

papers to Leonhard's *Taschenbuch für Mineralogie* and other journals.

Escher's modest personality is endeared in the minds of all Alpine geologists. His quiet, persistent spirit of inquiry enabled him to amass innumerable observations, which not only afforded a reliable framework for the future, but also contained the kernel of some of the grandest mental conceptions of geological phenomena that have been attained during the progress of Swiss geology.

While Escher's work is so empirical and technical in its tendency as to have retained its freshness for the specialist, his contemporary, J. G. Ebel,<sup>1</sup> has left a work whose chief interest now is for the historian, but which, nevertheless, was a great achievement at the time. Ebel was the first to bring any comprehensive account of Alpine geology to a relatively successful fulfilment. The previous literature of Swiss geology, from which Ebel drew his facts, embraced the works of Scheuchzer and De Saussure, the series of accurate geological sections prepared by the engineer of the Linth Canal, Hans Conrad Escher, and the papers of the younger Escher, which were then appearing in current magazines. De Luc and De Saussure had contributed a few observations on the southwest portion of the Swiss Jura mountains, and Count Razumowsky had published his large work, *Natural History of the Jorat and its Surroundings*, in the second volume of which important suggestions had been given regarding the structure of the Jura mountains. Ebel was also thoroughly familiar with the geological literature of the German, Austrian, French, and Italian Alps; in many cases he relied upon his own observations.

Ebel's description of the Alps was characterised by the

<sup>1</sup> John Gottfried Ebel, born 1764 in Züllichau, Silesia, studied medicine, then travelled three years in Switzerland, and in 1793 settled as a physician at Frankfort-on-Main. A translation of the writings of Sieyès brought him under political suspicion, and he was forced to leave Germany. He went to Paris, where he continued to practise medicine, but spent a large portion of his time in the pursuit of natural philosophy. In 1810 he selected Zürich for a residence, and died there in 1830. During his early years in Frankfort he published a "Guide," *How to Travel in Switzerland in the most Pleasant and Practical Way* (4 parts, 1793), a work which has served as the pattern of our present guide-books for travellers. His next work was *A Description of the Mountain-peoples of Switzerland*, 1798-1802. His chief geological work, *On the Structure of the Earth in the Alpine Mountain-System*, was published at Zürich in 1808.