithness, which, from a distance, seems to be absolutely featureless. Reference to the geological map will show that this abrupt transition from the hilly ground south of Morven to the plain lying to the north coincides with the line of boundary between the crystalline schists and the Old Red Sandstone. Though singularly monotonous in the interior of Caithness, the Old Red Sandstone compensates for this tameness by the boldness of its coast scenery. It forms round the margin of the county an almost continuous line of mural precipice. Its two dominant structures, bedding and jointing, manifest their influence everywhere in the character of these cliffs. The strata, for the most part gently inclined, consist of thin alternations of different varieties of flagstone, some of which withstand the weather better than others. The faces of the precipices are consequently etched out in alternate lines of cornice and frieze, on some of which vegetation finds a footing, while others are crowded with sea-fowl. By means of the vertical joints the rocks are split into clean perpendicular faces, which repeat themselves along the main cliff, on each inlet or 'gio,' and on every buttress and isolated stack (Figs. 7, 8, 11).

Upon these ranges of precipice, every winter gives fresh proof of the immense destructive power of the breakers of the North Sea. At some places, in particular to the south of the town of Wick, the waves have quarried out masses of flagstone and piled them up in huge heaps on the top of the cliff, sixty or a hundred feet above high-water mark. Some of the blocks of stone which have been moved from their original position at the base or on the ledges of the cliffs, are of great size. My friend, the late Mr. C. W. Peach, supplied me with the following notes regarding them. 'The largest disturbed mass,' he wrote in