

assent at the head of the geologists of his day, and the miserable controversy about the nature of basalt would either never have arisen, or could have been speedily set at rest. Cuvier tells us that Desmarest himself was fully conscious of the desirability of publishing the map, but his life slipped away as he still aimed at further improvement of it. Yet he could not bear that other observers should enter his volcanic region and describe its features. It used to be said that he seemed to look on Auvergne as his own property, and certainly he was the legitimate owner of many of the observations made there after him.

Cuvier, who knew him well and who had watched with interest his declining years, gives us a vivid picture of Desmarest. The illustrious geologist was little fitted to push his way in a society where the most successful art was that of self-advertisement. He took no more pains about his private interest than he did about his rights in regard to scientific discovery, importuning neither the dispensers of fortune nor those of fame. With his crust and his cheese, he said, he needed no Government help to visit the manufactories or the mountains. In short, in studying all the processes of art, all the forces of nature, he had entirely neglected those arts that sway the world, because nothing which agitates the world could move him. Even works of wit and imagination remained unknown to him, because they did not lie within the range of his studies. His friends used jocularly to affirm that he would have broken the most beautiful statue in order to ascertain the nature of an antique stone, and this character was so widely given to him