

of Paris as a mass of fossil molluscs, amongst which the genus *Cerithia* predominated; and the limestones in Burgundy and in the Morvan as similarly an aggregated mass of ammonites, belemnites, and gryphites. Unfortunately, Rouelle published nothing more than the bare outline of his ideas, and they failed to benefit the general development of geology.

A Swedish mineralogist of wide repute was Johann Ferber, who taught first in St. Petersburg, afterwards in Berlin, and finally settled in Switzerland. He was an indefatigable traveller, and wrote interesting series of letters relating his impressions and observations during journeys in nearly all European countries. His description of the neighbourhood of Naples, and still more his account of the ejected rocks of Vesuvius, are among the finest scientific writings of the eighteenth century.

Ignaz von Born, an Austrian, was a learned mineralogist, and a palæontologist of far keener insight than most of his contemporaries. Like Rouelle, he realised the great part that fossils were destined to play in historical geology, observing that successive assemblages of fossils gave indication of the different geographical and climatic conditions which had obtained in the same area during successive ages. In one of his treatises, Von Born recognised that the "Kammerbühel" near Franzensbad was an extinct volcano, but this opinion was at the time attacked and contradicted by Reuss, the Neptunist.

*G. L. Leclerc de Buffon.*¹—It was only natural that misgivings should have been aroused in the minds of many thinkers regarding a science whose literature frequently indulged in unfounded and fantastic hypotheses, and whose votaries seemed often to arrive at worldly distinction without having displayed any deep scientific knowledge or accurate observation of nature.

Buffon gave expression to this widespread feeling among his contemporaries when he made the sarcastic remark that

¹ George Louis Leclerc de Buffon, born at Montbard in Burgundy in 1707, was the son of a wealthy land-proprietor and Member of Parliament, Benjamin Leclerc. In the early part of his scientific career, he devoted himself to physics and mathematics, but was appointed in 1739 to succeed Dufay as Director of the Botanical Garden at Paris. He received the title of Count with the surname De Buffon. He died in Paris in 1788.