

CONSCIOUSNESS

damental natural phenomena ; we shall go more fully into this " problem of substance " in the twelfth chapter. The second insuperable difficulty of philosophy is given as the problem of consciousness—the question how our mental activity is to be explained by material conditions, especially movements, how " substance [the substance which underlies matter and force] comes, under certain conditions, to feel, to desire, and to think."

For brevity, and in order to give a characteristic name to the Leipzig discourse, I have called it the " Ignorabimus speech " ; this is the more permissible, as E. du Bois-Reymond himself, with a just pride, eight years afterwards, speaking of the extraordinary consequences of his discourse, said : " Criticism sounded every possible note, from friendly praise to the severest censure, and the word ' Ignorabimus,' which was the culmination of my inquiry, was at once transformed into a kind of scientific shibboleth." It is quite true that loud praise and approbation resounded in the halls of the dualistic and spiritualistic philosophy, and especially in the camp of the " Church militant " ; even the spiritists and the host of believers, who thought the immortality of their precious souls was saved by the " Ignorabimus," joined in the chorus. The " severest censure " came at first only from a few scientists and philosophers—from the few who had sufficient scientific knowledge and moral courage to oppose the dogmatism of the all-powerful secretary and dictator of the Berlin Academy of Science.

Towards the end, however, the author of the " Ignorabimus speech " briefly alluded to the question whether these two great " world-enigmas," the general problem of substance and the special problem of consciousness, are not two aspects of one and the same problem.