

volume, as the fruit of his long experience, he gives a chapter of suggestions as to what should be looked for in regard to organic remains among the rocks. Some of these suggestions are full of sagacity, and show that, though he had not followed them in his own researches, he recognized the importance of the advice he was giving. One of his admonitions was "to ascertain whether certain shells occur in the older rocks but not in the later, and whether it is possible by their means to fix the relative ages and eras of appearance of the different species." Another recommendation is "to compare exactly the fossil bones, shells, and plants with their living analogues and to determine whether they differ from these."¹

One of the most interesting features of De Saussure's work is exhibited in the care with which he equipped himself for the study of the rocks of the region that he undertook to examine and describe. Petrography was at that time in a very embryonic condition. Linnaeus and Wallerius had made a beginning in the definition of rocks, but Werner's labours had hardly begun. The Swiss naturalist set himself with his usual ardour to the study, into which he introduced his accustomed order and precision. Among other aids in his researches, he devised a series of experiments in fusion, in order to determine for himself the probable origin of different rocks, and especially to enable him to decide whether certain varieties could be produced by the melting of others. It will be remembered that Desmarest had propounded the doctrine that the basalts of Auvergne had been formed by the fusion of the

¹ Vol. iv. p. 505.