

**THE VICTORIAN ERA SERIES. THE
SCIENCE OF LIFE: AN OUTLINE
OF THE HISTORY OF BIOLOGY
AND ITS RECENT ADVANCES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649698929

The Victorian Era Series. The Science of Life: An Outline of the History of Biology and Its Recent Advances by J. Arthur Thomson

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J. ARTHUR THOMSON

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The Victorian Era Series

The Science of Life

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Science of Life

An
**Outline of the History of Biology
and its Recent Advances**

By

J. Arthur Thomson, M.A.

Author of "The Study of Animal Life", "Outlines of Zoology", etc.,
and Joint-Author of "The Evolution of Sex".



HERBERT S. STONE & COMPANY

CHICAGO & NEW YORK

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Preface

This little book bears a big title—The Science of Life—which is synonymous with Biology. Such a title would be unjustifiable did not the position of the book in the Victorian Era Series show that it is intended simply as a historical sketch of the evolution of the science, especially in Darwinian and post-Darwinian days. It is an attempt to illustrate the growth of Biology from an embryonic state of insignificance to a position which is central among the sciences, and full of influence even on the art of life. By reference to particular problems, and occasionally by reference to particular men, I have tried to illustrate impartially what may be called the modern biological attitude.

In most of the chapters I have begun the story before the Victorian Era; it did not seem possible to understand the historical position without so doing.

Although I have for many years burrowed not a little in the literature of Biology, even this inadequate sketch would have been impossible without the help of various historical surveys which have appeared from time to time, notably the

History of Zoology by Carus and the *History of Botany* by Sachs. But neither of these extends beyond Darwin's day.

If I might venture to associate this little book with a great name, I should dedicate it with much gratitude to one of my teachers—Ernst Hæckel—whose life has been so closely bound up with the advancement of modern Biology.

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