

Are Physical and Spiritual Energies Identical



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Are Physical and Spiritual Energy Identical?

by Mrs. Mary Parmele - circa 1890

Whether [science](#) turns its glass out into the immensities of [space](#), or in toward the equally fathomless abysses of the minute, there seems no bounds to the possibilities of discovery regarding the processes of nature. Yet each and every pathway leads at least to impenetrable mystery.

What use to know of the ultimate [molecule](#) and [atom](#), if we are never to learn what endows it with [life](#). What is [life](#)? What is [death](#)? What is pain? What is [color](#)? Perfume? What is there in a [minor chord](#) to make one weep? Thousands of hungry eyes are peering into the dark in search of clues to these encircling mysteries. But a little rift has appeared in the veil, through which some think they can see a great and illuminating truth. This [truth](#) is called [sympathetic vibration](#).

A new era dawned, we passed under a new scientific dispensation when [heat](#) and [light](#) were pronounced simply modes of [motion](#), and when the hitherto solid earth was found to be only seemingly so, while in reality it is a congeries of whirling atoms. Under this new dispensation the door hiding those two baffling mysteries, [matter](#) and [force](#), begins to yield. The former has surrendered its secrets down to the ultimate [atom](#), and now we are told that [energy](#), that inscrutable thing which makes [matter](#) its slave and plaything, is simply a mode of [motion](#) in the [atom](#).

The initial impulse is still as remote as ever. We have not yet discovered on what our [tortoise](#) stands. What imparted the first movement to the [atom](#), may be an ever receding mystery; but an enormous advance has been made upon the outlying territory. [Science](#) has gone one generation farther back in the pedigree of [energy](#); for the [law of sympathetic vibration](#) must be the Law of Laws.

We are told that what we have known as [sound](#), [heat](#) and [light](#) are simply ascending stages of increasing rates of [velocity](#), in atmospheric or [etheric](#) atoms. Between sixteen a second and thirty-eight thousand a second these vibrations are appreciable by the human ear, and we call them [sound](#). As the rate of [velocity](#) increases these are lost in [silence](#), and finally reappear to the sense as [heat](#). Then, after they are further accelerated, the optic nerve begins to tremble at their approach, and we call them [light](#). Nor can we suppose this to be a final limit, but must believe that, accelerated to still higher [velocity](#), they may reach us in some new form, which to man's perception, at least, is not [sound](#), nor [heat](#), nor yet [light](#), and which, perhaps, we call [electricity](#).

But this protean thing, it will be observed, is one and the same throughout. It is [energy](#), evolved into higher and higher forms, under the action of the law of vibration. Nor can we stop here. What right have we to suppose that the stage bounded by our perception is final? Much more easy is it to believe that the process goes on, and forces are developed as far beyond [electricity](#) as [electricity](#) is beyond our starting point, sixteen vibrations a

second; and so we are inevitably led to a conception of potential energies lying all around us, sufficient to hold the stars in their courses, or to tear them from their orbits.

Thus far we are standing on solid scientific ground. He who doubts this ascending ladder of [energy](#), arrays himself against so high an authority as [Prof. Tyndall](#). But we are going to venture soon upon a region where the footing is not so secure; and perhaps may be properly rebuked for the folly of attempting to map out the highways and byways in cloudland.

There is an unwritten law that [science](#) is for the scientific. This article is a protest against this law. The writer is speaking for the unlearned, "of whom she is chief," and she maintains that there can be no exclusive ownership in established scientific truths; which may, and should, be used as stepping stones by anyone, where they seem to lead to higher inclusive truths.

The average man of [science](#) is intent upon his own particular rung, and his [soul](#) is little vexed with wondering where the ladder leads. Scientific imagination is not always the companion of the [microscope](#) nor of the crucible. But Newton's discovery would have been a small affair without the [genius](#) to see its cosmical application. So there is a stage in the unfolding of natural [truth](#) when the poet, with his wings, can do more than the delver with his pick-axe. He does not discover, he divines. Shakespeare knew nothing of "vibratory physics," nor of "ultra-musical silence;" but two hundred and fifty years ago he said:

"There's not the smallest orb, which thou beholdest,
But in its [motion](#) like an [angel](#) sings,
still querying to the young-eyed [cherubim](#).
Such [harmony](#) is in immortal souls.
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close us in, we cannot hear it."

We sometimes wonder at the admirable docility with which the unlearned accept mystifying explanations. After being told that things act so and so because they have an "[affinity](#)" for each other, they feel that there is no more to be said. The question is answered. One mystery has been explained by another. But now we are on the track of this inscrutable "[affinity](#)."

Every [atom](#) behaves as it does because of its essential nature. It is not helplessly drifting in [space](#), waiting for stray streams of [energy](#) to gather it up and determine its fate. It has an attribute which compels it to find its own place in creation. It has inherently a certain rate of vibration, and an impulse to join others constituted with a like rate of [velocity](#) or one numerically allied to it. This tendency, this [sympathetic](#) hunger, is "[affinity](#)." "Oh, the depth of meaning in those words, "[sympathy](#)" and "[affinity](#)!" They are the world-builders, the creative agents which brought order out of [chaos](#).

For an uncomprehended reason, atoms have arranged themselves according to their numerical affinities. Those with like velocities of a certain kind were drawn into close union and became rocks. Others singing a different rhythm came together in less stable combination, and are gases. And so down to the minutest classification of [matter](#), all has been arranged by the compelling [law of sympathetic vibration](#).

It is a well-known fact that when a musical [note](#) is sounded over a piano, all the strings attuned to the same, or to a numerically related number of vibrations, will sing in response. This is "[sympathetic vibration](#)."

The reason the string gives audible response is because its [molecular](#) condition has been sympathetically stimulated to activity. This activity is of course a manifestation of [energy](#), and according to Mr. [Lascelles-Scott](#) (Physicist at the Government Laboratories, at Forest-Gate near London,) and other competent observers, this energy is often sufficient to tear the atoms apart; as illustrated by the breaking of a glass tankard by singing near it its "response note," which was in this instance the bass [note](#) D flat, which is not far from the lowest audible form of musical energy.

Now if in some of its lowest appreciable forms [energy](#) thus sympathetically evolved will break a glass tankard, or "fiddle a bridge down," what must be the force which might be sympathetically awakened in its higher rates of [velocity](#)?

Professor Tyndall says- "With a few vibrations a second [sound](#) is generated. When more numerous, you may have [light](#), [heat](#) and [electricity](#). Again multiplying these by the square of millions, who can say what might, or might not, be the result?" Now we are compelled to believe that every step of [acceleration](#) from sixteen vibrations a second to the velocities attained when "multiplied by the square of millions" (as Professor Tyndall says), that every step of this steeply ascending increase is capable of being acted upon sympathetically, if the response note could be found.

Is there any limit to the energies thus slumbering in the apparent [void](#)? Whether Mr. Keely has captured them or not, these streams of potential [energy](#) are a reality, and might be liberated by just the means he is using.

But of one thing there can be no slightest doubt. As man has risen to higher stages of development he has appropriated progressively [higher stages of energy](#). There was a period when stored sunshine ([light](#)) was sufficient for his material uses. Then [heat](#) was harnessed and drove his engines, his wheels and spindles. Then he reached higher and captured [electricity](#), which was found to be no less obedient and vastly more effective. Who dare say this is the end? It was after drawing upon the resources of the invisible, that such enormous impulse came into the life of humanity; and the farther we have gone into that supersensible creation, the swifter has been the advance!

It will be seen that as we pass through these ascending grades of [energy](#), its manifestations become more subtle. Increase of [power](#) means a corresponding increase of subtlety. The waves of [light](#) and [heat](#) must be like the heavy beatings of the surf, and the motions of [electricity](#) gross and sluggish, compared with the rhythm of those ethereal vibrations which could only be wielded by Omnipotence! And is it not obvious that the agent which sympathetically reaches these, must become correspondingly fine? Is [thought](#) such an agent?

If a single [tone](#) of the human voice be the initial stage of an [energy](#) so inconceivable, what, on the other hand, does that voice become when attenuated "by the square of millions?" Does this measure the distance between an audible human cry and the [thought](#) which produces it? Is "the hearts sincere [desire](#)," the [note](#) attuned to those energies whose subtlety, as well as [velocity](#), has been "multiplied by the square of millions?"

The [mind](#) cannot go back or stop on such a journey. It is compelled to go on and on until it reaches something with sufficient potency to tear the stars from their orbits, and yet so attenuated that it trembles responsively to something as [light](#) as [thought](#). If this be not "[spiritual energy](#)," it bears a strange resemblance to it!

Have we by inevitable steps reached the verge of that kingdom we have been accustomed to regard as separate and distinct? If so, [matter](#) is lifted from its long abasement. The pulsations in the heart of granite are the throbbings of the Divine, as truly as when it makes the [soul](#) of man tremble with new [life](#). And what wonder that [music](#) thrills, if it be a manifestation different in degree, but identical in kind, with the [spiritual energy](#) which nourishes the universe?

If the phenomena of [matter](#) and of [spirit](#) are controlled by the same [force](#), only in different degrees of development, then reasonable [cause](#) and [effect](#) take the place of [magic](#) and of mystery.

If it be true that [spiritual atoms](#), no less than material ones, are [arranging themselves according to their velocities](#), then every relation, human and divine, is comprehensible. If this law underlies both worlds, then those [spiritual atoms](#) numerically and rhythmically allied have an "[affinity](#)" for each other; they rush together in irresistible embrace; and there is a scientific basis for human affections, for conduct, and for [prayer](#)!

Race affinities exist because of a general rhythmic identity. Individual [temperament](#) is determined by the rate at which the [spiritual atoms](#) of the man move - making, as it were, a musical-key to which his being is set. Observe that when you sing a [note](#) over the piano, not alone the C strings, but E, G, and B vibrate responsively, because harmoniously related. So - two beings who love each other may make a richer [harmony](#) for not having identically the same rhythm in their souls. But on the other hand, union with one outside this harmonious group is impossible. [Discord](#) is a violation of nature. Two notes inharmoniously related can never combine. They may be simultaneously sounded; but they do not blend. [Discord](#) is in its essence a destructive force. Unhappy marriages, in fact one-half the tragedies of human life, find their solution in the [laws](#) which govern [music](#); and the language of metaphor is profoundly and scientifically true.

The unfolding [soul](#) invites to itself vibrations constructive and destructive, and grows by what it feeds upon toward [heaven](#) or [hell](#); harmonious vibrations making for the one, and [discordant](#) ones for the other. If, as is probable, these velocities have a tendency to be accelerated in multiples of the same rate, we can see how the wretched being is sometimes lost in the [vortex](#) of a terrible rhythm, only to be rescued by that one flawless rhythm left by [Christ](#) upon earth.

Does this sound fantastic? Will it be worse than fantastic, prosaic, to say that every human impulse is in its last analysis a mathematical fact? That [love](#), hate and all their diverse manifestations might be expressed by mathematical formula? A mathematical basis for [spiritual](#) phenomena sounds uninteresting. But to the [soul](#) that comprehends it, it is sublime. Mathematical conceptions are the only ones which do not vanish in the analysis of an illusive, elusive, creation. The multiplication table would survive the wreck of worlds and of [matter](#)!

The magnitudes of [time](#) and [space](#) - what are they? Nothing but modes of [thought](#) depending upon a point of view. They exist only relatively to your perception. The "solidity" of [matter](#) is a fiction. Were you created on a different scale you might gaze through the [intermolecular](#) spaces of granite, and see its whirling atoms as constellations in your [heaven](#) of [ether](#)!

We look out upon the world through a refracting, twisting, distorting medium, so that nothing is what it seems, and were it not for mathematical relations, we should be in a universe of dissolving dreams. But they are everlastingly true. They are the rock-ribbed realities which hold together the shifting, vanishing phenomena of existence. Change your point of view as you may, they are undisturbed.

A [truth](#) which has for its mission the upholding of all other truths, has need to be well buttressed and strengthened; and the rocks which bear the Andes on their bosom are not more immovable than the mathematics upon which rests the [law of sympathetic vibration](#).

If there be such scientific basis for human phenomena, then [metaphysics](#) and [psychology](#), with their intricacies and complexities expressed in an involved terminology, are artificially contrived systems, and what wonder that they are bewildering, and the despair of ordinary minds?

The human [mind](#) is perfectly capable of mastering an artificial system expressed through arbitrary symbols. It has been doing it for ages. (Alas!) But with what result? A few of the initiated know the system, and its terminologies; but neither they, nor any one else, has a vital grip upon the subject. But can a subject be made comprehensible, when its most essential [truth](#) is veiled? And what wonder there is confusion existing in men's minds regarding the most vital things? The following definitions of [Religion](#) are quoted in Kidd's "Social Evolution." We select them at random. Comte, "The worship of humanity." [Hegel](#), "The knowledge acquired by the finite [spirit](#) of its essence as an absolute [spirit](#)." Huxley, "[Reverence](#) and [love](#) for the ethical ideal." Matthew Arnold, "Morality touched by [emotion](#)."

These definitions are by men who are masters of [thought](#) and of expression, and offer, presumably, the best the world has to say on the subject. Are they convincing? - satisfying? Would any one know that any two of them were intended to define the same thing?

Hear now the definition of [religion](#) if [sympathetic vibration](#) be a fundamental law: [Religion](#) is an expression of a universal impulse, which draws the human [heart](#) into rhythmic unity with the Divine [heart](#).

How simple - how true. It is the [unconscious](#) utterance of the unlettered in all ages; and of poets, from King David to Tennyson; and at the same time a precise scientific statement, which is - to Omniscience at least - capable of mathematical demonstration.

But how can there be a satisfying definition if the fact underlying all other facts be not considered? - i.e., that there are precise definite [atomic](#) changes in [spiritual](#) experiences no less real, for having vanished into a region infinitely subtle, than if transposed to the lower [key](#) of [sound](#), [heat](#) and [light](#), or to the still lower condition of the visible and ponderable.

Men have discovered a great progressive movement in all organic things which they have called "[Evolution](#)." We see it as an imposing mysterious thing moving with awful sincerity on grand lines. But if the source of [energy](#) lies

in the [atom](#), its beginnings are infinitely small. It is the aggregate of a minute [atomic](#) hunger for unity with the Divine. That is the sublime consummation toward which all creation moves; and [evolution](#) is a religious impulse! Nature is thinking of the [atom](#) - not the [mass](#). All earthly systems which sacrifice the [atom](#) are foredoomed, because the great mother knows no great and no small, but only a stern necessity for an adaptation, precise and true, to the Eternal rhythm, which, in the evolutionary process, means an infinite [progression](#), while its absence means [disintegration](#) and elimination.

[Science](#) might have looked forever in vain through the [telescope](#). Not till it turned its vision in toward the invisible - the supersensible - did any true comprehension come of creative and cosmic realities. And the deeper it penetrates into this region, the stronger does it feel the throbbing of the Divine heart. Its own path is leading it, whether it will or no, where it must some day find itself face to face with Deity.

Two lines started in certain directions from given points in the earthy orbit, must meet at a certain point millions of miles away. You have never been there to see it. But you know it. It is a necessity of [thought](#) to believe it. And so, certain truths compel the existence of certain other truths. The [mind](#) cannot escape them.

Just such compelling power is in the [law of sympathetic vibration](#). Once started on its ascending ladder, it is impossible to stop, until we find ourselves confronted with energies inconceivably great and inconceivably fine. Surely it is not venturesome to leap the little chasm of uncertainty and call these "[spiritual](#) energies," nor to believe that they by their [sympathetic action](#) may be the basis of all the phenomena of the [life](#) of the [soul](#).

There is something new and strange in the air. A new element in the [spiritual](#) as well as the material atmosphere. Men are vaguely conscious of an impending crisis in the life of humanity. Is this because we have reached the confines of the old, and are entering upon a new dispensation of force, one which will enter into the processes of [life](#) in a manner more vital even than [electricity](#) has done?

However this may be, if the trend of progress is to be in the future the same as it has been in the past, it is man's inevitable destiny to grasp and appropriate [higher and higher conditions of an energy](#) which at each remove becomes more spiritualized in its expression. Whether this in fact merges at last into the "[spiritual](#) energy" which is the [life](#) of the [soul](#), is a question this article is intended to ask - not to answer.

See Also

[As A Man Thinketh](#)
[Consciousness](#)
[Dynamics of Mind](#)
[Etheric Elements](#)
[Maya](#)
[Mind](#)
[Mind and Matter](#)
[Mind Over Matter](#)
[Mind to Mind](#)
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