

## THE UNITY OF NATURE

mediately traced to mechanical and chemical energy, and to the effects of electricity and light. For other vital processes, however, especially for psychic activity and consciousness, such an interpretation is vigorously contested. Yet the modern science of evolution has achieved the task of constructing a bridge between these two apparently irreconcilable provinces. We are now certain that all the phenomena of organic life are subject to the universal law of substance no less than the phenomena of the inorganic universe.

The unity of nature which necessarily follows, and the demolition of the earlier dualism, are certainly among the most valuable results of modern evolution. Thirty-three years ago I made an exhaustive effort to establish this "monism of the cosmos" and the essential unity of organic and inorganic nature by a thorough, critical demonstration, and a comparison of the accordance of these two great divisions of nature with regard to matter, form, and force.\* A short epitome of the result is given in the fifteenth chapter of my *Natural History of Creation*. The views I put forward are accepted by the majority of modern scientists, but an attempt has been made in many quarters lately to dispute them and to maintain the old antithesis of the two divisions of nature. The ablest of these is to be found in the recent *Welt als That* of the botanist Reinke. It defends *pure cosmological* dualism with admirable lucidity and consistency, and only goes to prove how utterly untenable the teleological system is that is connected therewith. According to the author, physical and chemical forces alone are at work in the entire field of inorganic nature, while in

\* *General Morphology*, book 2, chap. v.