

rubbish held sacred to geology, which she once ventured to have cleared, but found it so disturbed the doctor that she determined never again to risk her matrimonial felicity in such a cause.'¹

That women have been interested in one way or another in geology has already been indicated. As early as 1823 the Geological Society received a communication from Mrs. Maria Graham, being 'an account of some effects of the late earthquakes in Chili;' and this was published in the *Transactions*.² Nearly forty years, however, elapsed before any other paper by a lady was printed in the Society's publications.³

In the diary of Lyell for May 1832, when he was professor of Geology at King's College, it is mentioned that there were 'grand disputes at the Geological Society about the propriety of admitting ladies to my lectures.' The fact was that the Council of King's College had decided that, in future, ladies should not be admitted to Lyell's lectures, because their presence 'diverted the attention of the young students.' A great falling-off in attendance was the result of this resolution.⁴ Sedgwick, however, lectured in 1847 at Cambridge to a very large class, including many ladies.⁵ In an amusing letter to Dr. William Somerville, in 1834, he offered a warm welcome at Cambridge to Mary Somerville (1780-1872), whose researches on physical geography should be mentioned in this volume, and whose husband took interest in mineralogy, and had in early years joined the Geological Society.⁶

In this country the most distinguished of early women-workers on geology was Etheldred Benett (1776-1845),

¹ 'Memoirs of Old Friends,' by Caroline Fox, 2nd ed. vol. i. 1882, p. 83.

² Ser. 2, vol. i. p. 413.

³ See 'The Work of Women,' in address to Geol. Assoc. 1894, *Proc. Geol. Assoc.* xiii. p. 264.

⁴ 'Life, Letters, and Journals of Sir C. Lyell,' vol. i. 1881, p. 381; and T. G. Bonney, 'Charles Lyell and Modern Geology,' 1901, p. 71.

⁵ 'Life and Letters of Sedgwick,' vol. ii. 1890, p. 140.

⁶ See 'Personal Recollections of Mary Somerville,' by her daughter, Martha Somerville, 1873.