for him the Copley medal of the Royal Society; while his theory of positive and negative electricity made a permanent addition to the nomenclature of the science. His conceit that a turkey, killed with the discharge of a battery of jars, was uncommonly tender eating, a discovery gravely communicated to the Royal Society by William Watson, is not so well-known, and does not appear up to the present to have been verified.

We cannot agree with him, I am sure, when he says: "Nor is it of much importance for us to know the manner in which Nature executes her laws; it is enough if we know the laws themselves." For the pursuit of the manner in which Nature executes her laws is the distinguishing characteristic of the science of the present day. It has led to most brilliant discoveries, and bids fair to do more than all other agencies combined to show the intimate and necessary relations existing between the different branches of physics. We need to be reminded often that accumulated facts do not constitute a science; and that utility is not the highest reward of scientific pursuits. A bit of polished marble plucked from the ruins of the Roman Palatine Hill is an interesting relic; but how much more interesting to reconstruct the palace of Nero and to see this fluted marble in its proper and designed relation to the whole, of which it was once a necessary part! Science is constructive. Laws are derived from an attentive consideration of facts; generalizations group laws under broader relationships; and great principles unite all together into one related, impressive whole.

From the time when the famous Boyle caught sight of a faint glimmer of electric light to the present, physicists have been in pursuit of the connection between light and electricity. As early as Newton's time, the ether was conceived by some to be a subtle medium confined to very small distances from the surfaces of bodies, and to be the chief agent in all electrical phenomena. "But," says Priestley,* "the far greater number of philosophers suppose, and with the greatest probability, that there is a fluid, *sui generis*, principally concerned in the business of electricity. They seem, however, though perhaps without reason, entirely to overlook Sir Isaac Newton's ether; or if they do not suppose it to be wholly unconcerned, they allow it only a secondary and subordinate part to act in this drama." Among the branches of knowledge that this writer recommends as likely to be of especial service in the study of electricity is the doctrine of light and colors. The invention of the voltaic battery, and Sir Humphrey Davy's celebrated experiment in producing the electric arc stimulated inquiry in this same direction. Mrs. Somerville, Morrichini, and others, sought to produce magnetism by means of sunlight, but ultimately, as is now known, without success. Notwithstanding these negative results, Faraday had such a "strong persuasion derived from philosophical considerations" of a direct relation between light and electricity that he resumed the inquiry in a most searching manner, with the happy result of discovering the rotation of the plane of polarization of light by means of magnetism. "Thus is established," he says,† "a true, direct relation and dependence between light and the magnetic and electric forces; and thus a great addition [is] made to the facts and considerations which tend to prove that all natural forces are tied together, and have one common origin."

It was thus reserved for Faraday to make those discoveries and to obtain that insight into electric and magnetic action which were needed by his great disciple and interpreter, Maxwell, to construct a most marvelous theory of the connection between these two departments of physical science.

Respecting the failures to obtain magnetism from the direct action of sunlight, to which allusion has been made, Maxwell says that we should not expect a different result because the distinction between magnetic north and south is one of direction merely; that there is nothing in magnetism indicating such opposition of properties as is seen at the positive and negative poles of a battery in electrolysis; that even right and left-handed circularly polarized light cannot be considered the analogue of the two poles of a magnet, for the two polarized rays when combined do not neutralize each other but produce plane polarized light.

It may be said, however, that if a right-handed circularly polarized ray produces magnetism in one direction, and a left-handed ray in the opposite, then the combination of the two rays may neutralize their magnetic effect, inasmuch as plane polarized light may have no magnetic influence. Professor J. J. Thomson has lately shown mathematically that a circularly polarized ray does have a magnetic effect, but that it is so small, even with strong sunlight, as to be much beyond the limits of experiment; and Mr. Shelford Bidwell has produced a bar of iron in such an exquisitely sensitive magnetic state that magnetic changes are certainly produced in it by the direct action of light. This he has secured by rendering the bar more susceptible to magnetic influences in one direction than the other. We may not, I venture to affirm, be without hope that magnetism and electric currents may yet be evoked by the direct agency of sunlight.

Faraday was deeply convinced that space had magnetic properties, and that the space or medium around a magnet is as essential as the magnet itself, being a part of the complete magnetic system. To him all magnetic and electric action took place by contiguous particles along lines of force. "What that magnetic medium, deprived of all material substance, may be, I cannot tell," he says,‡ "perhaps the ether." No doubt existed in Faraday's mind that these lines represent a state of tension; but whether that tension is a *static* state in the ether, or whether it is *dynamic*, resembling the lines of flow of a current between the poles of a battery immersed in a conducting fluid, was uncertain. He inclined, however, to the latter view. He was thus led to advocate, though not without hesitation, the physical nature of lines of force.

Faraday's discoveries and his method of regarding all magnetic and electric actions as propagated through a medium by means of contiguous parts have been of the utmost productiveness. They have revolutionized the science of electricity, and have been the most potent factors in the genesis of a theory, including all radiant energy, which has recently received such remarkable and conclusive confirmation. His name has become almost a household word. His earnest, unselfish life has added unnumbered millions to the world's wealth. His ideas and words, which have been instruments in the hands of philosophers, have become the current coin of the commercial tyro, who talks as glibly about lines of force and the magnetic circuit as if he really knew something about them.

Fruitful as Faraday's ideas were they yet awaited a mathematical interpreter for their highest development. A good Providence sent James Clerk Maxwell, whose brilliant mathematical ability was equaled by his philosophic insight, his

* Hist. of Elec., vol. ii., p. 22.

† Exp. Researches, 2,221.

‡ Exp. Researches. 3,277.