

inquisitiveness was strong but uncritical, and even round the simplest facts the intellectual fingers failed to meet.

But just as there are precocious children, so there was an early naturalist, whose works represent the most remarkable achievement of any one thinker.

Aristotle. The foundations of biology were laid by Aristotle (384-322 B.C.). He collected and classified, dissected and pondered, and the prevision of his insight reached forward to generalizations which were not established till two thousand years had passed.

The Dormant Period. Aristotle laid firm foundations, but for fifteen centuries they remained unbuilt upon, and were indeed in great part obscured by accumulations of rubbish. Apart from a few exceptions, such as Pliny (23-79 A.D.), a diligent but uncritical collector of facts, and the physician Galen (130-200 A.D.), who had the courage to dissect monkeys, men were preoccupied with the practical tasks of civilization, alike in peace and war, and science slumbered.

Even during the dormant period there were never lacking those who, as it were, dreamed of the great world around them. Their dreams are expressed in such literature as the famous *Physiologus*, which is found in about a dozen languages and in many forms, partly a collection of natural history fables and anecdotes, partly a treatise on symbolism, and partly an account of the medicinal and magical uses of animals. Fact and fiction were in those days inextricably jumbled; credulity ran riot along the paths where the scientific method afterwards established order; and the dominant theological mood affected even the vision of those who tried, as some did, to get away from tradition and back to nature.

The Scientific Renaissance. It would be a difficult task to state in due proportion all the factors which contributed to the scientific renaissance. It came about gradually; and, as in the making of the butterfly out of the chrysalis, processes of disruption went hand in hand with reconstruction. The freer circulation of men and thoughts associated with the Crusades, the widening of the horizon by travellers like Columbus,