

the rivers of Wales, whether flowing through Silurian, Old Red, or Carboniferous rocks, have been busy scooping out their valleys ever since the close of that great continental epoch that ended with the influx of the Rhætic and Liassic sea across the Triassic salt lakes, and though these valleys were modified by ice, and partially filled with detritus, during a short episode of submergence in glacial times, the rivers re-asserted their rights to their old channels when emergence took place. All the important rivers, therefore, that flow east and west and north and south through the Silurian rocks of Wales, are in their origin approximately of the same age, and from Cader Idris to Pembrokeshire they have all cut their way through a tableland with minor undulations, while here and there remains a higher hill, the rocks of which were unusually hard. This old upland was indeed of great extent, and its relics stretch far and wide into the northern part of Denbighshire, and into Montgomeryshire and South Wales. As already stated, standing on the summit of Cader Idris or of Aran Mowddwy, 2,960 feet high, and looking east and south, the eye, as far as it can reach, ranges across a vast extent of old tableland, the plane surface of which near the Arans is about 1,900 feet above the level of the sea, or more than 1,000 feet below the summits of the neighbouring mountains. All intersected by unnumbered valleys, to the ordinary observer it is merely a hilly country, while an eye versed in physical geology at once recognises that all the diversities of feature are due to fluvial erosions that have scooped out the valleys.

For this reason it also happens that the Dee now cuts right across the Carboniferous escarpment west of Erbistock and the lower area of the Permian strata;