

To every force there is an equal opposite force or reaction, and a reaction may be against a live body, but it is never suspected of being against the abstraction life or mind—that would indeed be enlarging the scope of mechanics!—the reaction is always against some other body. All stresses as a matter of fact occur in the ether; and they all have a material terminus at each end (or in exceptional cases a wave-front or some other recondite etherial equivalent), that is to say something possessing inertia; but the timed or *opportune* existence of a particular stress may be the result of organisation and control. Mechanical operations can be thus dominated by intelligence and purpose. When a stone is rolling over a cliff, it is all the same to “energy” whether it fall on point A or point B of the beach. But at A it shall merely dent the sand, whereas at B it shall strike a detonator and explode a mine. Scribbling on a piece of paper results in a certain distribution of fluid and production of a modicum of heat: so