

organization, or lead him to adopt the method of induction, which is the only safe means of generalizing results.

Beginning with pantheistic considerations, Pliny descends from the celestial regions to terrestrial objects. He recognizes the necessity of representing the forces and the glory of nature (*naturæ vis atque majestas*) as a great and comprehensive whole (I would here refer to the motto on the title of my work), and at the beginning of the third book he distinguishes between general and special geography; but this distinction is again soon neglected when he becomes absorbed in the dry nomenclature of countries, mountains, and rivers. The greater portions of Books VIII.-XXVII., XXXIII. and XXXIV., XXXVI. and XXXVII., consist of categorical enumerations of the three kingdoms of nature. Pliny the Younger, in one of his letters, justly characterizes the work of his uncle as "learned and full of matter, no less various than Nature herself (*opus diffusum, eruditum, nec minus varium quam ipsa natura*)."^{*} Many things which have been made subjects of reproach against Pliny as needless and irrelevant admixtures, rather appear to me deserving of praise. It has always afforded me especial gratification to observe that he refers so frequently, and with such evident partiality, to the influence exercised by nature on the civilization and mental development of mankind. It must, however, be admitted, that his points of connection are seldom felicitously chosen (as, for instance, in VII., 24-47; XXV., 2; XXVI., 1; XXXV., 2; XXXVI., 2-4; XXXVII., 1). Thus the consideration of the nature of mineral and vegetable substances leads to the introduction of a fragment of the history of the plastic arts, but this brief notice has become more important, in the present state of our knowledge, than all that we can gather regarding descriptive natural history from the rest of the work.

The style of Pliny evinces more spirit and animation than true dignity, and it is seldom that his descriptions possess any degree of pictorial distinctness. We feel that the author has drawn his impressions from books and not from nature, however freely it may have been presented to him in the different regions of the earth which he visited. A grave and somber tone of color pervades the whole composition, and this sentimental feeling is tinged with a touch of bitterness whenever he enters upon the consideration of the conditions of man and his destiny. On these occasions, almost as in the writings of Cicero, although with less simplicity of diction,* the aspect of

* "Est enim animorum ingeniorumque naturale quoddam quasi pab-