

Wernerian faith preached here by Jameson attracted in great measure the younger men, and when its influence waned there were no great names on the other side to rally the thinned and weakened ranks of Huttonianism. Hence came a period of comparative quiescence, which has lasted almost down to our own day. From time to time, indeed, a geologist has arisen among us to show that the science was not dead, and that the doctrines of Hutton had borne good fruit. But geology has never since held such a prominent place in Scotland, nor have the writings of our geologists taken the same position in the literature of the science. The great name of Lyell, and others of lesser note, have earned elsewhere their title to fame.

But there is one name which must be in our hearts and on our lips to-day, that of Roderick Impey Murchison. To his munificence and the liberality of the Crown we owe the foundation of this Chair of Geology, and to his warm friendship I am indebted for the position in which I stand before you. Of his achievements in science, and of the influence of his work all over the world, it is not necessary now to speak; but on Scottish Geology no man has left his name more deeply engraven. It was he who, with Professor Sedgwick, first made known the order of succession of the Old Red Sandstone of the north of Scotland; it was he who sketched for us the relations of the great Silurian masses of the Southern uplands; and it was he who, by a series of admirable researches, brought order out of the chaos of the so-called primary rocks of the Highlands, and placed these rocks on a parallel with the Silurian strata of other countries. These labours will come again before us in detail, and you will then better understand their value, and the debt we owe to the man who accomplished them.