

This knowledge, however, though extensive, remained more or less fragmentary and purely illustrative. The unification which was attempted, but never carried out, consisted largely in a monotonous iteration of the terms Matter and Force which were never defined, and in an equally vague reference to Nature and the Laws of Nature, which the reader could hardly help regarding as active principles. The desire which is always felt in such discussions to collect the many statements, illustrations, and analogies into a comprehensive view, led involuntarily to the use of such words as Nature, Causality, Natural Laws, &c., in a way similar to that in which the older philosophy of Nature had used the terms Mind, the Absolute, &c., without clearly defining them.

In a former chapter which treated of the problem of the Inner World, I endeavoured to show how psychology, in its recent developments, has gradually eliminated the word Soul as a conception which was not useful in a methodical treatment of mental phenomena. Nevertheless the word Soul and its various synonyms have remained indispensable in general language and literature. In a similar manner natural philosophy continually uses such words as Nature, though, for scientific purposes, the idea of nature as a whole vanishes as a superfluous conception. The essence, reality, and unity of natural phenomena are as little explained or defined in natural science as the essence and reality of mental phenomena are discussed in many modern treatises on psychology. In both cases, conceptions such as Soul or Nature lurk in the background as personified agencies