

*ena*, and referable to the direct action of causes, viz. an attractive and a repulsive *force*.

(81.) Of force, as counterbalanced by opposing force, we have, as already said, an internal consciousness; and though it may seem strange to us that matter should be capable of exerting on matter the same kind of effort, which, judging alone from this consciousness, we might be led to regard as a mental one; yet we cannot refuse the direct evidence of our senses, which shows us that when we keep a spring stretched with one hand, we feel an effort opposed exactly in the same way as if we had ourselves opposed it with the other hand, or as it would be by that of another person. The inquiry, therefore, into the aggregation of matter resolves itself into the general question, What will be the behavior of material particles under the mutual action of opposing forces capable of counterbalancing each other? and the answer to this question can be no other than the announcement of the *law* of equilibrium, whatever law that may be.

(82.) With regard to the cause of sensation, it must be regarded as much more obscure than that of motion, inasmuch as we have no conscious knowledge of it, *i. e.* we have no power, by any act of our minds and will, to call up a sensation. It is true, we are not destitute of an approach to it, since by an effort of memory and imagination, we can produce in our minds an impression, or idea, of a sensation, which, in peculiar cases, may even approach in vividness to actual reality. In dreams, too, and in some cases of disordered nerves, we have sensations without objects. But if force, as a cause of motion, is obscure to us, even while we are in the act of exercising it, how much more so is this other cause, whose exercise we can only imitate imperfectly by any voluntary act, and of whose purely internal action we are only fully conscious when in a state that incapacitates us from reasoning, and almost from observation!

(83.) Dismissing, then, as beyond our reach, the inquiry into causes, we must be content at present to concentrate our attention on the laws which prevail among