

has succeeded, in ever so small a degree, it has destroyed that truly philosophical interest which originally attaches to all phenomena of the inner world. While science has gained by the methods of abstraction and isolation, which we may term the analytical methods, philosophy has lost.

10.
Loss of
synoptic
view in
recent
philosophy.

It is important to bear this in mind whenever we desire to form an opinion of the value of by far the larger portion of recent philosophical writings. That they are so frequently deficient in depth, interest, and suggestiveness, if we compare them with the writings of the great philosophers of ancient and modern times down to the middle of the nineteenth century, is just owing to this, that they intentionally confine themselves to detailed discussions and special analyses, purposely abstaining from a reference to the great central problems which alone give to philosophy its real interest and importance. Concentrating themselves on analysis, they rarely venture upon the opposite process of synopsis and synthesis. Just as we have excellent treatises on biology which contain no definition of life, so it is supposed that we might have psychology without a soul, ethics without obligation or sanction, religion without a Deity and an object of reverence. The great thinkers of ancient and modern times, from Plato and Aristotle down to Schopenhauer, Comte, and Herbert Spencer, did not write on philosophical subjects before they had gained a firm foothold, a central and governing idea, a synopsis of their whole subject which threw light on the whole of their detailed and special discussions.¹

¹ Herbert Spencer, giving expression to this idea, terms his philosophy "Synthetic philosophy," and

Comte, on his part, though originally a mathematician and analyst, had a very clear conception of the