

Sandstone, Carboniferous, Permian, and New Red formations, it will be seen that, by the writer, they are all considered to afford evidence of continental as opposed to purely marine conditions; for the Old Red Sandstone was deposited in fresh water, the Coal-measures, whether below, interstratified with, or above the Carboniferous Limestone, on the edges of, and to a great extent *on*, a continent with large rivers, marshes, and beds of peat, and the Permian and New Red series both in salt lakes; in other words, *a great continental epoch in Northern Europe (and in other regions), lasted from the close of the Upper Silurian epoch down to the end of the deposition of the New Red Marl, one main feature of which was the abundance of reptilian life, partly Amphibian.* Those parts of it in which the Permian and New Red strata were deposited can be best compared physically to the great area of inland drainage of Central Asia, so dry and arid where not artificially irrigated by rivers, and in which, from the Caspian Sea for 3,000 miles to the east, and far south towards the Himalayah, in a comparatively rainless district, all the lakes are salt, excepting those which have an outlet into some lower lake.

I specially draw attention to these remarkable inferences, for surely they give something like a broad view of an old phase of a long-enduring physical geography, so long, indeed, in my opinion, *‘that the great continental era, which began with the Old Red Sandstone and closed with the New Red Marl, is comparable, in point of geological time, to that occupied in the deposition of the whole of the Mesozoic or Secondary series (later than the New Red Marl) and to the whole of the Cainozoic or Tertiary formations, and, indeed, to all the time that has elapsed since the begin-*