

and Wales where they are so copiously displayed. This territory was in Roman times inhabited by the tribe of the Silures, and so he chose the term Silurian—a word that is now familiar to the geologists of every country.¹

At the same time Murchison published a diagrammatic section of his classification which, except in one particular, has been entirely sustained by subsequent investigation. He there groups the whole series of formations as the Silurian system, which he divides into Upper and Lower, drawing the line of separation where it still remains. In the upper section come the Ludlow and Wenlock rocks ; in the lower the Caradoc and Llandeilo. The base of the series, however, is made to rest unconformably on a series of ancient slaty greywackes. No such base exists, for the Llandeilo group passes downward into a vast series of older sediments. At that time, however, both Murchison and Sedgwick believed that a strongly marked separation lay between the Silurian System and the rocks lying to the west of it.

Murchison used to maintain, with perfect justice, that he had succeeded in his task, because he had followed the method which had led William Smith to arrange so admirably the Secondary formations of England. He was able to show that, apart from mere lithological differences, which might be of only local value, his formations were definitely characterized, each by its peculiar assemblage of organic remains. If Smith's labours had not only brought the Mesozoic rocks of England into order, but had furnished a

¹ *Phil. Mag.* July 1835, p. 48.