

descend into the valley. In front, amid a heap of mounds that mark where a glacier once ended, he will see these blocks scattered in profusion, and on the nearer ones he will note how distinctively the internal structure of the stone manifests itself in their outer forms—the twisted, crumpled lines of the foliation, the blending of white bands of quartz with dark streaks of black mica that vary the prevailing grey, brown, or pink hue of the stone, the silvery sheen of the white mica and the glance of the felspar or the garnets. And lastly, he will not fail to observe how, while losing only very slowly their quadrangular forms, these blocks show in their component layers great differences in power of endurance, some bands projecting as hard ribs, others receding as deep hollows, yet that over all the hand of decay has passed, yielding out of the mouldered stone sustenance first for crusts of grey and yellow lichen or of green velvet-like moss, and then for tufts of fern and foxglove mounting above the clustered wild-flowers, the tall purple heather, and the trailing briars, which in the end bury the boulder out of sight.

The red Cambrian sandstones and white quartzites are in great measure composed of the durable mineral quartz, and hence yield but little to internal disintegration. Their lines of joint, however, open and allow them to be rent by vertical rifts. It is the smooth vertical walls of rock thus produced, that give the most distinctive characters alike to the mountains and to the crags of the lower grounds. Each cliff has its face, its projecting buttresses, its retreating recesses, and its narrow clefts defined by them. They are traceable too even on the detached blocks strewn below. A pile of such blocks reminds us of some gigantic quarrying operation. So slowly does the sandstone decay, and so little foothold does it supply for vegetation, that the sharp,