

present day, whose belief recently formulated by Professor Tyndall, "that matter contains in itself the presence and potency of every form and quality of life," is simply striving to invest matter with all the properties of life and spirit. It is passing strange, however, that while they maintain that the deepest mysteries of life are quite explicable by their theories, they cannot give any positive and satisfactory information as to what is the ultimate condition of matter, nor as to how it originated. Matter, say they, when reduced to its elementary state, consists of atoms, which, according to some authorities are round,—according to others are angular. Those holding the latter view must have perceived that if they admitted the globular form of atoms they would be placed in a difficulty. For as rounded bodies when placed in apposition do not touch at every point, interstices are left between them. If then there be nothing in the universe but matter, what occupies the interstices? Many physiologists of this school, while striving to prove that physical forces are sufficient for the production of all the vital processes, evidently cannot divest their minds of the idea that there is a force operating in the human organism which differs in its manifestations from any known physical force. For instance, Professor Lehmann says, "The correctness of the view which ascribes vital phenomena to mechanical conditions cannot be purely tested till the existence of this new force has been proved; but how can such proof be adduced in reference to a force the simplest effects of which are unknown to us, and which differs from other forces merely by its disregard to all restrictions, and of the limits prescribed by physicists to laws? It may be briefly asserted that the exclusion of physical agency affords no proof of a purely vital force, and yet there is no other means by which its existence can be established. The physicist who rigidly follows the leading maxims of his own science, must admit the possibility of a vital force, although he may regard any proof of its existence as at present impossible."