

of thought and activity of mind, unfolding itself exactly in proportion to the facts with which it had to deal. We are reminded of that cyclopean architecture in which each stone, as it occurs, is, with wonderful ingenuity, and with the least possible alteration of its form, shaped so as to fit its place in a solid and lasting edifice.

Different yet again was the character (as a geological discoverer) of the great naturalist of the beginning of the nineteenth century. In that part of his labors of which we have now to speak, Cuvier's dominant ideas were rather physiological than geological. In his views of past physical changes, he did not seek to include any ranges of facts which lay much beyond the narrow field of the Paris basin. But his sagacity in applying his own great principle of the Conditions of Existence, gave him a peculiar and unparalleled power in interpreting the most imperfect fossil records of extinct anatomy. In the constitution of his mind, all philosophical endowments were so admirably developed and disciplined, that it was difficult to say, whether more of his power was due to genius or to culture. The talent of classifying which he exercised in geology, was the result of the most complete knowledge and skill in zoology; while his views concerning the revolutions which had taken place in the organic and inorganic world, were in no small degree aided by an extraordinary command of historical and other literature. His guiding ideas had been formed, his facts had been studied, by the assistance of all the sciences which could be made to bear upon them. In his geological labors we seem to see some beautiful temple, not only firm and fair in itself, but decorated with sculpture and painting, and rich in all that art and labor, memory and imagination, can contribute to its beauty.

[2nd Ed.] [Sir Charles Lyell (B. i. c. iv.) has quoted with approval what I have elsewhere said, that the advancement of three of the main divisions of geology in the beginning of the present century was promoted principally by the three great nations of Europe,—the German, the English, and the French:—Mineralogical Geology by the German school of Werner:—Secondary Geology by Smith and his English successors;—Tertiary Geology by Cuvier and his fellow-laborers in France.]