THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1868.

PROF. TYNDALL ON MATERIALISM. | of rock salt and a plate of crystallized sugar

His Address Before the British Associa ation-The Holecular Theory in Matter and in Thought,

From the London Athenaum.

The President delivered the following address Fichte, in his lectures on the "Vocation of the Scholar," insisted on a culture for the scholar which should not be one sided, but all-sided. which should not be one sided, but all-sided. His intellectual nature was to expand spheri-cally, and not in a single direction. In one direction, however, Fiente required that the scholar should apply himself directly to natura, become a creator of knowledge, and thus repay by original labors of his own the immense debt he owed to the labors of others. It was these model has the subscience of the knowledge of the knowledge of the labors of others. which enabled him to supplement the kno#-ledge derived from his own researches, so as to render his culture rounded and not one-sided. Fichte's idea is to some extent illus-trated by the Constitution and the labors of the British Association. Partly through of the British Association. Partly through mathematical and party through experimental research, physical science has of late years assumed a momentous position in the world. Both in a material and in an intellectual point of view it has produced, and it is destined to produce, immense changes, vast social amelio-rations, and vast alterations in the popular conception of the origin, rule, and governance of things. Miracles are wrought by science in the physical world, while philosophy is forsaking its ancient metaphysical channels and pursuing those opened or indicated by scientific research. This must become more and more the case as philosophic writers become more deeply imbaed with the methods of science, better acquainted with the facts which scientiac men have won, and with the great theories which they have elaborated. If you look at the face of a watch, you see the hour and minute hands, and possibly iso a second-hand, moving over the graduated hal. Why do these hands move? and why are diai. their relative motions such as they are observed to be? These questions cannot be answered without opening the watch, mastering its various parts, and ascertaining their relationship to each other. When this is done, we find that the observed motion of the hands follows of necessity from the inner mechanism of the watch when acted upon by the force invested in the spring. This motion of the hands may be called a phenomenon of art, but the case is similar with the phenomena of nature. These also have their inner mechanism, and their store of force to set that mechanism going. The ultimate problem of physical sci-ence is to reveal this mechanism, to discern this store, and to show that from the combined action of both the physical actions of which they action of both the phenomena of which they constitute the basis must of necessity flow. I thought that an attempt to give you even a brief and sketchy illustration of the manner in which scientific thinkers regard this problem would not be uninteresting to you on the present occasion: more especially as it will give me occasion to say a word or two on the tenden-cles and limits of modern science, to point out the region which men of science claim as their own, and where it is mere waste time to oppose their advance, and also to define, if possible, the bourne between this and that other region to which the questionings and yearnings of the scientific intellect are directed in vain. But here your tolerance will be needed. It was the American Emerson, I think, who said that it is hardly possible to state any truth strongly without apparent injury to some other truth. Under the circumstances, the proper course appears to be to state both truths strongly, and allow each a fair share in the formation of the resultant conviction. For truth is often of a dual character, taking the form of a magnet with two poles; and many of the differences which agitate the thinking part of mankind are which sgitate the thinking part of mankind are to be traced to the exclusiveness with which different parties affirm one half of the quality in forgetulness of the other half. But this wait-ing for the statement of the two sides of a question implies patience. It im-plies a resolution to suppress indignation if the statement of the one half should clash with our convictions, and not to suffer ourselves to be unduly elated if the half state. ourselves to be unduly elated if the hall state-ment should chime in with our views. It implies a determination to wait calmly for the statement of the whole before we pronounce judgment either in the form of acquiescence or dissent. This premised, let us enter upon our task. There been writers who affirmed that the pyramids of Egypt were the productions of mature; and in his early youth Alexander von Humboldt wrote an essay with the express object of retat-ing this notion. We now regard the pyramids as the work of men's hands, aided probably by machinery of which no record remains. We picture to ourselves the swarming workers toll-ing at those vast erections, lifting the inert stones, and, guided by the volition, the skill, and possibly at times by the whip of the architect, placing the stones in their proper positions. The blocks in this case were moved by a power external to themselves, and the final form of the pyramid expressed the thought of its human builder. Let us pass from this illustration of building power to another of a different kind. When a solution of common salt is slowly evaporated, the water which holds the salt in ution disappears, but the salt itself remains behind. At a certain stage of concentration the salt can no longer retain the liquid form; its particles, or molecules, as they are begin to deposit themselves as minute solids-se minute, indeed, as to dely all microscopic power. As evaporation continues solidification goes on, and we finally obtain, through the clustering together of innumerable molecule a finite mass of salt of a definite form. What is this form ? It sometimes seems a mimicry of the architecture of Egypt. We have little pyramids built by the sait, terrace above terrace from base to apex, forming thus a series of steps resembling those up which the Egyptian traveller is dragged by his guides. The human mind is as little disposed to look at these pyramidal salt-crystals without further ques-tion, as to look at the pyramids of Egypt without inquiring whence they came. How, then, are those salt-pyramids built up? Guided by analogy, you may suppose that, swarming among the constituent molecules of the sait, there is an invisible population, guided and coerced by some invisible master, and placing the atomic blocks in their positions. This, however, is not the scientific idea, nor do I think your good sense will accept it as a likely one. The scientific idea is, that the molecule act upon each other without the intervention of slave labor; that they attract each other and repel each other at certain definite points, and ertain definite directions; and that the pyramidal form is the result of this play of attrac-tion and repulsion. While, then, the blocks of Egypt were laid down by a power external to themselves, these molecular blocks of salt are self-posited, being fixed in their places by the forces with which they act upon each other. 1 take common salt as an illustration because it is so familiar to us all; but almost any other substance would answer my purpose equally well. In fact, throughout inorganic nature, we have this formative power, as Fichte would call it—this structural energy ready to come into play, and build the utilimate particles of matter into defininite shapes. call It is present everywhere. The ice of our winters and of our polar regions is its handiwork; and so equally are the quartz, felspar, and mich of our rocks. Our chalk beds are for the most part composed of minute shells, which are also the product of structural energy; but behind the shell, as a whole, lies the result of another and more subile formative act. These shells are built up of little crystals of calc spar, and to form these the structoral force had to deal with the intangible molecules of carbonate of lime. This tendency on the part of matter to organize itself, to grow into shape, to assume definite forms in obedience to the definite action of force, is, as I have said, all-pervading. It is in the ground on which you tread, in the water you druck, in the air you breathe. Incipient life, in fact, mauifests itself throughout the whole of what we call in-organic nature. The forms of minerals resulting from this play of forces are various, and exhibit different degrees of complexity. Man of general different degrees of complexity. Men of science avail themselves of all possible means of explor-ing this molecular architecture. For this purpose they employ in turn as agents of exploration, light, heat, magnetism, electricity, and sound. Polarized light is especially useful and powerful here. A beam of such light, when sent in among the molecules of a crystal, is asted on by them, and from this action we infer with more or less of clearness the manner in which the molecules are arranged. The difference, for example, between the inner structure of a plats | when we hate that the motion is in the other;

or sugar candy is thus sirkingly revealed. These differences may be made to display them-relves in phenomena of color of great splendor. the play of molecular force being so regulated as to remove certain of the colored consultaents of white and light, and to leave others with increased intensity behind. And now let us pass from what we are accustomed to regard as a dead mineral to a hving grain of regard as a dead mineral to a living gran of corn. When it is examined by polarized light, chromatic phenomena similar to those noticed in crystals are ob erved. And why? Be-cause the architecture of the grain resem-bles in some degree the architecture of the crystal. In the corn the molecules are also set in definite positions, from which they not more the last. Just what has built because act upon the light. But what has built together the molecules of the corn ? I have already said regarding crystalline architecture that you may, if you please, consider the atoms and molecules to be placed in position by a power external to themselves. The same hypothesis is open to you new. But if in the case of crystals you have rejected this notion of an external archi-tect, I think you are bound to reject it now, and to conclude that the molecules of the corn are relf-posited by the forces with which they act upon each other. It would be poor philo-sophy to invoke an external agent in the one case, and to reject it in the other. Instead of cutting our grain of corn into thin slices and subjecting it to the action of polarized light, let us place it in the earth and subject it to a certain degree of warmth. In other words, let the molecules, both of the cora at d of the surrounding earth, be kept in a state of agitation; for warmth, as most of you know, is, in the eye of science, tremulous molecular motion. Under these circumstances, the grain and the substances which surround it interact, and a molecular architecture is the result of this interaction. A bud is formed; this bud reaches the surface, where it is exposed to the sun's rays, which are also to be regarded as a kind of vibratory motion. And as the common motion of heat with which the grain and the substances surrounding it were first endowed, enabled the grain and these substances to coalesce, so the specific motion of the sun's rays now enables the green bud to feed upon the carbonic acid and the aqueous vapor of the air, appropriating those constituents of both for which the blade has an elective attraction, and permitting the other constituent to resume place in the air. Thus, forces are active at the root, forces are active in the blade, the matter of the earth and the matter of the atmosphere are drawn towards the plant, and the plant augments in size. We have in succession the bud, the stalk, the ear, the full corn in the ear. For the forces here at play act in a cycle, which is completed in the produc-tion of grains similar to that with which the process began. Now, there is nothing in this process which necessarily eludes the power of mind as we know it. An intellect the same in kind as our own would, if only sufficiently ex-panded, be able to follow the whole process from beginning to end. No entirely new intel-lectual faculty would be needed for this pur-The duly expanded mind would see in pose. the process and its consummation an instance of the play of molecular force. It would see every molecule placed in its position by the spe cific attractions and repulsions exerted between it and other molecules. Nay, given the grain and its environment an intellect the same in kind as our own, but sufficiently expanded, might trace out a priori every step of the pro-cess, and by the application of mechanical principles would be able to demonstrate that the cycle of actions must end, as it is seen to end, in the reproduction of forms like that with which the operation began. A similar necessity rules here to that which rules the planets in rules here to that which rules the planets in their circuits round the sun. You will notice that I am stating my truth strongly, as at the beginning we agreed it should be stated. But I must go still further, and affirm that in the eye of science the animal body is just as much the product of molecular force as the stalk and ear corp, or as the crystal or salt of sugar. Many of its parts are obviously mechanical. Take the human heart, for example, with its ex-quisite system of valves, or take the eye or the haud. Animal heat, moreover, is the same in bind as the heat of a far hains produced by the kind as the heat of a fire, being produced by the same chemical process. Animal motion, too, is as directly derived from the food of the animal, as the motion of Trevethick's walk-ing engine from the fuel in its furnace. As regards matter, the animal body creates nothing; as regards force, it creates nothing. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? All that has been said regarding the plant may be restated, with regard to the animal. Every particle that enters into the composition of a muscle, a nerve, or a bone, has been placed in its position by molecular force. And unless the existence of law in these matters be denied, and the element of caprice intro-duced, we must conclude that, given the rela-tion of any molecule of the body to its environment, its position in the body might be predicted. Our difficulty is not with the quality of the problem, but with its complexity; and this difficulty might be met by the simple expansion of the faculties which man now possesses. Given this expansion, and given the necessary molecular data, and the chick might be deduced as rigorously and as logically from the egg as the existence of Neptune was deduced from the disturbances of Uranus, or as conical refraction was deduced from the undulatory theory of light. You see I am not mincing matters, but avowing nakedly what many scientific thinkers more or less distinctively believe. The forma-tion of a crystal, a plant, or an animal is in their eyes a purely mechanical problem. which differs from the problems of ordinary mechanics in the smallness of the masses and the complexity of the processes involved. Here you have one-half of our dual truth. Let us now glance at the other half. Associated with this wonderful mechanism of the animal body we have phenomena no less certain than those of physics, but between which and the mechanism we discern no necessary connection. A man, for example, can say, I feel, I think, I love; but how does consciousness infuse itself into the problem? The human brain is said to be the organ of thought and feeling; when we are hurt the brain feels it, when we ponder it is the brain that thinks, when our passions or affections are excited it is through the instrumentality of the brain. Let us endeavor to be a little more precise here. I hardly imagine that any profound scientific thinker, who has reflected upon the subject, exists who would not admit the extreme probability of the hypothesis, that for every fact of consciousness, whether in the domain of sense, of thought, or of emotion, a certain definite molecular condition is set up in the brain; that this relation of physics to conscious ness is invariable: so that, given the state of the brain, the corresponding thought or feeling might be inferred; or given the thought or teeling, the corresponding state of the brain might be inferred. But how inferred? It is at bottom not a case of logical interence at all, but of empirical association. You may reply that many of the inferences of science are of this character; the inference, for example, that an electric current of a given direction will deflect a magnetic needle in a definite way; but the cases differ in this, that the passage from the current to the needle, if not demonstrable, is thinkable, and that we entertain no doubt as to the final mechanical solution of the problem; but the passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a dednite thought, and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously, we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any radiment of the organ, which would enable us to pass by a process of reasoning from the one phenomenon to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why. Were our minds and senses so expanded, strengtheaed, and illuminated as to enable us to see and feel the very molecules of the brain; were we capable of following all their motions, all their groupings, all their electric discharges, if such there be, and were we intimately acquainted with the corresponding states of thought and feeling, we should be as far as ever from the solution of the problem, "How are these physical processes connected with the facts of consciousness?" The chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain intellectually impossible. Let the consciousness of love, for example, be associated with a right-handed spiral motion of the molecules of the brain, and the consciousness of hate with a left-handed spiral motion. We should then know when we love that the motion is in one direction, and

but the "why ?" would still remain unanswered. In affirming that the growth of the body is mechanical, and that thought, as exercised by ns, has its correlative in the physics of the brain, I think the position of the "materialist" is stated as far as that position is a tenable one. I think the materialist will be able finally to maintain this position against all attacks; but I do not think, as the human mind is at present constituted, that he can pass beyowd it. I do not think he is entitled to say, that his molecu-lar groupings and his molecular motions explain everything. In reality, they explain nothing. The utmost he can affirm is the association of two classes of phenomena, of whose real bond of union he is in absolute ignorance. The problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages. Phosphorus s known to enter into the composition of the human brain, and a courageous writer has exclaimed, in his trenchant German, "Ohne Phos-phor kein Gedanke." That may or may not be the case; but even if we knew it to be the case, the knowledge would not lighten our darkness. On both sides of the zone here assigned to the ma-terialist he is equally helpless. If you ask him whence is this 'matter" of which we have been discoursing, who or what divided it into mole cules, who or what impressed upon them this necessity of running into organic forms, he has no answer. Science also is mute in reply to these questions. But if the materialist is coufounded, and science rendered dumb, who elso is entitled to inswer? To whom has the secret been revealed. Let us lower our heads and acknowledge our ignorance, one and all. Perhaps the mystery may resolve itself into knowledge at some future day. The process of things upon this earth has been one of amelioration. It is a long way from the Iguanadon and his contemporaries to the President and members of the British Association. And whether we regard the improvemen from the scientific or from the theological point of view-as the result of progressive develop-ment, or as the result of successive exhibitions of creative energy-neither view entities us to assume that a man's present faculties end th series; that the process of amelioration stops at him. A time may therefore come when this ultra scientific region by which we are now enfolded, may offer itself to terrestrial, if not to human investigation. Two-thirds of the rays emitted the sun fail to arouse in the eye the sense of vision. The rays exist, but the visual organ requisite for their translation into light does not exist. And so from this region of darkness and mystery which surrounds us, rays may now be darting which require but the development of the proper intellectual organs to translate them into knowledge as far surpassing ours as ours does that of the wallowing reptiles which once held possession of this planet. Meanwhile the mystery is not without its uses. It certainly may be made a power in the human soul; but it is a power which has feeling, not knowledge for its base. It may be, and will be, and we hope is, turned to account, both in steadying and strengthening the intellect, and in rescaling man from that littleness to which. in the struggle for existence, or for precedence in the world, he is continually prone. **RELIEF ASSOCIATION.** OTI C OFFICE OF THE MANHATTAN CO-OPE. RATIVE BELIEF ASSOCIATION. No. 432 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

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