and he added to the memoirs of the academy many in­teresting papers. These are the only works which he has left behind him. He died at Paris, of a fever, on the 29th of December 1737, in his seventy-eighth year. He married a wife of the family of Crousas, in Switzerland, who bore him a son, Bernard Joseph, distinguished as a writer for the theatre.

Saurin was of a bold and impetuous spirit. He had that lofty deportment which is generally mistaken for pride. His philosophy was austere ; his opinions of men were not very favourable ; and he often delivered them in their pre­sence. This created him many enemies. His memory was attacked after his decease. A letter was printed in the *Mer­cure Suisse,* said to be written by Saurin from Paris, in which he acknowledges that he had committed several crimes which deserved death. Some Calvinist ministers published in 1757 two or three pamphlets to prove the au­thenticity of that letter; but Voltaire made diligent inquiry, not only at the place where Saurin had been discharging the sacerdotal office, but at the deans of the clergy of that department. They all exclaimed against an imputation so opprobrious. It must not, however, be concealed, that Vol­taire, in the dcfence which he has published in his general history of Saurin’s conduct, leaves some unfavourable im­pressions upon the reader’s mind. He insinuates that Sau­rin sacrificed his religion to his interest, and that he played upon Bossuet, who believed he had converted a clergyman, when he had only given a little fortune to a philosopher.

SAUSSURE, Horace BeNEDIct **DE,** a celebrated na­turalist, was a native of Geneva, and born in the year 1740. His father was an intelligent farmer, who lived at Conches, about half a league from Geneva, which no doubt contri­buted, in addition to his active education, to increase the physical strength of young Saussure, so requisite for a na­turalist who intends to travel. He went daily to town for public instruction ; and as he lived at the foot of a moun­tain, he frequently amused himself in ascending its steep and rugged sides. Thus environed by the phenomena of nature, and assisted by study, it was to be expected that he would soon conceive a predilection for natural history. Botany was his most early and favourite study, a taste which was powerfully encouraged by his local situation, and was the means of introducing him to the acquaintance of the great Haller, to whom he paid a visit in 1764, and who was astonished at his intimate acquaintance with every branch of the natural sciences.

His attachment to the study of the vegetable kingdom was also increased by his connection with Bonnet, who had married his aunt, and who put a proper estimate on the talents of his nephew. He was at that time engaged in the examination of the leaves of plants, to which Saussure was also induced to turn his attention, and published the result of his researches under the title of Observations on the Bark of Leaves. About this time the philosophical chair at Geneva became vacant, and was given to Saussure at the age of twenty-one. Rewards conferred so early have been thought to extinguish in some a zeal for the increase of knowledge ; but this was not the case with De Saussure, who taught physics and logic alternately with equal success. For physics, however, he had the greatest taste, as afford­ing the means of prosecuting the study of chemistry, mi­neralogy, and other kindred sciences.

He now began his travels through the mountains, not for the purpose of studying, as formerly, their flowery decora­tions, but their constituent parts, and the disposition of their masses. During the first fifteen years of his profes­sorship, he was alternately engaged in discharging the du­ties of his office, and in traversing the mountains in the vi­cinity of Geneva ; and in this period his talents as a great philosopher were fully displayed. He extended his re­searches on one side to the banks of the Rhine, and on the

other to the country of Piedmont. He travelled to Au­vergne to examine the extinguished volcanoes, going after­wards to Paris, England, Holland, Italy, and Sicily. It is proper to remark, that these were not mere journeys, but were undertaken purely with the view of studying nature ; and in all his journeys he was surrounded with such instru­ments as would be of service to him, together with plans previously arranged of his whole procedure.

The first volume of his travels through the Alps, which was published in 1779, contains a circumstantial descrip­tion of the environs of Geneva, and an excursion as far as Chamouni, a village at the foot of Mont Blanc. It con­tains a description of his *magnetometer.* In proportion as he examined the mountains, the more was he persuaded of the importance of mineralogy ; and that he might study it with advantage, he acquired a knowledge of the German lan­guage. In the last volumes of his travels, the reader will perceive how much new mineralogical knowledge he had acquired.

During the troubles which agitated Geneva in 1782, he made his beautiful and interesting experiments on hygro- metry, which he published in 1783. This has been pro­nounced the best work that ever came from his pen, and completely established his reputation as a philosopher. De Saussure resigned his chair to his pupil and fellow-labourer, Pictet, who discharged the duties of his office with reputa­tion, although rendered difficult to him by succeeding so great a man. He projected a plan of reform in the educa­tion of Geneva, the design of which was to make young people acquainted with the natural sciences and mathema­tics at an early period ; and wished that their physical edu­cation should not be neglected, for which purpose he pro­posed gymnastic exercises. This plan found admirers in the city, but the poverty of its funds was an obstacle in the way of any important innovation. It was dreaded, too, that if established forms were changed, they might be altered for the worse.

The attention of De Saussure was not wholly confined to public education, for he superintended the education of his own two sons and a daughter, who have since proved them­selves worthy of such a father and preceptor. In 1786, he published his second volume of travels, containing a de­scription of the Alps around Mont Blanc, the whole having been examined with the eye of a mineralogist, geologist, and philosopher. It contains some valuable experiments on electricity, and a description of his own electrometer, said to be the most perfect we have. To him we are indebted for his *cyanometer,* for measuring the degree of blueness of the heavens, which is found to vary according to the height of the observer ; his *diaphanometer,* for measuring the trans­parency of the atmosphere ; and his *anemometer,* for ascer­taining the force of the winds. He founded the Society of Arts, to the operations of which Geneva is indebted for the state of prosperity which it has reached within the last thirty years. Over that society he presided to the day of his death ; and the preservation of it in prosperity consti­tuted one of his fondest wishes.

In 1794, the health of this eminent man began rapidly to decline, and a severe stroke of the palsy almost deprived him of the use of his limbs. Such a condition was no doubt painful ; but his intellects still preserved their origi­nal activity, and he prepared for the press the last two vo­lumes of his travels, which appeared in 1796. They con­tain a great mass of new facts and observations, of the last importance to physical science. During his illness he pub­lished Observations on the Fusibility of Stones by means of the Blow-pipe. He was in general a Neptunian, ascrib­ing the revolutions of our globe to water, and admitting the possibility of mountains having been thrown up by elastic fluids disengaged from the cavities of the earth. Id the midst of his rapid decline he cherished the hopes of re­