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ART. XXVII.—*The Correlation of the Vital and Physical Forces.* A Prize Thesis for the Degree of M.D., C.M. By R. MAURICE BUCKE.

“The one spirit's plastic stress  
Sweeps through the dull, dense world, compelling there  
All new successions to the forms they wear  
Torturing the unwilling dross that checks its flight  
To its own likeness as each mass may bear;  
And bursting in its beauty and its might  
From trees, and beasts, and men, into the heaven's light.”

Although the subject upon which I have undertaken to write is not strictly a medical one, I shall make no apology for having selected it; for in the first place, it is not to be expected that a man so little read in medical science as a student must necessarily be, and who, at the same time, has had no experience at all, could advance new views of any value, or relate any facts (except in rare cases) not known before; for this reason, I say, it can make but little difference upon what he writes:

But secondly, and on the other hand, if he could write anything of any value, if he could add anything to the stock of positive facts or opinions possessed by the medical world, then certainly there is no subject upon which information should be more acceptable, and on which it is more wanted, than the nature of life; a phenomenon which has so often been considered to be an ultimate fact, and philosophic inquiry into the nature of which, has consequently until lately been almost entirely neglected.

Furthermore, the subject I have chosen though not strictly a medical one, yet must be acknowledged to lie at the basis of all branches of medicine; to be in fact the trunk of the great medical tree; for as it has to do with the nature of life, so it is the very ground work of Physiology and Pathology, and as such underlies the whole subject of the practice of medicine; and I think it is not too much to say, that until we have some clearer understanding of life than we at present possess, the great blank which lies between the knowledge of the nature of medicines on the one hand, and their obvious actions on the other, will never