

dualism but also many more special discontinuities, which show themselves in all our varied experience, and which may possibly be reducible to that main difference or contrast ordinarily described by the terms nature and mind. This tendency has shown itself, in the second half of the nineteenth century, also in the philosophy of nature, and this quite as much with thinkers who have approached the problem of nature in the purely scientific interest as with those who have done so in a philosophical spirit. It is the phenomenon of Discontinuity which has, more and more, attracted the attention of a large section among recent philosophers.

38.
Rise of the
problem of
Discon-
tinuity.

In fact, the most emphatic expression of this difficulty was given by a natural philosopher who marched in the van of those modern reformers of science who discarded not only as useless, but as harmful for scientific purposes, that entire complex of ideas which invaded German philosophy during the first third of the century: the idealistic and romantic movement. Emil du Bois Reymond had acquired considerable reputation among philosophers through his 'Researches in Animal Electricity' (1848), which contained in their preface a strong recommendation of the exact methods and an equally strong denunciation of the conception of vital forces.¹ He was accordingly classed for a long time among the

39.
Du Bois
Reymond.

¹ This Preface, as also the Addresses hereafter referred to, are reprinted in the Leipsic edition of E. Du Bois Reymond's 'Collected Addresses' (2 vols., 1886-87). This collection, with its valuable literary notes and references replying to numerous criticisms, has now been republished with

additional matter. The collection forms together an important record of the beginnings, the progress, and the gradual reform of philosophical thought on the subject of the study of nature, the principles of natural knowledge, and the comprehension of nature as a whole.