

—that organic matter really contains some element which inorganic matter does not, and that the former differs from the latter as much as wine differs from water—the one having spirit in it, and the other not. They gain by this supposition nothing that they want to prove. The individual life or mind is equally a bubble in either case, which is formed for a moment on the surface of a general element, and is then lost in it. The individual champagne-bubble disappears as surely as the bubble of soda-water. There is no greater comfort to us in thinking that we rot like the roses, than in thinking that, like broken iron, we fall back into the melting-pot. As a matter of fact, however," Glanville went on, "the rift, such as it is, between organic matter and inorganic is merely a rift, not in the Universe, but in our knowledge of it, just as there may be a rift in our knowledge with regard to the axis of Uranus; and this rift which we are now speaking of is being filled up rapidly."

"Indeed!" said Lady Snowdon. "Is that really the case? I remember not long ago having seen in some paper or other that crystals are found to propagate themselves as if they were living things. Is it some discovery of that kind that you refer to?"

"No," replied Glanville. "The discoveries to which I was referring affect our view of the question in a yet more penetrating way. One of them is not so much a new discovery, as the gradual fusion of two in our intellectual consciousness. I mean the scientific discovery of the material unity of the Universe, and the philosophical discovery of the mental character of matter. This latter discovery, which is what we have just been discussing, long preceded the former; and the former had been well established before it connected itself with the latter. The two remained for a time, like separate stars—the one a barren materialism, the other a barren mentalism; but each seemed to menace, each to approach the other. Then the catastrophe came, and the two stars collided. But instead of destroying each other, they were fused, and were