

waste are duly proportioned, the result is that the mountain, worn away above and shielded under its ruins below, grows more and more tapering, until it passes into a perfect cone. In many instances, the beginning of the formation of a cone may be detected on ridges which have been deeply trenched by valleys. The smaller isolated portions, attacked on all sides, have broken up under the influence of the weather. Layer after layer has been stripped from their sides, and the flat or rounded top has been narrowed until it has now become the apex of a cone. Admirable examples of this progress of sculpture are to be seen among the sandstone mountains of Western Ross-shire. Amid the Highland hills, examples of almost every stage may be found, from the long ridge which has not yet been trenched down, to that which has been so deeply cut through that the separated portions have had time to be disintegrated into regular cones.

The thick zones of white quartzite, that form so notable a feature in Highland geology, supply many excellent illustrations of this kind of topography. Even in the thin quartzite cappings on the Cambrian hills of Western Ross-shire, the tendency to take a conical form may be distinctly seen, as in the striking group of red sandstone pyramids of Dundonald, between Loch Maree and Little Loch Broom (Fig. 44). Shiehallien, in Perthshire, is a noble instance of a cone not yet freed from its parent ridge. Seen from the south-east, it appears as a long rocky ridge, mounting slowly from the east and descending abruptly at its western end. But from the north-west, the ridge appears as a perfect cone, raising its gleaming peak of snowy quartzite to a height of 3547 feet, and throwing its rocky declivities far into the moors on either side (Fig. 45). The Ben Glloe hills and others towards the valley of the Dee prolong the same features into the heart of the