

where a patriarch would have chosen to feed his flocks and herds.' This is faithful description, at once beautiful and characteristic; and such of my audience as remember the exquisite landscape of the 'Enterkin' of our countryman Harvey, as exhibited at the Royal Institution here, in, if I remember aright, the year 1846, with its grey rocks, its green swelling hills of softish outline, and its recluse and houseless valley of deepest loneliness, will be convinced, as I am, that where there is in the mind a certain prominent requisite present, the region of the Silurians is as available for the purposes of the painter as for those of the poet,—that one requisite being the not very definable and many-sided faculty represented by the single magic word *genius*.

The Silurians of Scotland, though of very considerable depth, are greatly less rich in organic remains than the contemporary deposits of England and the Continent. Vast beds of grey slaty rock, hundreds of feet in thickness, seem to have been formed at the bottom of profound seas beyond the zero line of animal or vegetable life. And even in the cases in which organisms of both kingdoms were present, we find their remains very imperfectly preserved.¹ The flora of the system in Scotland is represented merely by a few dark-coloured carbonaceous beds, which occasionally pass into an impure anthracite or blind coal, and which are probably identical in their origin with the anthracite schists of Scandinavia, regarded by Sir Roderick Murchison as the remains of large forests of algæ and fuci, which originally existed in the

¹ As mentioned in the preface, it is stated by Sir Roderick Murchison, in his Leeds address to the British Association, that twenty species of Silurian fossils have been discovered by Mr. Peach in a limestone band above the Silurian conglomerate of the Western Highlands, determined by Mr. Salter, and carefully examined by Sir Roderick himself. They are *Maclurea*, *Murchisonia*, *Cephileta*, and *Orthoceras*, with an *Orthis*, etc.—L. M.