series of phenomena may here be studied, all more or less directly resulting from the subtle influence of the direction of the attention to the organs of the body.

We cannot doubt that Mr. Page is justified in insisting upon the enormous influence exerted by mere mental shock in the first instance, and by concentration of the mind, subsequently, upon motor and sensory phenomena, in order to strengthen his leading contention that there is no proof that the concussion consequent upon physical shock to the spine without local injury will lead to organic changes in the cord and its membranes. Mr. Page's utilization of the recorded facts of the influence of the mind upon the body, is an illustration of the important bearing and the practical utility of researches in this direction—researches which at first sight might seem to possess only a speculative interest, whereas their far-reaching nature can hardly be exaggerated.

It would be entirely foreign to our purpose in thus briefly noticing Mr. Page's work, to enter into the consideration of the other bearings of the main question discussed by him, and upon which his conclusion so widely differs from that of a well-known surgeon of the present day. Our object is simply to draw the attention of our readers to the psychological aspects of a publication they might overlook, and which they may study with advantage in the direction indicated.

A valuable tabular analysis of 243 cases is appended to the work.

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*The Alternative*: *A Study in Psychology*.—Macmillan, 1882.

This is certainly a curious and a remarkable book. On the title page the anonymous author inscribes Hamlet's bitter text, "We fools of nature." The preface teems with terse scorn of all philosophies, old and new, and claims that the writer has for the first time not only justified what he calls "the scientific method" against the riotous excesses of induction, but that he has taught mankind a new gospel that has more than all the moral merits of the old "without its supernaturalism and mysticism." And throughout there runs a heroic self-confidence, cropping out not merely in terminology but in the whole tenor of the book, which proclaims to this sceptical generation that it has to do with a prophet.

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The first question that will occur to everyone is, what *is* the "Alternative?" Here it is, in the author's own words: "Either puppet, dupe, and victim of unconscious forces, or self-denying conduct for the achievement of wisdom." The antithesis is not quite grammatical, and at the first glance is not very intelligible either. But it carries a very important meaning, which every page of the book is intended to enforce by demonstration and illustration in every conceivable way. The point is developed in the Third Book; for the first consists of *Definitions* demanded by a new classification of mental events and faculties—not the less new that the classes are denoted by familiar names; and the second treats of *Reasoning*. This Third Book, then, is to establish first of all the existence of "unconscious mental event," and, indeed, of an "unconscious part of the mind," which turns out to be "the encephalon, &c." The author begs us to observe that unconscious cerebration and such things, as far as has been hitherto shown, might have been only unconscious conditions of mental events. Indeed, he roundly rates Leibnitz and even Professor Bain for not considering these phenomena as really "mental" at all; whereas he is most positive upon that. But it would hardly seem a very vital difference. The main point is the further proof that in the history of humanity till now, man has been the dupe, puppet, &c., of this "unconscious part of himself."

As might be expected, then, the author's first concern is the careful explanation and analysis of "consciousness." It would be futile to follow him through a long series of curiously worded subtleties, which merely lead up to the re-affirmation of the importance of "latent forms of consciousness." *Inter alia,* he gives us a new definition of "consciousness," whereby it includes not only "discernment-connected-with-apperception," but also "discernment-unconnected-with-apperception." What the latter, the *latent* division, means is illustrated by sundry examples, of which one is so near akin to madness that as the author relates it of himself, it will be wise to quote it in full, in his own odd English:—

"The following mental event was given to the writer as having occurred while he was in a swoon: A discernment void of self-consciousness seemed to have for object a figure consisting of several luminous, variously-coloured concentric rings, the largest about twelve feet in diameter. Time, space, and the figure seemed to comprise all being. There

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was no spectator. After a while an impersonal wonder contemplating the figure obtained, and then after a while 'I' was suddenly annexed to the wonder as subject to attribute: for a moment I was aware of myself as gazing at the figure, and with the vanishing of the figure I recovered."

The importance or interest of the book, however, hardly lies in the psychology of which this is a specimen. The author does in reality good service by directing attention pointedly to the immense proportion of our acts which are dominated by forces and processes independent of consciousness. But this has been insisted upon before. Neither will the book survive because of the logical discussion of the nature of knowledge, which, indeed, is sometimes very mystical and strange. Take this refutation of Kant: "Following Leibnitz, he asserts, as though it were a self-evident truth, that what all the world understands by the term experience, does not give cognisance of the non-contingent, of what could *not* be. He thereby implies, or seems to imply, that it is not competent to a latent encephalic event, consequent to a tactile impression, to cause a discernment of both a solid and a non-contingent void." This imposing statement leads up to a demonstration of the error of Kant's theory, by which Space is an *a priori* framework into which the *a posteriori* data of extended objects fall. But although the author is at most elaborate pains to define all his terms as he goes along, and frequently invents a new word or rebaptizes an old one to serve his turn, yet he cannot escape a constant confusion of ideas. In truth, this craze for new terms and independent definitions, which seems to beset each new psychologist of our day, is a fatal snare. For the meaning of the terms of our common mental experience, vague as these are to the common man, is not a thing that can be altered at will. "Conscious" *has* a true meaning, which by clear insight and by just analysis of experience we may make definite. So has perception, or will, or sensation. But to devise, for the elucidation of a new hypothesis, some original definition and then make an old and innocent word fast to it, and go gaily on through endless arguments and theories, always using, or professing to use, this well-known common term as meaning not itself but our new-fangled definition, is only to deepen the darkness. You cannot in reality keep on consistently using a word which has its own hereditary associations in some arbitrary sense of your own. The old associations creep in in spite of you—the more surely that

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your own new definition must always be more or less mixed up with the ordinary meaning to begin with. If a new philosopher *must* have new terms to work out his theories by, let him make up his definitions and then put $x$ and $y$ for them. But do not let him say that "*mind* denotes a concrete, or a sum of concretes, that either is or involves what lacks nothing essential to a subject of consciousness," and then suppose that whenever he speaks of "mind" throughout 400 pages his readers will understand not mind but "a concrete or sum of concretes that either is or involves, &c." Psychology is not algebra: for while the latter deals only with the analysis of a simple relation—that of space or number—the former touches *all* the complex and interrelated problems that lie within the touch of human experience. But if a psychologist *will* commit the mistake of arguing on an algebraic system, at least let him take for his counters symbols that are not already saturated with vague and varying import.

If the reader will penetrate, however, behind the curious veil of twisted language, he will find that the tenor of this part of the book is an interesting attempt to disprove the "positivist" denial of the "ego" as "a concrete and durable subject," and of Cause as Power, and Life as "a species of power—a dynamic quality." "Blazoning the sovereignty of experience," he complains "positivism behaves towards it as a sort of Mayor of the Palace, discarding some of its most important data." His rehabilitation of the "ego" is so complicated by the pervading question of latent mental events that an attempt to disentangle it here would lead this notice to impossible lengths. But the argument as to *cause* is worth noting, for it brings out an element in the problem too apt to be ignored by the scientific school who take Hume's half-truths for gospel. The prophet of "The Alternative" admits that he cannot disentangle the idea of power from the many confusions that surround it; but he thinks it is "an embryo which culture is in process of maturing." His argument is, that to say with Mill that "cause is the sum of the conditions" is a meaningless phrase—for in that case time and space, and, indeed, any and all the infinitude of events simultaneous with or antecedent to a given event, are included in its "cause." Everything is the cause of everything else. And this, in a sense, is true. Freewill apart, it is accurate to say that no natural phenomenon would be what it is, if any of the infinite

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series of phenomena that have been, or that simultaneously are, could be changed or taken away. But we make a distinction between certain of these conditions which are "causes" in a special sense, and others which are "occasions" or "accessories." Substitute twine for the wire of an electric battery, and the current ceases. There is an aptitude in the wire which might be called "a dynamic condition." Or, to take a better example, we start at a shadow: the shadow is an essential condition, but it is not a "dynamic" one. It was this conception of an element of "power" of some sort, inherent in "cause," that Hume overthrew, and that Hume's opponents wished to use as a basis for the conception of "will" as itself an "uncaused cause," a power to bring into being a fact or state which all the antecedents, minus my volition, would be powerless to create.

On the question of volition, which, of course, is the main point of the book, the author takes decided ground; and his view is presented, as usual, under the bold form of a series of definitions. "*Intention* is a bent of the mind to act according to a present guiding idea," but *choice* is "an intentional act that consists of two acts—first, study of two opposite motives intent upon a preference of one of them—second, a preference." The study is an effect of predetermining causes, the preference is not; indeed, "the idea of choice supposes that the involved preference is not predetermined, and is uncaused. He who affirms that an event presupposes a cause, denies the possibility of choice."

All this may seem very arbitrary, and it is. But the point he wishes to lead up to is worth notice. It is that "*the greater part of perceptible human intentional actions are unoptional.*" For, as he assumes, it is essential to choice, or volition, properly so-called, that the mind should refer to what he is pleased to call "a binary of opposite motives"—a motive to do and a motive to forbear from doing. Obviously, it is true that no such "practical alternative" is in question in the vast majority of human acts. But he insists that the bulk of human *intentions* also are wanting in the same character; and for all "intentions or intentional actions unconnected with a practical alternative," he adapts the misleading term *Instinct*. This is a good instance of the vice of terminology commented on just now—for instinct has a scientific meaning of its own, which, whether it be hard to define or not, cannot be swept away by an arbitrary definition invented



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by a theorist. And, indeed, it is hard to see how much or how little he proposes to include in his new class. The examples he vouchsafes are meagre, *e.g.*, "quasi-attention in spite of efforts to undo it," or "anger breaking from control of a man interested and strongly minded to dissemble." It is to be regretted that he did not spend more pains over the new classification, for it is worth attending to. Habit, instinct, and their allied conditions, are problems which students of mind, and specially of mental pathology, have never sufficiently studied. We all see that there are thousands of acts, including many of the highest importance, which we do at first only by a distinct volitional effort or assent, but which in time become all but automatic. And yet we do not really take them to be unintentional, or in any real sense mechanical. When a choleric man, who has given the rein to his temper, seems to be carried off his feet by a trivial annoyance, he knows, and we know, that he could stop himself if he chose, and we hold him fully responsible for his explosion. But, of course, the "habit" of breaking out in that or any other form of passion has made acquiescence in any new temptation easier, and resistance more difficult. And the point at which the habit may merge in a moral madness and become an uncontrollable necessity is *apparently*, in each man's case, a question only of degree. Is it *really* so? Is moral impotence a species of bad habit? If that were proved by mental science, it might be an interesting question for the theologians to consider whether it did not provide a possible theory of hell.

But we are deserting our author. He brings us next to the startling proposition, which is in a way the key of his whole position, that "Will" has very little to do with the affairs of life. For the most part, the strongest motive prevails—"propensity" does the ordinary business of the world. Thus is "our mind made up for us." Only at rare intervals does moral *choice* come in, but these occasions are the valuable part of human conduct. It is when Wisdom demands resistance to propensity that Will has its opportunity. That opportunity is the opening for the introduction of the improved form of Christianity which this anonymous prophet has discovered—a revision in which, "Wisdom and the Christian spirit are identical," and the ideas of reverence, godliness, &c., are seen to be only "the scaffolding of the temple." It would be too long, and it would be out of place, to sketch the extraordinary series of moral disquisitions, for

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the most part deeply interesting, by which this singular writer developes his new ethical plan. St. Paul, the author of the "Imitation of Christ," Hume, the Puritans, and many other ethical authorities not commonly found in company, are all drawn in; and if the total result is a little hazy, it is at least to be commended as a serious attempt to tackle those moral problems which the prevalence of shallow utilitarian shibboleths has lately tended to put out of sight. The book ends with an odd abruptness. He has intimated that there are difficulties in *proving* the freedom of the Will. But instead of refuting statistical and other objections, he contents himself with saying that even if it were apparently drawn into doubt, we must rescue ourselves at all costs from the moral paralysis which that involves. In the last resort, we are therefore to take refuge in an "*arbitrium*" a voluntary determination to act as if free-will were proved, whether we think so or not—a *decree*, in fact, that Will exists!! Having done this, a man may "by ordinate self-denial (in the way of volitional checks upon propensity) improve his instincts, and make probable the possibility of man becoming Christ-like." And then afterwards we have an elaborate diagnosis of the really Christ-like character, and even a description of the "Summum bonum." But suddenly, when we arrive at the last chapter, and, finding it duly headed "Man, Puppet, Dupe, and Victim of Unconscious Force," expect a final blaze of luminous teaching on the relation of the unconscious to the development of humanity, he stops in two rambling pages and leaves us to draw the moral of the book ourselves.

Probably, the moral which most of our readers will draw, if they read this psychological curiosity, will be that the author is somewhat eccentric at the least. But there are among his disordered paragraphs not a few sound ideas. An eccentric mind is of use somewhat as a wit is—because it is struck by associations and connections of ideas which do not suggest themselves to the too sane minds that work along the highways of knowledge. The author of "The Alternative" will do such service to the limited number who will be at the pains to follow him. The philosophy of the unconscious, if it has been too popular in Germany, has not been prominent enough in English psychology; and it is a fruitful field. The distinction between propensity and will, and the extent to which, by a kind of moral laziness, "our minds are made up for us" perpetually, are subjects that involve infinite

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issues. Therefore, with all its obvious faults and follies, we welcome this book; and we venture to hope that it is one among many signs that the tyranny of the lately dominant English school of psychology is giving place to independent thinking, even though that be, as it must be in the beginning, a little wild and unprepared. It is high time that we produced a new philosopher.

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*Die Alcoholischen Geisteskrankheiten im Basler Irrenhause, &c. Vom damaligen Assistentarzte.* Von WILHELM VON SPEYR. 1882.

This dissertation consists of a valuable collection of actual cases, well observed and thoughtfully classified. Dr. W. von Speyr, possessing, as he does, a critical mind and a fine perception of differences, approaches the subject of which he treats with the mental qualities so requisite for psychological study. His treatise is dedicated to his teacher and physician-in-chief, the well-known and esteemed Professor Wille, of whom he has proved himself to be an apt pupil and loyal disciple.

Dr. W. von Speyr, after briefly discussing ætiological classifications of insanity, groups together the following specific alcoholic psychoses:—

I. Pathological intoxication (Alcoholismus Acutus.) II. Alcoholic Insanity. (*a*) Acute. (*b*) Chronic. III. Delirium Tremens. IV. Chronic Alcoholism.

Of the first, the delirious and maniacal attack resulting from the abuse of alcohol, and developing itself not very suddenly and completely, a typical example is given, viz., that of

A man who, having fallen down in the street, was admitted into the Basle asylum. He had been unconscious, and violently convulsed, and had bitten his tongue. The pupils were dilated and insensible, the eyes red and dull, the body and limbs being still frequently convulsed. Although he could not stand alone he avoided everyone; he cried out loudly when the attempt was made to support his head. He stammered out a few words, and had painful visual and auditory hallucinations. A warm bath and cold affusion brought him round so far as to be able to answer questions shouted into his ear; after which he slept the whole night. In the morning he was himself, and related that when drunk he stumbled against some one in the street and fell

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