

of empirical knowledge by terms which admit either of too wide or too limited a definition of the ideas which they were intended to convey, and are, besides, objectionable from having had a different signification in those classical languages of antiquity from which they have been borrowed. The terms physiology, physics, natural history, geology, and geography arose, and were commonly used, long before clear ideas were entertained of the diversity of objects embraced by these sciences, and consequently of their reciprocal limitation. Such is the influence of long habit upon language, that by one of the nations of Europe most advanced in civilization the word "physic" is applied to medicine, while in a society of justly deserved universal reputation, technical chemistry, geology, and astronomy (purely experimental sciences) are comprised under the head of "Philosophical Transactions."

An attempt has often been made, and almost always in vain, to substitute new and more appropriate terms for these ancient designations, which, notwithstanding their undoubted vagueness, are now generally understood. These changes have been proposed, for the most part, by those who have occupied themselves with the general classification of the various branches of knowledge, from the first appearance of the great encyclopedia (*Margarita Philosophica*) of Gregory Reisch,* prior of the Chartreuse at Freiburg, toward the close of the fifteenth century, to Lord Bacon, and from Bacon to D'Alembert; and in recent times to an eminent physicist, André Marie Ampère.†

* The *Margarita Philosophica* of Gregory Reisch, prior of the Chartreuse at Freiburg, first appeared under the following title: *Æpitome omnis Philosophiæ, alias Margarita Philosophica, tractans de omni generi scibili*. The Heidelberg edition (1486), and that of Strasburg (1504), both bear this title, but the first part was suppressed in the Freiburg edition of the same year, as well as in the twelve subsequent editions, which succeeded one another, at short intervals, till 1535. This work exercised a great influence on the diffusion of mathematical and physical sciences toward the beginning of the sixteenth century, and Cassles, the learned author of *L'Aperçu Historique des Méthodes en Géométrie* (1837), has shown the great importance of Reisch's *Encyclopedia* in the history of mathematics in the Middle Ages. I have had recourse to a passage in the *Margarita Philosophica*, found only in the edition of 1513, to elucidate the important question of the relations between the statements of the geographer of Saint-Die, Hylacomilus (Martin Waldseemüller), the first who gave the name of America to the New Continent, and those of Amerigo Vespucci, René, King of Jerusalem and Duke of Lorraine, as also those contained in the celebrated editions of Ptolemy of 1513 and 1522. See my *Examen Critique de la Géographie du Nouveau Continent, et des Progrès de l'Astronomie Nautique aux 15^e et 16^e Siècles*, t. iv., p. 99-125.

† Ampère, *Essai sur la Phil. des Sciences*, 1834, p. 25. Whewell,