

CHAPTER VIII

THE EMBRYOLOGY OF THE SOUL

Importance of Ontogeny to Psychology—Development of the Child-Soul—Commencement of Existence of the Individual Soul—The Storing of the Soul—Mythology of the Origin of the Soul—Physiology of the Origin of the Soul—Elementary Processes in Conception—Coalescence of the Ovum and the Spermatozoon—Cell-Love—Heredity of the Soul from Parents and Ancestors—Its Physiological Nature as the Mechanics of the Protoplasm—Blending of Souls (Psychic Amphigony)—Reversion, Psychological Atavism—The Biogenetic Law in Psychology—Palingenetic Repetition and Cenogenetic Modification—Embryonic and Post-Embryonic Psychogeny.

THE human soul—whatever we may hold as to its nature—undergoes a continual development throughout the life of the individual. This ontogenetic fact is of fundamental importance in our monistic psychology, though the “professional” psychologists pay little or no attention to it. Since the embryology of the individual is, on Baer’s principle—and in accordance with the universal belief of modern biologists—the “true torch-bearer for all research into the organic body,” it will afford us a reliable light on the momentous problems of its psychic activity.

Although, however, this “embryology of the soul” is so important and interesting, it has hitherto met with the consideration it deserves only within a very narrow circle. Until recently teachers were almost the only