

Dear Sir

I was much gratified  
by your account of the reading of  
my paper, and still more so by  
your favourable opinion of it. The  
tracks were not very distinct, but I hope  
yet to find better ones, if I can find a  
traced surface without rain marks.  
Whether we chose to call the animals  
which made these tracks reptiles, and birds  
or not, I cannot doubt that amphibians  
or terrestrial animals walked on the shores  
where plants of the carboniferous period still  
flourished. Perhaps at the time when  
these sandstones were deposited, the older  
system of organic forms was wearing away  
and those families of birds and reptiles



which afterwards attained so great de-  
velopment were only beginning to appear.  
If this were the case it does not differ  
very much from the transition character  
of the fossils of your English New red sand-  
stone, which I believe show a mixture of newer  
and older forms. In England however  
the disturbances which followed the de-  
position of the coal bearing rocks seem to  
have restored a state of things like that which  
prevailed during the accumulation of the  
Mountain limestone, an ocean with shells  
and corals of lower carboniferous forms. In Amer-  
ica ~~as~~ far as I am aware we have  
nothing of that kind so that our coal flora  
may have gradually passed away and at  
its confines have been blended with the  
remains of vertebrates, which are found  
in the new red sandstones of both continents,  
<sup>without the intervention of any equivalent of the Magnesian limestone</sup>  
Perhaps if our red newer coal formation  
could be traced farther in the ascending  
order we might find it passing into



a red sandstone formation like that of Connecticut without coal plants. At present, however, it would certainly be contrary to sound principles of classification to separate this formation from the Carboniferous System.

The Journal which you mention and which I see advertised will be very useful to geologists in the colonies, and indeed everywhere out of London, and a few other large towns. I have long wished for the establishment of something of the kind, as ~~an~~ an aid in keeping up with the progress of Geology.

Your East Indian Survey would have been truly a splendid affair that country must afford a noble field for geological investigation. As soon as the enterprise would have perfectly suited my inclination; but I am not very certain that it would have been



consistent with my duty to my parents  
and their interests. I am sorry that  
you will not be able to visit N. S. S. in  
your proper westward; perhaps you  
may be able to do so as you return.

I feel most grateful to you for  
your continued kindness and the en-  
couragement which your approbation gives  
to collect such new facts as are within  
my reach.

Copy letter  
Edyell  
1845