

for publication in such a book as this, but the leading features of the story are, that before entering the plains of Cheshire, the river, passing through Bala Lake, runs through the beautiful Vale of Llangollen, which as far as the behaviour of the river is concerned, may on a small scale be compared to that of the Moselle (see p. 534, Chap. XXXI.). At the mouth of its valley the river passes through a bold escarpment of Carboniferous Limestone and Millstone Grit, whence suddenly bending to the north it passes through flats of New Red Sandstone to its long shallow estuary beyond Chester.

The greater part of the Silurian region on either side of Bala Lake, and of the Dee, stood high above the level of the sea, from remote geological times, and formed a wide tableland, extending far to the south, and also to the east and north-east, and on its edges rose the more mountainous land, formed by the Lower Silurian volcanic rocks, splendid relics of which still remain in the peaks of Cadir Idris, the Arans, and Arenigs.

When, by the drainage of this old land, the Dee, induced by minor undulations of the ground, began to flow in its earliest channel, it is clear that its present source, Bala Lake, had no existence; for whereas the river at that time must have flowed on a surface of land not less high than that on either side of the present valley near Corwen and Llangollen (now, in places, from 1,600 to 1,800 feet high), the surface of Bala Lake is only 600 feet above the level of the sea, while the neighbouring watershed between the lake and Dolgelli is only 200 feet higher. As the river could not flow up hill, it is clear that in that early stage of its history, the valley of the Dee about Bala, must have been at least from 1,300 to 1,400 feet higher than it is now, and