

sophically, it synthesized the Carlylean image of Nature which had profoundly influenced Huxley, Tyndall and G. H. Lewes, the Baconian view of scientific method in unveiling natural uniformity and the symbolic separation of matter from theology. As it gently lifted science from threadbare controversies with religion, it offered the hope of fuller philosophical insight into the process of creation. Though it stressed the "natural world" of the naturalist, the word also carried a message of unity in investigation, of shared understanding between all different branches of natural (and potentially social) science. Its effect was exhilarating. As J. J. Sylvester wrote⁶:

What a glorious title, *Nature*, a veritable stroke of genius to have hit upon. It is more than a Cosmos, more than universe. It includes the seen as well as the unseen, the possible as well as the actual, Nature and Nature's God, mind and matter. I am lost in admiration of the effulgent blaze of the ideas it calls forth.

Its immediate application may have arisen from the first meeting of the little known but highly important Metaphysical Society in April 1869. The society, of twenty-six original members, was formed to confront men of science with men of faith, to discover what philosophical reconciliation was possible between religion and the principle of uniform, evolving Nature. The scientific part of the society included Huxley, Tyndall, Pritchard, Lubbock and Carpenter—all Macmillan's men and Lockyer's friends. The society, however, also included R. H. Hutton, editor of the *Spectator*, James Knowles, editor of the *Contemporary* (and later the *Nineteenth Century*), and Wilfred Ward, editor of the *Dublin Review*. It must have been all too clear to the scientific men that they had no authoritative medium of opinion in which they could present a united front. The chance of a new journal by Macmillan, edited by a young, successful and (so far) uncontroversial man, was too good to miss. At the first meeting of the society in April 1869, Tennyson's new poem "The Higher Pantheism" was read. Tennyson had been on the continent recovering from illness and depression and had turned to Wordsworth. In some sense his strange abstract poem was a reconciliatory reply to the fear, despair and the materialism he saw in Tyndall and revealed in *Lucretius*, published in 1868. Whatever may be the mysteries of matter there was promise of reconciliation⁷:

God is law, say the wise; O Soul, and let us rejoice,
For if He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.

Where to look for the new natural theology—the "higher pantheism"? Perhaps to Wordsworth⁸:

. . . To the solid ground
Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye;
Convinced that there, there only, she can lay
Secure foundations. . . .

These lines from the revised version of an obscure sonnet became the new journal's motto⁹. Significantly, in the journal, the capitalization of "nature" and "mind" are interchanged and remain thus until 1920. It is unlikely that this reflects a mere typographical error. A mast-head was chosen, perhaps under Huxley's or Tyndall's influence, with a cosmical representation of the Earth in the context of the universe—a striking and unique reflexion of *natur-*

philosophie, even of Goethe, in British scientific thought, and perhaps also a wishful plan for the journal's distribution.

On November 3, Macmillan innocently betrayed to James Maclehorse the thrill of first night anticipations⁹:

Nature is to be published in London at 7.30. . . . Lockyer was preemptory that our publication day should indicate the point to which our information is brought up. The fallacy of a Saturday publication with a Thursday actual information he doesn't think right. . . . We start with 10 pages of advertisement. . . . I think we will look nice.

¹ *Macmillan Archives*, 17, Alexander Macmillan to Henry Roseoe, September 14, 1869.

² Morgan, Charles, *The House of Macmillan*, 84 (London, 1943).

³ Smithsonian MSS. 46283, Lockyer for Macmillan to Director, Smithsonian, August 2, 1869.

⁴ Graves, Charles, *Life and Letters of Alexander Macmillan*, 299, Macmillan to Thomson, July 20, 1869 (London, 1910).

⁵ *Lockyer Papers*, Hooker to Macmillan, July 22, 1869.

⁶ Quoted in Lockyer, T. Mary, and Lockyer, Winifred L., *Life and Work of Sir Norman Lockyer*, 48 (London, 1928).

⁷ *The Works of Alfred, Lord Tennyson*, 239 (London, 1902).

⁸ Wordsworth, W., *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, 21, 5-8 (London, 1827).

⁹ Graves, Charles, *Life and Letters of Alexander Macmillan*, 302, Macmillan to Maclehorse, November 3, 1869 (London, 1910).

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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY

WE have so often maintained in these columns that Science cannot now be propelled on its onward course by the efforts of unassisted individuals only, and that the State must itself, sooner or later, put its shoulder vigorously to the wheel, that there is some danger lest we should be thought to undervalue the force of private enterprise. We, on the contrary, attach very high importance to such enterprise, which exists amongst us in England more abundantly than perhaps in any other country in the world. It exists in two forms—in that of detached individual effort, and in that of voluntarily associated bodies, the Scientific Societies. To the latter only we propose now to address ourselves.

The system of internal government by which the affairs of a body like this are regulated becomes a matter of the deepest moment, not only to the Society, but to the nation and to civilisation itself.

The governing body, the Council, is composed of a President, five Vice-presidents, and twelve ordinary members. These are all honorary posts. Two ordinary Secretaries and one Foreign Secretary, members of the Council with votes, are paid, the first two 300*l.*, and the last 100*l.* per annum, out of the funds of the Society. There is also a Treasurer, a member of Council, but unpaid. An Assistant Secretary and a Librarian, not members of the Council, and of course both salaried, perform all the necessary routine duties.

There is a wide-spread feeling that this form of government admits of improvement, and as the actual occupants of the posts in which an alteration is thought desirable stand deservedly very high in the estimation, not of the scientific world only, but in that of the community generally, the reform of which we are about to speak can fortunately now be discussed without personality, and without any fear of the acrimony to which, under less auspicious circumstances, such a discussion would inevitably lead.

⁹ The original text, published in 1823, does not contain these lines. The influences which brought Wordsworth to make the revision are surely most intriguing. I thank Professor John Hollander for his illumination of this point.