

volcanic cones, ought to have done much to arrest the progress of the Freiberg doctrine of the aqueous origin of basalt.¹ The same good observer undertook a journey into the Western Isles of Scotland towards the end of the eighteenth century,² when that region was much less easily visited than it now is, and convinced himself of the volcanic origin of the basalts there, thus adding another important contribution to the literature of volcanic geology.

Spallanzani (1729-1799), the illustrious professor of Pavia, Reggio, and Modena, born in 1729, devoted his earlier life to animal and vegetable physiology, and was fifty years of age before he began to turn his attention to geological questions. But from that period onward he made many journeys in the basin of the Mediterranean from Constantinople to Marseilles. Of especial interest were his minute and picturesque descriptions of the eruptions of Stromboli, which at not a little personal risk he watched from a crevice in the lava. His *Travels in the Two Sicilies and in some Parts of the Apennines* contained a mass of careful observations among the recent and extinct volcanoes of Italy.³

Another Italian vulcanist well worthy of remembrance was Scipio Breislak (1748-1826) who, born in Rome and destined for the church, showed so strong a bent for scientific pursuits that he was eventually made professor of natural philosophy and mathematics at

¹ *Recherches sur les Volcans éteints du Vivarais et du Velay*, folio, 1778.

² *Voyage en Angleterre, en Écosse, et aux Iles Hébrides*, 2 vols. 8vo, 1797.

³ *Viaggi alle due Sicilie*, 1792-93.