

promise, to establish a monistic view, it sacrificed, as it seemed to the one side, mathematical rigor, and, as it seemed to the other, spiritual depth. In the middle of the century nobody saw this more clearly or expressed it more emphatically than Lotze; and the formula by which he explained the position has not lost its validity even at this day, though materialism has considerably modified its fundamental assumptions. What Lotze endeavoured to show was "how universal but, at the same time, how subordinate is the part which mechanism plays in nature."

20.  
Lotze's  
formula  
regarding  
mechanism.

But even with regard to the wider problems which legitimately belong to natural science and natural philosophy, materialism itself did not greatly assist in their solution; though, in the course of the controversy, a gradual but slow clearance of ideas took place. Among these problems two stood out as of paramount interest and importance. The first refers to nature as a whole: this we may term the cosmological problem. The second refers to the system of ideas by which we try to comprehend nature. So far as the first of these problems is concerned, there is no doubt that the writings of the materialistic school, and foremost those of Büchner, tended to spread among the reading public a large amount of useful knowledge referring to the discoveries which science had made in the course of the first half of the nineteenth century, by which great regions of knowledge had been opened out or remodelled, and which were especially interesting and useful in the departments of biology and medicine.

21.  
Success and  
failure of  
Materialism.