

The first number of the "Fossil Fishes" had already appeared, and had been greeted with enthusiasm by scientific men. Elie de Beaumont writes Agassiz in June, 1834: "I have read with great pleasure your first number; it promises us a work as important for science as it is remarkable in execution. Do not let yourself be discouraged by obstacles of any kind; they will give way before the concert of approbation which so excellent a work will awaken. I shall always be glad to aid in overcoming any one of them."

Perhaps it is as well to give here a slight sketch of this work, the execution of which was carried on during the next ten years (1833-1843). The inscription tells, in few words, the author's reverence for Humboldt and his personal gratitude to him. "These pages owe to you their existence; accept their dedication." The title gives in a broad outline the comprehensive purpose of the work:

"Researches on the Fossil Fishes: comprising an Introduction to the Study of these Animals; the Comparative Anatomy of Organic Systems which may contribute to facilitate the Determination of Fossil Species; a New Classification of Fishes expressing their Relations to the Series of Formations; the Explanation of