

progress of these studies made by members of any nationality can only be appreciated in their true values when held in the balance with the general position of research at the time, and with the discoveries and advances made by other geologists irrespective of nationality.

In spite of some doubt and consideration on my part, it seemed absolutely necessary to continue the *History of Geology and Palæontology* to the present day. A historical exposition of these sciences which should close with the sixth or even the eighth decade of the nineteenth century, would be out of date in many respects and out of touch with the modern standpoint. My task was made more difficult by such an extension of the subject-matter, as there has been no previous historical work dealing with the newer researches. Further, the mode of treatment which appeared most suitable for the older periods could not be retained with advantage for the treatment of the modern development. The greater and greater specialisation and branching of the science which took place during the latter half of the nineteenth century, seemed to demand individual descriptions of the different areas of research in preference to a general comprehensive survey of the leading features in all.

The geological writings of antiquity have little scientific value, and they are therefore only briefly indicated. Again, the period subsequent to the downfall of the Roman Empire and extending into the second half of the eighteenth century, though it has contributed a number of noteworthy observations, is mainly conspicuous for its hypotheses. Whewell, Brocchi, Lyell, and others have depicted this older development of geology. Keferstein's *Geschichte und Literatur der Geognosie* is continued to the year 1840, but for the period from 1820 to 1840 it supplies only an enumeration of books