

In order to reconcile religion and science, two things, at any rate, would appear to be needful. Science must moderate its mechanicalism, which is no essential attribute of it, but merely a coloring which it naturally acquired during the period from Galileo to Darwin, when mechanics and allied branches of physics were the chief subjects of thought, ~~for~~ against mechanicalism, many great biologists have been all along are today pleading for the admission of genuine spontaneity. Religion, on the other hand, must moderate its infallibilism, which it only wants in a moral, and practical sense, and which, ~~is~~ ^{taken} absolutely and mathematically, is merely a vestige of the low ~~state~~ 'of culture' of the generations that constructed its symbols.

The advisableness of making any special efforts of reconcile religion and science has been called in question in these columns, on the ground that an inquiry which is to have a foregone conclusion could not be a sincere one. Every living man who was really

capable of seeing vividly both sides of the question here,
in our day, had his mind torn asunder by the
lamentable discrepancy between religion and science.
How many men have said to themselves scientific expe-
rience and scientific methods make it silly to believe
in anything but matter and motion, ~~yet our religions~~
- and we must candidly acknowledge it; yet our
personal religious experiences bring us into the
presence of our Father and our Redeemer, - we do
fervently believe that, too. The two things are in flat
contradiction: so there must be some mistake about
one, or other, or both. We hope and trust some adjust-
ment between them may be accomplished; but what the
nature of it may be we cannot foresee; so it only
remains to wait and courageously expect that both
views ~~may~~ ^{will} be found to be substantially correct when
both have been duly corrected. That was really a logical
position. But there are ~~few~~ ^{so} few minds that have the
patience to ^{so} stay hovering between heaven and earth,
for long years. The ordinary use of reason is to decide
our conduct, and to a practical man ~~an~~ indecision
soon becomes intolerable. ~~But~~ He asks: why, at any rate,

"strain all our efforts to find out ~~the truth?~~" By all ^{3.}
means, as soon as we can see any way of attaining
that end. But this is not a special question to be
settled by a special investigation. It is a general
question which depends upon the general spirit,
and method, and philosophy of science on the one
hand and of religion on the other; and its solution
can only come by the general development of
the scientific and religious thought. In this devel-
opment, each must adhere to the continuity of its
own traditions (which gradually modify them)
and attend exclusively to its own interests, or
else the growth will be unhealthy and the fruits
unsound. Still, if we ~~wish to~~ wish to do all the little
that in us lies to bring about the reconciliation, it
would seem that we ought to direct our inquiries
to the limits of mechanicalism, on the one hand, and
to the limits of infallibility, on the other.

There is such a thing as mechanical infallibilism
Bücher's Kraft and Stoff affords an example, of what we

mean. ~~There is not a more in~~ Scientific workers⁷
never insist on anything as infallibly certain. There
is not a more marked characteristic of the genuine
investigator than his perfect readiness to entertain
any question which there is any possibility of
settling by experiments. In fact, "science" is an unfor-
tunate designation for that department of living
civilization. Science is defined as a body of
truth. Knowledge. But it is not half so much
knowledge, as ~~is~~ inquiry, - the active striving to
know which implies we don't know already, -
that makes the scientific man. ~~Before~~ Before the
present jargon came in, in our childhood, physics
was called Natural Philosophy; and philo-sophy,
or wanting to know much better, ^{than science} describes the
real business the physicist is about. But people
who learn the results of natural philosophy out
of books are very fond of being called "scientists",
and it is a good name for them. They do not
want to know, because they are well-sure already,
The law of the conservation of energy, the ^{experimental} verifications

of which, except in a few simple cases, ~~each~~ no
very high degree of precision, ~~and~~ which in the
cases of muscular work and brain activity has
little but analogy to support it, ~~and~~ which is
~~as~~ far less well established than the three laws of
motion, is not only often treated by these men as
if it were more ~~as~~ secure than the law of action
and reaction, but as if it were the very bedrock
of truth, not to be questioned in its very extremest
applications. This may be called ~~a~~ mechanical
infallibilism. ^{In view of} ~~its~~ carrying both mechani-
calism and infallibilism to their furthest, it would
seem to be as poor a ground as could be chosen
for a reconciliation of religion and science; Never-
theless, with the addition of a sham god, that is not
a living thing, far less ^{any way} analogous to a person, an
"religion of science" has been proposed. Its sectaries
have even issued their "catechism" and "horilities", -
dogmatic enough and lethargic enough to be the
real thing. These people are thoroughly convinced, -
indeed, they are far more scientific than the natural
philosophers, and carry into their prophecies far more

But what ~~more~~ ^{sh} would you say if I were to tell you that there are several well-established facts in different branches of physics, that no ^{other} theory has been able ~~hitherto~~ as yet to explain, which are ~~never~~ ^{however} perfectly explained by supposing that those two balls really would recede if set in motion as we have supposed; and ~~if~~ what if I were to add that ^{from} ~~the~~ theory that supposition a fact has been deduced not known to be true when the deduction was made, but which observation has since ^{proved} and that several other facts ~~had been made~~ ^{as to the fact} ~~had been predicted~~ and which of ~~which~~ to test the truth of which it would be requisite to make certain experiments? This, of course, is not a proper place to announce scientific discoveries. They should be laid before a body competent to criticize them. But surely if I were to tell you that my ~~own~~ investigations had reached that point, you would say: By all means try those experiments which are to decide whether these predictions are correct. (Back to last page)