

erature were capable of subdivision into distinct formations characterized by a peculiar assemblage of organic remains. As he found them to be well developed in the region once inhabited by the British tribe of Silures, he gave them the name of Silurian.⁵¹ From the base of the Old Red Sandstone, he was able to trace his Silurian types of fossils into successively lower zones of the old "Grauwacke." It was eventually found that similar fossils characterized the older sedimentary rocks all over the world, and that the general order of succession worked out by Murchison could everywhere be recognized. Hence the term Silurian came to be generally employed to designate the rocks containing the first great fauna of the Geological Record.

The controversy regarding the respective limits of the Cambrian and Silurian formations (ante, p. 1211) survived the lifetime of the two great antagonists. Prof. Lapworth in 1879 proposed, as a compromise, that the lower half of Murchison's Silurian system, which Sedgwick had claimed as Cambrian, should be detached from both and erected into a distinct system under the name "Ordovician."⁵² I consider that this proposal, which was honestly intended to obviate confusion and to promote the progress of the science, is fair to neither of these fathers of English geology, and is especially unjust to Murchison. The division of "Lower Silurian" has the claim not only of priority, but of having been established and of having had its component members defined by the author of the Silurian system in the early years of his investigation. The primordial fauna which Barrande had shown to underlie the Lower Silurian rocks of Bohemia was hardly known to exist in Britain during Murchison's

⁵¹ Phil. Mag. (3), vii. 1835, p. 47.

⁵² Geol. Mag. 1879, p. 13.