

have as yet seen nothing to disturb, that I should be able to speak impartially of the great scientific men of all ages, even of our own.

I have already said, in the Introduction, that the work aimed at being, not merely a narration of the facts in the history of Science, but a basis for the Philosophy of Science. It seemed to me that our study of the modes of discovering truth ought to be based upon a survey of the truths which have been discovered. This maxim, so stated, seems sufficiently self-evident; yet it has, even up to the present time, been very rarely acted on. Those who discourse concerning the nature of Truth and the mode of its discovery, still, commonly, make for themselves examples of truths, which for the most part are utterly frivolous and unsubstantial (as in most Treatises on Logic); or else they dig up, over and over, the narrow and special field of mathematical truth, which certainly cannot, of itself, exemplify the general mode by which man has attained to the vast body of certain truth which he now possesses.

Yet it must not be denied that the Ideas which form the basis of Mathematical Truth are concerned in the formation of Scientific Truth in general; and discussions concerning these Ideas are by no means necessarily barren of advantage. But it must be borne in mind that, besides these Ideas, there are also others, which no less lie at the root of Scientific Truth; and concerning which there have been, at various periods, discussions which have had an important bearing on the progress of Scientific Truth;—such as discussions concerning the nature and necessary attributes of Matter, of Force, of Atoms, of Mediums, of Kinds, of Organization. The controversies which have taken place concerning these have an important place in the history of Natural Science in