

interpret the hieroglyphics with which they are inscribed, and from apparently the most insignificant relics, trace the history of beings of whom no other records are extant, and restore anew those forms of organization which lived and died, and whose races were swept from the face of the earth, ere man, and the creatures which are his contemporaries, became its denizens. Well might the illustrious Bergman exclaim, "*Sunt instar nummorum memorialium, quæ de preteritis globi nostri fatis testantur, ubi omnia silent monumenta historica.*"

To derive from these Medals of Creation all the information they are capable of affording, regard therefore must be had, not only to their peculiar characters, but also to the geological position of the strata in which they are found deposited. Data may be thus obtained by which the relative age of a formation or group of strata may be determined, as well as the mode of its deposition, and the agency by which it was effected; whether in the bed of an ocean, or of a lake, or estuary—by the action of the sea, or of rivers—of lakes or of running streams—by the effects of icebergs or glaciers—by slow processes through long periods of time, or by sudden inundations or deluges—or by the agency of volcanoes and earthquakes.

The discovery that particular fossils are confined to certain deposits, has been fruitful in important consequences to the advancement of modern Geology; for although the justly celebrated naturalist Dr.