

by great earth-cataclysms. Otherwise palæontological research between 1820 and 1860 made remarkable advances. Innumerable new forms were brought to light by zealous stratigraphers during their field surveys; while the museums were rapidly extending their collections, and affording ready opportunities to the younger minds of assimilating the broad facts and tendencies of palæontological investigations.

Schlotheim had in 1804 laid the ground-work of a knowledge of fossil plants, and Count von Sternberg<sup>1</sup> worthily continued these pioneer labours. His chief work, *Attempt at a Geognostic Botanic Representation of the Flora of the Past* (1820-32), describes two hundred fossil species of plants, and is illustrated by sixty splendid folio plates. Sternberg tried to insert the fossil species into the botanical system of existing floras, applied names correspondingly to the fossil species, and discarded the old names under which the fossil forms had been known. He accomplished much for the proper botanical significance of fossil floras, and paved the way for a scientific treatment of palæophytology.

A year after the appearance of the first part of Sternberg's work, Adolphe Brongniart<sup>2</sup> began his celebrated studies in fossil plants.

Like Sternberg, Brongniart also consistently carried out the examination and description of fossil plants strictly on lines of comparison with living plant-forms, and he arrived at similar results. Brongniart had at his disposal much more extensive material of observation than his German contemporary. His first *Treatise on the Classification and Distribution of Fossil Plants* is therefore the most complete and most scientific summary of all the fossil plants known before the year of its publication, 1822. A large, richly illustrated work, whose contents were made known in a preliminary *Prodrome*, was intended to form a fuller supplement to the earlier treatise, but unfortunately was never completed, and contains only the

<sup>1</sup> Kaspar Maria, Count von Sternberg, born 6th January 1761 at Serowitz (Bohemia), belonged to an old family, was president of the Bohemian National Museum, to which he bequeathed his library and collections; died 20th December 1838.

<sup>2</sup> Adolphe Théodore Brongniart, born 1801 in Paris, the son of the famous geologist, Alexandre Brongniart, studied medicine, but occupied himself chiefly with botany; was in 1833 appointed Professor of Botany at the Botanical Garden, in 1852 General Inspector of the University of France; died on the 19th February 1876, in Paris.