

In England, with the exception of Woodward's "Catalogue" of the collection now preserved in Cambridge, there was no general work on fossils. James Parkinson tried to supply this deficiency in his work, *Organic Remains of a Former World* (1804-11); the epistolary style was selected as the most easy of comprehension, and the most likely to stimulate popular interest in fossils. The first volume gave in forty-eight letters a short history of palæontological knowledge, an account of the various views about fossils or "Medals of Creation" (a name which Parkinson and others had adopted from Bergman), and a discussion of the surface forms and physical constitution of the earth. Peat, lignite, brown-coal and coal, buried woods, bitumen, etc., were then described according to their properties, their mode of occurrence, state of preservation, and the changes they had passed through. The various fossil woods, leaf-impressions, ferns, stems, branches, and fruits belonging chiefly to Carboniferous and Tertiary times were enumerated and compared with existing types; nine coloured quarto plates complete this volume.

Parkinson shared in great measure the older conceptions of the "diluvialists" about the origin of fossils; the comparison of fossil and living forms, which he carried out in collaboration with the botanist, J. Edward Smith, led him to the conclusion that the most of the fossil plant types were the products of a warmer climate. Parkinson unfortunately made no attempt to identify the fossil plants according to genus and species, nor did he use the Linnæan method of nomenclature. Hence his work on fossil plants is distinctly behind the almost contemporaneous publication of Schlotheim.

The second volume treats of corals, sponges, and crinoids, and comprises twenty-nine letters and nineteen plates. The Linnæan method of nomenclature was introduced into this volume, but was not carried uniformly through the work. In the third volume, with 22 plates, Parkinson had the advantage of fuller reference literature. He could refer to the works of Klein and Leske on Echinoderms, to the writings of Lamarck on Molluscs, to the result of Cuvier's investigations on Vertebrates. We find the author's views considerably expanded in this volume, wherein he becomes more and more convinced that numerous fossil species belonged to extinct forms of life. Moreover, the influence of William Smith's researches had spread amongst English geologists, and taught