

system against which the materialistic doctrines are a protest, they have made it more intensely spiritual than before, thus widening the breach and increasing the causes of revolt.

The result of a recent *post mortem* examination on a man who had committed suicide in a prolonged fit of abject melancholy, was the discovery that a splinter of bone had been detached from the skull and was lodged in such a position that it must have irritated the brain of the deceased. The verdict was to the effect that the irritation caused by the particle of bone, had produced the melancholy mood that made life seem unendurable to the victim. This verdict was accepted by all parties as perfectly reasonable, and no one has yet raised his voice to dispute it or to show wherein it clashes with the pet theories of Christendom. That it does clash with the common estimate of mind as distinguished from matter cannot be disputed. It shows that the mind may, by a physical agent, be thrown into a mood that will bring a train of thought leading to the commission of the crime of suicide. It must be remembered that this man was conscious of no pair,—that he continued to practise his vocation up to the very day on which he killed himself,—and that there was no previous evidence of his being out of his right mind. So here is a clear case of mind under the dominion of matter.

If the protrusion into the brain of a particle of bone of a particular size will produce the desire to kill oneself, why may not the protrusion of a particle of slightly different size, or of two or more particles, produce the desire to kill some one else, or to steal, or to commit some other crime? If melancholy may be produced by a certain amount of irritation or compression, why may not mirthfulness, benevolence or any other quality be the result of perfect freedom from irritation or compression? It is not at all necessary that a particle of bone should be detached from the skull to form an irritant. The shape of the skull itself may determine the prevailing mental condition. Then instead of attributing the growth of a particular organ to the cultivation or development of the faculties which it indicates, as phrenologists do, it might be assumed that the natural enlargement of that portion of the skull had compressed the brain, or expanded its dwelling place, in such a way as to increase the activity and relative influence of the particular faculty of the mind for which the organ is named. This is on the supposition that the phrenological division of the brain into portions representing the various faculties of the mind, is correct. It would be interesting to know whether the irritation that produced despair in the mind of the suicide alluded to was in the portion of the brain to which the phrenologist would ascribe it; but there is no published information as to that. It is perfectly clear, though, that a minute particle of bone changed this man's mind from cheerfulness to melancholy and finally to despair; and it is fair to suppose that some disturbing physical cause might change virtue to vice, kindness to cruelty, or charity to intolerance. The supposition is worthy of being taken into consideration by scientists, and made the subject of careful investigation whenever proper subjects for anatomical inspection are available.