

all these modern aspirations. A history of this thought will be a definition of Thought itself.

Much has been done in the course of this century to prepare for an undertaking such as the one before me. It will be well to review shortly this special side of modern literature. We have indeed passed out of what may be called the age of encyclopædic treatment of learning—the hundred years from the middle of the last to the middle of the present century.<sup>1</sup> The plan of such an arrangement of knowledge belongs to an earlier period, the period immediately succeeding the birth of modern science. Lord Bacon was the father of it, but neither he nor the most encyclopædic intellect of modern times, Leibniz, did much to realise the idea, and it was reserved for the genius and the labours of Diderot and d'Alembert<sup>2</sup> in France, in the

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1750 to 1850.  
The age of  
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<sup>1</sup> "Encyclopædia nomen hodie frequentius auditur quam alias."—Gessner in Göttinger Lectiōns-Katalog for 1756.

<sup>2</sup> Diderot's "Prospectus" to the 'Encyclopédie' appeared 1750; the first volume appeared 1751 with the celebrated "Discours préliminaire" of d'Alembert and a reprint of the "Prospectus." The complete title was 'Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et métiers, par une société de gens de lettres, mis en ordre et publié par Diderot et d'Alembert.' The principles which guided the editors, and the object of the work, are explained, with repeated references to Lord Bacon, in this introduction, as well as in the article "Encyclopédie," in the fifth volume (1755), which was written by Diderot, and occupied 28 pages. See also Diderot's 'Pensées sur l'interprétation de la Nature,' published anonymously in 1754.

Copious details about the history, the reception, and the influence of the 'Encyclopédie' are to be found in the correspondence and memoirs of Grimm, d'Alembert, and Voltaire, Madame d'Epinay, the Abbé Morellet, and many others. They are combined into a concise narrative, giving all the important facts, in Rosenkranz's 'Leben und Werke Diderots,' 2 vols., Leipzig, 1866, and in John Morley's 'Diderot.'

It is interesting to note how the idea of the unifying and life-giving influence of thought was as familiar to Diderot as it is to us: "Si l'on bannit l'homme ou l'être pensant et contemplateur de dessus la surface de la terre; ce spectacle pathétique et sublime de la nature n'est plus qu'une scène triste et muette. L'univers se tait; le silence et la nuit s'en emparent. Tout se change en une vaste solitude, où les phénomènes inobservés se passent d'une manière obscure et sourde. . . ."