

and later periods, and which will enable us to see how that great change has gradually come about.

All studies that deal with the actual things and events by which, on a large and on a minute scale, we are surrounded in nature, are comprised under the term Natural History. In opposition to Natural Philosophy, which comprises our abstract knowledge of the possible forms of motion and the possible combinations of the elements into which we have so far been able to decompose matter, Natural History deals only with such forms and combinations as actually exist around us, only with such processes of change as actually take place in nature. Some of these forms and changes we may be able to collect in our museums or imitate in our laboratories, but the forms of nature cannot in this way be exhausted, nor her processes understood. Her forms or things do not exist in isolation, but always in a certain environment, having a definite plan, a position in time and space. These surrounding features are as important as the things themselves. Besides this, the processes of nature draw on the great factor of time with a much more liberal hand than we can permit ourselves to do. Nevertheless, as in the abstract sciences we deal with things at rest and with things in motion, so we can appropriately divide our study of the real and the actual into the attempt to give some account of the forms and things which actually exist and continually recur, and the study of the changes which things undergo. In abstract science the terms statics and dynamics, the doctrines of rest and of motion, have been generally introduced, to distinguish the two great aims of study; some cor-

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Divisions of
natural
history.