become possible by means of these two most ancient inscriptions to reconstruct the history of ancient Egypt, and to decipher all hieroglyphic writings, so in many cases a few bones of an animal, or imperfect impressions of a lower animal or vegetable form, are sufficient for us to gain the most important starting-points in the history of the whole group, and in the search after their pedigree. A couple of small back teeth, which have been found in the Keuper formation of the Trias, have of themselves alone furnished a sure proof that mammals existed even in the Triassic period.

Of the incompleteness of the geological accounts of creation, Darwin, agreeing with Lyell, the greatest of all recent geologists, says :—

"I look at the geological record as a history of the world imperfectly kept, and written in a changing dialect; of this history we possess the last volume alone, relating only to two or three countries. Of this volume, only here and there a short chapter has been preserved; and of each page, only here and there a few lines. Each word of the slowly-changing language, more or less different in the successive chapters, may represent the forms of life which are entombed in our consecutive formations, and which falsely appear to us to have been abruptly introduced. On this view, the difficulties above discussed are greatly diminished, or even disappear."—*Origin of Species*, 6th Edition, p. 289.

If we bear in mind the exceeding incompleteness of palæontological records, we shall not be surprised that we are still dependent upon so many uncertain hypotheses when actually endeavouring to sketch the pedigree of the different organic groups. However, we fortunately possess, besides