

18. A leading distinction between the material and the mental fabrications is, the far greater complexity of the former, at least greater to all human observation. Into that system of means which has been formed for the object of seeing, there enter at least twenty separate contingencies, the absence of any one of which would either derange the proper function of the eye, or altogether destroy it. We have no access to aught like the observation of a mental structure, and all of which our consciousness informs us is a succession of mental phenomena. Now in these we are sensible of nothing but a very simple antecedent followed up, and that generally on the instant, by a like simple consequent. We have the feeling, and still more the purpose of benevolence, followed up by complacency. We have the feeling or purpose, and still more the execution of malignity, or rather the recollection of that execution, followed up by remorse. However manifold the apparatus may be which enables us to see an external object—when the sight itself, instead of the consequent in a material succession, becomes the antecedent in a mental one; or, in other words, when it passes from a material to a purely mental process; then, as soon, does it pass from the complex into the simple; and, accordingly, the sight of distress is followed up, without the intervention of any curiously elaborated mechanism that we are at all conscious of, by an immediate feeling of compas-