

the winter of 1802 a tabular mass, 8 feet 2 inches in length by 7 ft. in breadth and 5 ft. 1 in. in thickness, was dislodged from its bed and removed to a distance of from 80 to 90 feet. In 1820, he found that the bed from which a block had been carried the preceding winter, measured $17\frac{1}{2}$ ft. by 7 ft. and 2 ft. 8 in. in depth. The removed mass had been borne a distance of 30 feet, when it was shivered into thirteen or more fragments, some of which were carried still farther, from 30 to 120 feet. A block 9 ft. 2 in. by $6\frac{1}{2}$ ft. and 4 ft. thick, was hurled up the acclivity to a distance of 150 feet. 'Such,' he adds, 'is the devastation that has taken place amidst this wreck of nature. Close to the Isle of Stenness is the Skerry of Eshaness, formidably rising from the sea, and showing on its westerly side a steep precipice, against which all the force of the Atlantic seems to have been expended: it affords refuge for myriads of kittiwakes, whose shrill cries, mingling with the dashing of the waters, wildly accord with the terrific scene that is presented on every side.'¹

The result of this constant lashing of the surge has been to scarp the coasts of the Shetlands into the most rugged and fantastic cliffs, and to pierce them with long twilight caves. Dr. Hibbert describes 'a large cavernous aperture, 90 feet wide, which shows the commencement of two contiguous immense perforations, named the Holes of Scranda, where, in one of them that runs 250 feet into the land, the sea flows to the utmost extremity. Each has an opening at a distance from the ocean, by which the light of the sun is partially admitted. Farther north other ravages of the ocean are displayed. But the most sublime scene is where a mural pile of porphyry, escaping the process of disintegration that is devastating the coast, appears to have been left

¹ Hibbert's *Shetland Islands*, p. 527.