

not determined until the effect of these ancient disturbances had been levelled down by denudation.

We have seen that this denudation has been in progress since early geological time. The very stratified rocks that form most of the framework of the country are the most striking monument of this waste, for they have been derived from the degradation of adjoining land. We know that the rocks of the Highlands and Southern Uplands had been enormously planed down before the deposition of the Old Red Sandstone; that the Old Red Sandstone was in turn upraised and extensively abraded before the formation of the Carboniferous strata; that these again were greatly eroded before they were covered with the Permian sandstones. But perhaps the most astonishing proofs of waste are those supplied by the basalt plateaux and dykes, which prove that even since older Tertiary time a thickness of many hundreds of feet of rock has been stripped off the surface of the country.

In describing the cause of this stupendous waste, I have spoken of it as a kind of land-sculpture, and the denuding agents as tools employed by nature in the task of chiselling out the valleys and carving the hills into their present forms. Air, rain, springs, frost, rivers, glaciers, and the sea have all in turn been employed, and each has left its own impress upon the landscape.

The land may have been again and again worn down to the level of the sea, and finally planed away by the waves, until it reached a base-level of erosion beneath the limits of breaker-action. Such an eroded surface seems still traceable in the table-lands of the Highlands and Southern Uplands. On its upheaval once more into land, the denuding agents would at once begin to play upon it. Rain falling on the upraised surface would find its way from the centre by devious paths