

Fossil organic remains are the relics of a primeval world long since gone past, proclaiming with a loud voice the instability of earthly affairs, and impressing upon the minds of those who seriously consider them, sentiments of piety and feelings of devotion. If the antiquary digs from among the ruins of Herculaneum a piece of ancient money, a vase, or a statue, we rejoice with him, in finding the mode of life, the manners and arts of an ancient people, placed before our eyes: If he finds an old record, illustrative of the history of his country, however limited in extent that country may be, we are grateful to him for the particle of knowledge he has added to our store; but if, among the ruins of the common country of the human race, we linger at the great sepulchre of animated beings destroyed by the hand of fate, who can look upon it without sentiments of piety! It is not here the statues of Polycletus that we admire, but the admirable monuments of the workmanship of Nature, taken from the ruins of the great Herculeum overwhelmed by the ocean, that we look upon with feelings of the deepest wonder and devotion.