

*the Earth*, and published it in 1785. Associated with Hutton, rather as a friend and enthusiastic admirer than as an independent observer, was John Playfair, Professor of Natural Philosophy in this University, by whose graceful exposition the doctrines of Hutton were most widely made known to the world. His classic *Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory* is one of the most delightful books of science in our language—clear, elegant, and vivacious—a model of scientific description and argument, which I would earnestly recommend to your notice. Sir James Hall, another of this little illustrious band, had one of the most inventive minds which have ever taken up the pursuit of science in this country. His merits have never yet been adequately realised by his countrymen, though they are better appreciated in Germany and in France. He was in fact the founder of Experimental Geology, since it was he who first brought geological speculation to the test of actual physical experiment. This he accomplished in a series of ingenious researches, whereby he corroborated some of the disputed parts of the doctrines of his master, Hutton. These were the three chief leaders of the Scottish School; but to their number, as worthy but less celebrated associates, we must not omit to add the names of Mackenzie, Webb Seymour, and Allan.

It would lead me far beyond the allotted hour of lecture to attempt any adequate summary of the work achieved by each of these early pioneers of the science. It will be enough for my present purpose to sketch what were the leading characteristics of this Scottish School, and what claim it has to be remembered, not by us only, but by all to whom Geology is the subject either of serious study or of pleasant recreation.

Born in a "land of mountain and flood," the geology