

members, an enumeration of some of their characteristic fossils, and a synopsis of their special lithological peculiarities and scenery. This table was drawn up in triplicate by Mr. Richardson, at Smith's dictation, in the year 1799, each of the friends and Mr. Townsend taking a copy. Smith's copy was presented by him to the Geological Society of London in 1831.

Though not actually published, this table obtained wide publicity. It showed that the fundamental principles of stratigraphy had been worked out by William Smith alone, and independently, before the end of the eighteenth century. He had demonstrated, as his friend and pupil Farey testified, "that the fossil productions of the strata are not accidentally distributed therein, but that each particular species has its proper and invariable place in some particular stratum; and that some one or two or more of these species of fossil shells may serve as new and more distinctive marks of the identity of most of the strata of England."¹ Had Smith's table been printed and sold it would have established his claim to priority beyond all possibility of cavil. But even without this technical support, his place among the pioneers of stratigraphy cannot be gainsaid.

Notwithstanding the abundant professional employment which he obtained, Smith never abounded in money. So keenly desirous was he to complete his investigation of the distribution of the strata of England, for the purpose of constructing a map of the country, that he spent as freely as he gained, walking, riding, or posting in directions quite out of the way

¹ See note on p. 394.