

course of more than a century, alternately taken up with enthusiasm, and abandoned as misleading. At the turn of the centuries the mania for animal electricity was at its height. Men like A. von Humboldt took up the study with eagerness, and sovereigns like Napoleon offered special prizes, in the hope that here at last the secret of life and consciousness would be revealed. The school of the "Naturphilosophie" in Germany seized upon the suggestion of polarity and polar forces contained in the phenomena of galvanic action, and, supported by the still more mystical processes of the so-called animal magnetism which had been exhibited by Mesmer twenty years earlier, worked up these vague indications into fanciful theories of vitalism and animism. This brought the whole line of thought into discredit, drove away the soberer, more scientific students of nature, and retarded real progress in the knowledge of the electric phenomena of the muscular and nervous system for fully a generation. At length in the school of Johannes Müller the subject was again approached and was put on a firm scientific basis by Helmholtz, and notably by Du Bois - Reymond. It is now known that, as in inorganic, so also in organic systems, the energy proper to them can appear under the different forms of mechanical, thermal, electric or chemical energy, but also that in none of these can be found pre-eminently the principle of life, still less that of consciousness.

10.
Phrenology.

Another important line of research which has had an equally fluctuating development, being sometimes enormously exaggerated, to the damage of sound pro-