

considering the specially interesting character of this subject, I may be excused for stating briefly, some of the actual facts which have been brought to light.

In our own island various and extensive bodies of drift are found, to which a more detailed attention is necessary. That which I shall first mention extends over a district to which Mr. Murchison, by a well-judged application of our early history, has given the name of Siluria.* It may be generally described as comprehending a considerable part of Wales, and of Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, and Shropshire. There is good reason to believe that this body of drift is the most ancient of all that have been formed on the surface of what is now land, but was then the bed of the sea, afterwards elevated, and, in the season ordained by Divine Wisdom, made to constitute the island of Great Britain. The region over which it had been spread when under the waters of an ancient sea, was raised and became dry land while the ocean still covered the adjoining districts to the east and north. Since that elevation it has not been again submerged. Its dried surface was clothed with vegetation, and became the abode of land animals; scattered bones of which are dug up, containing anatomical proofs that they had belonged to species not existing in the present state of our earth. There are several distinct formations of this drift, but they are all local, derived from rocks existing within the region.

Another more extensive body of drift spreads over a large tract from Lancashire southwards; and it possesses characters of the most decisive kind, showing its perfect distinctness from the former. Its contents are derived,

* Admirably detailed in the magnificent work, *The Silurian System*; 2 volumes in quarto, with a splendid and most instructive map; 1839. This division of the subject is treated in Chap. XXXVII.