

48.
Effects of
modern
analysis on
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whole.

has had on our view of nature as a whole. For we must not forget that the problem of nature, taken philosophically, cannot be solved by detailed researches in restricted areas or by conceptions which refer merely to special phenomena; further, that even if we multiply these researches indefinitely, they will not lead to a comprehensive view of nature as a whole. Just as in psychology, the enormous growth of detailed knowledge in the domain of the sensations has not approached, but rather led away from, an answer to the problem of the Soul or the essence of the inner world, and has ended by throwing overboard the former term altogether; so likewise the enormous bulk of natural knowledge of the phenomena and relations in nature has led us away from a comprehension of nature as a whole, and this for two reasons :—

In the first place, the so-called unification of knowledge, of which we hear so much in recent times, and which has become a watchword among philosophical naturalists, such as Spencer, consists in reducing the great variety of forms and processes which we observe to a small number of general relations expressed in logical or mathematical formulæ. These tend to become more and more purely geometrical when we have to do with the study of natural forms (Morphology), and more and more genealogical when we have to do with living things (Biology). It is true—as I have had ample opportunity to show in earlier chapters—that one of the great influences of Darwinism upon natural science has been to lead the way out of the laboratory, the museum, and the dissecting-room, into the great world and expanse