

fortunate departures could have been. During this apparent rest, all the different parts of method were deepened; the interior of natural objects was studied; even minerals were dissected and reduced to their mechanical elements; a still more intimate analysis was made by a perfected chemistry; the earth itself was, during this interval, if the expression is allowable, dissected by the geologists; its depths were sounded; the order and layers of rock which form its shell were recognised.¹ In the absence of foreign contributions the interior of the soil on which we walk became tributary to science. The beings of which it contains the remains came to light, and revealed a natural history anterior to that of to-day, different in its forms, and nevertheless subject to similar laws, thus giving to these laws a sanction which no one expected. The botanists did not gather so many plants in their collections, but with the lens in hand they demonstrated more and more the intimate structure of the fruit, the seed, the various relations which connect the parts of the flower, and the indications which these relations furnish for a natural division. The most delicate forms of organic tissues were exhibited; medicine

¹ Cuvier refers here to the investigation of the fossils in the Paris basin, which he undertook during the years 1804 to 1808: "La singularité des animaux dont je découvrais les ossements à Montmartre me fit désirer de connaître plus en détail la composition géologique des environs de Paris. Mon ami Brongniart s'associa à moi pour ce travail; nous fîmes ensemble et séparément beaucoup de courses. . . . Ces recherches ont donné une face toute nouvelle à la géologie, et ont occa-

sionné toutes celles qu'ont faites ensuite en Angleterre MM. Webster, Buckland, Labêche et autres" (Cuvier, "Mém. sur sa Vie" in Flourens, 'Eloges,' vol. iii. p. 188). This was the beginning of the Science of Palæontology, a term which Cuvier did not use himself (Flourens, 'Travaux de Cuvier,' p. 147). See also Cuvier, 'Recherches sur les Ossemens fossils de Quadrupèdes,' &c., 1st ed., 1812, 3rd ed., 1825, in the Introduction.