

support them. The leaders of this attack were Feuerbach, Moleschott, Büchner, and Carl Vogt. In this country, on the other side, the violent spirit came from the side of prominent exponents of the established beliefs; the discussion originating in the publication, about the same time, of two works of very different character but equally impressive by the definiteness of their respective doctrines. They were Mansel's "Bampton Lectures" on 'The Limits of Religious Thought,' and Darwin's 'Origin of Species.' We know that Lotze on his side took a leading part in the criticism of materialism; we also know that Spencer was greatly influenced by the ultimate conclusions drawn by Mansel from the philosophy of Sir Wm. Hamilton; further, that Darwin's startling hypothesis of natural selection furnished one of the most telling illustrations of the larger but vaguer theory of evolution which Spencer had then already clearly formulated for himself.

The principal ideas which contributed to the formation of Spencer's highest scientific generalisation, and which were at work in his mind before Darwin's classical treatise appeared, were partly suggested in the biological writings of von Baer; these had become known in this country through Huxley's translations. To these must be added the theory of environment and adaptation, and the conviction that psychical and social phenomena cannot be understood by the study of individuals alone, but point to the history of the race. When studying the phenomena of development Spencer recognised the importance of the nebular hypothesis of Kant and Laplace as an explanation of the genesis of the solar system.

63.
Formative
ideas of
Spencer's
philosophy.