

15.
Unmethodical
thought.

and very frequently outside of any school, points to novel modes of mental conception, to a fund of ideas yet undeveloped or only partially developed into clear thought. The whole of this productiveness indicates a vast amount of mental work which, though not yet absorbed by science or philosophy, belongs nevertheless, according to our original conception, to the world of thought. The meaning of it may be enigmatical, and the clear expression which it will some day produce in philosophical and scientific reasoning may be far distant and unintelligible to us now. Still there it is, this great body of undefined thought, this volume of diffused light, the focus and centre of which is still hidden from us. We feel that in discussing the thought of the century we cannot pass it by or neglect it.

It is difficult to find any one term under which we could comprise this great body of unmethodical, scattered, and fragmentary thought,—any one word, similar to science and philosophy, in which we could sum up and characterise its general meaning and tendency. So far we have only stated what it is not, what to a large extent it perhaps never will be—*viz.*, methodical. And yet we feel that it contains that kind and portion of thought which touches our deepest interests, our most intimate concerns, our noblest aspirations. Science becomes more and more a mere calculation, *une question d'analyse*, an occupation for the laboratory, the workshop, the manufactory, and the market; philosophy savours at its best too much of the school and lecture-room, runs too much into systems and categories, it fatigues us with definitions