

his young science have contributed to supply the missing links of that great chain by which we are reaching back from the living present into that infinite past through which creative power has manifested itself in ever varying forms and conditions in the succession of life. Nevertheless all the recognition of Sir William Logan's indefatigable labours is not left for posthumous appreciation. Owing to some special advantages which the geological formations of Canada supply, the researches of our provincial staff have largely aided in throwing a new and clearer light on those Azoic rocks which by their essentially inorganic character appear to point clearly to a terrestrial era prior to the first creation of life; and thus to offer a scientific confirmation to that initial stage of creation in which the earth was without form, and void. Sir Roderick Murchison in his recent reclassification of the more ancient rocks of Scotland,* when referring to those on the North West Scottish coast, remarks: "The phenomenon relating to these Cambrian sandstones, which may well strike the geologist, is that these very ancient rocks, on which unquestionably the Lower Silurian rocks repose, should be simply sandstones and grits which have undergone much less change than the sandstone which lies upon them,—the latter having been metamorphosed into quartz-rock. However difficult it may be to account for this fact, it is at all events most instructive as regards the origin and succession of life in the crust of the earth, and sustains my view of a beginning. For here the older of the two rocks in Scotland has offered no trace of fossils, whilst the more crystallized structure above exhibits unmistakeable signs of former living things." Having accordingly set forth in detail the evidence and reasoning on which he bases his new views on the order of the ancient stratified rocks of Scotland, and their associated eruptive rocks, Sir Roderick Murchison thus proceeds: "The beginning of the geological alphabet, as applied in the maps of the Geological Survey to the Cambrian rocks of England, Wales, and Ireland, must therefore be preceded in Scotland by the first letter of some alphabet earlier than the Roman, showing a still lower deep in the north-west of Scotland—as in North America,—than exists in England, Wales, or Ireland. If this most ancient gneiss required a British name, it might indeed, with propriety, be termed the *Lewisian System*, seeing that the large island of Lewis is essentially composed

* Proceedings of the Geological Society, Vol. XVI., page 240.