

primitive age when man, first developing out of the monkey-state, began for the first time to think more closely about himself, and about the origin of the world around him, the natural theories of development, on the other hand, are necessarily of much more recent origin. These views are met with only among nations of a more matured civilization, to whom, by philosophic culture, the necessity of a knowledge of natural causes has become apparent; and even among these, only individual and specially gifted natures can be expected to have recognized the origin of the world of phenomena, as well as its course of development, as the necessary consequences of mechanical, naturally active causes. In no nation have these preliminary conditions, for the origin of a natural theory of development, ever existed in so high a degree as among the Greeks of classic antiquity. But, on the other hand, they lacked a close acquaintance with the facts of the processes and forms of nature, and, consequently, the foundation based upon experience, for a satisfactory unravelling of the problem of development. Exact investigation of nature, and the knowledge of nature founded on an experimental basis, was of course almost unknown to antiquity, as well as to the Middle Ages, and is only an acquisition of modern times. We have therefore here no special occasion to examine the natural theories of development of the various Greek philosophers, since they were wanting in the knowledge gained by experience, both of organic and inorganic nature.

We will here mention only that as early as the seventh century before Christ, the representatives of the Ionian philosophy of nature, Thales, Anaximenes, and Anaximander of Melitus, and more especially Anaximander, established