

philosopher is the link of causation. It was the link that connected the sublime thoughts of Newton, when, sitting in his arbour, he saw the apple fall from the tree, and traced in profound meditation the effect of the great law to which it owed its fall, from the earth to the moon, and from thence to the sun and all the planets. And, on the other hand, the link of mere contiguity is the prevailing link in those minds in which intellect is feeblest: it was the link on which the ideas of Dame Quickly were suspended. Her recollections hung upon the parcel-gilt goblet, the sea-coal fire, and the chance visit of goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife. Nay, even the inferior animals are not too low to be under its influence. The horse quickens his pace when some contiguous object reminds him of the neighbourhood of his stable, with its corn and hay; and the cat learns to associate the dinner-bell with the dinner which it precedes. And yet we find one of the most ingenious of the idealistic metaphysicians fusing these two widely distant links of association into one,—the prevailing Newtonian link into the prevailing link of the cat and horse; or, as he himself expresses it, suppressing the link of causation as superfluous, and leaving instead, in conformity with his adoption of the doctrine of Hume (though Hume himself avoided the absurdity), only the link of contiguity in time and space. The "olde polde-headed manne," who held that Tenterden steeple was the cause of the Goodwin Sands, because the steeple had been built in their neighbourhood, he said, just immediately before they began to form, has been a standing joke in English literature for the last four hundred years. He made the mistake of substituting contiguity in time and place for causality, and has become a jest in consequence. But what shall be said of a scheme of metaphysics that does deliberately and knowing, in order to preserve the consistency of a foregone conclusion, what the polde-headed manne did in his simplicity and ignorance? The