

the present day, the serious consideration of thinkers of all shades of opinion.

In the first of these addresses Du Bois Reymond adopts—probably without being aware of it—a view somewhat akin to that of Herbert Spencer, who had published, already in 1860, the first part of his *System*, in which he puts forward the conception of the Unknowable as the underlying ground or power in and of everything.<sup>1</sup> Similarly Du Bois Reymond maintains that the natural philosopher must admit that the ultimate conceptions of all exact or mathematical science, the conceptions of matter and force, cannot be explained or further analysed,—that they constitute for him an insoluble enigma. In addition to this he maintains that a further equally difficult problem arises when we attempt to explain how the underlying substance of which matter and force are the attributes can, under certain conditions, feel, desire, and think; in fact, the psychical attributes of the underlying substance constitute a second enigma. The second enigma has occasion-

<sup>1</sup> It is indeed remarkable that E. Du Bois Reymond's first address ends with the celebrated '*Ignorabimus*' with which Herbert Spencer, more than ten years earlier, had started his systematic speculations, expressive of an idea which has received popular currency through Huxley's '*Agnosticism*.' It is also significant that Du Bois Reymond rouses himself out of this humiliating and deadening conviction of our fundamental ignorance by the following reflection: The natural philosopher "now finds solace and elevation in work which augments

the treasure of human knowledge, increases by wholesome exertion the powers and capabilities of our race, extends our dominion over nature, refines our existence through the enrichment of our mind and beautifies it through the multiplication of our enjoyments. From that depressing '*Ignorabimus*' the natural philosopher rouses himself again by the dying Septimius Severus's watchword to his legions: '*Laboremus*'" (*loc. cit.*, vol. i. p. 235). Truly an anticipation of modern pragmatism!