

Desmarest was soon actively employed in tasks for which his knowledge and capacity were found to fit him, and thenceforth his struggle with poverty came to an end. Among those who befriended him, the young Duc de la Rochefoucault was especially helpful, taking him on his travels and enabling him to see much of France and Italy.

Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century, the Governments of Europe, wearied with ruinous and profitless wars, began to turn their attention towards the improvement of the industries of their peoples. The French Government especially distinguished itself for the enlightened views which it took in this new line of national activity. It sought to spread throughout the kingdom a knowledge of the best processes of manufacture, and to introduce whatever was found to be superior in the methods of foreign countries. Desmarest was employed on this mission from 1757 onwards. At one time he would be sent to investigate the cloth-making processes of the country: at another to study the various methods adopted in different districts in the manufacture of cheese. Besides being deputed to examine into the condition of the industries of different provinces of France, he undertook two journeys to Holland to study the paper-making system of that country. He prepared elaborate reports of the results of his investigations, which were published in the *Mémoires* of the Academie des Sciences, or in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*. At last in 1788 he was named by the King Inspector-General and Director of the Manufactures of France.