

his wonted ardour, he determined in the course of 1860 to go again over some of the debatable ground. On this occasion, which was in fact his last great expedition in the field, Murchison was accompanied by Sir A. Geikie, who has told of the keen enthusiasm and the remarkable endurance in the rough mountain district of his old chief, then in his sixty-ninth year.¹ The results of their observations were brought before the Society in February 1861; and in an appendix to this paper Murchison drew attention to what he conceived to be inaccuracies in the lately published sections of Nicol. To these criticisms Nicol made reply in a note appended to his next paper, which dealt with the Southern Grampians, was read on June 18, 1862, and published in May 1863. The Council ordered the paper to be printed in full, but without the note. This was not an unjust decision when it is remembered that the paper by Murchison and Geikie referred directly to the area in dispute, whereas that of Nicol related to another portion of the Highlands. In his 'Geology and Scenery of Scotland,' published in 1866, Nicol, however, took the opportunity of making a final reply to his 'illustrious opponent—from whom only the most thorough conviction that [his] views were well founded, and that the question was one on which it became a teacher of geology in Scotland to give no uncertain utterance, could have compelled [him] to differ.'

In later years, commencing in 1878, Dr. Henry Hicks, Professor Bonney, Dr. Charles Callaway, and Mr. Hudleston, grappled from time to time with some of the problems in the Scottish Highlands; and in 1882 Professor Lapworth commenced to study in detail the somewhat bewitching region of Durness and Eriboll, with the aid of six-inch maps. In a series of articles, commencing in March 1883, he described and illustrated the facts which gave the clue to 'The Secret of the Highlands.' His observations had led him to believe 'that we have in the so-called metamorphic Silurian region of the Highlands of Scotland a portion of

¹ 'Life of Murchison,' vol. ii. p. 230.