

presents the angular column of the Pentacrinite; with this one exception, pentangular columns first began to abound among the Crinoïdeans at the commencement of the Lias, and have from thence extended onwards into our present seas. Their several species and even genera are also limited in their extent; e. g, the great Lily Encrinite (*E. moniliformis*) is peculiar to the Muschel Kalk, and the Pear Encrinite to the middle region of the Oolitic formation.

The Physiological history of the family of Encrinites is very important; their species were numerous among the most ancient orders of created beings, and in this early state their construction exhibits at least an equal if not a higher degree of perfection than is retained in the existing Pentacrinites; and although the place, which, as Zoophytes, they occupied in the animal kingdom, was low, yet they were constructed with a perfect adaptation to that low estate, and in this primeval perfection they afford another example at variance with the doctrine of the progression of animal life from simple rudiments through a series of gradually improving and more perfect forms, to its fullest development in existing species. Thus, a comparison of one of the early forms of the Genus Pentacrinite, viz. the Briarean Pentacrinite of the Lias, (Pl. 51 and Pl. 52, Fig. 2, and Pl. 53) with the fossil species of more recent formations, and with the existing