

passed all who have preceded him, from the days of Aristotle, in the reform which he has effected in the sciences of observation. His religion (being brought up in the Protestant faith) put early difficulties in the way of his education; and at a subsequent period his active mind gave him, in the German University of Heidelberg, such an unenviable polemical superiority, that he was led, by the persecutions which it entailed, to abandon the profession of the church, his original destination.

The characteristic of Cuvier's mind was rather accurate observation than grasping ideality; and though all his researches exhibit a most comprehensive scope of thought, yet this was so well disciplined by his habits of actual investigation, that he cannot be said ever to have committed an extravagance in theoretical deduction; and the same admirable perfection of the contemplative faculties which makes genius merely the application of common sense to new ideas, prevented him from ever erring so far as to enter the domains of hypothesis. His lectures on Comparative Anatomy have been preserved by two of his pupils. They exhibited an unequalled assiduity of research, and were the bases of the natural arrangement of the animal kingdom which he presented to the world in the *Règne Animal*.

The constancy of form and structure, which in the course of his researches this able naturalist had perceived to characterize those separate creations which nature appeared to mark out as distinct species, led him to conceive that the lost forms of the earth, the animals of former worlds, might be grouped, and their affinities to living tribes be established by an inspection of fragments, however small, which might be collected from its rocky strata. There was no occasion to travel to test the truth of this deduction; the basin of the French metropolis contained within itself all the materials necessary for the investigation, and, to assist him in the mineralogical part of the inquiry, he associated M. Brogniart with himself; and the establishment of a new order of formations in the geological series, was one of the first results. Thus, in prosecuting one branch of science, the giant mind of Cuvier was led to effect an improvement in another, as vast as it was unanticipated. The anatomical part of this inquiry, as it stands incorporated in the museum of the Garden of Plants, and in the great work on Fossil Remains, will ever be one of the most lasting monuments to the author's genius. As Secretary to the Academy of Sciences, Cuvier was called upon by the Emperor Napoleon to write the history of the modern progress of the sciences of observation—a task which he accomplished with equal ability and modesty; and the annual report of a similar nature, which it was a part of his duty to present to the same learned body, brings down that history to the present time. The biographical memoirs of learned naturalists, foreigners or countrymen, written during the same period, are also so numerous as to fill several volumes. His last course at the College of France—and latterly he has not lectured much at the Garden of Plants—was on the ancient history of the natural science, and evidenced all that erudition and learning which had obtained for him, what, we believe, is without precedent, a seat in three academies of the Institute of France. The reunions at Cuvier's house were held on the Saturday evenings, and were a centering