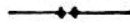


PREFACE.



THE *History of Geology and Palæontology* was originally entrusted to Julius Ewald of Berlin. The Historical Commission of the Bavarian Royal Academy of Sciences could not have made a happier choice. Ewald was one of the few geologists who had been actively engaged in geological research during the first half of the nineteenth century; he had witnessed the most brilliant period of the rise of geology in Germany, and had been for a long time personally acquainted with most of the great exponents of the science on the Continent. Unfortunately it was not granted to Ewald to bring his task to completion. A few years before his death his feeble health compelled him to give up the work he had undertaken, and the results of many years' labour which he had expended upon it were entirely lost, as his will directed that all his unfinished manuscripts should be destroyed.

Although the present author of the *History of Geology* was asked to depict chiefly the history of the growth of the science in Germany, the nature of the subject is such that it could not be successfully treated along national lines. All civilised nations have shared in the development of the natural sciences, the history of any one of which must be to a certain extent the history of a scientific freemasonry. The questions of the highest import in Geology and Palæontology are in no way affected by political frontiers, and the contributions to the