

1794 a stroke of paralysis put an end to his mountaineering activity, and in 1799 he died.

Saussure's glowing descriptions of the Alpine world removed the prejudice against the "Montagnes Maudits," and awakened a feeling of enthusiasm for the infinite wonderland of beauty and delight in the higher altitudes of the Alps. Apart from his achievements in science, De Saussure may be regarded as the pioneer of a practically new cult in human enjoyment, the love of mountain-climbing.

His great work, *Voyage dans les Alpes*, is a model of clear language, exact observation, absence of bias, and cautious reserve in forming general conclusions. His style is simple, concise, without rhetorical efforts, yet by no means devoid of elegance. At the outset De Saussure laid down the principle that we need not expect to advance our knowledge of the earth's past by a study of flat plains; that only by solving the problems presented to our view in mountain-systems can we hope to gain insight into the series of biological and geological events in the history of our world. His chief concern was to observe accurately; he placed little importance on theoretical speculations.

The descriptions of his journeys start with the environment of Geneva,—with Mont Salève, the Rhone Valley, and the south-west Jura,—continue into the Dauphiné, across the Tarentaise and Maurienne group, the Mont Cenis Massive, the Ligurian Alps, and embrace the Provence and the Rhone Valley. The district examined in greatest scientific detail was that of Mont Blanc and the Valais group; but he also travelled through the St. Bernard group, the Berne and Gotthard Alps, and the neighbourhood of Lake Lucerne. Everywhere he observed and noted the local varieties of rock and the occurrences of minerals and fossils. He also entered the strike and dip of the strata upon topographical maps, although he made no attempt at geological maps and sections.

In his views on mountains tructure, De Saussure followed Pallas. He showed that in the Western Alps, as in the Ural mountains, a central core of granite, gneiss, and other primitive rocks, was succeeded by stratified but unfossiliferous shales and schists of different kinds. The schistose rocks were most steeply tilted in the Central Alps, where they came into proximity with the primitive rocks, while towards the outer Alps the secondary rocks (limestone, sandstone, conglomerates)