

ultimately constituted of inorganic elements, which are consequently subject to chemical laws, and we know that chemical laws or forces cannot operate so as to impart *life* to the kind of matter over which they preside; we must therefore look for another power or force which will serve to originate and maintain vitality in matter so called organized, and it is to this power that we give the name of organizing agency, which we believe is imparted to inorganic matter so soon as it comes in contact with an organized body to which it bears a relation. It gives to that matter the power: 1st, of becoming organized; 2nd, of being or remaining in a state of organization, and, 3rd, of acting the part of an organizing agent in the conversion of matter to organization similar to that of itself. Viewing organized matter in this light, we perceive that there are two distinct classes of agencies or powers operating upon it, viz., the organizing agency on the one hand, and the chemical forces on the other—the former serving to maintain the condition of organization, while the latter, on the contrary, operates powerfully to reduce or bring back the organized matter into its primitive state of inorganization. These two powers, therefore, act antagonistically in relation to each other, and it is to this reciprocal or stimulus—as a result of these powers acting on matter in opposition to one another—that the phenomenon of perpetual motion is manifested in it. As a result also of these operating powers, we observe the phenomenon of constant motion accompanied by incessant changes, which in fact, constitute the individual processes of formation, growth and decay.

The organizing agency, of which we have spoken, extends its actuating power to all kinds of matter which is organized and cannot serve to specialize the difference in the nature and qualities of the various textures. Every organized texture which exists in a living body must be possessed of distinct properties of its own to distinguish its species from that of another. These properties may be termed specific, as being limited to the kind of matter which possesses them and as acting upon it alone, so as to preserve its original nature and qualities distinct.

Keeping these details in view, we observe a wide line of demarcation between the two great kingdoms of nature, and yet a marked analogy, both in the phenomena of their respective actions and in the general and special agencies which guide, actuate and govern them, as separate systems. It is by thus contrasting their nature and operating agencies, that we can obtain a clear knowledge of the nature of organic life, or life as exhibited in an organized body; and from what has been considered, it may be safely inferred that *life*, in the acceptation of the term as applied to an organized body, is the manifestation of activity in