

THE EMBRYOLOGY OF THE SOUL

ones to occupy themselves with a part of the problem; since their avocation compelled them to assist and supervise the formation of the psychic activity in the child, they were bound to take a theoretical interest, also, in the psychogenetic facts that came under their notice. However, these teachers, for the most part, both in recent and in earlier times, were dominated by the current dualistic psychology—in so far as they reflected at all; and they were totally ignorant of the important facts of comparative psychology, and unacquainted with the structure and function of the brain. Moreover, their observations only extended to children in their school-days, or in the years immediately preceding. The remarkable phenomena which the individual psychogeny of the child offers in its earliest years, and which are the joy and admiration of all thoughtful parents, were scarcely ever made the subject of serious scientific research. Wilhelm Preyer was the pioneer of this study in his interesting work on *The Mind of the Child* (1881). To obtain a perfectly clear knowledge of the matter, however, we must go further back still; we must commence at the first appearance of the soul in the impregnated ovum.

The origin of the human individual—body and soul—was still wrapped in complete mystery at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Caspar Friedrich Wolff had, it is true, discovered the true character of embryonic development in 1759, in his *theoria generationis*, and proved with the confidence of a critical observer that there is a true *epigenesis*—i.e., a series of very remarkable formative processes—in the evolution of the foetus from the simple ovum. But the physiologists of the time, with the famous Albert Haller at their head, flatly refused to entertain these empirical truths, which