

physicist: "The progress of modern discovery has in no respect weakened the force of Descartes' remark, that between that of which the differential attribute is Thought, and that of which the differential attribute is Extension, there can be no similarity, no community of nature whatever. Modern discovery, so far from bridging over the chasm between mind and matter, tends rather to exhibit the distinction between them as absolute. It has, indeed, been rendered highly probable that every act of consciousness is accompanied by a molecular motion in the cells and fibres of the brain; and materialists have found great comfort in this fact, while theologians and persons of little faith have been very much frightened by it. But since no one ever pretended that thought can go on, *under the conditions of the present life*, without a brain, one finds it rather hard to sympathize either with the self-congratulations of Dr. Büchner's disciples, or with the terrors of their opponents. But what has been less commonly remarked is the fact that when the thought and the molecular movement thus occur simultaneously, in no scientific sense is the thought the product of the molecular movement. The sun-derived energy of motion latent in the food we eat is variously transformed within the organism, until some of it appears as the motion of the molecules of a little globule of nerve matter in the brain. But does this motion of nerve molecules now produce a thought or state of consciousness? By no means. It simply produces some other motion of nerve molecules, and this in turn produces motion of contraction or expansion in some muscle, or becomes transformed into the chemical energy of some secreting gland. At no point in the whole circle does a unit of motion disappear as motion, to reappear as a unit of consciousness. The physical process is complete in itself, and the thought does not enter into it. All that we can say is, that the occurrence of the thought is simultaneous with that part of the physical process which consists of a molecular movement in the brain." And even Professor Tyndall says that "the passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously; we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ, which would enable

us to pass by a process of reasoning from the one to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why."

Moreover, philosophy teaches us that our present knowledge of matter is but a knowledge of phenomena; or, in other words, of *qualities* which we ascribe to matter, but which really cannot be shown to have any existence apart from the mind which conceived them. Even Clifford, one of the most materialistic of materialists, admits, in his latest article, that "this doctrine of Berkeley's has now been so far confirmed by the physiology of the senses, that it is no longer a metaphysical speculation, but a scientifically established fact." To many of the most thoughtful philosophers of the present day, that mysterious something which we call matter is but the manifestation to our senses and minds of the action of an invisible Will—"the manifestation of infinite Deity to our finite minds." *Mind*, then, not matter, has the most real existence to us—is indeed the only indestructible existence; and can we admit that, in ourselves, any more than in the external mind in which we believe, it is dependent for its existence in being associated with certain transitory material combinations?

If, then, the spiritual and material worlds are utterly incommensurate and radically differentiated, it is both unreasonable and unphilosophical to maintain, as does Professor Clifford, that a universe full of atoms and ether affords no room for the existence of purely spiritual beings, and that because in our experience we have not known consciousness to exist apart from matter, therefore it is impossible it should do so. Inasmuch as we believe that our own consciousness, which is more real to us than anything else whatever, co-exists with our material organism without in the least interfering with its extension in space, why may not other intelligences similarly co-exist with a material universe ever so full of atoms? And as the world of mind is absolutely inaccessible to the minutest physical investigation, the fact that such investigation discovers no trace of it is no proof whatever of its non-existence. To speak of physical proof or disproof of a spiritual world is as incongruous as it would be to speak of the colour of a cube root or the fragrance of a triangle. The two ideas are simply out of all relation. It is quite reasonable to believe that spirit.