led the way, through his ethical and political essays, to the study of history.[1]

18. Biology and the history of origins.

We have met with a similar tendency towards historical treatment and the study of origins in that great region of scientific thought comprised under the term Biology: the science of life. After the futility of all attempts to grasp the essence of life itself by a direct analysis had become apparent, the more extensive description and observation of living things themselves, of their forms, their habits, and their environment, infused new hope into the sciences of nature; and, latterly, all these studies have converged in the direction of the study of origins,[2] whether these be found in the embryological beginnings of individual life (ontogenesis), or in the historical beginnings of genera and species (phylogenesis). Instead of trying to grasp the meaning of life through philosophical definitions, natural science has taken the more promising course of studying life in the great world of living things and their properties. Similarly the study of mind, after having met with much discouragement from the side of philosophical sceptics, as well as through the endless controversies peculiar to the introspective schools, has latterly gained new hope by turning to the external manifestations of mental life in the phenomena of society, religion, language, &c. The reality of mental life, which had gradually evaporated under the hands of

[1] See *supra*, vol. i. p. 47, and the passages there quoted from Leslie Stephen's 'English Thought in the Eighteenth Century.'

[2] I am indebted to Prof. J. Arthur Thomson, in his Review of the first part of this History (see 'Hibbert Journal,' vol. iii. p. 395), for the remark that it is not so much a study of genesis and origins as of genealogies and descent that the Darwinian view has introduced into biology.