

CHAP. II.

*History of the External Characters of Fossils.*

§. 22.

THE most ancient writers on mineralogy, as *Theophrastus*,\* *Pliny*,† and others, described Fossils merely with regard to their use:—hence it arose, that they made little mention of their External Characters, and only occasionally employed one, or the other, as an assistant in their descriptions.

§. 23.

For many centuries after their time, we had not any professed writer on Mineralogy, and the Science itself had become almost wholly extinct:—it is, therefore, easy to suppose that nothing remarkable has appeared respecting the External Characters of Fossils.

§. 24.

At length *George Agricola* arose, the father of Metallurgic Science, and produced among other valuable works his treatise *de natura fossilium*. ||—In this he is the first who has introduced the proper  
use

\* *Theophrasti Eresii περι των λιθων βιβλιον.*

† *Caii Plinii Secundi Historia Mundi, Lib. XXXVII.*

|| *Georgius Agricola de natura fossilium, Basileæ 1546, fol.*—I pass by preceding mineralogical writers, as *Avicenna, Albertus Magnus, &c.* as their works do not contain any thing worthy of note respecting External Characters.