

antiquities, and when Sir Humphry Davy, who also recognised his qualities, urged him to turn his attention to science, she strenuously encouraged him to follow the advice. He at last sold his hunters, came to London, and began to attend lectures on chemistry and geology at the Royal Institution.

Murchison was thirty-two years old before he showed any interest in science. But his ardent and active temperament spurred him on. His enthusiasm being thoroughly aroused, his progress became rapid. He joined the Geological Society, and having gained the goodwill of Buckland, went down to Oxford for his first geological excursions under the guidance of that genial professor. He then discovered what field-geology meant, and learnt how the several parts of a landscape depend for their position and form upon the nature of the rocks underneath. He returned to London with his zeal aflame, burning to put into practice the principles of observation he had now been taught. He began among the Cretaceous formations around his father-in-law's home in Sussex, but soon extended his explorations into Scotland, France and the Alps, bringing back with him at the end of each season a bundle of well-filled note-books from which to prepare communications for the Geological Society. These early papers, meritorious though they were, do not call for any special notice here, since they marked no new departure in geological research, nor added any important province to the geological domain.

During six years of constant activity in the field, Murchison, together with Sedgwick, worked out the structure of parts of the west and north of Scotland,