

Silurian System is given by the distinguished geologist who has devoted seven years of toil and study, with unsparing expense, to their investigation. He has thus supplied some connecting links, the absence of which had created difficulties and perplexing inquiries, between the primary strata and the old red sandstone, now better called the Devonian System; and has poured a stream of light generally upon British, or justly speaking European, and still more extensive, stratification. Their united thickness is about a mile and a half; but the numeration of all the beds, between which a boundary of separation is discernible, would probably exceed human power: who, then, can calculate the periods of their derivation from the older formations, their deposition, their elevations and distortions; their convulsions, penetrations, and alterations of the adjoining rocks, by *frequent* out-bursts from the fiery liquid below, and other movements, till they were brought to their existing condition? * It would seem perfectly impossible for any person, but moderately acquainted with the visible phenomena of volcanic regions, to escape the impression that myriads of ages must have been occupied in the production of these formations, before the creation of man and the adaptation of the earth's surface for his abode. In short, the Silurian System of formations contains within itself a compendious body of instruction, examples, and demonstrations of Geological truths. †

* Let the impartial inquirer study Murchison's *Silurian System*; particularly chapters xvi. xix. xl. xlii.

† Will my reader accept of a little specimen?—"Coupling the preceding observations with what has been said concerning the Trap rocks, and the dislocations of Coalbrook Dale and the Clee Hills, it may be affirmed that this district in Shropshire furnishes proofs of the *alternate play and repose* of volcanic action during very long periods. These evidences demonstrate,

"1. That Volcanic Grits were formed during the deposition of the Lower Silurian strata.

"2 That the Upper Silurian rocks and Old Red Sandstone were accumulated tranquilly, without a trace of contemporaneous eruptions.

"3. That, after their consolidation, the last-mentioned deposits were dismembered, and set upon their edges, by vast out-bursts of intrusive Trap.

"4. That the Carboniferous System was deposited after the older strata had been upheaved.

"5. That subsequent dislocations, including some of the most violent with which we are acquainted, took place after the accumulation of the Coal Measures and the Lower New Red Sandstone." Murchison, vol. I. p. 235.