

## CHAPTER V

### THE HISTORY OF A LAND-SURFACE

HAVING now, as it were, watched the employment of each of the implements wielded by nature in the process of sculpturing the surface of the land, let us briefly consider the combined effect of the co-operation of the whole of these processes upon the landscapes of a country possessing such a climate and geological structure as Scotland. In the first place, as the result of the influence of the air, changes of temperature, rain and frost, there is a general disintegration of the whole surface of the land. Even the most obdurate rocks cannot permanently resist this decay, while the softer kinds yield to it with notable rapidity. The crumbled materials are ready to be blown away by wind or to be washed off by rain, leaving new surfaces exposed to a continuation of the same ceaseless attack. While the general surface of the land suffers, scope is afforded for the manifestation of differences in the degree of resistance to the progress of destruction. The harder rocks are gradually left projecting above those which, being softer, are more readily abraded.

The lines by which the drainage of the land is carried out to sea are liable to specially vigorous erosion. The