tach him to life; he would not, therefore, risk it from the hope of a relief often temporary, and followed sometimes by painful infirmities, which, depriving him of part of his strength, would have been, to an active mind like his, worse than pain. He preserved, almost to his last moments, the power of occupying himself about his works, and the functions of his situation; the entire freedom of his mind, and all the vigour of his reason; and only a few days before his death he ceased to be that illustrious man whose genius and labours had occupied Europe for forty years. He died April 16, 1788, in the eighty-first year of his age. When such men vanish from the earth, there succeeds to the first glow of enthusiasm augmented by regrets, and the last cries of expiring envy, a dreadful silence, during which is slowly prepared the judgment of posterity. We read over again patiently to examine, what we read before to admire, to criticise, or merely from the vain pleasure of speaking about. Opinions which are conceived with more judgment, motives that act with more liberty, operate by degrees, modify themselves, correct each other, and at length a unanimous voice arises and pronounces a sentence which future ages rarely venture to revoke. This judgment will be favourable to Buffon: he will always be one of that select class of philosophers whom a distant posterity will read with pleasure.

Buffon was very accessible to adulation, and with singular *naïveté* would praise himself. "The works of eminent geniuses," said he, "are few; they are those of Newton, Bacon, Leibnitz, Montesquieu, and *my own*." A nice and just regard to his fame made him destroy every paper which he thought useless or unfinished, so that he left behind him none of the rubbish which crowds the desks of so many great authors.

The chronological order of his works is as follows: His translation of "Hale's Vegetable Statics" was published in 1735; and was followed, in 1740, by a translation of "Newton's Fluxions."

His celebrated work of "Natural History, General and Particular," was commenced in 1749, and finished in 1767; it consisted of 15 volumes, 4to. or 31 volumes, 12mo. To these were afterwards added supplements amounting to several more volumes. In the purely anatomical part of this work he had the assistance of D'Aubenton; the rest was wholly his own composition.

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