

gle was begun by Descartes, and they proclaim him the legislator of modern philosophers. But when we examine the philosophical writings of Fracastoro, of Benedetti, of Cardan, and above all, those of Galileo; when we see on all sides energetic protests raised against the peripatetic doctrines; we ask, what there remained for the inventor of vortices to do, in overturning the natural philosophy of Aristotle? In addition to this, the memorable labors of the School of Cosenza, of Telesius, of Giordano Bruno, of Campanella; the writings of Patricius, who was, besides, a good geometer; of Nizolius, whom Leibnitz esteemed so highly, and of the other metaphysicians of the same epoch,—prove that the ancient philosophy had already lost its empire on that side the Alps, when Descartes threw himself upon the enemy now put to the rout. The yoke was cast off in Italy, and all Europe had only to follow the example, without its being necessary to give a new impulse to real science.”

In England, we are accustomed to hear Francis Bacon, rather than Descartes, spoken of as the first great antagonist of the Aristotelian schools, and the legislator of modern philosophy. But it is true, both of one and the other, that the overthrow of the ancient system had been effectively begun before their time by the practical discoverers here mentioned, and others who, by experiment and reasoning, established truths inconsistent with the received Aristotelian doctrines. Gilbert in England, Kepler in Germany, as well as Benedetti and Galileo in Italy, gave a powerful impulse to the cause of real knowledge, before the influence of Bacon and Descartes had produced any general effect. What Bacon really did was this;—that by the august image which he presented of a future Philosophy, the rival of the Aristotelian, and far more powerful and extensive, he drew to it the affections and hopes of all men of comprehensive and vigorous minds, as well as of those who attended to special trains of discovery. He announced a New Method, not merely a correction of special current errors; he thus converted the Insurrection into a Revolution, and established a new philosophical Dynasty. Descartes had, in some degree, the same purpose; and, in addition to this, he not only proclaimed himself the author of a New Method, but professed to give a complete system of the results of the Method. His physical philosophy was put forth as complete and demonstrative, and thus involved the vices of the ancient dogmatism. Telesius and Campanella had also grand notions of an entire reform in the method of philosophizing, as I have noticed in the *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, Book xii.]