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ILLUSION AND DELUSION;

OR,

MODERN PANTHEISM

versus

SPIRITUALISM.

"The burden of the mystery of all this unintelligible world."—WORDSWORTH.

BY

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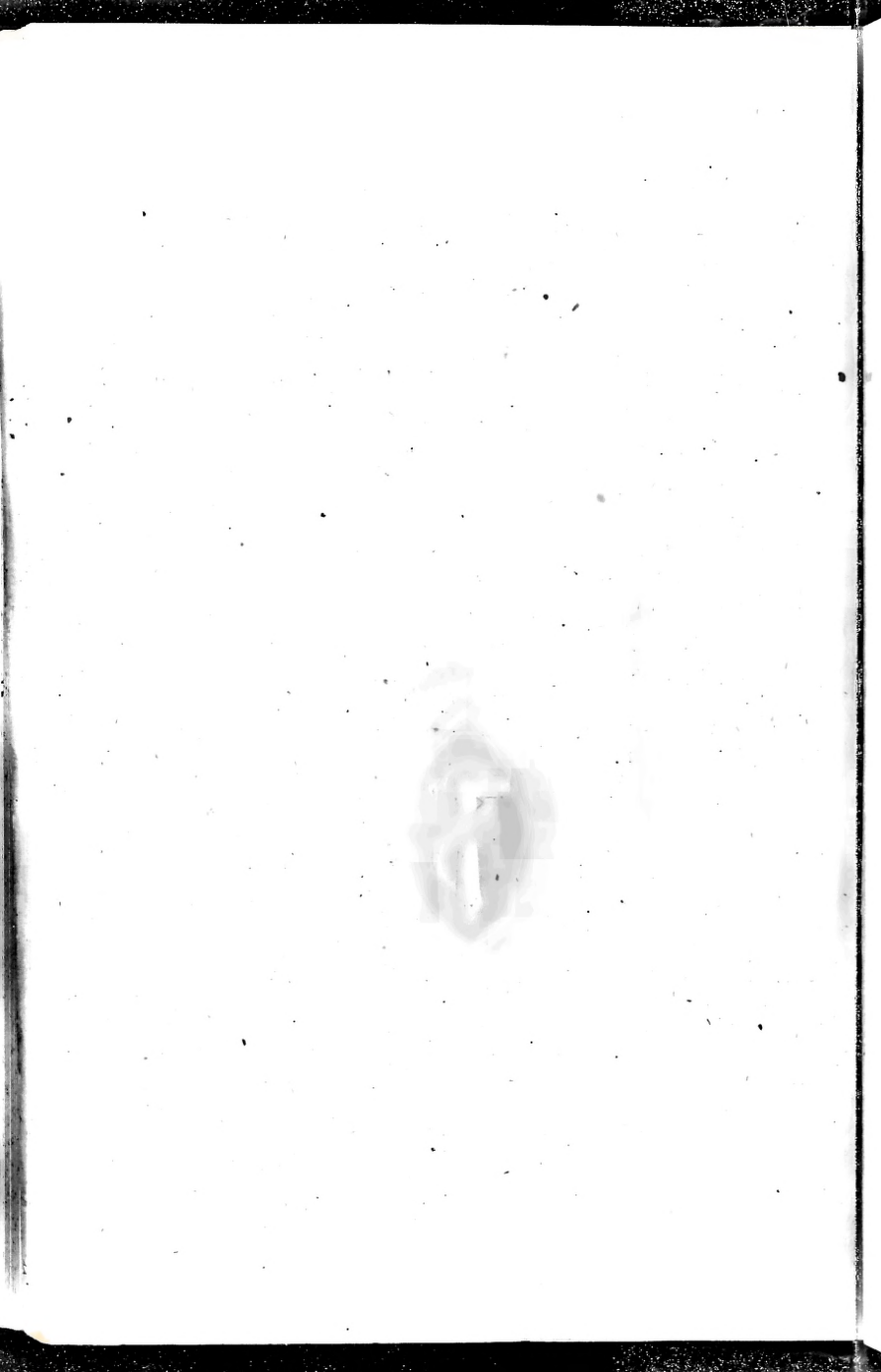


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ILLUSION AND DELUSION, ETC.

IN Mathematics we can all agree ; in Physics we have at least learned to call things by the same name ; we understand what we are talking about so far as to have certain definite admitted facts in common ; but in Psychology every one at present appears to use words in a different sense, and we talk of Body and Soul, Matter and Mind, Spirit and Spirits, Knowledge and Ideas, Matter and Motion and Force, without any common ground of assent, or even knowing whether such things, in the sense in which we use the terms, have any real existence or not. In this unfenced, hazy, uncultivated ground superstition still rides supreme. But is it not possible, and if so, will it not be desirable, to divest ourselves of the preconceptions time and authority have attached to these names, and to see how far known facts will carry us in the knowledge of such things, as in others in which we are all agreed? Accuracy in Mental Science is the more important, as all sects and denominations take advantage of the want of it, and of the darkness that exists to introduce all sorts of groundless assumptions, and to reason upon them as established truths. The differences between metaphysicians, and much misconception and error at present arise, from their confounding motion and the thing moving ; force with that of which it is the force ; passive force, which

they call matter, with active force, which they call spirit. The question is, have we knowledge enough to enable us to substitute such very vague conceptions on these and similar fundamental principles for the more accurate ones which science requires? I think we have.

“All our conceptions,” says James Hinton, in ‘Man and his Dwelling-Place,’ “are based on the implied postulate that the world is as it appears. . . . The advance of knowledge consists in the substitution of accurate conceptions for natural ones.” This implies that our natural conceptions are not accurate ones, and such will be found to be universally the case. In no single instance is the world what it appears to be to the common sense or to the vulgar eye. It is a complete illusion to all, and delusion to those who believe in its real existence as it appears to us. The delusion is not more complete in those who believe that *Heaven* is above, in a world that turns round every twenty-four hours, and in which therefore there can be no above and below, than it is with respect to the existence of the earth itself. Let us take a single illustration of the common belief, and examine it thoroughly by the light of science. The world, as it appears to the common sense, is based on the conception that colour is something that belongs to bodies outside ourselves, and the world without colour would lose all its beauty. And yet what we call colour is a nervous sensibility, an idea, a feeling within ourselves. The vulgar idea is that the green is in the grass, whereas the green is in ourselves. Equally it will be found that all the other attributes or qualities ascribed to matter are attributes of mind and not of matter, and that the world itself is but an illusion and delusion—a great ghost or mental spectre. All that is known of matter is its capability of creating within us these Illusions. Professor Tyndall says, “The atoms of luminous bodies vibrating, communicate their vibrations to the ether in which they

swing, being propagated through it in waves ; these waves enter the pupil, cross the ball, and impinge upon the retina, at the back of the eye. The motion of the ether then communicated to the retina is transmitted thence along the optic nerve of the brain, and there announces itself to consciousness as light." It would take, he tells us, 699 million of millions of such waves *to enter the eye in a single second* to produce the impression we call violet in the brain. We are not required to count these waves, because that would take some little time, but as 57,000 of such waves fill an inch, and light travels at the rate of 192,000 miles in a second, we have only to bring the miles into inches and then multiply one by the other to get the million of millions required. It takes 477 millions of millions of such waves to produce the colour we call red, and 577 millions of millions to produce green. Now let us examine these facts. The effect produced by this wonderful motion from without is a nervous impression, a sensation of light, an idea of colour. Our perception of colour, it is now known, is dependent upon a particular part of the brain, for if that part of the brain is not there,* or deficient in quantity, people have no perception of colour, *i.e.*, are colour blind, or can only partially distinguish colours. How, then, can colour be in the object ? or what possible resemblance or sim-

* Sir David Brewster says that as many as one person in twenty-eight cannot distinguish some colours from others, and that about one in ninety are colour blind, that is, cannot see colours at all. Any one, in such cases, may easily satisfy himself that it is the brain that is deficient ; for if he puts his thumb on the centre of the eye-brow he will find an indentation enabling him to touch the eye—his thumb will rest upon the eye-ball. People are equally blind, in about the same proportion, in other mental faculties. They may be fluent in speech, full of facts, well read in history, with a generally good memory, so as to be able to make a great display, and yet be blind in the reasoning power ; and people are seldom conscious of their own mental deficiencies, even in colour, unless they are quite colour blind.

ilitude can there be between our feeling or idea and the object which we say is coloured? The immediate antecedent of our idea of colour is the motion of the brain; this motion is communicated, through the eye and retina, by the ether, and the ether is set in motion by the reflex action of what we erroneously call the coloured body. What this particular action is that produces this effect upon the ether we have no means whatever of knowing; we only know that it has to produce 122 millions of millions of knocks on the eye less per second from the ether waves to produce the green colour than the violet, and 100 millions of millions less to produce the red than the green. Then what is colour? An idea or feeling within ourselves, requiring all these links in the chain, and all their wonderfully varied modes of motion, to produce it. If any link in the chain is absent—if the brain, or the retina, or the eye-ball, or the waves of ether, or the reflex action on the ether, are not there, the effect is not produced. It has probably taken millions of years to perfect this relationship—to create this faculty of mind which entirely depends upon this continuous adjustment of internal relations to external ones. Tyndall says, “We have rays of too high and too low a pitch to be visible, that is, they are incapable of exciting any sensation, or creating within us any idea of colour.” Where, *then*, is the colour? Very nearly the same motions go on outside of us without creating any idea of colour or consciousness on our part. The same, he says, “may be said of sound, and probably sounds are heard by insects, which entirely escape our perceptions; and both as regards light and sound, our organs of sight and hearing embrace a certain practical range, beyond which, on both sides, though the objective cause exists, our nerves cease to be influenced by it.” Metaphysicians used to divide the qualities or properties of matter into primary and secondary; the primary—extension, &c., were supposed to belong to

things themselves : the secondary—colour, &c., to *ourselves* ; but observation has shown that there is no ground for this distinction, no difference between primary and secondary, that all are equally dependent upon the action of the brain. Extension, that is, form and size, as well as weight, order, relative position, &c., are all formed in the mind like colour by the action of forces from without, which set the brain in motion. It is an illusion and delusion to suppose that there is anything without ourselves resembling these perceptions. Our perceptions are all we know or are conscious of, and how can a perception be like an object, or anything but itself? There are no coloured forms without us ; coloured forms are perceptions. All that we know of without us are certain powers or forces, producing certain motions which produce within us these perceptions, the aggregate of which perceptions we call the mind, and we are under the delusion that they really exist out of our own minds, constituting the external world. The world, however, as we conceive it, is created by the peculiar constitution of the nervous system, which nervous system has been gradually increasing in size and complexity since the first appearance of life on this earth, supposed to be some 100 millions of years ago. Each creature's ideas, or forms of thought, depend upon its nervous system, and vary as that system varies, so that each animal creates its own world, and carries it about in its own head, that world varying as the size and capacity of that head varies.

There is not one world, then, but thousands of worlds, as each creature creates its own, and all made out of the same stuff, which is not matter, but mind. What we call MATTER is an illusion and delusion. What there may be in reality we do not know, we only know of something that affects us in a certain way, for "we know nothing of objects, but the sensations we have from them." Locke says (book ii., chap. 23, § 29),

“The simple ideas we receive from sensation and reflection are the boundaries of our thoughts, beyond which the mind, whatever effort it would make, is not able to advance one jot.” David Hume only puts this a little more emphatically. He says, “We may observe that it is universally allowed by philosophers, and is besides pretty obvious of itself, that nothing is ever present with the mind but its perceptions or impressions and ideas, and that external objects become known to us only by the perceptions they occasion. Now, since nothing is ever present to the mind but perceptions, and since all ideas are derived from something antecedent to the mind, it follows that it is *impossible for us so much as to conceive or form an idea of anything specifically different from ideas and impressions.* Let us fix our ideas out of ourselves as much as possible; let us chase our imaginations to the heavens, or to the utmost limit of the universe; we never really advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can perceive any kind of existence but those perceptions which have appeared in that narrow compass.” That is, no creature can advance a single step beyond the little world its own brain has created. He knows nothing of matter, but only of his idea of matter; nor of spirit, but of his idea of it; and what relation these ideas bear to the real truth, and whether there is any real difference between matter and spirit he has no means of knowing. Knowing and perceiving are to us the same thing. We know or are conscious of our own perceptions, and what those perceptions are in themselves we do not know. We know nothing of the real or essential nature of anything. Any supposed difference, then, between matter and spirit or between mind and matter, may be, as far as we know, and probably is, as we shall see, a delusion. All dogmatizing about such supposed differences proceeds from ignorance, and all theories based upon them must fall to the ground, for if we do not know what matter is or what spirit is, only their different modes of motion or mani-

festation, how can we know that they differ from each other, except in such manifestations?

The brain, and the nervous system that travels to and from this great nervous centre, have been of very slow growth. The brain of a fish bears about the average proportion to the spinal cord of 2 to 1; of the reptile, of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 1; the bird, 3 to 1; the animal, 4 to 1; and, lastly, man averages 23 to 1. Sensibility or power of feeling, which in man we call mental energy, increases as we thus rise in the scale of being, and always in proportion to the enlargement and complexity of the brain and nervous system; from the creature who is all stomach to a London Alderman, who is sometimes supposed to possess feelings and faculties beyond.

The faculties, both of feeling and intellect, have been gradually formed during countless ages by the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external necessities. First, we have exercise, then habit, attended with increase of structure, this structure is transmitted to offspring with its functions, and we have then spontaneous action or instinct as it is called. All our faculties are instincts,—organized experience or habits that have become structure transmitted from parent to offspring, through innumerable generations, from variety to variety. It is a most complicated relationship this between external forces and our perceptions, as we have seen in the faculty which enables us to perceive colour, and has been doubtless countless ages forming, so that the whole body upon which it and our other faculties depend is the most wonderful contrivance of creative skill with which we are acquainted or can conceive.

The way in which this body and mind have been built up, part added to part, and function to function, through the chain of being, since life first appeared on this earth, probably 100 million years ago, is the great marvel, and yet we hear endless talk of spirits that possess all these attributes without this previous probation, and of souls to whom this wonderful body is only a clog and

hindrance to its naturally more perfect action ; but there is not a single fact on record from which we can infer that there is or can be anywhere such a thing as a disembodied spirit, and as to this soul, whatever that may be, we know its action is determined entirely by the body.

First, we have the monad, the simplest of all organisms, of which seven species are at present known. These do not present any division of functions or of organs. One of these species, discovered by Huxley, inhabits the sea at great depths, covering the ground with a sort of network, and is so homogeneous in its construction that its spontaneous generation is not thought improbable. This monad becomes a cell, the original starting point of all plants and animals. Man at the outset of his existence, like every other animal, is only an egg, a simple cell, of almost invisible proportions. This egg after fecundation becomes an embryo. The female supplies the egg, the male the fecundation, and there is considerable dispute as to which performs the most important part in the production of the new being. It is asked, "Does the mother merely supply, as it were, by the ovum a cradle for the incipient man, and afterwards feed and nurse it until birth ; or is it that the germ is in the ovum of the mother, to which nothing more than vital action stimulating it to growth is imparted by the father?" We know that, however important a part the woman may play in influencing through her own nervous system the nervous organization of the child, yet that the man supplies the germ, and often thus transmits to his offspring his colour of hair, or other bodily features, tendencies to disease, and other characteristics, and also his mental aptitudes, habits, and idiosyncracies,—some peculiar habits that belonged to the father not manifesting themselves till late in life. So early is *the soul* under the influence of structure and organisation, that is, of the body. It is significant that the grades through which man passes in his passage through

the womb are the same in order as the history of the earth shows us the different forms of animals have been, viz., fishes, amphibia, reptiles, birds, and mammals, so that we have not only the evolution of the ages, but the same thing repeated at the gestation of every superior animal, and this development of the individual from his cell is, if anything, more difficult to explain than that of the species, inasmuch as it is accomplished in so comparatively short a time. There is nothing more wonderful than the hatching of a bird's egg, unless it is the hatching of a man. The different classes in the earliest stages of their embryonic development cannot be distinguished from each other, and later man and the dog are almost identical, and when development in man is arrested, as in the idiot, no higher functions are manifested than in some of the lowest animals, and vastly inferior to the dog. "Mr Marshall has recently examined and described the brains of two idiots of European descent. He found the convolutions to be fewer in number, individually less complex, broader, and smoother than in the apes." "In this respect," he says, "the idiot's brains are even more simple than that of the gibbon, and approach that of the baboon." The proportion of the weight of brain to that of body was extraordinarily diminished. We learn, then, that when man is born with a brain no higher—indeed lower—than that of an ape, he may have the convolutions fewer in number, and individually less complex than they are in the brain of a chimpanzee and an orang; the human brain may revert to, or fall below that type of development from which, if the theory of Darwin be true, it has gradually ascended by evolution through the ages."* "The native Australian, who is one of the lowest existing savages, has no words in his language to express such exalted ideas as justice, love, virtue, mercy; he has no such ideas in his mind, and cannot comprehend them.

* *Body and Mind*, p. 46. By Dr Henry Maudsley.

The vesicular neurine, which should embody them in its constitution and manifest them in its functions, has not been developed in his convolutions ; he is as incapable, therefore, of the higher mental displays of abstract reasoning and moral feeling as an idiot is, and for a like reason." * M. Taine, speaking of the Béarn peasants, says, "Here men are thin and pale ; their bones protrude, and their features are large and severe, like their mountains. An eternal struggle with the soil has made women stunted as well as plants ; it has left in their eyes a vague expression of melancholy and reflection. . . . The impressions of the soul and body modify in the long run the body and the soul ; the race moulds the individual, and the country moulds the race. A degree of heat in the atmosphere and of inclination in the soil is the primary cause of our faculties and passions. . . . The productions of the human mind, as well as those of organic life, are only to be explained by the atmosphere in which they thrive." On the other side, when the climatic influences are not too depressing, the necessity which is the mother of invention, gives increased activity to the brain, and with it increased size. Centuries of skinning flints have bred the finest race in Scotland that there is in the world, and the Scotch brain is the largest in the world.

These are now well known and acknowledged facts. The mind depends upon the brain, and the brain upon the body of which it is part, and the body, not upon the soul, but upon Life. "Our thoughts," says Huxley, "are the expression of molecular changes in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital phenomena." Those molecular changes depend upon the perfect action of every other part of the body, and "it behoves us clearly to realize the broad fact, which has most wide reaching consequence in mental physiology and pathology, that all parts of the body, the highest and the

* Body and Mind, p. 56.

lowest, have a sympathy with one another more intelligent than conscious intelligence can yet or perhaps ever will, conceive ; that there is not an organic motion visible or invisible ministrant to the noblest or to the most humble purposes, which does not work its appointed effect in the complex recesses of mind ; that the mind as the crowning achievement of organization, and the consummation and outcome of all its energies, really comprehends the bodily life. . . . Lower the supply of blood to the brain below a certain level, and the power of thinking is abolished ; the brain will then no more do mental work than a water-wheel will move the machinery of the mill when the water is lowered so as not to touch it." *

The Spiritists, or Spiritualists, as they improperly call themselves, disregard or altogether ignore this close and necessary connection between mind and body,—this nice adaptation of one to the other. They think they have observed a class of phenomena which prove that mind can exist separately from body ; that spirits and souls have new faculties adapted to their new sphere of action, without having any idea, however, of how such faculties are formed. The mental faculties with which we are acquainted are a nice adaptation of internal to external requirements—necessitating certain movements—which have taken ages to form. But the Spiritualists, by a sort of hocus-pocus or thimble-rigging with the words body, mind, soul, have created a system which, in my opinion, falls to pieces immediately we know definitely what is meant by such terms.

I think we have sufficient knowledge now to show definitely what there is that really corresponds to these words.

We have seen what a perfect piece of mechanism the body is, "fearfully and wonderfully made ;" the question is, what is the power that works it ? It is precisely the same as works the steam-engine, and it re-

* Body and Mind, p. 102. Dr Maudsley.

quires stoking very much in the same way, and if it is not stoked or fed regularly it will not go. The source of this power, as at present traced by us, is the sun; sun-power divorces the carbon from the oxygen in plants, and when the carbon and oxygen come together again this power is restored, whether in the fire of a steam-engine or in the slower combustion of the human body. The force of heat is generated, known to us by its mode of motion. This heat, this peculiar mode of motion, is correlated or transformed in its passage through the body into various other modes of motion, and which we call the functions of different organs, until it causes the molecular motion of the brain, on which it resumes consciousness or becomes sensibility. A function is a force indicating a specific mode of action. Force seems to intensify as it passes through the body, one equivalent of chemical force corresponding to several equivalents of heat or inferior force, and brain or mental force is the most concentrated of all. Mind is the highest development of Force.

But what is Force? We know that it is persistent, or that it cannot be made to cease to exist, and therefore it is an entity. This admitted, and it cannot now be disputed, and we have the gist of the whole matter. It explains numberless difficulties both in psychology and physics, and here will be found, in my opinion, the explanation of the phenomena which now so perplex sincere Spiritualists. Force is not a function of matter, although it must be the force of *something*—of some entity; matter only conditions it, that is, changes its modes of manifestation; it is not motion, but the cause of motion. It is known to us only in its modes of motion, and hitherto it has been confounded with motion, and hereby we have lost the secret of much that has appeared mysterious. Force, as it has been known to us only by its manifestations, is what we have been accustomed to call a spiritual entity. If I turn the handle of a grindstone, force passes from me

into the grindstone, and does its work ; as soon as that force has passed* out, causing motion elsewhere, the motion I caused in the grindstone ceases. If I wind up a watch, force passes from me into the watch compressing the spring ; as it passes out, setting the whole machine in regulated motion, it tells the time. Force is the active principle in nature, causing motion everywhere ; this motion acts in a certain order for a given purpose, that is, it acts intelligently, and if you add intelligence to force we have what we call mind or will. Mind acts both consciously and unconsciously, or what is called automatically, and what we call physical force is probably automatic mind.

Now, what happens in the creation of what we call mind ? The force we take in with the food, after undergoing various transformations in the body, is worked up into sensibility or consciousness, by inducing a peculiar motion in the brain, which we call its molecular action, so that, as Dr Huxley tells us, "Consciousness and molecular action are capable of being expressed by one another, just as heat and mechanical action are capable of being expressed in terms of one another." Consciousness requires so much force to produce it, and the intensity of an idea or feeling is in proportion to the amount consumed, and that is generally in proportion to the size of the nervous centre, or organ, or specialized part of the brain through which it passes. Thus consciousness, like heat, has also its mechanical equivalents. The brain, already in motion, is acted upon from without through the medium of the senses, and the union of the specific force within with the specific force without produces an idea which we call a perception. We have seen how our perception of colour is produced, and the extraordinary complicated action that is required. If any link in this long chain of outward sequences is wanting, the idea is not produced ; and if the food, or internal force is not supplied, or the molecular action of the brain is interfered with, by pressure

upon it, there is no consciousness—no ideas or feelings—and millions of millions of ether wave motions without are required to give a simple perception of colour. Other ideas are formed in the same way, by the union of force within with force without. We have ideas of form, size, weight, which together give us our ideas of extension and solidity, and which are no more solid and extended than music and colour are. The popular notion of these things is a belief in that which in *fact* does not exist. Forces act upon us from without and give us what we call perceptions, these are taken up by other parts of the brain, by what we call our faculties of relative perception, comparison, causality, &c., and in this way the external world is created. But it is only our idea of an external world, which must vary as the specific structure of the brain varies upon which that idea depends. But although the world, as we conceive of it, exists only in our ideas, something exists, which is real independent of our thoughts, something that we call force, or a system of forces. Light and sound, the mental states, might cease to exist, but their vibratory causes without us would not, and they might affect other beings* differently organized^d in quite a different way; that which produced light in us might produce sound, or other sensations or ideas, in them, and vice versa. Perception is the direct action of force without; Conception is the internal action of the brain only, producing the same ideas but less vivid; Memory is a repetition of this action in a given form; Imagination is the re-combination in the brain itself of these ideas, strong in proportion to the great or less activity of the brain; and Judgment is either a reference of a simple perception to its external source, or, as more generally understood, the action of one class of faculties upon the others, inducing, among other things, what is called self-consciousness and reason. These are not primitive or innate faculties of mind—they have no organs, they are only modes of action of all the faculties.

To be conscious and to know, or consciousness and knowing, are to us the same things. Consciousness and sensibility are also the same things—and sensibility we divide into ideas and feelings. Knowing a thing and our idea of it are the same, and an idea cannot be like anything but itself. We cannot in our knowledge get beyond or even behind that idea, and it tells us nothing of itself, still less of anything but itself. When, then, we speak of matter and spirit, of body, mind, and soul, as different in themselves, we speak of what we can and do know nothing about; we speak of only our ideas of such things, and those ideas do not differ in themselves, but are the same. The differences we think we see are differences in modes of action only. Almost all the controversies on these subjects are based upon the supposed essential differences in these objects, of which differences, if any such exist, we know really nothing. When we talk of the *material* man, we mean our idea of him, but that idea is what has been called spirit.

Having stated facts as they are at present known to us, let us now give a few definitions based upon them.

MATTER is the unknown cause of states of consciousness. It produces different sensations in us by its different modes of motion, and Science is the mere registration of these different modes of motion. Men of science give fine names to these motions, and having named them, assume that they know all about them, when in fact they know nothing but of these modes of motion.

“ Our little systems have their day ;
 They have their day and cease to be :
 They are but broken lights of Thee,
 And thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

—*Tennyson.*

The consciousness, idea, or perception of matter is the union of the force within, prepared by the molecular action of the brain, and the force without. We

have matter, motion, and force. Motion, which by physicists is almost always confounded with its cause, is nothing, it is a mere change of place, and is of course inseparable from the thing moving. Force is the active cause of all motion, and passive force, which is what we call matter, is the cause of the peculiar and specific direction which the force takes, its correlation or transformation. It is force only that acts upon us, that is upon our bodies or structures, and those structures, when examined, resolve themselves into centres of force. The more we examine the more the conviction is forced upon us that there is but one stuff out of which all things are made, and that is force, or rather the unknown of which force is the force. Huxley says, "Every form is force visible; a form of rest is a balance of forces; a form undergoing change is the predominance of one over others." Matter and mind are probably the same in essence; I say probably, for we know nothing of essences, and we do not *know* therefore that there is any difference. Dr Carpenter says, matter possesses extension, or occupies space, while mind has no such property; but surely if individual mind exists, and one mind exists separate and apart from another, there must be somewhere where it exists, and that somewhere is what we call space. But if extension is only a form of thought, and there is only force or mind, then space, like extension, is a form of thought, or purely subjective, and the universe, with its supposed enormous distances from star to star, must be something very different to what we conceive of it.

SPIRIT is only sublimated or etherialised matter. Spirits and souls are, with most people, the same things. Huxley tells us "that the alchemists called the volatile liquid which they obtained from wine, 'spirits' of wine, and as the 'spiritus' or breath of a man was thought to be the most refined or subtle part of him, the intelligent essence of man was also conceived as a

sort of breath or spirit; and by analogy, the most refined essence of anything was called 'spirit.' And thus it has come about that we use the same word for soul of man and for a glass of gin."

MIND.—Sensibility, as distinguished from insensibility, or consciousness, as distinguished from unconsciousness, is what we call mind. As protoplasm is the physical base of life, so sensibility is the spiritual base of mind, the specific form it takes depending on organisation. There is no idea or feeling but is connected with the action of brain or nervous system. The specific action of certain parts of the brain we call forms of thought, the specific action of other parts we call feelings, which we divide into propensities and sentiments. We receive a number of separate impressions from without, a form of thought gives them unity and individuality, which unity we call matter, body, or substance; we have a succession of separate and independent thoughts and feelings, the same faculty of mind, or form of thought, gives unity to them also, and we call them our mind, although it is clear that all the unity they possess is given them by a form of thought, and that each separate thought and feeling is a distinct entity. The mind is one whole, we are told—and much is based upon the assumption—and yet it is evident the idea of *individual* mind as a whole is a creation of the mind, in the same way as colour is; or rather it is a whole only in the same sense as the body is, which is composed of many parts, and is always changing them, so the mind is composed of many ideas and feelings constantly changing.

The unity of mind is an illusion, there are individual thoughts and feelings, and that is all. The unity of any mind but the one Great Supreme, is a delusion.

Faith, hope, resignation, and all the soul's highest aspirations, exist only from their connection, like colour and music, with organisation; they are feelings specialised by the peculiar structure of certain nervous

centres, and if that organisation is not there, like colour, they do not and cannot exist.

But there must be a substratum of consciousness, a something that is conscious. What is that? Mind, says one, soul, says another, brain or matter, says a third, but none of these are right. The force within, it is, that under brain action becomes conscious, and the quantity of this force consumed is always proportionate to the vividness of the idea or the amount of feeling. Mental activity and nerve force are the same; mental force is the strongest of all forces, and being persistent, it passes from the state we call consciousness into all the motions of the body, and probably into all the extraordinary phenomena of so-called spiritual manifestations. We are told that "the nerve and brain organism is the immediate substratum which has the consciousness." This is a mistake; it is the "force" that becomes consciousness, which the brain does not originate, but only conditions. Again, "the nervous organism, which is the conscious agent, reacts through the muscles upon the external world." Here, also, it is not the organism, but the force that is the conscious agent, and reacts, &c. Consciousness is said to be immaterial, but consciousness tells us nothing of its own nature, nothing of either material or immaterial.

THE SOUL.—It is this substratum of consciousness that is usually called the soul, but in this sense it is the active principle, conscious or unconscious, of all things. Man, however, is supposed to have a special soul of his own. I must confess, however, that I have not been able to find it, or any use for it. If there is a special soul, where does it come from? when and how does it enter into him? In the germ in which lie folded up many of the mental attributes of the future man? or during what period of gestation, at what period of animal evolution? or at birth? No; the poet says, "there lives and moves a soul in *all* things, and that

soul is God ;" and the poet, I think, will prove to be right.

THE SELF, THE EGO.—Intimately connected with this soul is the self or ego ; but this also is an illusion and delusion. The "ego" is a mere form of thought—that is, self-consciousness is formed by the brain. Thus we say "I think," when all we are warranted in saying is, that "thinking is." The "I" comprises both body and mind, but the body does not think, it only "conditions" or gives the "form" to thought, therefore "I think" is wrong. There is a succession of thoughts, and that is all that we find in the analysis of consciousness. The "I" of consciousness is an intuition, but intuitions are not always truths, although they are generally accepted as such. Intuitions or instincts are specialised actions of the brain, hereditarily transmitted, to answer definite purposes. The body is constantly changing, and the mind is only a change of thought corresponding ; neither body nor mind are identical or the same for any two seconds together, but are part of, and in constant flux with, all the forces around ; nevertheless, a part of the brain, whose function it is, produces the "ego," or the sense of individuality, and personal identity. This part of the brain is sometimes diseased, and then the "I" or sense of identity is lost, as is well known in some cases of insanity, and of double consciousness. This ego has about the same reality as the external world ; there must be something that produces the feeling, and that is all. It is characteristic of living organisms to replace the new material precisely in the place of the old. A mark on the body continues through life, the same on the brain, the new material is placed round the old impressions, so that the forms of thought and feeling turned out by it are very nearly, if not precisely, the same. It is the transmitted experience of this result that has produced the intuitional "I," or the feeling of identity. Memory is the result of impressions on the brain, deep and vivid

in proportion to our youth and susceptibility. In old age, when our animal vigour is exhausted, and less force passes through the brain, and the brain itself becomes less susceptible of impression, the old, or rather the early impressions resume their sway, and we return to our habits of feeling and thinking, and our early memories. "If," says Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy," "the old man on the verge of the grave is *the same* as the child within the womb, if the mutilated soldier is conscious that no part of himself is, if to the very edge of that change which we call death we have watched the force of mind and soul continued in all its keenness, then the belief that what each man calls *himself* will be destroyed when the material surroundings which have been often changed without affecting him are dissolved, is not justified by anything we see in the world around us." But material surroundings never do change without affecting him, and close observation shows that a change of mind always accompanies a change of body.

THE WILL is generally regarded as our commander, and free. This is another delusion. It is entirely a servant, and necessarily obeys either the last dictate of the understanding or some strong impulse or feeling. No doubt the will has a local habitation in the brain, in a position in which it can best execute these commands. The intellect or feeling having determined what to do, with a power proportioned to the size of the organs from which the determination proceeds, the will, like a trigger to the mind, lets off this force in the direction of the purpose aimed at. Under the very top of the head, where firmness lies, is the part of the brain connected with the Ego, and again under this, in the base of the brain, above the *medulla oblongata*, is most probably the part connected with the will. This specialises the control over different muscles. We say "I will," and a bundle of isolated nerve-threads, communicating with particular portions of the central

nervous system, can set to work any set of muscles through the aid of the vaso-motor nerves, which close or liberate the flow of blood to any particular part of the central system.

TRUTH.—If, then, in the process of substituting accurate conceptions for “common sense” ones we are obliged to come to the conviction that the latter, or the ordinary ideas of matter, mind, soul, the I, and the *free will* are illusions and delusions, how is it that we believe in them? As these ideas result from the natural exercise of our faculties—that is, as it is the function of the brain to produce these illusions, so there is a part of the brain whose function it is to produce belief in them, or to give the sense of their reality. Each faculty has its function, and it is natural to us to believe in the result of its activity, but that may have no relation to the real truth about anything. What, then, is truth? Truth, to us, is the record of the succession of our own consciousness, and of how that is affected by the infinitely varied modes of motion without us. But how distinguish the internal workings of our own mind or brain, our active imaginings, from that which takes place without us, and which ought to be the same to all beings similarly organised? Observation and experience is the test of truth. Different and independent individuals question nature, and if they invariably get the same answer—that is, the same impressions,—that we call the truth. But this is merely how we are impressed; it tells us nothing more, and that impression can be like nothing but itself; still it is all we can know, which is merely affirming what all philosophers now admit, that our knowledge is only relative, and not absolute. However it may affect our self-conceit, this relative knowledge is all we have, or probably can have, and it is all that can be of any use to us. To know what things are in themselves is probably impossible to finite creatures, and how such things affect other intelligences is of comparatively little

consequence to us. The object of nature does not appear to be to give us any real knowledge, only to induce that kind of action in us that shall harmonise with the things without us, and produce and *perpetuate* the largest amount of enjoyment. All opinions may be erroneous, but all are thus made salutary; for "it is manifest," as Bishop Butler observes, "that nothing can be of consequence to mankind, or any creature, but happiness." In this department alone has man any real knowledge, all else is illusion and delusion. The knowledge of pains and pleasures is alone absolute knowledge, and to increase the sum of the pleasures, the aggregate of which constitutes happiness, has this wonderful phantasmagoria of a world been produced.

Man is "the heir of all the ages," and it has taken ages to put him together in his present form. The lowest forms of animal life appeared first, and are necessary steps to the evolution of the highest. He has passed through all grades, as is now illustrated in his passage through the womb. We trace the gradual evolution and specialisation of nerve centres from the first appearance of nerve tissue in the lowest animals to the complex structure of the nervous system of man. What is rudimentary in savage man becomes more fully developed as civilisation advances, and this "progressive evolution of the human brain is a proof that we do inherit, as a natural endowment, the laboured acquisitions of our ancestors. The added structure represents, as it were, the embodied experience and memories of the race."* And this embodied experience or instinct represents 30 per cent. of the added structure, which is the difference in weight between the brains of savage and civilised man. I know it is customary to speak of the body, of the material man, in terms of depreciation and reproach, as merely the instrument by which the mind communicates with the world without, &c., but

* "Body and Mind," p. 59, by Dr H. Maudsley.

there is not the slightest evidence to show that mind, as known to us—that is, as specialised for special purposes here, can act separately or independently from the body. Body and the succession of thought and feeling which we call mind, are one and indivisible. “Life,” says Schelling, “is the tendency to individuation.” The forces of nature are confined within definite limits, and work towards a given object. The evolution of the brain depends upon life; and mind, as it is specialised in human ideas and feelings, is the result of brain action. The soul—that is, force, may exist as an independent essence, but faith, hope, charity, and all its other supposed attributes exist only from their connection, like colour, with organisation. These sentiments, and the moral feelings generally, have been specialised for a special purpose connected with the relation of man to his fellows. Milton, among our great and unprejudiced minds, and quite independent of recent discoveries in cerebral physiology, perceived this oneness of body and mind. He says, in his “Treatise on Christian Doctrine,” “That man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not, according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body—but the whole man is soul, and the soul man; that is to say, a body, or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational.”

This unity of body and mind is now generally admitted by physiologists and scientific men generally, and those who hold the unity only without further investigation into what has been called matter are called Materialists, which is considered to be a term of reproach. The Spiritualists think that they have discovered a class of phenomena which prove that man is “compound or separable,” and that these manifestations appear at the present time as a sort of special revelation to counteract the above materialistic tendency

of the age. The late hard-headed mathematician Augustus de Morgan, speaking of these phenomena, many of which he had himself witnessed, says, "When it comes to what is the cause of these phenomena, I find I cannot adopt any explanation which has yet been suggested. If I were bound to choose among things that I can conceive, I should say that there is some sort of action, of some combination of will, intellect, and physical power, which is not that of any of the human beings present. But thinking it very likely that the universe may contain a few agencies, say half a million, about which no man knows anything, I cannot but suspect that a small proportion of these agencies, say five thousand, may be severally competent to the production of all the phenomena, or may be quite up to the task among them. The physical explanations which I have seen are easy, but miserably insufficient; the spiritual hypothesis is sufficient, but ponderously difficult." In the early ages of the world, in the prevalent ignorance of physics, spirits were the supposed agents in all those unknown causes which we now trace to natural law. Psychology is at the present time where physics was in those early ages, and again we have recourse to spirits to help us out of our difficulties, and supplement our ignorance. And more than that, these spirits are called up to neutralise and make of no avail the knowledge we have acquired. But I would ask the Spiritualists, "Would it not be better to pause, with Professor de Morgan, until we know more, rather than commit ourselves to a 'future state' so little desirable?" for, as the Professor says, 'if these things be spirits, they show that pretenders, coxcombs, and liars are to be found on the other side of the grave as well as this,' and all seem to have retrograded, both in mind and feeling, since they were in the body. Surely we had better satisfy ourselves with nature's course, and be content to pass on our powers of body and mind, in endless progress, to coming gene-

rations, than continue our own individual existence under such conditions.

This idea of ghosts and apparitions and a future state does not ever appear to have been a comfortable one all the world over. Among savages, when a chief died his wives and horses and dogs were slain at his tomb, that he might have the use of them in the happy hunting grounds where he had gone. Hindoo widows were burnt (burnt themselves, it was said) on the funeral pile in the same spirit, and at the present time, although widows are not burnt, their life is one of continual penance. A Hindoo widow obtains her husband's property, that she may devote it to oblations and ceremonies for the good of her husband's soul. Should the lady marry again, the husband is supposed to have a very bad time of it below, and the daring couple become literally outcasts from all society, and all that makes life enjoyable. In China this fear of ghosts is the great barrier to all progress. It is not the living, but the dead that rule. There can be no railroads, lest in laying them down the bodies of the dead should be disturbed, and relations should be haunted by their spirits. In this and other Christian countries a future state is looked upon as a sort of necessary aid to the policeman, and children are asked if they know where they will "go to" if they steal or tell a lie. We are also told by Mr Thomas Wright, the journeyman engineer, "that it is well for society that the masses have this hope and belief, or they would not endure the present so patiently as they have done and do." Their belief is that the condition of rich and poor will be *reversed* in another world, if they do not even rejoice a little over the fate of Dives. But this kind of consolation does not appear to be confined altogether to the working classes. Thus we are told in "Random Recollections of the Midland Circuit," by Robert Walton, a book lately published, that "a man of the name of Harrington was tried at Warwick for blas-

phemy. Old Clarke, Q.C., was the leading prosecuting counsel. Clarke, in the general reply he claimed on the part of the Crown, inveighed in no measured terms upon the evil tendency of the man's writing, especially those parts which denied the existence of his Satanic majesty and his various attributes, the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, &c. Warming himself as he went on, as he of course would, from the very *nature* of his subject, he exclaimed, 'Gentlemen, if there be any truth in what the prisoner asserts, where are we?' (A favourite expression of his.) 'If there be no devil and no hell, what is to become of us? Gentlemen, it is men like those who would deprive us of all hope here and comfort hereafter.'

Neither can a "future state" be altogether a "gospel of glad tidings," even to the orthodox christian, who professes to believe that "Whosoever will be saved, before all things, it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith," and that, *without doubt*, he shall perish everlastingly,—go into everlasting fire, if he do not. This Creed includes the belief that Christ "descended into Hell," and that men shall live again *with their bodies*, to give account for their own works. We are told that "Strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," and "that many are called, but few are chosen;" and truly this must be so, if such faith is required. The Scotchman's creed, based on the Westminster Confession of Faith, contains similar consolation. He holds that God hath appointed the Elect only unto glory, and that the rest of mankind he was pleased to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour, and wrath for their sin, *to the praise of his glorious justice!* However certain a man may be in his self-conceit and self-complacency of his own salvation, he must be extraordinarily constituted, if such a belief in a Future state can supply him with any consolation. For myself, I would rather, a thousand times, give up all hopes of an

“individual” hereafter, and go back to where I was before I was born, when, if I was not happy, at least I did not suffer, rather than that *one* being should be reserved to *everlasting* suffering.

Continued existence does not necessarily imply Immortality, *fortunately*, as all the Spiritualists assume, for think of the gift of Immortality being considered a blessing, when *possibly* it might be one of endless misery! Even the poor “wandering Jew” would rest when this world came to an end. I cannot imagine how such *devilish* conceptions ever got into people’s heads, or how, having got them there, they can live and even be happy!

Dr Carpenter says: “I look upon the root of this Spiritualism to lie in that which is very natural, and in some respects a wholesome disposition of the kind—a desire to connect ourselves, in thought, with those whom we have loved, and who have gone before us. Nothing is more admirable, more beautiful, in our nature, than this longing for the continuance of intercourse with those whom we have loved on earth. . . . But this manifestation of it, is one which those who experience this feeling, in its greatest purity, and its greatest intensity, feel to be absurd and contrary to common sense.” How much better is the Poet’s expression of this feeling:—

“Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature whom I found so fair,
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.”—*Tennyson*.

We who believe in God,—and not in a being who exacts an *impossible* belief, or who elects a few to glory, and passes the rest by, when he might either have not created, or have elected all,—as regards a Future state, hold the faith, that if it is better, *all things considered*, that we should, as individuals, continue to exist, we shall be sure to do so; if it is not better we ought not, and do not, desire to do so. Surely this is the least selfish faith. I, for one, am

prepared to leave myself for the future, in infinite confidence in God's hands.

But are the physical explanations of these so-called spiritual phenomena so miserably insufficient as De Morgan represents them? I think not; at least they appear to me to point unmistakeably to the direction in which the explanation will be found. In the first place, as we have seen, to know and to be conscious are with us the same things, and consciousness is what we call mental, and we know of nothing beyond—that is, the difference between physical and mental is only in their modes of manifestation; we know of no essential difference between them. The more we know, the more it seems probable that all is of one stuff, and that all is mind, not matter. If so, we must confess that we know at present but very little of its natural modes of manifestation, that what little we do know is at present “practically interpretable only through the methods and formulæ of physics,” and through the language or terms of physics. Thus an immense amount of what we call physical force passes through the body, estimated at 14 millions of foot pounds per day, which, when subjected to the molecular action of the brain becomes mind or consciousness, that is, thoughts and feelings. This force, on leaving the brain again appears to lose its consciousness, and to revert to physical force, and at present we know very imperfectly what becomes of it, or what its real condition is after leaving the brain. The investigation which Sergeant Cox proposes to make in his second Vol. of “What am I?” into Sleep and Dream, Insanity, Hallucination, Unconscious Cerebration, Trance, Delirium, Psychic Force and Natural and Artificial Somnambulism, will no doubt throw considerable light on this subject, and be proportionally interesting. Dr C. Darwin's book on “Expression of the Emotions in Men and Animals,” is a valuable contribution in this direction; so also is “Mysteries of the Vital Element,” by Dr Robt. Collyer. Mr Herbert

Spencer insists on the general law, that feeling passing a certain pitch, habitually vents itself in bodily action, and that an overplus of nervous forces, undirected by any motive, will manifestly take first the most habitual routes ; and if these do not suffice, will next overflow into the less habitual ones. But Mr Spencer, although an able exponent of the persistence of Force, has not yet attempted to trace nervous force beyond the body, in its action upon other organizations, neither, as far as I know, does he believe in it. My own personal experience has been very slight. I have seen will force acting beyond the body, that is, without the aid of the muscles, and producing various effects, both in contact and without, both near and at some distance. I have witnessed many cures from what appeared to be the action of the nervous force of one body upon another, and also one mind as completely under the control of another, as if they were one, in what is called Electro-biology. I have satisfied myself beyond a doubt, that thought reading is a possibility, having on one occasion seen a mesmerised child tell the number of three watches, consecutively, each number consisting of five figures each. These figures could only have been known to the mesmeriser, who, with some difficulty, made them out by the aid of a strong light. I have also satisfied myself of the truth of phreno-mesmerism, and that it is not necessarily connected with thought reading. I have also seen, in Spiritualist circles, a great deal of humbug and pious fraud, as well as self-deception.

I have, however, seen quite enough to satisfy me that the senses, the ordinary inlets to the mind, are not the only means by which the brain is acted upon from without. The brain faculties specialize the action of mind for special purposes, and the senses direct the action and limit the quantity of force from without ; but these barriers to the more general and universal action of mind can be partially removed. We are part

of all the forces around, and in direct and immediate connection with them, and but partially individualized. As star can act on star, at immeasurable distances, so can one mind upon another within more limited bounds, when such minds are *en-rapport*. In thought-reading we have probably synchronism of vibration between patient and mesmeriser. We can charge a table with brain or nervous force, and our volition can act or produce motion through that medium without the aid of the motor-nerves and muscular contact. In electro-biology the same thing takes place, one brain becomes charged with nervous force from another, and the whole of this force is under the direction of one will. We are surrounded by an atmosphere, the result of cerebration, its character depending upon the nervous centres or mental faculties from which it emanates. We all have felt the effect, more or less, of coming into each other's atmospheres. There are mental attractions and repulsions, likes and antipathies among individuals, varying as they do in chemistry. The amount of force that goes to the brain may be artificially increased by Alcohol, Opium, Haschisch, etc., not only inducing greatly increased mental activity, but many extraordinary phenomena besides. We have nerve force from mental energy, and mental energy from nerve force in constant correlation. In trance we have the same thing, the force being withdrawn from the vital functions, gives us mind under new conditions, with increased and additional and abnormal powers. As force from the sun impinging upon body, produces 699 millions of millions of waves in ether (probably the raw material of mind) inducing in us the sensation we call violet colour, so brain force may be carried through the same ether inducing consciousness, and carrying ideas in all sorts of ways, at present unknown to us. At any rate we should hesitate before we call in the aid of the Spirits, the infallible resort, from the beginning of time, of ignorance. We ought to be modest and

cautious when we reflect that we know only our own consciousness, and everything else only as it is reflected there, and that it tells us nothing of its own nature, or of the nature of anything without its boundaries.

I have to apologize for this digression upon Spiritualism, which originally formed no part of my subject, and which shortens the space at my command, which before was too little.

THE MORAL WORLD.

IF the physical world has been created by our forms of thought connected with the intellect, so has the moral world been created within us by our feelings; as a few simple perceptions have been worked up by the mental faculties to form the world without, so our simple pains and pleasures have been worked up by our moral faculties to make our moral world. To suppose that there is anything outside ourselves corresponding is as pure an illusion and delusion in one case as the other. We are said to be responsible for freedom of will, that is, we are supposed to be a sort of first cause in a small way capable of spontaneous action; an exception to everything else in the universe, to be capable of *originating* motion; but this is a contradiction to the now established doctrine of the persistence of force. This doctrine of the conservation of energy furnishes the modern proof of the truth of what has been hitherto called Philosophical Necessity. Thus as Oerstead says, "everything that exists depends upon the past, prepares the future, and is related to the whole." This is the principle of evolution: "each manifestation of force can be interpreted only as the affect of some antecedent force, no matter whether it be an inorganic action, an animal movement, a thought or feeling."* "Consequently, as I have said elsewhere (Manual of

* Herbert Spencer.

Anthropology, p. 309) "all actions being equally necessary—all equally the effect of some antecedent force, there can be no intrinsic difference between them, the only difference being one of arrangement. Good and evil are purely subjective, that is dependent upon the way in which our sensibility is affected by things without. Where we have pleasure it is called good; where we have pain evil. Pleasurable sensation attends the legitimate action of all our faculties, whereas pain or suffering is not the legitimate object of any part of our organization. Praise and blame, reward and punishment are not a recognition of any intrinsic difference in actions themselves, but of our wish to produce one class of actions rather than another as more agreeable to ourselves. They are intended merely as motives to action. Responsibility consists in our having to bear the natural and necessary consequences of our actions. The supposition that our responsibility consists in our liability to so much suffering for so much sin or error, if not in this world then in another—that *jus'ice* requires that if we sin we must suffer—however ancient, is an altogether groundless notion. The object of pain or suffering is reformation, and any pain or punishment that has not that object, any suffering in excess of that, would be objectless and mere revenge. Every sin contains its own atonement in the pain or penalty attached to the natural consequences that follow it. . . . That retribution would not be *just* which included more punishment than was sufficient to correct the offence and was therefore good for the offender." "If," as Quetelet says, "society prepares crime, and the guilty are only the instruments by which it is executed," the strict demands of justice would require that the sinner, not the saint, should be made happy in another world, because the sinner having been *made* to dishonour in this world, has been the most unhappy here, and requires compensation." We hear much of the "self-determining will of man, on which his moral

responsibility essentially depends." But what does this mean but that he may be moved by motives and his liability to suffer the consequences if he does not? Conscience tells him he must do right, and not do what is wrong, and it is these consequences that tell him what is right and wrong. A sense of pain and pleasure, is the revelation God has given to all mankind, not to be disregarded or misinterpreted. And what does self-determining mean but that a man must necessarily act in accordance with the laws of his own nature? A selfish man acts selfishly and takes the consequences, and he could not do otherwise in either case, whether his actions were free or necessary. Fire burns and water drowns whether we get into them voluntarily or by accident. Self-determining in this sense applies to everything organic or inorganic,—everything acts in accordance with the laws of its own nature, from an atom to a monad, and from a monad to God. It is the power to do this without *external constraint* that constitutes freedom, and it is this experience, organized in the long ages, that is the source of the instinct or intuition that is generally stronger than reason, even in the best informed. I know that my will is free; I feel that I can do as I please, that is the language of intuition but it is not the less an illusion and delusion. What we please to do depends upon persistent force passing through our organization, the strongest force or feeling always prevailing, or governing the will. It is our consciousness that deceives us in this case, as in so many others, from its insufficiency; the fact being that this governing power or force, does not appear in consciousness, but only its correlation. "Human liberty, of which all boast," says Spinoza, "consists solely in this, that man is conscious of his will, and unconscious of the causes by which it is determined." "Arrest one of the viscera, and the vital actions quickly cease; prevent a limb from moving, and the ability to meet surrounding circumstances is seriously interfered with; destroy a

sense organ, paralyze a perceptive power, derange the reason, and there comes more or less failure in that adjustment of conduct to circumstances by which life is preserved." * It is of such kind of impediments to free action only of which man is conscious, and it is this power of adjustment of conduct to circumstances that constitutes his freedom, and this is a freedom that can be exercised only in accordance with natural law.

There can be no mental science or social science, or indeed "science" at all where these principles are not admitted; and the sooner this dire chimera of man's freedom of will, which has caused and still causes so much suffering, is banished the better. The science of man must be placed on the same foundation as all the other sciences, and not left to chance as this freedom implies; on the contrary we shall take care that the will is never free but always under the governance of the cultivated intellect and highest feeling. We shall then begin to discover that the laws which regulate men's birth are quite as important as those by which we improve our horses, short-horns, sheep, and dogs; and our inquiries will be directed, not so much as to where he is *going to*, as to where he comes from. Our goals will undergo the change, that, with much labour, we have effected in our Lunatic Asylums; and we shall learn that civilization does not consist in the increase of wealth, but in the increase of brain, upon which all thought and feeling depend. When Morality becomes a Science we shall cultivate brain, as its special organization and harmonious development are essential to warmth of sentiment, to the sense of the beautiful, and to religious emotion; and education in the future will consist in the developing and perfecting of all the faculties which make a complete man. If the organization is deficient or defective, we can no more feel the higher emotions than we can see without eyes. To

* Principles of Psychology, vol. 2, p. 627, by Herbert Spencer.

ensure this development of a healthy and well-formed brain, "preaching" goes but a very little way; it must be placed in conditions favourable to its healthy growth. The increase of wealth is essential, as we cannot engraft virtue on physical misery, and we must be happy ourselves to wish to make others happy. As I have said elsewhere (*Education of the Feelings*), "To grow the organization upon which moral action habitually depends is the work of time, and we must be content to wait."

We may pause here for a brief summary before we enter a field of thought into which scientific men may not feel equally disposed to follow me, and which, with our limited knowledge, necessarily partakes of much speculation.

MATTER is known to us only from its capacity of creating within us certain sensations which we call ideas and feelings. "The conception we have of matter," says Herbert Spencer, "is one which unites independence, permanence, and force."

MIND is the aggregate of these ideas and feelings, their character or speciality depending upon the brain.

THE WORLD, therefore, is created within us, and although there is *something* without us, the world, as we conceive of it, exists only in our conception. But although the world is the world of our ideas, and exists only in thought, it is not the less worthy or wonderful on that account. It is *our* world.

THE SOUL is the force or active power which causes these ideas, or creates this world; and more, this force, or that which it is the force of, is the stuff out of which this world is made.

THE WILL is the subject of "law" like everything else.

MORALITY regulates the laws of man's well-being, and as it is the "law" of his nature to seek his well-being, the interests of morality are sufficiently assured, whatever may be his *opinions* on the subject.

THE BODY consists of forces of nature individualized and acting together for a special purpose. Their action depends upon the nice balance established between external and internal relations. It has taken ages to bring together and establish this relationship, and it is the unity of these powers and their united action that constitutes the Identity or the Ego. The forces which compose the body are all capable of acting separately and are indestructible, but when this unity of body is destroyed, whether the identity is destroyed with it, is a question I leave every one to answer for himself, as it is usually made a question of feeling and not of reasoning.

Thus Matter, Mind, the World, the Will, in the common conception, are illusions, and to many delusions. What is the Reality underlying them? For myself, I believe in what natural philosophers call Pre-existent and Persistent Force and its Correlates, and which to me is *the Supreme and Universal Spirit* and its manifestations. All the phenomena in the universe consist but in changes of form or transformation of energy. Matter when closely examined resolves itself into centres of force, and mind is force or energy, representing a concentration of all the forces. All forces readily pass from one into the other, according to the structure through which they pass. We have a right, therefore, to infer that there is but one force. And what is this? As there cannot be motion without something moved, so force or power must be the force of something; and that something to me is the *Great Unknown*, its modes of action or manifestations alone are known to us. But as everything shows the unity of force, and as all force or power tends to a given purpose or design, that force must be intelligent, and, if intelligent, conscious, and the conscious action of power is will. All power, therefore, is will power, and as W. R. Grove, says, "Causation is the will, creation the act of God." The will which originally

required a distinct *conscious* volition has passed, in the ages, into the *unconscious* or automatic, constituting the fixed laws and order of nature.

Here Materialism and Absolute Idealism meet.

Physical force is automatic mind, and this unconscious force passing through the brain and subjected to its molecular action *resumes* its consciousness constituting that succession of "forms of thought" and feeling which man calls his mind. Thus our bodies :—

" Are but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all."

Coleridge.

Giordano Bruno taught that "Nature is but a shadow, a phantom, the mirror in which the Infinite images himself. The basis of all things is mind, not matter. It is mind that pervades all. We ourselves are mind, and what we meet in creation is a corresponding mind. Creation does not present mere traces or footprints of the Deity, but the Deity himself in his own presence." For this belief in the 13th century he was burnt. The world is wiser now, for there are many who believe with St. Paul "that God is all in all,—that of him and through him, and unto him are all things." That God is the universe, and the universe is God; and that, in no poetical, but in a truly literal sense, "In him we live and move and have our being." "It is true there are diversities of operation, but the same God worketh all in all." "God is everything or nothing."* "But nature, which is the time-vesture of God, and reveals him to the wise, hides him from the foolish."†

It is as difficult for most people to accept this conclusion as it is to believe that the world does *not* exist outside of them as it *appears* to them to do. God the

* Victor Cousin.

† T. Carlyle.

author of all things is accepted only in theory and in a very limited and secondary sense, for what then becomes of sin and evil if it were so, is he the author of them? The answer is, good and evil are purely subjective—relative pains and pleasures, the creation of our own minds; beyond is only good. What we call the soul's highest and sweetest emotions are parts only of the great whole that equally includes the little, the low, the poor and the helpless, and what to us are the worthless and the bad.

This Pantheism is as old as the world, the highest minds in very early ages have attained to it. "The earliest known origin," says F. W. Newman, "of Pantheism was in India; where it was taught that the eternal infinite Being creates by self-evolution, whereby he becomes, and is, all existence; that he alternately expands, and as it were, contracts himself, reabsorbing into himself the things created. Thus the universe, matter, and its laws, are all modes of divine existence. Each living thing is a part of God, each soul is a drop out of the divine ocean; and, as Virgil has it, the soul of a bee is a '*divinæ particula auræ*.'" The question is, has modern thought or science added any thing that helps to make the conception clearer? I think it has, in the knowledge we now have of the existence of persistent intelligent force and its unity. But as we cannot know things *in themselves*, we can only judge by analogy, or show how one thing resembles another. The human body is a perfect cosmos, an epitome of the action of the forces of the whole world. Every action of the body—the heart, the liver, the lungs, &c.,—that is now performed unconsciously or automatically were originally performed voluntarily; the spinal cord, on its first appearance, in the lower animal scale, governed the body consciously and intelligently, as the brain does at present; it now governs the body intelligently, but *not* consciously, and it does its work quite as well. This is a most

important distinction, as it seems to be universal. Mind itself may perhaps be truly said to be inseparable from consciousness, but it *acts* equally well unconsciously, and we have the action of "unconscious intelligence." We can only know things through their manifestations, and this appears to be the nature of mind. A conscious mental act frequently voluntarily performed, passes with such frequent repetition into the involuntary or automatic state, where the same action is performed equally well unconsciously. This it appears to do by the aid of structure (whatever that is in itself) and as far as we know, mind is never separated from structure or body. That

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul,"

is probably as true as it is poetical. "Thought and extension," says Spinoza, "are the internal and external elements of Being." In speaking of mind, therefore, we must regard it, in its modes of manifestation at least, as both conscious and automatic. Continuing then the analogy between ourselves and the universe; as many of the functions of the body are now performed, unconsciously but intelligently, and as many of our originally voluntary acts during our lifetime, such as walking, talking, &c., have passed into the automatic, so in the world without the Laws of Nature appear to act intelligently but unconsciously. All power is Will power, but the will which originally required a distinct conscious volition has passed, in the ages, into the unconscious or automatic, thus constituting the fixed laws and order of nature. If this view be accepted the bridge over the gap between nerve elements and consciousness has been discovered; the gulf hitherto supposed to exist between matter and mind is filled up, and such questions as,—Can mere matter think? How can mere physical force pass into consciousness? In the world is mind developed first

or last? &c., are answered, and all we have to explain are the conditions under which automatic mind or unconscious intelligence resumes its consciousness. Again, as our body has a centre of volition and intelligence so may the universe have. Our earth moves round the sun, and all power comes to us from thence; but the sun moves round some other centre, and that probably round another, until we approach the great centre of all, where possibly God's power may be more directly exercised, and he may consciously govern all; here, in the extremities, much of it seems to have passed into the automatic. And here, as regards this centre, we have another analogy most important. As the world to us is the world only of our ideas, so the universe may exist only in the mind of God. We know nothing but consciousness, space is a mere mode or form of thought, and if there is nothing but mind, things without ourselves must be very different indeed to what we intuitively regard them. As Bishop Berkeley says, "All permanent existence is in the Divine Mind," and, as Hegel considers he has demonstrated, the essence of the world and all things in it is thought, and Schopenhauer also holds that Will alone is the *dinge an sich*, the essence of the world.

What then are we? Schelling, like Spinoza and our greatest thinkers, allow only a phenomenal existence to the object and subject, admitting only one reality, the Absolute. The individual ego is phenomenal, the universal ego only is noumenal. This may be made intelligible by the kaleidoscope: with each turn we have a different form, this form is the phenomenon, and passes away, that of which it was composed is the noumenon, and is persistent. The world is a great kaleidoscope, it is ever on the turn, producing its infinitely varied forms in ever-increasing brilliancy and beauty, and ever-increasing pleasurable sensibility. That which persists or exists is not these forms but that which is the *nexus*, or which underlies these ever

varying appearances. Thus "There is no death in the concrete, what passes away passes away into its own self, only the passing away passes away."* We continue for ever to exist as part of the Great Whole, in never-ending changes of form. The sun sets in all his splendour, it is equally beautiful on the following day, although the splendour is not the same; the song of the lark each returning spring is quite as sweet, although no one asks or cares if it is the same lark; the night comes to us, and a new day rises to some new comer, with no loss of enjoyment, but only increased freshness. Is this for us an ignoble position? Are we so perfect, any of us, that we would for ever remain as we are? Is the recollection of our present grub state so very desirable? We *are immortal*, for we are part of God himself, do we wish always to remain in the childhood of our present individual existence? To be thus *for ever* fellow-workers with God is surely honourable, by whatever names we may be called. Through the countless ages, one universal plan prevails for the elaboration and organisation of a nervous system, by which unconscious mind shall again become conscious in all the varied forms of animal life. Each creature has its own world created in its own head, specially fitting it to take its appointed place at the common feast. And here we have the last and most striking analogy of the human body to the great cosmos. As each of the countless cells in the human body has a separate life, and yet constituting the life of the whole, making one body, so the aggregate of individual creatures makes one great nervous system, every beat or change in which produces intense enjoyment, so great, indeed, that the necessary pain which we call evil disappears and is lost.

* Hegel.