

scribe battle-fields, the crossing of rivers or difficult mountain passes in their narrations of the struggle of man against natural obstacles. In the Annals of Tacitus, I am charmed with the description of the untoward passage of Germanicus over the Amisia, and the grand geographical delineation of the mountain chains of Syria and Palestine.* Curtius has left us a fine natural picture of a woody desert to the west of Hecatompylos, through which the Macedonian army had to pass in the marshy region of Mazanderan.† I would refer more circumstantially to this passage if our uncertainty as to the age in which this writer lived did not prevent our deciding what was due to the poet's own imagination and what was derived from historic sources.

The great encyclopedic work of the elder Pliny, which, by the richness of its contents, surpasses any other production of antiquity, will be more fully considered in the sequel, when we enter on the "history of the contemplation of the universe." The natural history of Pliny, which has exercised a powerful influence on the Middle Ages, is, as his nephew, the younger Pliny, has elegantly remarked, "manifold as nature itself." As the creation of an irresistible passion for a comprehensive, but often indiscriminate and irregular accumulation of facts, this work is unequal in style, being sometimes simple and narrative, and sometimes full of thought, animation, and rhetorical ornament, and from its very character deficient in individual delineations of nature; although, wherever the connection existing between the active forces of the universe, the well-ordered Cosmos (*naturæ majestas*), is made

* Tac., *Ann.*, ii., 23-24; *Hist.*, v., 6. The only fragment preserved by the rhetorician Seneca (*Suasor.*, i., p. 11, Bipont) that we possess of a heroic poem, in which Ovid's friend Pedo Albinovanus describes the deeds of Germanicus, likewise describes the unfortunate passage of the Ems (Ped. Albinov., *Elegia*, Amst., 1703, p. 172). Seneca considers this description of the stormy waters as more picturesque than any passage to be found in the writings of the other Roman poets. He remarks, however, *Latini declamatores in Oceani descriptione non nimis vigerunt; nam aut tumide scripserunt aut curiose.*

† Curt., in *Alex. Magno.*, vi., 16. Compare Droysen, *Gesch. Alexanders des Grossen*, 1833, s. 265. In *Quæst. Natur.*, lib. iii., c. 27-30, p. 677-686, ed. Lips., 1741, of the too rhetorical Lucius Annæus Seneca, there is a remarkable description of one of the several instances of the destruction of an originally pure and subsequently sinful race, by an almost universal deluge, commencing with the words *Cum fatalis dies diluvii venerit*; and terminating thus: *peracto exitio generis humani extinctisque pariter feris in quarum homines ingenia transierant*. See, also, the description of chaotic terrestrial revolutions, in *Bhagavata-Purana*, bk. iii., c. 17 (ed. Burnouf, t. i., p. 441).