

almost no ancient embryology. There are, indeed, records to the effect that more than two thousand years ago, in Greece, inquiring eyes bent over the chick developing within the egg, as they do still in our laboratories, but the methods of investigation were wanting, and the most elementary facts were either unperceived or misunderstood. Moreover, it must be remembered that the wide-spread belief in spontaneous generation, and the common habit of inventing metaphysical explanations of vital processes, tended to stifle embryological inquiry.

The one great exception was Aristotle, whose genius foresaw what Harvey more explicitly declared two thousand years afterwards. Harvey quotes a sentence from Aristotle which deserves to be remembered: "All living creatures, whether they swim, or walk, or fly, and whether they come into the world with the form of an animal or of an egg, are engendered in the same way". And one of the most scholarly of embryologists, Prof. Whitman, has said "that part of Harvey's theory which affirms that the parts of the future organism do not pre-exist as such, but make their appearance in due order of succession, and which is so often cited as the essence of epigenesis, was all clearly stated by Aristotle".

After Aristotle, the first important name in the history of embryology is that of William Harvey (1578-1657), the immortal discoverer of the circulation of the blood. Working "in the harness of Aristotle", he maintained that "all animals are in some sort produced from eggs", but the aphorism "omne vivum ex ovo", so persistently ascribed to him, was not his, nor must it be supposed for a moment that the word egg meant to Harvey what it means to us. He maintained that practically every organism begins its individual life from an apparently simple *primordium* in which "no part of the future offspring exists *de facto*, but all parts inhere *in potentia*". But since he had no conception of what we now call "genetic continuity"—which links the germ-cells of successive generations in a continuous lineage,—he was quite unable to suggest