movements of definite things in the heavens, such as the rising and setting of the sun and moon, the recurrent appearance of the planets, their number, the conjunction and eclipses of the sun and moon, or the still rarer appearance of comets. But when this chapter of stellar science had been successfully written and was drawing to something like an end, the astronomer looked back again at other events and features of the starry firmament and opened out new lines of research, taking in other phenomena, such as those of light, colour, and heat, the movements of seemingly stationary objects, such as double stars, the changing face of the sun and moon, the erratic behaviour of meteorites, and many other objects which formed new and special fields of research. All this progress was possible only, and stimulated through, a recurrent synoptic glance, taking in the whole and overlooking nothing in the whole of the starry expanse.

A still more striking example of what the human mind can achieve by leaving behind it the laborious collections of single objects of nature, the artificial classification and arrangement of specimens, and looking out into the great expanse of the natural world —that is, by abandoning the analytic and synthetic method and resorting to the synoptic view, is to be found in the birth of the modern science of Biology, which we have already glanced at.