

vast a region as the Russian Empire, demanded much skill, labour and time. It was fortunately entrusted to a man in every way qualified for the task—Pierre Simon Pallas (1741-1811). The whole expedition comprised seven astronomers and geometers, five naturalists and several assistants. Starting from St. Petersburg in June 1768, they traversed the vast empire to its remotest bounds, making many journeys in every direction. After six years of unwearied labour, and almost incredible suffering and privation, during which Pallas had from time to time sent home accounts of his more important observations, he returned in July 1774.

Never before had so large a store of observations in all departments of natural history, extending over so wide a region of the earth's surface, been gathered in so brief a time. Pallas wrote his results in German (his native language, for he was born at Berlin), and sent them home as they were ready. They were published at St. Petersburg between 1772 and 1776, in three quarto volumes. Translated into French, the work afterwards appeared at Paris during the years from 1788 to 1793,<sup>1</sup> in five handsome quartos, with a folio atlas of plates.

Pallas was an accomplished naturalist, and made some original and valuable contributions to zoology. But it is only with his geological work that we are here concerned. One of the geological questions which especially interested him was the occurrence of the remains of huge pachyderms in the superficial

<sup>1</sup> Another edition of this translation appeared in 8 volumes 8vo, and was reprinted at Bâle in 1806.