

The selection of an inappropriate Greek nomenclature has perhaps been even more prejudicial to the last of these attempts than the injudicious use of binary divisions and the excessive multiplication of groups.

The physical description of the world, considering the universe as an object of the external senses, does undoubtedly require the aid of general physics and of descriptive natural history, but the contemplation of all created things, which are linked together, and form one *whole*, animated by internal forces, gives to the science we are considering a peculiar character. Physical science considers only the general properties of bodies ; it is the product of abstraction—a generalization of perceptible phenomena ; and even in the work in which were laid the first foundations of general physics, in the eight books on physics of Aristotle,* all the phenomena of nature are considered as depending upon the primitive and vital action of one sole force, from which emanate all the movements of the universe. The terrestrial portion of physical cosmography, for which I would willingly retain the expressive designation of *physical geography*, treats of the distribution of magnetism in our planet with relation to its intensity and direction, but does not enter into a consideration of the laws of attraction or repulsion of the poles, or the means of eliciting either permanent or transitory electro-magnetic currents. Physical geography depicts in broad outlines the even or irregular configuration of continents, the relations of superficial area, and the distribution of continental masses in the two hemispheres, a distribution which exercises a powerful influence on the diversity of climate and the meteorological modifications of the atmosphere ; this science defines the character of mountain chains, which, having been elevated at different epochs, constitute distinct systems, whether they run in parallel lines or intersect one another ; determines the mean height of continents above the level of the sea, the position of the center of gravity of their volume, and the relation of the highest summits of mountain chains to the mean elevation of their crests, or to their proximity with the sea-shore. It depicts the eruptive rocks as principles of movement, acting upon the sedimentary rocks by traversing, uplifting, and inclining them at various angles ; it

Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, vol. ii., p. 277. Park, *Pantology*, p. 87.

* All changes in the physical world may be reduced to motion. Aristot., *Phys. Ausc.*, iii., 1 and 4, p. 200, 201. Bekker, viii., 1, 8, and 9, p. 250, 262, 265. *De Genere et Corr.*, ii., 10, p. 336. Pseudo-Aristot., *De Mundo*. cap. vi., p. 398.