

development of organic species by transformation and descent, Goethe and Oken pursued the same course in Germany, and helped to establish the theory of development. As these naturalists are generally called nature-philosophers (Natur-philosophen), and as this ambiguous designation is correct in a certain sense, it appears to me appropriate here to say a few words about the correct estimate of the "Natur-philosophie."

Although for many years in England the ideas of natural science and philosophy have been looked upon as almost equivalent, and every truly scientific investigator of nature is most justly called there a "natural philosopher," yet in Germany for more than half a century natural science has been kept strictly distinct from philosophy, and the union of the two into a true philosophy of nature is recognized only by the few. This misapprehension is owing to the fantastic eccentricities of earlier German natural-philosophers, such as Oken, Schelling, etc.; they believed that they were able to construct the laws of nature in their own heads, without being obliged to take their stand upon the grounds of actual experience. When the complete hollowness of their assumptions had been demonstrated, naturalists, in "the nation of thinkers," fell into the very opposite extreme, believing that they would be able to reach the high aim of science, that is, the knowledge of truth, by the mere experience of the senses, and without any philosophical activity of thought.

From that time, but especially since 1830, most naturalists have shown a strong aversion to any general, philosophical view of nature. The real aim of natural science was now supposed to consist in the knowledge of details, and it was