

ber, that the long dispute as to the organic or inorganic character of *Eozoon canadense* has just ended at the close of the nineteenth century.

(2) The learned tell us, on the authority Ancient  
Opinions. of Origen, that Xenophanes of Colophon, about 500 B.C., observed fossil fish remains in the rocks near Syracuse and Paros, and regarded them as remains of fishes which had been entombed when these parts of the earth were under water.

(3) Another characteristically ancient view, which both Aristotle and his pupil Theophrastus countenanced, though they did not wholly adopt it, was, that fossils were expressions of the earth's plastic virtue—results of spontaneous generation which had not succeeded in coming to the surface.

(4) The discovery of many hippopotamus bones in Sicily led Empedocles (about 450 B.C.) to regard this area as a battlefield between the gods and the Titans, and to interpret the bones as those of the *extinct* giants. Here the true idea of fossils glimmered for a moment, and was lost for much more than a millennium.

It was in Italy, where shells abound in the rocks, that a revival of independent interest in fossils was first strongly marked. The artist and thinker Mediæval  
Opinions. Leonardo da Vinci, born in 1452, protested vigorously against the current traditional beliefs, maintaining that fossils were what they seemed to be—remains of animals which had once lived. In France, Da Vinci's common sense found a supporter in Bernard Palissy (1580), said to have been "the first to assert in Paris, that fossil shells and fishes had once belonged to marine animals".

The industrious accumulation of collections, and the cataloguing of these, began to make the traditional views less acceptable, but the truth had a slow dawn. Steno, a Dane, professor of anatomy in Padua, showed (1669) by actual comparison that the teeth of a living Mediterranean shark were identical with those found fossil in Tuscany, that fossil cockles and modern cockles had much in common, and made for the first time the suggestive observation that the oldest rocks contained