

some upon more, others on less, cogent evidence, as "modes of motion," they seem to consider Force itself as included in the same category, and think there is "reason to believe that it depends on the diffusion of highly-attenuated matter through space."\* This doctrine goes to resolve the entire assemblage of natural phænomena into the mere knocking about of an inconceivable number of inconceivably minute billiard balls (or cubes, or tetrahedrons, if that be preferred), which once set in motion and abandoned to their mutual encounter and impact, work out the totality of natural phænomena. With the amount of forethought and intelligence called for in the initiatory disposal of the place and movement of every individual of this multitude; to work out for countless ages the orderly sequence of observed facts, by their blind conformity to the laws of collision, those disposed to adopt such a view of nature would probably concern themselves little. Their actual disposal at the present moment is a *fait accompli*; and from this point it would be possible, at least in imagination, if we knew the present position and movement of every particle of matter in the universe, to work backwards, up to any epoch which we might choose to assign as that of creation, by a simple reversal of the velocity and direction of each:—nay, having thus *uncreated* the world, the molecules would of themselves work out a pre-existent order of things into all past eternity: an image of what *might have* existed in the past (though it did not) seen, as it were, reflected in the future.

\* *North British Review*, vol. xl. p. 41.