

of others; perfectly true, but such is the pleasing position of affairs here below. Have I not been driven for thirty-three years to busy myself with that tiresome America, and am I not, even yet, daily insulted because, after publishing thirty-two volumes of the great edition in folio and in quarto, and twelve hundred plates, one volume of the historical section is wanting? We men of letters are the servants of an arbitrary master, whom we have imprudently chosen, who flatters and pets us first, and then tyrannizes over us if we do not work to his liking. You see, my dear friend, I play the grumbling old man, and, at the risk of deeply displeasing you, place myself on the side of the despotic public. . . .

With reference to the general or periodical lowering of the temperature of the globe, I have never thought it necessary, on account of the elephant of the Lena, to admit that sudden frost of which Cuvier used to speak. What I have seen in Siberia, and what has been observed in Captain Beechey's expedition on the northwest coast of America, simply proves that there exists a layer of frozen drift, in the fissures of which (even now) the muscular flesh of any animal which should accidentally fall into them would be preserved intact.