

peculiarities of the Wernerian style be seen in more typical perfection than in the writings of the Edinburgh professor.¹

In the year 1808, Jameson founded a new scientific association in Edinburgh, which he called the "Wernerian Natural History Society," with the great Werner himself at the head of its list of honorary members. So far as geology was concerned, the original aim of this institution appears to have been to spread the doctrines of Freiberg. I know no more melancholy contrast in geological literature than is presented when we pass from the glowing pages of Playfair, or the suggestive papers of Hall, to the dreary geognostical communications in the first published Memoirs of this Wernerian Society. On the one side, we breathe the spirit of the most enlightened modern geological philosophy, on the other we grope in the darkness of a Saxon mine, and listen to the repetition of the familiar shibboleths, which even the more illustrious of Werner's disciples were elsewhere beginning to discard.

The importation of the Freiberg doctrines into Scotland by an actual pupil of Werner, carried with it the controversy as to the origin of basalt. This question, it might have been thought, had been practically settled there by the writings of Hutton, Playfair, and Hall, even if it had not been completely solved by

¹ See, for instance, the way in which he dismisses the observations of Faujas de St. Fond on Scottish rocks, and the unhesitating declaration that there is not in all Scotland the vestige of a volcano.—*Mineralogy of the Scottish Isles* (1800), p. 5. He never loses an opportunity of a sneer at the "Vulcanists" and "fire-philosophers."