

CHAPTER VIII

THE Wernerian School of Geology. Its great initial influence and subsequent decline. Effect of the controversy about the origin of Basalt upon this School. Early history of Volcanic Geology. History of opinion regarding Earthquakes.

IN tracing the influence of Werner's teaching upon the progress of geological inquiry, we must begin by the full and frank acknowledgment that when all objections and qualifications have been made regarding his theoretical opinions, the momentous fact remains that by his personal example and contagious enthusiasm he rendered a vast service to the science. He awakened a far more widespread interest in the ancient history of the earth than had ever before existed, and even where his pupils found reason eventually to abandon many of the doctrines which he had taught them, they still retained their devotion to the studies for which he had kindled in them so ardent a zeal. "It was to his irresistible influence," as Cuvier has well remarked, "that the world owes those authors who have treated so fully of minerals, and those indefatigable observers who have so fully explored the globe. The Karstens and the Wiedemanns in the cabinet, the Humboldts, the Von Buchs,