

middle of the eighteenth century, to carry out the plan, foreshadowed in the 'Novum Organum,' of collecting all knowledge, which had been accumulated ever since science had been liberated from the fetters of theology, into one comprehensive whole. It must, however, be admitted that whilst the practical end of these laborious undertakings, the diffusion of knowledge, has certainly been greatly furthered, the original idea, that the sum of human knowledge is an organic whole, has in the execution been by degrees entirely lost sight of. The unity of thought and knowledge was indeed referred to in Diderot's "Prospectus" and d'Alembert's "Discours préliminaire," and in the introduction to Ersch and Gruber's great Encyclopædia,¹ as also in Coleridge's celebrated essay

16.
Unity of
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works.

Voilà ce qui nous a déterminé à chercher dans les facultés principales de l'homme la division générale à laquelle nous avons subordonné notre travail."—Article "Encyclopédie," p. 641.

¹ Ersch und Gruber's 'Allgemeine Encyclopädie der Wissenschaften und Künste,' Leipzig, 1818 to 1875, unfinished, 151 vols. It was founded by Professor Johann Samuel Ersch, librarian at Halle in 1813, assisted by Hufeland, Gruber, Meier, and Brockhaus, and contained contributions by the most learned and eminent Germans of the century. It is interesting to compare the plan and principles which guided the editors, as expounded in the introductions to the first and second volumes, with the corresponding dissertations prefixed to the 'Encyclopédie' in France and the 'Encyclopædia Metropolitana' in England. The unity aimed at by Bacon was either purely formal, securing only uniformity and completeness of treatment, or it was that of prac-

tical usefulness—the philosophy of fruit and progress. The plan adopted by Diderot and d'Alembert could hardly attain anything more than this. Coleridge, nursed in German philosophy, and deeply impressed with the fact that there is a higher view than that of Lord Bacon, and that such is to be found rather in writers like Plato and Shakespeare, uses the word method in a much wider sense. He was deeply affected by the spirit of the idealistic philosophy, which was foreign to Bacon and unduly despised by him.

In the idealistic systems of the Continent, beginning with Kant, the opinion was current that the methods and treatment of science alone were insufficient to close the circle of knowledge. The truly encyclopædic view was only possible in a scientific investigation specially carried on for that purpose, and this was considered to be one of the main objects of philosophy. Thus Kant in many passages of his works, notably vol. ii. pp. 377, 378,