

notion ;—preserves as well as expresses a truth ;—and, like a medal of gold, is a treasure as well as a token. We shall frequently have to notice the manner in which great discoveries thus stamp their impress upon the terms of a science ; and, like great political revolutions, are recorded by the change of the current coin which has accompanied them.

*Generalization.*—The great changes which thus take place in the history of science, the revolutions of the intellectual world, have, as a usual and leading character, this, that they are steps of *generalization* ; transitions from particular truths to others of a wider extent, in which the former are included. This progress of knowledge, from individual facts to universal laws,—from particular propositions to general ones,—and from these to others still more general, with reference to which the former generalizations are particular,—is so far familiar to men's minds, that, without here entering into further explanation, its nature will be understood sufficiently to prepare the reader to recognize the exemplifications of such a process, which he will find at every step of our advance.

*Inductive Epochs ; Preludes ; Sequels.*—In our history, it is the *progress* of knowledge only which we have to attend to. This is the main action of our drama ; and all the events which do not bear upon this, though they may relate to the cultivation and the cultivators of philosophy, are not a necessary part of our theme. Our narrative will therefore consist mainly of successive steps of generalization, such as have just been mentioned. But among these, we shall find some of eminent and decisive importance, which have more peculiarly influenced the fortunes of physical philosophy, and to which we may consider the rest as subordinate and auxiliary. These primary movements, when the Inductive process, by which science is formed, has been exercised in a more energetic and powerful manner, may be distinguished as the *Inductive Epochs* of scientific history ; and they deserve our more express and pointed notice. They are, for the most part, marked by the great discoveries and the great philosophical names which all civilized nations have agreed in admiring. But, when we examine more clearly the history of such discoveries, we find that these epochs have not occurred suddenly and without preparation. They have been preceded by a period, which we may call their *Prelude*, during which the ideas and facts on which they turned were called into action :—were gradually evolved into clearness and connection, permanency and certainty ; till at last the discovery which marks the epoch, seized and fixed forever the truth which had till then been obscurely and