

## CONSCIOUSNESS

liar a character that a derivation of it from other psychic functions seems extremely hazardous. It seemed, therefore, the easiest way out of the difficulty to conceive it as an inherent property of all matter, like gravitation or chemical affinity. On that hypothesis there would be as many forms of this original consciousness as there are chemical elements; each atom of hydrogen would have its hydrogenic consciousness, each atom of carbon its carbonic consciousness, and so forth. There are philosophers, even, who ascribe consciousness to the four elements of Empedocles, the union of which, by "love and hate," produces the totality of things.

Personally, I have never subscribed to this hypothesis of atomic consciousness. I emphasize the point because Emil du Bois-Reymond has attributed it to me. In the controversy I had with him (1880) he violently attacked my "pernicious and false philosophy," and contended that I had, in my paper on "The Perigenesis of the Plastidule," "laid it down as a metaphysical axiom that every atom has its individual consciousness." On the contrary, I explicitly stated that I conceive the elementary psychic qualities of sensation and will, which may be attributed to atoms, to be *unconscious*—just as unconscious as the elementary memory which I, in company with that distinguished physiologist, Ewald Hering, consider to be "a common function of all organized matter"—or, more correctly, "living substance." Du Bois-Reymond curiously confuses "soul" and "consciousness"; whether from oversight or not I cannot say. Since he considers consciousness to be a transcendental phenomenon (as we shall see presently), while denying that character to other psychic functions—the action of the senses, for example—I