

least the *basis* of matter was fundamentally conserved.

Further than this, however, we cannot go ; and to say, as Professor Haeckel says, that the modern physicist has grown so accustomed to the conservation of matter that he is unable to conceive the contrary, is simply untrue. Whatever may be the case in real fact, there is no question with respect to the possibility of conception. The electrons themselves must be explained somehow ; and the only surmise which at present holds the field is that they are knots or twists or vortices, or some sort of either static or kinetic modification, of the ether of space—a small bit partitioned off from the rest and individualised by reason of this identifying peculiarity. It may be that these knots cannot be untied, these twists undone, these vortices broken up ; it may be that neither artificially nor spontaneously are they ever in the slightest degree changed. It may be so, but we do not know ; and it is quite easy to conceive them broken up,