

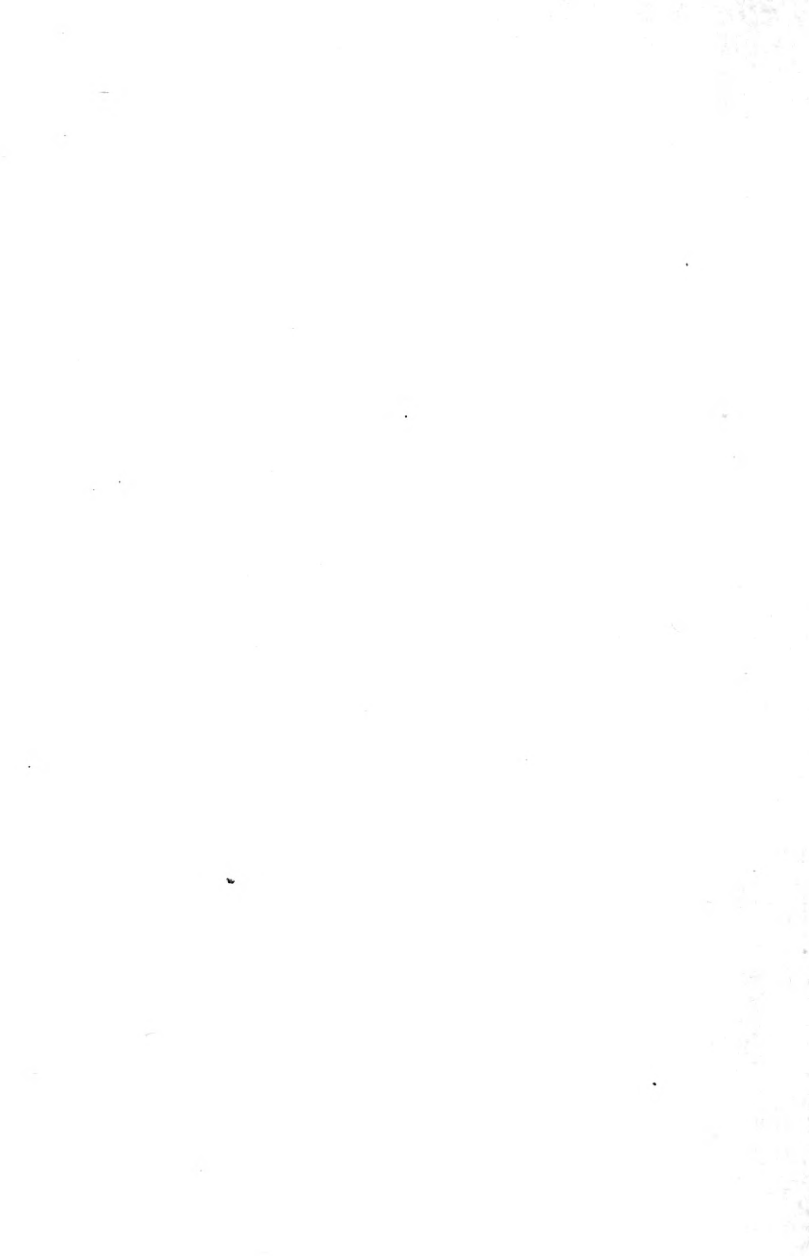
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EUCKEN'S KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE



# KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE

BY

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THIS volume, which constitutes an introduction to the Theory of Knowledge, is one of Professor Eucken's latest pronouncements. It forms an excellent epitome of the author's views concerning the need of a Metaphysic of Life. The book supplements certain important aspects of the author's previous writings. Its insistence on the need of a Knowledge based upon Life is an all-important message for our generation. As the author shows, we are at the end of a period of *Expansion*—a period which has brought forth so many things of real assistance to the material welfare of life, but which, at the same time, has failed to touch the depth of man's soul. There has arisen, on account

of this failure of the material side of life, a deep longing for something greater—for something that will give power and depth to life. This longing, according to the author, is a sign of a coming new *Concentration* of life. Men's attention will be turned more and more to the things of the spirit, and the real norms and values of life will once again gain their legitimate place.

The life of the spirit will discover a self-subsistent reality which will result in bringing about an *inverted* order of things as well as a new scale of values. The whole domain of Knowledge will be measured and valued from the standpoint of such a spiritual life. In a series of chapters Professor Eucken shows the insufficiency of natural science and of much of the philosophy that is in vogue to-day to accomplish such a revolution within man's soul. And really the question arises, Is it worth understanding and describing earthly things at the expense of relegating life and its deepest necessities to

a secondary place? Yet it is this that is being done by much of the science of our day. Is it worth weaving systems of Metaphysics concerning the Absolute merely from the conclusions of a Logic which has hardly any affinity with life? Yet this is what is being done by much of the philosophy of our day. The solution of the problem of life is urgent and difficult. A solution of the problem is *urgent* because experience has taught us during the past fifty years that much which is of permanent value is in danger of becoming lost to the vast majority of mankind. It is *difficult* because it deals with a *new world* and a *new life*; and neither of these lies near to our hands. The problem is difficult on account of the further fact that its solution cannot come about without the operation of a *deed of the soul*. Ideas about things will not save us, and neither will ideals viewed merely as objects of contemplation and far removed from human life. But though difficult a solution can be found. It is

found in the presence of a spiritual life whose existence is not in space or time but *in itself*. When the world becomes aware of this truth—a truth which cannot be realised without an enormous struggle—it becomes aware at the same time of the only power which will free us from the many entanglements into which increasing knowledge *about* things has led us.

Professor Eucken's plea in this book is, that the only Knowledge which may be termed genuine springs from the demands and aspirations of man's own deepest life. The union of such Knowledge and Life will create a new humanity and a new world.

That the situation to-day is in dire need of such a solution of the problem of life few will deny; and no European thinker has laboured more than the great and genial author of this book to make such a treasure the possession of all "who carry a human face."



I have to thank the Rev. E. E. Coleman for his kindness in reading the proofs and in making several valuable suggestions.

W. TUDOR JONES.

HIGHBURY, LONDON, N.

*November 1, 1913.*



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE following pages constitute a portion of a greater work already planned. The separate publication of this volume has been occasioned by personal reasons, especially by my approaching visit to the United States of America. But I could not resist this invitation though it necessitated a decision between an introductory volume on the one hand, and my strong desire for the completion of the work on the other. On account of the confusion which governs things to-day, it is of importance, in the first place, to discover the *direction* of the path we have to travel over before we follow it any farther or seek upon it a view of Reality.

When our work sets the problem of Knowledge in definite contact with the problem of Life it corresponds to a strong movement of the times. All the incessant and highly

significant work on the *external* side of things to-day is not able to prevent a stiffening and an ageing of life—a stagnating of it in its inner parts. Consequently, there proceeds right through the civilisation and culture of humanity an ardent desire after a renewal of life—after a connection with the original sources of life; for it is thus alone that man can create the necessary power and greatness to withstand victoriously the hostile powers which threaten him. Such a yearning, however, engenders a turn towards life—a turn to the nearest and most original source which it is possible to reach. Thus the word “Life” is to-day on everybody’s tongue. But much of the prevalent sympathy towards such a point of view easily connects itself with much obscurity with regard to the true conception of the problem, and consequently the most varied conceptions frustrate one another: often a higher and a lower grade of life are not sufficiently differentiated, and therefore what should have furthered the

development of the life of the spirit of man tends to fall under the ban of conceptions *merely natural*. In opposition to all this, we shall attempt to show how Life has to be created—a Life that shall make genuine Knowledge possible. Further, we shall open the investigation concerning the meaning of Life and its connection with Reality, as well as show how, out of such a creative Life, the method and task of Knowledge are to be specifically moulded. All this, however, requires the most definite connection with the situation of the present day, and indicates the goal for which we have to strive if our final convictions once again are to receive more stability and content than they possess to-day—if, in a word, the critical situation of the present is to be overcome. What the present work will only sketch, a future volume, soon to appear, will bring to fuller completeness.

RUDOLF EUCKEN.

JENA, *August 1912.*



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# KNOWLEDGE AND LIFE

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

IN relation to the problem of Knowledge, modern man is in an extreme degree beset with insecurity as to his position in the universe and the meaning of his own life. Despite the acknowledgment of values and ends, *old* and *new* modes of conceiving things stand in irreconcilable opposition to each other. The *old* mode sets high aims before man, and allows him to think highly of himself and of his place within Reality; but this mode, in the consciousness of the present day, has been shaken to its deepest foundations, and has consequently lost much of its power. The *new* mode presents us with tasks

and with achievements in abundance, but these do not connect themselves into a *totality* or *whole* such as raises man in the inwardness of his being—giving his acts a self-value, and satisfying the deepest part of his nature. Consequently we vacillate insecurely between the *old* and the *new* modes; and in such unstable equilibrium the inner situation of life is in danger of falling into a serious case.

The *old* conception of his own greatness gave man the conviction of an inner connection with the universe and of the significance of his actions in their relation to the universe. The universe thus appeared as possessing a life of unity, or as being governed by such a life: man not only participated in this unitary condition but also occupied a *special* position within it, and seemed indispensable in order to bring to perfect expression the meaning of the universe. This was the view of life and its meaning as presented by religion; and also here man's relation to God raised him far beyond the sensuous environment, and en-

abled his deeds to be effective in relation to the destiny of the universe itself. The same view was presented in certain ideals of civilisation and culture, with their transformation of Reality into a kingdom of reason either of a logical or of an artistic kind. In such an idealism the whole of the world was transformed into an *inner presence*; and man's deeds, for the first time, seemed to be raised by the All to the level of clear consciousness and, at the same time, perfected. In religion as well as in idealism all greatness seemed thus to proceed out of the independence of an *inner world* and of its superiority to the external world.

This independence of an *inner world* and, at the same time, this inner relation of man to the universe have become, during the past century, more and more insecure. The inner connections of things have become more and more disintegrated; and the natural world has been resolved into a mere co-existence of individual elements, and into

a web of the mutual relations of such elements. This web of relations has also more and more drawn man into itself, and has regarded him as a mere part of itself. Man's life has thus been entirely transformed into a relation with the environment of sense impressions; life is viewed as exhausting its meaning in its effects and counter-effects in connection with the external world. Thus what happens within the *inwardness of the soul* becomes a merely subsidiary phenomenon—it becomes a mere repetition in miniature of what happens in the great world without. Man thus becomes a mere link in an endless chain : he can neither *mean* anything *special* nor grasp, by means of his acts, any totality or whole. And if no kind of totality or whole obtains here, the *idea* of an inner relation to a whole—the idea of a personal experience of a whole and of a value for the whole—sinks into a delusion. To grant any specific position to man in the universe is consequently impossible ; and, at the same time, it is supposed

here to be proved that what issues from the inwardness of his being has no longer any kind of value any more either for himself or for anybody else, so that all his actions have no other ends to serve than the betterment of his situation within the sensuous environment, and the extension of his power over this environment. How much has been achieved in this direction from the sides of the pure and applied sciences is evident to all. Thus, for the loss of an invisible world, the heightening of the visible one seems to offer entire compensation; and amidst the continuous development of the power of the environment we are not at all able to discover the loss of such an *inwardness*.

So we are surrounded and carried along not only by the results already achieved in the external world, but also by the problems of life in our own day. These problems rivet man's life to the external world. As, for instance, the social questions of the present in all their confusion show, the life of

man on its purely external side becomes his whole life; more and more are all his wishes and hopes and beliefs drawn into the vortex of such an external life.

And yet there exists and persists a painful contradiction in the fact that the life of man is being wholly transformed into a portion of a mere flux—that it is being darkened and rendered indifferent to its own worth. Such a state of things could content us only if it were able to drive out all unity from life, to place in its stead the relations of our actions to physical phenomena, and to set the standard of life in the external world. Our life would then become a mere co-existence and sequence of external happenings, and the mere *factual* world would fill us so entirely that all questions concerning our own situation and its meaning would appear altogether futile.

Such a development of life, upon the ground of modern times, has undeniably gained a certain kind of reality: even upon

the so-called summits of civilisation there appears much life though without a soul in it, and in the midst of great activity there may be found stunted and languishing souls. But from its very nature the soul will not allow itself to be permanently driven out of life. For we discover once again that we are *thinking natures* and as such must reflect concerning *what we do* and *what offers itself to us*.

For we do not merely live but also *experience* what we live; we construct a specific circle of our own over against the environment, and we cannot possibly refrain from deciding concerning what lies *within* this circle and what is only contiguous with it from *without*. The Subject—Man's Mind—and his inwardness may be placed in the background and neglected, but they cannot possibly be eliminated. If all this *persists*, it cannot possibly be nothing more than what merely flows on the current of external events, but is in reality that which trans-

forms such a current into a mere environment; and thus it becomes an intolerable contradiction to exhaust Life wholly in achievements connected with this environment. Viewed from the side of the Subject—Man—all progress towards the environment and all the development of power within the domain of the universe cannot be viewed as constituting the kernel of life, but only as a help and a furtherance, only as a means, only as a setting of the conditions for what constitutes the *main fact*. To conclude merely with a care for such conditions and means is certainly a kind of initial preparation for Life; but Life in this manner has prospects which it never succeeds in realising, so that such incessant work and care become empty of significance. This emptiness—this poverty—becomes all the more manifest the more the thirst after a richer life has been engendered by the calling up of all the powers of man's nature. As a fact the present day not seldom exhibits



powerful effects from *without* along with the most painful sensation of *inner* emptiness.

Such an experience will immediately awaken a longing after a stronger development of life and after a development of inwardness; but this longing is more easily awakened than fulfilled. For, in the necessary withdrawal from external things, man cannot furnish himself with any ready-made content of a kind different from what he possesses in his natural state: his nature, at the outset, cannot, out of its own capacity, pass beyond the waves and the winds of external circumstances. In a word, his nature ceases to grow any further by means of the world which penetrates so effectually into his life. Thus activity in connection with external things on the one hand, and concern for the state of the soul, on the other, do not unite, and consequently the man's life remains split between a work without soul and a soul empty of content. Life, as a whole, through such a splitting,

does not succeed in reaching full power and reality; and its total result, despite its activity in individual situations and on various sides, is bound to become unreal and to lose all original creativeness as well as all genuine joyousness. At the end of such a path stand pessimism and despair.

We cannot possibly surrender our life to such disaster : we must wage a war against all this, and seek to give our life an inner unity and also a greatness and value. The aspiration for this necessarily leads to the problem of Knowledge. We shall be able to overcome the disruption and diminution of our life only if we succeed in coming out of our isolation and in winning once more a genuine connection of the soul with the world and, as well, in experiencing all this in the form of immediacy. This can come about only if we succeed in reaching Knowledge in the specific and distinctive sense, viz. that such Knowledge, which, at the outset, only shows the contact of things with us on their

external side and as being somehow over against us, incorporates objects into *our own* life, and transforms their content into our own possessions. In order to obtain such an *inner* appropriation of reality other provinces occupy themselves : art and religion succeed in transforming reality into an inward possession of man. But though the undertaking within these provinces possesses an independence over against philosophic work still it is the latter which has to transmit to the various provinces the final justification of the transition which it presents—the justification regarding the meaning and value of the whole. For unless such a justification is found, uncertainty and doubt will never be entirely driven out of life. The possibility of this kind of Knowledge is the indispensable condition for gaining an inner relation to Reality and, also, an inner greatness for man. Thus the question at issue is not one merely for scholars, but one which presents itself to all who might participate

in mental and spiritual development and who might co-operate, in an independent manner, in such a development. Finally, it is the desire after a *spiritual* self-preservation—it is the taking of our stand upon the meaning and value of life *as a whole*—which drives us to-day in an imperative way to the problem of Knowledge. Mankind at the present day, despite all its activity and achievements, stands under the powerful influence of an inner shrinkage and of an increasing hollowness of soul—it stands under the restriction of a pettiness of what ordinarily happens *within* us and *without*. This lies as a heavy pressure upon us—a pressure which deadens all the courage of life, and which is bound to choke all joyous development of the powers of our nature; for of what avail are the brilliant results connected with the fragmentary elements of our nature if nothing at all issues out of life *as a whole*? It becomes thus the question of questions whether it be possible to withstand such a

downward movement of the inner life—such a growing apathy of the human race, and whether it be possible to consolidate once again the faltering faith of life. We stand here face to face with a pointed *Either—Or*—with an alternative which, of all facts, is *our own* fact, and from which no one can withdraw except under pain of being left behind the inner movement of mankind. This *Either—Or* leads of necessity to the problem of Knowledge.

Such a situation is bound to invert in an essential manner the effort of Knowledge as this effort presented itself at the beginning of modern times. At that period the feeling of intolerable bewilderment pressed heavily upon mankind; and the main desire, over against such a depression, was to obtain a thorough clearness of view by a dispersal of the existing chaos and by the development of a homogeneous world of ideas. In our own day, too, such a bewilderment is not absent, while nevertheless we do not see in

it the main problem : this main problem we find to-day in the evaporation of all spiritual stability of life—in the loss of a governing centre and, along with this, in the loss of a substantial nucleus of life. We find the problem in the inner emptiness which threatens to engulf us notwithstanding all our feverish activity and our immense profusion of stimulations and achievements. In the seventeenth century Comenius complained of the lack of genuine light in so illuminating a period (*in tam illuminato seculo, uti quidem appellari gaudet, luminis penuria*); so that as Tantalus deplored the lack of water in the very midst of water, the age missed genuine light though it was surrounded by some kind of light. With regard to our own day, we would say that we, in the midst of all the fulness of life, miss *genuine* life; we would say that life, with all its sensuous plenty, threatens to become inwardly disintegrated and unreal. Such a thirst after genuine reality must also mould the work of

Knowledge in a manner other than that of the period of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), and the first question therefore is not concerning clearness of ideas but concerning reality and a substantial content for our life.

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# I.—CRITICAL PART



## CHAPTER II

### THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE

A DEEP-ROOTED opinion, which appears to-day as if it were quite self-evident, is that Science has to supply man with knowledge, and that he cannot expect knowledge from any other province of life. There can, indeed, be no doubt that, when Knowledge is taken in the widest sense of the term as meaning a description and explanation of Reality, Science stands pre-eminent; but the matter appears in quite another light when the conception of Reality is taken in the definite sense which occupies our attention in this volume. For it is easy to see that it is only an inexact conception of Science, and especially of Modern Science, that can view the task of Knowledge as Science's entire

monopoly. Modern Science has attained its greatness and its value—indeed, has only become a Science in a definite and exact sense—because it has succeeded in viewing the customary projection of human ideas, feelings, and aims into the universe as an intolerable confusion; it has opposed such a view with the greatest persistency, and has learned to see things in *their own* nature, apart from their supposed human qualities. This has happened most specifically with regard to the *physical* universe; but even in regard to *History and the life of the soul* man has attempted to conceive of things as real facts without any admixture of subjective interpretation and valuation. The subjective factor has generally been conceived and condemned as an illegitimate ingredient—indeed, as a falsification of the facts—and a purely objective consideration of things has been striven for. It is in this way alone that Science can develop its own methods as well as connect its material into a king-

dom of its own. The fact that man is able to place his own subjectivity in the background, and is able to present before himself something outside himself constitutes something of the greatest significance—something that testifies, even in the denial of the activity of the mind as really making anything known, to a distinctive greatness that has to be taken into account in any accurate and complete view of man. But such a fact marks also an insuperable limit to Science. The results and value of Science depend upon the fact that any disparity between Object and Subject—any opposition of external things to the mind that knows them—is obliterated. The *factual*, striven after by Science, dare not suffer any intrusion through attempts at dovetailing it into something mental or interpreting it by means of some human analogy. Thus Science, the more it progresses, divests itself more and more of all anthropomorphic trimmings and removes the facts further and further from

being conceived as having their existence in the human mind. The experience of the present day indicates this with special clearness. Natural Science especially eliminates more and more clearly from its products all its relation to human reflection, and seeks all its conclusions and simplifications entirely within its own external domain. Thus Physics at the present day is not conceived as at an earlier period—in that the differences of our senses do not any longer suffice as a principle of division (Optics, Acoustics). When the effort is most diligently made to resolve the multiplicity of phenomena into the fewest possible elements, and, indeed, finally to one element, it is evident that the *whole* is not thus brought inwardly nearer to us. Such a tendency must on the contrary remove this final simplification further and further from our sensations and perceptions. In so far as such attempts of Science succeed, the results are bound to leave us inwardly alien to them; and consequently the meaning

of the whole remains in darkness. We clarify the *relations* of things, but we do not know what lies *beyond* them.

Further, with regard to the view of History, modern investigation eliminates from all events the nearness of the soul and also the seeming transparency which events seemed to possess in earlier times. In the thought of antiquity, Past and Present flowed inseparably together, so that the Here and Now became a key to what had gone before, and so that anything of value which had arisen anywhere seemed to remain valid for *all* times, and capable of being furthered by all men. But afterwards came exact investigation with its criticism, and broke ruthlessly down the connections of epochs. While the nature of epochs were more clearly depicted, this *specific isolation* of each epoch was shown at the same time; the interval between ourselves and each and every epoch has been indicated, and an easy transition from epoch to epoch has

been made impossible. The subversive effect of this point of view has been experienced especially in religion. For it was essential for religion to interpret unique events as Standards, and to show their necessity for *all* times. This could only happen on condition that religion did not insist entirely on the particular colouring of any special epoch, and on condition that it was equally intimate with *all* times and equally trusted and saw the meaning of them all. Scientific investigation, however, is unable to envisage such a view in any exact manner without discovering in it a coercion of the Past; so that such an investigation, notwithstanding all it gains in insight, removes us from the Past in a manner which cannot be tolerated. We are on this view unable any longer to unite our lives with the Past in an intimate manner; we are unable, as it seemed possible at an earlier period, to understand our own nature as connected with the whole of things. Thus



Science separates us and the objects far from each other, while it teaches us to view the objects in *their own* connections. Different periods thus seem, on fuller investigation, to conflict with each other more than to bind themselves together in a friendly relation. And, further, the domain of historical development has extended beyond our range of comprehension, so that a *total* view of things, an insight into the meaning of the whole, and the connection of the individual with the whole have become impossible. The scientific research concerning History and the History of Philosophy differentiates the two provinces more and more sharply. All attempts at finding the final grounds of things are shattered upon the immeasurable fulness of the bare *factual* which surrounds us.

It is clear, as the particular sciences in their advancement remove ever further from

Knowledge as related to man and his life, that the union of the sciences and the connection of their relations are unable to grant us Knowledge in the definite sense already referred to. Doubtless there originate valuable tasks and combinations of the particular sciences from the proofs of their resemblances and differences, because there is room by the side of the particular sciences for a Theory of Science. But such a Theory of Science is by no means a Philosophy : mere notifications with regard to the provinces of the sciences can never bring to us anything essentially new, or enable us to attain any higher level for viewing things connectedly. The claim so often made to-day of the possibility of developing a theory of the universe from Science can only arise—if a Theory of Science signifies in any manner an insight into reality—from a false mode of thinking which becomes possible only by mixing Philosophy with Science and especially with Natural Science. To-day it is Monism especially

which believes itself able to construct a theory of the universe from Natural Science. The transformation of Natural Science into a theory of the universe is only possible through overlooking the *Subject* (man and his mind) as well as the *mental process* which carries on the work of Science, and also by overlooking what this *mental and spiritual process* has brought forth and ever brings forth in the form of contents and aims in the universal life of mankind outside the realm of Science as well as side by side with it. The theory of the universe obtained by leaving these values out of account is much too narrow in its thought-content; and the picture of the universe here presented is much too poor and shallow. Thus the confusing of Philosophy and Science produces a shallowness and an alienation within our world of ideas. When the representative of a "scientific theory of the universe" does not allow of a *contradictio in adjecto*, and presents his impossible solution as the only possible one, this can mean

nothing other than that the certitude which is reachable within Science, and especially within Natural Science, is unconsciously applied to the meaning of the *whole universe*. Evidently in this case one is not aware that in the recognition of the facts we have mentioned a transition has taken place which sets forth new demands. Thus it is incorrect to think that the problem cannot be solved in *another way* or that the scientific method is the only valid method—a method that leads us into difficulties of an *inner* kind. Hence we conclude that Science is unable to discover Knowledge in the sense in which we conceive of Knowledge, and that it is unable to unite *from within* man and the world. A view of the limits which Science in this respect certainly has shows that the nature of Science, and especially of Modern Science, is not perceived with sufficient clearness. To perceive the specific greatness of Science means at the same time to perceive its limitations.

## CHAPTER III

### THE FAILURE OF SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY

IF Science then does not lead us to Knowledge, Philosophy is able to vindicate itself in relation to Knowledge only in so far as it proceeds on its own specific path. Such a path Philosophy believes to have found from of old; and for centuries this path has been the one of *speculation*. This speculation consists in a mode and work of *ideas* which free themselves from the remainder of life, and which exercise complete sovereignty over all. Such governing ideas seemed powerful enough to penetrate to the depth of Reality, and to transform this Reality into a possession of man as a thinking being. In fact, ideas have attributes which invest man with a special position and significance.

From the outset it cannot be questioned that if Knowledge be possible at all its organ must be *Thought*. In the first place, ideas are able to free man from indifference and from the interests and aims of considering himself as an isolated being. They engender the conception of an actual necessity or obligation, and may in their development feel themselves superior to all the disorder and confusion which surrounded them. In the next place, ideas include an effort to pass out of the chaos of the existing situation and to transform all the multiplicity of elements, which present themselves, into an inclusive system. They accomplish this in a *positive* way by means of linking together Propositions otherwise isolated; they do it in a *negative* way by driving contradictions out of life. In the possession of such attributes, ideas are able to transform the world into an *inner presence*.

Speculation, however, passes beyond such a valuation of ideas in that it believes itself

capable through its own inherent power of unlocking the world of Being and of guiding man to a clear knowledge of such a world. But that this matter is not so simple as Speculative Thought assumes becomes evident from a survey of the actual history of the enterprise. Such a survey points to hard trials and struggles, to a perpetual quest after new paths, and to a constant swinging from one experiment to another. It also shows an awakening of doubts ever recurring concerning the possibility of the whole undertaking. Two questions have been raised ever anew: (1) Can Thought, out of its own capacity, discover an inner union with the world of Reality? (2) Does Thought, through such a self-sovereignty, exhaust the whole domain of existence?

In the most important work of the world the connection of Thought and Being has been in the foreground. Three possibilities present themselves here. In the Middle Ages as well as in Modern Times have these

characteristics appeared, but they have been treated at various times in very diverse manners; and the centre of gravity of their various effects has been found in very different positions.

The first step of this Speculative Thought requires belief in the mutual connection of man and the world—of Thought and Being. These signify one and the same Reality, and belong to each other and strive together in a friendly encounter. The power of such relations succeeds in passing easily from one to the other; just as the light of the sun becomes visible to us because our eyes have in them something of the same nature, so here the fundamental nature of Reality is able to include our Thought because it contains within itself elements of Thought. The work of Thought thus only binds together qualities which belonged to one another from the very beginning.

The second step of Speculative Thought brings out a sharper distinction between



human life and its environment. The soul and the world are too far apart to be able to come into immediate contiguity with each other; the union of the two is now sought in the fact that what occurs on the one side has corresponding effects on the other side. Thus the supposed natural connection of Thought and Being here issues in a doctrine of Parallelism.

The third step asserts that Thought cannot reach Being that is *external* to itself, so that Knowledge is possible only in so far as Being is discovered within Thought itself, and in so far as it is produced by Thought. Thus Knowledge becomes a thought of Thought—a knowledge of self, a self-comprehension of a creative thought which embraces Subject and Object.

The theory of an intimate connection of Thought and Being corresponds to a naïve mode of thinking, and it is also held in a more refined way by an æsthetic mode of thinking. The blossoming period of such a

mode of thought was classical antiquity; but the view was also revived in the Middle Ages, and it is not entirely alien to modern times. It continues to be effective as a basis wherever the necessity of Thought and the qualities of Being are regarded as essentially connected.

This mode of thinking connects, in the closest possible manner, the microcosm with the macrocosm; it discovers connections everywhere between man and the universe, and by means of this development raises the life of man into breadth and greatness. The strength of this mode of thinking lies in its ability to see things *together*; its elevation is due to its æsthetic intuition, which does away with the interval between Subject and Object; and, consequently, it gives Life a strong feeling of rest and security, and it seems to grant Life a solid and immovable foundation. This mode of thinking on its æsthetic and general human sides finds its climax in Plato, and, on its scientific

side, in Aristotle. The former held up before mankind great ideas and myths; the latter, by means of his teaching of the union of Thought and the World, developed a logical order of Life and a thorough system of Ideas which have governed the centuries, and which exercise influence down to our own time. But even in antiquity serious doubt was raised concerning such an intimate union of man and the world; and with the Stoics and the Sceptics man and the world were parted far asunder. This cleavage between man and the world became all the deeper the more powerfully the upheavals and renewals which took place later set the meaning of life in a region above its superficial connection with the environment and found the kingdom of pure inwardness in religion alone. This inwardness needed only to gain a fully awakened self-consciousness and a power to control the work of science in order to reveal the ancient connection of inner and outer worlds as an

intolerable defect—as a projection of merely human qualities into the universe, and as an unbearable anthropomorphism. It was now seen that man, in the turn towards the world, had merely extended *his own* circle, but had not passed beyond it. It is evident that the definite contiguity and even the blending of sensuous and spiritual, as these were presented from the heights of ancient thought right through the centuries, as well as the conception of Knowledge (*e.g.* of intuition), have at the present day become untenable. More doubtful still has become the transference of formal logical conceptions into the particular nature of external things, as, for example, the treatment of modal conceptions involving even the possibility and necessity of an energy inherent in the things themselves. Such an admixture of Logic and Metaphysics penetrates into the theory of Principles of Aristotle, and it also finds a prominent place in Scholasticism. But to modern thought such conceptions appear as

presenting the world in an obscure light, and even in the dangerous light of ascribing human qualities to it. The abolition of this confusion of the logical and the real aspects of things in the beginning of modern times has resulted in a clarification highly necessary, and, indeed, in a mental and spiritual emancipation. It thus became evident that the world *without* and the world *within* contain for man a rich fulness of life; the aim was now to bring to a clear expression the abstract, formal, schematic character which the picture of Reality took, and which, since the time of Aristotle, made the inner meaning of the effort of knowledge to consist in what lies behind the particular qualities of things, *i. e.* in the nature of Being itself—in the recognition of Being as Being ( $\tauὸ ὄν ἢ ὄν$ ). The necessary result of this view was that the scaffolding of abstract-ontological conceptions became an essential part of Reality. The rich and variegated fulness of life presented by such conceptions

consisted, however, in a mere development on the logical side of things. The greater experiences and further development of life did not consequently combine sufficiently to form a connected view of Reality. The recognition of this fact constrained the civilised and moralised life of modern times to part with this traditional solution.

Further, the step of differentiation between Thought and Being already referred to is in no way alien to antiquity; but the classical period of antiquity did in no manner run its whole course in this direction. But though Hellenic times were conscious of the antithesis of Subject and the Universe, it is the dualistic mode of thinking in modern times that has brought such an antithesis to a climax. In the modern world, for the first time, does man gain the power and the self-consciousness to place himself, by reason of the unlimited needs of his nature, over against the whole world; more than ever has his life become a struggle with the universe.

This movement of man, however, has penetrated so deeply and ruled his spirit so powerfully because the cleft between himself and the world was thrust out of sight; and a burning desire of his life for a unity between the human spirit and the universe as well as for the transformation of inward and outward into his own possession originated. Without a radical transformation of the first view of man and the world the contradiction between them cannot be overcome. Consequently thinkers of the first rank have devoted their best energies to this task.

Descartes, who separated Thought from the World and placed it upon itself, became fully aware of the difficulty of finding his way back from Thought to the World. He sought to overcome the difficulty from the very outset by linking human reason to a Divine Reason that governed and penetrated the universe; and through such a belief he gained confidence in human capacity to acquire truth. He sought thus to discover

for his future investigations a touchstone for the differentiation of the true and the false, and believed himself to have discovered such a touchstone in concepts of entire clearness and distinctness. Complex, unfinished and strained as his conclusions are his contributions were of undoubted value in the fact that he laid the centre of gravity in *consciousness*, and gave a new beginning to the movement for conceiving things from consciousness to the world and not from the world to consciousness. The problem of Knowledge is carried further back by Spinoza and is brought by him to a height which even Leibniz could hardly overtop. Upon this height Thought and Being [the aspect of Being as Existence] stand independently over against each other, but both belong to the same Universal Life that carries and embraces them; and both exist and continue parallel to each other as the Appearance-forms of the one Reality. Whilst one side develops out of itself and according to its own nature,



still it harmonises with the other side. “The order and the connection of Ideas are the same as the order and the connection of Things.” Leibniz holds to the idea of Parallelism, but by it he meant not so much that Thought and Extension should correspond to each other as that the individual and the All, the microcosm and the macrocosm, should do so. Each individual soul, according to him, experiences the whole of Infinity within itself in the form of immediacy and without any kind of mediation of the world; the “pre-established harmony” produces this connection; an Intelligence that embraces the whole universe brings forth all effects.

This theory of Parallelism contains a strong inducement to conceive each of the two sides in a precise manner on its own characteristic side, and to mark clearly the boundary of one from that of the other; and every mingling of the two is most strongly resisted. Through such a method it becomes possible to transform each of the two

into a continuous union and development, and to weld each in an incomparably more definite and consolidated a manner than was previously possible. This investigation possesses its value on account of its penetrating analysis; for the main effort of the modern world to treat Nature and the Life of the Soul as independent provinces, without, at the same time, giving up the *unity* of the universe, finds here a philosophical justification. Thus the work of Thought corresponds to the demands of a universal and all-important situation, and the frequent withdrawal of this work of Thought towards the multiplicity of external things does not by any means render it alien to Reality.

But the *difficulties* concerning the adjustment here sought for between the World of Thought and the World of Sense do not remain long out of sight. Most of all, the main idea of an all-embracing unity fails of proof. This main idea was a keen hypothesis of Speculative Philosophy, but it is an hypo-

thesis which the calm clearness of modern thought has sharply contradicted, and one whose roots lay less in modern ground than in the world of traditional religious ideas. The increasing uncertainty concerning this main idea loosened more and more the connection of man and the universe, and as the weakness of this connection increased, Thought tended to be considered and to become a merely subjective reflection; Nature now sinks to a soulless mechanism, and also all the possibility of genuine Knowledge disappears. And, further, along with this uncertainty an *inward impoverishment* gives rise to doubt and contradiction, which are actual experiences of human life despite all the external expansion and development of things. For this theory of Parallelism brings man into unison with the universe only in so far as everything specific and distinctive within him is discarded, and only in so far as what constitutes a copy of the external world is alone held as essential. But what

remains on this theory is thus no more than Thought with its forms and concatenations : man consequently and necessarily becomes a mere mechanism of Presentations and Ideas ; and so it remains entirely enigmatic how he can cultivate a *unity* or *whole*, and how he can experience his own life as such. If Life, in spite of this, gains a psychic depth and warmth, this is supposed to happen not by means of the further development of ideas but by something in contrast with such ideas—by the addition of mystic speculation and intuition. It is, however, the main feature of the theory of Parallelism that while it is able to present the equilibrium striven after by the two sides by means of general ideas, it is *not* able to carry such ideas into effect. For as soon as the theory of Parallelism presents any of its conclusions we find that either the *external* or the *internal* aspect is uppermost ; and the conclusion expresses itself either in Naturalism or in Idealism ; mind either becomes a pheno-

menon which merely accompanies us—a mere reflex of Nature—or Nature becomes a mere description and semblance of mental and spiritual life.

The failure of both attempts—of Relation and Parallelism—necessarily leads to a further quest for a solution of the problem. If the two sides do not relate themselves intimately together, and, if separated, they do not again come together there is only one possibility of solution open, viz. the denial of all Existence outside Thought and the laying of all Reality within Thought and its movement. If Thought has to deal with *its own* evidence and not at all with anything alien to itself, if Knowledge becomes a self-comprehension of Thought, then no opposition can prevent the realisation of a complete illumination of the problem—then the work of Thought seems certain of a complete conquest. Thought is certainly here to be raised above the mere individual and established with its own motive power; it must, in

order to fulfil its task, be raised to Absolute Thought. In all this, there is in fact a genuine effort to reach summits and turning-points of life.

This path was not trodden for the first time by modern thought: antiquity and especially Plotinus and the Mystics of the Middle Ages who followed his lead trod the same path. But there lies a considerable disparity between the ancient and the modern modes of conceiving the matter. The old mode of thinking placed Being [the Constant] in the foreground, while the new mode gives most prominence to Becoming. Thus the turn of the old mode towards an Absolute Thought signified the taking up of all the multiplicity into an unchangeable unity, and interpreting the latter by means of the former. As everything draws its life from such a unity, which is its root, everything strives to return, of necessity, to this unity in order to find in it its self-subsistence and eternal rest. It is in this way alone that the Universe gains

an all-pervading unity and a pure inwardness; it is here alone that an *inner world* originates. Here the unity precedes the multiplicity, the inner precedes the outer, and the Constant precedes the mobile. As here the whole of Reality thus flows into the life of Infinity, so all definite and limited conceptions disappear, and are unable to present as their interpretation anything more than a metaphor of the deepest truth. Complete, adequate knowledge, on this view, is given by mystic intuition alone—an intuition which must be clearly distinguished from the æsthetic intuition of classical times; for while mystic intuition extinguishes all particular elements, æsthetic intuition seeks the unity in and along the multiplicity alone. It is especially from this point of view that the thought of an all-present unity and of a self-subsisting eternity (*præsentia stans*) gained such enchanting power over many minds, and gave life its penetrating inwardness as well as the way into the Great and the

Cosmic. But what is here offered as Knowledge is more of a Feeling difficult to grasp—is more of a calm absorption of the soul in Infinity than of an intellectual penetration into Reality. Such an experience certainly discovers original depths, but it does not point out a path to pass back from itself to the work of life. So that it remains true that life as a whole has been furthered more on particular sides by Religion and Art than by Philosophy.

But the modern turn of the main thought we have under consideration penetrates still more deeply into the meaning of Knowledge. It understands Thought not as an intuition by the self of an Eternal Being but as a great Becoming—as a quest for one's own self and as a self-realisation. Thus, according to this view, the cosmic process is nothing other than a self-realisation of Thought. Here emanation gives way to evolution, and intuition to the construction of ideas. Hegel especially brought this leading funda-



mental Thought to a remarkable expression. In Hegel's teaching the process of Thought is driven further and further by means of self-engendered antitheses; through thesis, antithesis, and synthesis the Thought-process evolves an ever richer content; it ascends from general outlines to concrete forms: the Process draws all that lies near to it to itself. Thus the whole of Existence is in flux; still all the multiplicity is brought into mutual relation and interpenetration, and everywhere a content of Thought is discovered as the real kernel and energy of the things of existence. Thought thus steps out of the "realm of shades"; it gains the most definite connection with the historico-social life of mankind, while the historico-social life is itself seen in great connections and is universally illumined. The view presented here by Hegel is not directed backwards towards origins but forward towards the goal of an entire self-realisation; it is the view of a calm philosophical reflection

embracing all movement—embracing all the reciprocal conflict and opposition which were placed by him in his picture of the universe. We are aware how mightily that stream of life which has had its source in this Hegelian movement has affected the minds of men, and how much this stream has affected spiritual work as well as modern civilisation and culture; but we are also aware how soon a reaction took place and how many contradictions raised up their heads.

The conception of an absolute Thought-process contains before all else an inner contradiction. Thought can be no Process, and the Process can be no Thought. Thought is essentially a stepping forth out of Time, and an apprehension of things under the “Form of Eternity.” The Process, on the other hand, moves hurriedly forward further and further and knows neither rest nor terminus. Hegel, in his own person and for his own day, understood how to connect

those two different aspects; but a contradiction existed in the facts themselves, and he was obliged to find justification for his theory of *Becoming* in the special characteristics of great personalities, and thus he had to divide mankind into opposite camps. Where *Thought* stands in the foreground, the *Process* is overlooked; but this is certainly a mistake unless the *Process* has reached its final terminus. Thus the *Movement* falls within the *Past* alone; the *Present* appears as ready-made, and the *Future* will contain nothing to do. Where the *Process* stands in the foreground, it moves further and further into the region of the indefinite and the uncertain; the *Ages* lose their inner bond of connection, and *Philosophy* becomes a mere expression of the existing situation—a historico-social view of *Reality*. Thus all absolute truth must give way to a relativism; we cannot any longer speak of a deliverance from, and a mastery of, the world; in other words, there is no *Knowledge* possible. The

struggles and doubts which issue from such a view are bound to shake to its very foundation the position of Thought and its claims to rule the world. For though, within the human domain, a web of Thought arises and a circle of existence superior to the remainder of the psychic life develops, still all this remains a *thought of man*; and that even all this is the source of Reality—that all this carries the universe within itself—is extremely difficult to substantiate. Human thought is on this theory raised to Absolute Thought, and its mode of movement is transformed into a cosmic phenomenon in far too rash and direct a manner. For close at hand exists the doubt whether the *Whole* which is thus declared as the kernel of Reality is anything more than an accompanying phenomenon of Reality.

Further, the nature of the world presented in this view also strengthens such doubts. As Thought draws into itself all Reality, it transforms Reality into a domain of relations

and forms—into a world of outlines and shadows—into a gloomy picture. When Hegel presents us with something more than this and when his world of ideas with all its distinctive clearness works upon us, this effect does not arise from his theory but from his *personal* mode of presenting things—a mode which has an open mind for all greatness, and which understands how to view the multiplicity *together* as a richly-coloured picture. Apart from the quickening energy of great personalities, everything in his theory discloses a shadowy character and a distressing emptiness of content. And it is this fact which explains the occurrence of a rash turn towards Empiricism and Positivism and with the obscuring of man and his soul behind the problem of the physical universe, and, finally, with the renunciation of all knowledge regarding the things of the spirit and regarding greatness. Thus the historical consideration of things justified the doubt whether Thought be able

by the mere exercise of its own force to attain to Knowledge; and in this way doubt presents the dilemma that in the recognition of a world *existing externally* Thought is unable to find the path to such a world; and, that Thought, in the attempt to create all Being out of itself, exaggerates itself and loses itself in a world of shadows. Consequently the path of Philosophical Speculation ends in disappointment.

(a) THE TRANSITION TO THE PROBLEM OF  
LIFE

Speculative Philosophy and Science tend to belittle each other. Science looks upon Speculative Philosophy as a fanciful reverie; Speculative Philosophy looks upon the undertaking to interpret the universe by the methods of Science as a presumption and an invasion into a province alien to Science (*μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*). Still in spite of this divergence between the two they are related to each other, and work towards similar

ends. Both summon the intellect to assume regnancy over the whole of life, and to compress all Reality within the bounds of Thought. Thought traces out a place for both—a place into which everything has to fit and to adapt itself; it points out to action its direction, and it understands action as a conclusion—as the application of *general* propositions to *particular* cases. But the modern world has protested more and more emphatically against such a mode of treatment. The incessant expansion of Life towards the inclusion alike of what is great and what is small shows Life as being far too rich and coloured—far too mobile and variable—to be reduced into the forms and formulas of Thought. The stream of Life breaks through the dam which was meant to enclose it, and flows out of its limited enclosure into the open and the boundless. At the same time, there springs up a strong antipathy towards all attempted adjustments of Life to Thought: stronger and

stronger grows the aspiration after more immediacy, more intuition, and more originality. In Thought, we seem to be presented with mere signs and pictures and not with the "things themselves." In all the work of Thought, with its incessant reflection and discussion, Life seems to evaporate and to disappear into the shadowy. The realisation of all this is bound to create a passionate desire after a more complete Reality. Further, the work of Thought has shown so much confusion and has, within its own domain, split up in so many directions—it is so full of inquiries and doubts, of contradictions and negations—that it appears absolutely impossible to construct Life upon so unstable a foundation.

The Life of the Present is therefore powerfully affected by a desire to break the autocratic rule of the intellect, and to cast off the yoke of intellectualism. But what we discover here, as a demand of the Present, casts its light also upon the Past, and enables



us clearly to see that at all times the work of Thought reached its results not in any isolation from, but in a definite connection with, every situation of life and with the problems of the whole of life. In nowise could Greek Philosophy have brought so near together Thought and Being, or could have placed them in so fruitful a relation, had it not been that this Philosophy was encompassed by an æsthetic form of life—a form which united into *one* cosmos the inner and the outer worlds, and which brought forth by means of such a union the most fruitful creativeness. Only in an age when men, tired of mere civilisation and culture, became impressed with the necessity of something beyond mere rest and peace, and only when they felt that their greatest gain consisted in a flight to a supersensuous order of things could such a world of ideas as that of Plotinus originate and gain the influence it actually attained. And, in modern times, it is on account of the desire to free Body and

Mind, Nature and Spirit, from an intolerable entanglement and to differentiate them in a fundamental manner without allowing either to fall outside *one total world*, that the doctrine of Parallelism has reached such a stage of development and has exercised such a power. And are the systems born of keen speculative German Philosophy understandable without the background of a highly-strung cultivated age and of a human capacity directed towards what is highest? Indeed, different as such epochs may be, and far removed from one another as may be their achievements, all their differences recede into the background as soon as we compare the whole of our Western civilisation and culture with the Indian civilisation and culture. For then it becomes apparent that in the Western World a more positive love of life discovers all the more strongly the oppositions of the world and struggles with them, and, on account of this, stands upon solid ideas and a uniform development;

whilst, in the East, a renunciative mode of life paints the impressions of the world in weak colours, and seeks the *whole* in the *particular*, and thus gladly expresses its results and convictions by means of symbols and metaphors. Thus the mode of *Life* radically determines the mode of Thought and Knowledge.

Indeed, with regard to this, History shows that even where Intellectualism reached its highest point—where Thought attempted to carry Life along simply by its own energy—Thought advanced far beyond its merely intellectual achievement, so that it became a movement of the whole of life even to the realisation of a new level—a level of self-activity. When Plato bases all genuine virtue upon an insight of knowledge, because it is such an insight alone that makes virtue one's own act; when Clement and Origen show that Christian truth is brought into the inwardness of the soul by means of knowledge alone; when Leibniz, in a similar manner, considers it necessary that all

genuine love to God should be based upon knowledge; when Spinoza and Hegel are persuaded that a new nature for man springs out of Thought—to them all Thought is incomparably more than a mere mental act; it means in fact to them all an act of the whole nature of man and a turn of the whole life.

If thus a specific Life exists as a directive power behind Thought, the struggle for Thought is in the last resort a struggle for Life. Thinkers are divided from one another not so much because they interpret a *common* fact in merely *different* lights, but because they see things from different standpoints of life—each seeing something different in the things under observation—each fact disclosing something special to each thinker. But though this connection of Thought and Life is now so indisputable, the connection was not thoroughly worked out at an earlier period, and hence the struggle of the spirit of man was not decisively presented. So far from

seizing the key of the situation one did not come out of a situation of skirmishing between advance guards. But when we find to-day an aspiration after, as well as a clearer insight into, the moving energies of life should we not break away decisively from Intellectualism, and base Thought upon Life rather than Life upon Thought? Certainly the problem of Knowledge gains a more advantageous position when the question is directed towards Life and not towards Existence. For Existence stands over against us as something fixed and inscrutable: only in its *effects* does Existence come into contact with us—in *effects* which continue unintelligible however much of their nature they communicate to us. But Thought is quite capable of being translated into Life; and, because it is created out of Life, it can, at the same time, work for the elevation of Life. Thus Knowledge advances not by means of anything alien to itself but by means of *itself*; and it moulds itself into a knowledge of itself

as well as into a knowledge of the self. That Thought be above all else transformed into self-knowledge is an imperative demand. For it is an inner contradiction to will to know what is alien to us—to will to fathom what is alien to ourselves. If we really know only what is *our own*, the power of appropriation must precede all Knowledge or at least must be united with Knowledge. It is only the turn towards Life that offers a pathway in this respect.

Thus various things operate to sustain the desire to base Knowledge upon Life. This desire moves in mighty waves through the efforts of the present day.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MODERN CONCEPTIONS OF LIFE

A MOVEMENT such as this in the direction of Life could hardly have been called with such earnestness into being in our day had there not awakened also a *new* Life—a Life that has branched out in all directions. But it is not said that the Life that has filled and satisfied a particular epoch is the whole, the final, and the deepest possible within the human domain, or that this Life of a particular epoch is able to bring forth Knowledge in the full sense of the term. For, as will be shown later in this volume, Knowledge has permanent conditions. Whether the mode of Life which prevails at the present day, and which might mould Knowledge in a new way, is in reality able to do this

is a question which must first of all be investigated. A demonstration of this is all the more necessary because currents of an epoch tend to become self-satisfying and readily accept the approval of the masses as the actual proof of their worth.

The present-day view of Life, however, is especially under the influence of the turn towards sensuous existence as this existence surrounds us in Nature and in human society; and the empirical mode of thought which issues is held competent to mould Knowledge from these two sources. Whatever in our day proves favourable to such a point of view as this (and we have already noticed that much seems favourable) will enter into the new moulding of Knowledge, and will recommend itself to our age. This method will especially seek to draw into its current the movements against Intellectualism, the desire after immediacy, intuition, and reality. The age will thus find its fulfilment in what appear as the



claims of this point of view. But the empirical current divides into two main tributaries according as to whether human existence or Nature stands in the foreground. Thus there are apparent to-day two new modes of the Theory of Knowledge—a Pragmatic and a Biologic mode. It is necessary to investigate more fully the nature of both conceptions; for it is only the analysis of both of these modern conceptions which can prove the right of our particular undertaking, and which can clearly set forth the characteristics of this right.

#### (a) PRAGMATISM

Pragmatism has had a continuous history from of old down to the English-speaking world of the present, and has exercised great influence; but the formulation which its fundamental idea has recently received in the United States of America has given it a more precise form as well as a new significance. Its direction upon experience

and the conduct of life has, in America, brought about a specific conception of Truth which has placed the whole work of Knowledge in a new light. To this view, it seems entirely misleading and fatuous to attempt to discover the nature of things through an effort after the nature of Knowledge, or by means of a union with the "things themselves"; and it is also hopeless to attempt to reach a world existing independently of ourselves. For there is no sure path to such a world, and there is no possibility of verifying any of the experiments made in this direction. In fact, through such attempts we lose ourselves in vain reflections, which have not the slightest possible value for our actual needs. The wide divisions and the incessant disputes of the sects also furnish a further corroboration to the uselessness of this kind of effort. What we know and what is of significance for us are *our own life and its needs*; it is only in so far as things

*work* upon life that we know them and have interest in them; and as these effects of things upon us are either of a helpful or of an obstructive kind a standard and also a conception of Truth are to be found in such effects. What is now *true* is that which works for the elevation of life—that which serves the development and success of life—that which is useful in the widest sense of the term—whilst what is *false* is that which injures and coerces life.

The method which develops out of such a standpoint possesses many advantages. It removes us from inaccessible causes and sets us upon tangible effects; the work of Thought is here brought near to the whole of life as well as to immediate perception and intuition; nowhere then is such work vain but it bears valuable fruit in every situation of life. And, at the same time, there result an intense concentration and condensation of the work of Thought,

whilst all the problems which cannot affect anything in life must be excluded as things irrelevant and insoluble, as, for instance, the ontological questions of the old *Metaphysic*; whilst, however, all that remains by virtue of its relations to a governing centre—to life—is brought nearer and its elements are woven more closely together. In addition to these advantages, there is also the merit of the *mobility* which the work of Thought thus gains, and which answers in the best possible manner to the modern desire for more freedom of movement. As Life is in incessant movement the useful and the harmful change along with it; therefore Knowledge also must possess a definite relation to the times and must shape ever anew a readjustment of the demands of the times. In all this, Thought seems to operate not on account of its own necessity, but is used as a tool of Life—as a path upon which Life seeks its summit; thus Thought has no autonomous

and absolute character, but only an instrumental one.

How far the work of Thought has been transformed by means of such a conception can be more clearly shown by means of particular examples than by elaborate discussions. Though Materialism and Idealism have in the past struggled against each other, still both have sought to trace back reality to a value contested for by each. In this attempt, therefore, each came to the region of Metaphysics—an unknown land to the mass of mankind. The result of the contentions was an endless debate, not in the least useful, and leading to no conclusive result. The facts become interpreted quite otherwise when it is asked (following here the guidance of the leading spirit of the whole movement—the excellent William James) whether an explanation of the higher phenomena by means of the lower and the reduction of the higher to the lower, or whether an explanation by means of a recognition

of the independence and leading position of the higher phenomena be the more profitable. Thus the question is wholly transferred into the domain of our own history and experience; and here the answer certainly seems to favour Idealism as a doctrine which possesses more rousing energy and presents higher Ends than Materialism. "But spiritualistic [idealistic] faith in all its forms deals with a world of *promise*, while materialism's sun sets in a sea of disappointment" (James's *Pragmatism*, p. 108). The case is similar in connection with the problem of Religion. If the truth of Religion depended upon speculative insight we should need to possess the mental capacity sufficient to penetrate into its deepest "grounds," and consequently a certitude could never be attained; and, besides, if such "grounds" were attainable they would still have too little to reveal to us. But if we test Religion by what it is able to accomplish for human life, when it works upon life, a path seems

to be found which certainly leads to a definite goal and one in which we can all participate. "On pragmatic principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true" (*Pragmatism*, p. 299).

By means of such a turn towards the *effects* of things Pragmatism does no more than take up once again an old mode of experience and raise it to the level of a *Principle*: this is the *Principle* that nothing gives man an easier entrance into general Thought than what is felt as a *personal effect*. For instance, the peace of mind and the fulness of hope which Religion brings to the souls of men have undoubtedly meant far more than all the efforts of theologians and philosophers to found religion upon a scientific basis. Pragmatism further recommends itself to the modern mind on account of the prevalent denial of the validity of Intellectualism and especially of Speculative Metaphysics, and also on account of the

rich fulness of intuitive experience which leads the modern mind to the work of Knowledge. But what contributes most of all to the popularity of Pragmatism is the surpassing position which human society has reached in modern times with regard to its view of *Life*—a fact which means that the welfare of life has become more and more the all-governing aim of effort. As the unity of mankind cannot now, as was the case in former times, create its tasks and its values from an order of existence above and beyond itself, every synthesis which binds men together must therefore all the more concentrate all anxiety, work, and hope upon its own immediate existence. Herewith it appears at first a great gain to throw off the yoke of dependency upon alien powers, to place man simply upon himself, and thus to gain a better soil for fruitful work and creativeness. Thus the definite co-operation of men seems able to place high value on effects which had become sacri-



ficed to Religion and Metaphysics. In fact, the whole mental and moral movement of modern times has taken the path from God to reason and from reason to humanity, and is believed to have reached a final conclusion in a "religion of humanity." Ludwig Feuerbach was only giving an individual expression to a widespread tendency when he said—"God was my first thought, reason my second, and man my third."

Thus were Ideals transformed solely into the meaning of human society: Ethics now discovered its main task in working for the human environment, and it became moulded into Social Ethics; Religion became a worship of humanity ("le grand être," to use Comte's expression); instead of a belief in an invisible Kingdom of God there appeared the belief in the incessant progress of humanity. Does not the work of Thought stand in the closest accord with such notions when its main subject-matter and motive no longer deal

with attempts to fathom the depth of the Godhead, but with illuminating and furthering the situation of man? The human province on this view can no longer receive its light from the universe, but its darkness is now illumined only in so far as it relates itself to the situation of man.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the Pragmatic movement should attract wide circles, especially when we remember that the weight of remarkable personalities lies behind its teaching. But there is no question that over against the strong impression which Pragmatism has made a reaction has again set in—a reaction which raises more and more objections to it. These objections penetrate from particular points to the very heart of the assertions of Pragmatism, and it is precisely in what Pragmatism regards as its own stronghold that its disadvantages and drawbacks become manifest.

In the first place, it is not easy to determine and to assess the *nature of effects*

upon man—it is not easy to state what is useful or what is injurious. Judgments on this question may vary considerably because different sides give attention to different complexes of thought, and the particular standpoints of the observers put emphasis on very different things. The opponent of Religion is far from admitting that Religion furthers human welfare: he will far rather place in the foreground the superstition, the inner disposition of men, the spirit of persecution—it is on these things that the emphasis will be laid by him. He argues as follows: The whole of human existence shows good and evil effects in an entangled confusion, and who is going to decide, without any doubt concerning the matter, whether good or evil has the upper hand? The materialist again will by no means acknowledge that Idealism works advantageously upon the human spirit. He will at once raise the objection that a favourable judgment with

regard to Idealism assumes at the outset the standpoint of Idealism, and that consequently the facts appear quite otherwise than what they really are. Thus the strife concerning the *effects* inevitably leads back to a similar question concerning *principles*—a question which it is sought to avoid.

Further, the mobility of the Pragmatic doctrine is in no manner a pure gain. The advocate of mobility accustoms himself to see in it only freedom, richness, and progress; he overlooks the dispersal, the frittering away, and the disappearance of so many things of value. If human wants and needs are made the measurements of truth, we get truths as numerous as are times, states of morals, and, indeed, individuals. For one thing finds its welfare in *this* and the other in *that*, so that we obtain a situation of sharp contrasts. Thus times of spiritual exhaustion and of timid disposition call for a system of religious ideas quite different from what is desired in times of

joyous creativeness and of victorious energy. In the former the idea of the antitheses, and in the latter the idea of harmony, would predominate; in the former Transcendence and Dualism become just as self-evident as Immanence and Monism in the latter. The contrast between waning antiquity and the beginnings of modern times shows all this quite clearly. And this contrast ramifies further and further into all the multiplicity, until finally every point and every moment come to have each its own particular needs and also to possess each its own specific truth. In such an unfathomable ocean of particular truths is not the conception of Truth itself drowned? This destruction of the conception of Truth would not only mean the destruction of what *objectively* surveys the whole of the movement; it would also mean a perceptible difference in what exists *within*. For no one is so confined to his own particular circle that he can afford to dispense with the observations

and points of view of others, or to abandon the attempt to adjust his own life to what is external. And when one now discovers such points of deviations—deviations not only here and there but everywhere and universally—one is inevitably shaken in one's own convictions. Indeed, the further one sees into this fact and, indeed, the more impartially one can place himself in the position of another, the more inevitably does he arrive at scepticism.

But a deeper note still is sounded in the question whether, in connection with the things of the spirit, the *effects* allow of being considered by *themselves in isolation*, or whether they remain *connected* with their *causes*. The *effects* of things in the *external world* can be measured *by themselves*: the effects of electricity, for instance, do not depend upon the mode in which they are interpreted by us. But what obtains within the *soul*, and is mediated by means of Thought, cannot be removed from its basis,

because it receives its scientific character *from the character of its basis alone*. This basis is not something that is supplemented by Thought, but belongs to the *nature of things*. For this reason Religion so powerfully affects the human soul in that it brings to man a Power superior to himself, in that it promises to unite him from *within* with this Power, and, indeed, to transplant him into the kingdom of this Power. It is because Religion is *no mere theory* of Divine things, but the inauguration of a *new life*, that it cannot possibly doubt the real presence of a Divine Being within the human soul. If nothing beyond a *mere intellectual proof* of the presence and reality of the Divine be present in the soul, Religion becomes no more than a mere phantom and fancy: the claim that Religion works in man and the effects it produces depend upon the experience that *something beyond* him is grasped as a *fact* and is attended to and preserved. Thus in spiritual things the

*effects* do contain assertions concerning the *cause*. It may be that up to a certain level the mere idea produces the same result as the reality, but it is able to do this only so long as it is held as the entire truth; when any uncertainty arises concerning the completeness of the idea, the *effect* disappears. The illusion of a dream works upon us only so long as we are asleep. The idea of Thought waking out of the slumber of ordinary daily life is as old as Plato.

Behind this reflection of things from the side of their *effects*, there arises a conception of Thought and Knowledge which produces a positive contradiction. This standpoint for viewing things looks upon Life, with its situations and movements, as something close to our hands—ready-made—as something which Thought has only to interpret. But such a relation of Thought to Life holds good only in so far as an *external* world exists by our side; and such a relation



is invalid with regard to the *inner* world. For in the *inner* life Thought co-operates from the very first in the development of life, and blends in the re-moulding of life—it is really an *essential* part of life and not a mere means to it. And when philosophic effort raises Thought in a freer manner from the structure of Life, and seeks to bring it into independent effect, Thought is not by this means entirely severed from the process of Life, but is further developed; and, indeed, in this manner a transformation takes place within Thought itself—a transformation which means that man is freed from his *natural* state and from the particularity of a life moving from point to point, and is transplanted into a life connected with the universe and into a Reality which is more than the individual content of his own life. Man, in all this, labours to shift the centre of gravity of his life from the petty, narrow, and empty self into the creativeness of a

more universal life—from what is merely “given” into self-activity, and from a derivative and dependent life to a life freer and more original. When this happens, new avenues open out, new movements are called forth, and mightily within the human soul arises the hope for freedom, for expansion, and for a life of larger content. This has constituted the aspiration and hope of all the great thinkers: to all of them Knowledge so far from being merely a genial helpmate of Life, was an ascent to a *new kind of life*—a deliverance out of an intolerable narrowness and emptiness. It is true that doubt attaches itself to such an effort, and raises the question whether man does not undertake the impossible in the pursuit; but, in spite of this, doubt does not destroy the *inner elevation* which lies beyond the initial situation—beyond the situation of the “merely human.” Though a complete answer to the question may not be reached, still the

question has *altered* the aspect of the facts—a new view has been reached and it cannot possibly again disappear—so that a return to the initial naïve situation or the finding of a satisfaction in it is utterly precluded. Such a satisfaction is herewith finally destroyed; so that, if we are unable to proceed further on the new path, there now opens up before us only a gulf of dark despair in which all striving is abandoned.

On account of such a situation of things, the undertaking of Pragmatism—the undertaking to hold fast to the knowledge concerning human well-being and to return constantly to such a knowledge—cannot but be viewed as a situation which the most important historical movements of the world have left behind. We have outgrown the standard of a welfare merely human, and all the values of such a welfare cannot blind us to their narrowness and emptiness. Nothing is so characteristic of man as that he possesses a nature that must

strive to get beyond itself; such a characteristic and effort may be often ignored, but they can never be entirely suppressed. That Pragmatism, by means of its activity, has made such a deep impression and has won so many excellent personalities is accounted for by the fact that it has, from the very outset, idealised its view of human life, and has included within itself qualities which could not possibly arise within the merely human circle, and which also need for their development the energetic work of Thought. Especially does the modern conception of Society work upon Pragmatism often in a misleading manner, whilst, in its mere extension of the human circle, a refinement and a transformation of the "goods" of Society take place in such a way as to involve the belief that a growth in *quantity* means without further ado an advance in *quality*.

Society certainly issues in a unification of things, but the experience of History

shows clearly enough that such a unification is not confined to what is good, but extends also to what is evil; and the situation as a whole is marked rather by confusion than by orderly arrangement. If the social effort results in something *essentially new and higher*, this can only proceed from the energy of a Spiritual Life: the issues set forth the conditions of Spiritual Life which reveal themselves in them. Then it is not so much the *natural* man—either as a type or as an individual—whom we have to esteem and honour but the *new stage of life* which appears within him and which makes him a “new creature.” The glorification of the natural man roots itself in the last resort in that cult of generalities which began in antiquity but which was brought to a full development only at the period of the Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), and from which most of our great thinkers have been unable to free themselves. If we break with this cult the impossibility

of confining all Knowledge within the bounds of the *ordinary* experience of mankind becomes fully evident.

If, therefore, we are obliged to deny that Knowledge is to be gained on the path of Pragmatism—Knowledge as it not only presents itself to the mind, but as it corresponds to the longings and aspirations of mankind—still we can receive an incentive from Pragmatism and recognise in it something of value. This we are able to do especially in two respects—in the human point of departure of Pragmatism and in its demand for a Knowledge which tells upon life. Little as we may make mankind the goal of our Knowledge, still mankind with its experiences remains the only possible *point of departure* for the work of Knowledge. To have emphasised this truth is a service rendered by Pragmatism. But a twofold negation comes in in connection with this matter. On the one hand, we find the negation of the possibility of starting from

the external world—a world which only means anything to us in its effects upon us, and which can never become our own life; and, on the other hand, a denial of a point of departure from ontological conceptions such as unity and multiplicity, rest and change—conceptions which can never lead to a reality rich in content, and which can never lead beyond themselves to a point of sure decision. Man himself undoubtedly presents us with the deepest meaning of the universe—man not in his individual existence but in his final convictions and in his development of universal experiences. If at all, it is in this way that an inner relation to the universe such as is sought after by Knowledge is attained. But we have to bear in mind that such a Cosmic life is something more than the mere acceptance of what is on the surface or a mere description of things; such a Cosmic life has to raise man and set in motion something that is within him which is superior to his own particularity.

The hope of success in this direction lies in the fact that man can aspire after independence and can construct a Reality rich in content. It is out of such a hope alone that he can make the attempt to discover a light in a universe otherwise dark. Our Yea leads beyond Pragmatism; in the Nay we are at one with it.

Further, we sympathise with its condemnation of a work of Knowledge which severs itself from the *whole* of life, which constructs a special web of its own, which has no progressive results without having serious defects along with them. It is not necessarily meant that he who desires a furtherance of Life by means of Thought has passed over to Utilitarianism. For such an advance of Life by means of Thought is to be understood in two ways. On the one hand, such a furtherance deals with the situation—with the subjective state and the welfare of man and of human relations; and, on the other, the existence and content



of life itself have to be taken into account. In the former, human existence is viewed as a "given" possession—a possession whose petty "dead level" has to be shared in by all that is drawn into its service and that is employed as a means for its success. In the latter, man is considered as a being who has *needs* and is capable of elevation, so that everything that enters into relation with him, in this respect, is drawn into an ascending movement and is further developed by means of itself. In the former, man is a datum; in the latter, he becomes a problem. In the former, he is engaged in the decoration of an *old* world; in the latter, he is struggling for a *new* one.

The view which develops out of the former mode of thought renders clear no more than the relations which objects and processes have to man's given possessions. What these signify beyond their relations and what they are in themselves—all this remains, on the level of relations, in total

darkness as well as in entire indifference. But if the question is turned towards something that is *new* that can happen in man—towards the question whether and how far he is able to experience a further development and transformation within his own life—then there arises the *affirmative fact* of something that exists beyond the customary mode of ideas and the mere inclination of man—of something that comes to the foreground of life, something which gains *an independence of its own* in contrast to the remainder of life, and which extends the circle of man's reality, and, indeed, leads him to a genuine reality. Thus there arise here, out of man's life itself, both a problem of Truth and a movement towards Truth.

Within all the domain of the life of the spirit as Knowledge may apprehend it, such a difference as we have mentioned as well as an advance beyond Utilitarianism become evident. For instance, Religion appears quite different and has quite a different

value for Thought according as to whether it is conceived as a means of furthering the subjective opinions of the individual or of human society and of furthering man in his mere wishes and hopes, *or* according as to whether it develops further the situation of life, awakens new tasks and energies, calls forth new movements, shifts the standpoint of life, culminates by means of them all in a transmutation of the process of life so that all prior aims and standards, and, indeed, all man's prior existence, become insufficient and even intolerable. By means of the first conception referred to, we do not, in an inward manner, reach beyond ourselves; and doubt remains as to whether the whole domain of Religion is anything more than a fabric of human wishes and ideas, and as to whether man constructs within himself anything beyond a mere semblance which has no right to be termed Truth at all. But when Religion calls forth movements which withstand, in a direct manner,

the natural desires of man — movements which engender difficult entanglements, and cast him into a state of grave unrest, but which, in the midst of all agitation and negation, inaugurate new contents of life, new instinctive and intuitive energies, new aims and, indeed, a completion of life— then we are compelled to ask, could all this originate from that “given” existence by which man is primarily conditioned? Is there not rather to be recognised here a further inauguration of Reality, which carries its verification within itself? And are we not able, in so far as such a Reality becomes *our own* life and deed, to penetrate into it and to transform it into Knowledge?

In the antithesis, however, which is thus disclosed in all this, and which extends over the whole extent of life, we observe, on the one side, the cultivation of the merely *natural* life, and, on the other, the *inner elevation* of man above irreconcilable opposition. Thus we observe morality and right,

on the one hand, as mere means for the development of an easy and pleasurable collective life; and, on the other, as the dawning of a new world of freedom and spontaneity. Thus, we find Art on the one side, as a means of gratification—as a pleasant stimulus to the senses; and, on the other side, we are conscious of an inner conquest over the contrasts of our life—of the creation of a more sublime harmony. We find Science on the one hand a means to the mastering of the environment; on the other hand, we experience an elevation of life beyond the embroilment of its daily routine and beyond an effortless renunciation into the mere level of external things. Therefore the Useful and the Good constitute two entirely different *stages*—indeed, two entirely different *worlds*. Little advantage as may accrue to the problem of Knowledge from the promotion of the *first* mode of life, the *second* mode has an advantage all the greater. Knowledge itself verifies its own value and rights;

it not only merely prepares the inner elevation of man but it also remains permanently present within the development of such an elevation; it is not merely a point of departure, but also constitutes an essential part of the new life; it does not stand by the side of, but within, the life. It is therefore able to reveal the work of Thought which operates upon Life. A Reality which has its source within the *process of Life* does not countenance our being shut up within what is alien and unknowable. Therefore points of connection, prospects, and tasks arise as material for Thought to work upon.

We are at one with many of the Pragmatists with regard to the necessity of making the assertion of the *actual elevation of life* the touchstone of Truth, and, indeed, we are at one with the main atmosphere of Pragmatism. But we must bring the accusation against it that it does not sufficiently distinguish between the *natural desires* and the *elevation of life*, between the

decoration of a *given* world and the struggle for a *new* one, between what is *useful* and what is *good*. Where, however, the New does not attain spontaneity it cannot possibly connect itself together; it cannot unfold its own nature, and its motive power cannot develop; it cannot secure a standpoint to view and illumine Reality or possess Knowledge in the sense in which we here employ the term. This being so, we remain immersed in a turbid mixture while our situation is in dire need of clarification and differentiation. The continuance of Pragmatism in such a confused situation is ultimately due to its false idealisation of the merely ordinary level of human life: it concedes to such an ordinary level, especially by means of an ethico-religious conviction, a deeper background and a richer spiritual content than such an ordinary level of life is capable of bringing forth through its own virtue. Man needs and sees *more* than he really possesses; but this More is not, however,

acknowledged in its superiority and independence, but is looked upon and used as if it were entirely the evidence of an existence merely human—as if his merely natural existence had brought forth what in fact has been brought forth by a Spiritual Life operating within man's natural state.

The fact is therefore to be admitted that if human life is to constitute the starting-point of Knowledge, *more* must happen within it than the preservation and desires of man in his *merely natural state*. If there were no more than this present, the aims of life could never lead to an *essential* content of life, but even in every success man would enter into an ever greater inward emptiness. Therefore true Knowledge calls upon man not merely to reorganise what is *given* to him as a natural human inheritance but to transform such an inheritance from its very foundation. The words of Kant are applicable in this respect: "Everything—even the most sublime thing—diminishes



under the hands of man when he turns the *idea* into a *mere utility*.”

### (b) THE BIOLOGICAL VIEW

Pragmatism roots itself in the life of the individual and of society as these are interpreted in our own modern times. The Biological view connects itself with Nature, and develops out of Nature a specific theory of Knowledge. As against Pragmatism, with which it has many affinities, the Biological view has the merit of greater expansion—of a wider adaptation of man in his connection with the physical universe. Nature, however, appears to the Biological view as a domain of universal movement and incessant “becoming.” What is attempted here, from the very outset, is to interpret Nature in this manner. This point of view constitutes the difference even of the new Physics from the old; indeed, the new Physics founded by Galileo and Descartes maintained that *change* cannot be conceived any

longer as *matter* set going by *spirit*, but that what is termed *spirit* is imbedded in *matter*: it was maintained further that the "ground" of *change* appears as a natural "ground" which requires no other kind of interpretation. Everywhere the idea of *change* has been gradually applied to all natural phenomena, and, indeed, to the whole of Nature itself. This could not come about until the rigidity of the old mechanistic system had been overcome nor before the phenomenon of Life, found in Nature, had acquired greater importance and, indeed, had been brought to the foreground. The modern theory of Evolution has brought this tendency to a culmination. At the present time, the whole of Nature appears as a stream of Becoming, and, indeed, as a Becoming which does not from the outset follow any definite course, but which obtains its present form only through the situations which constitute the actual course of the process and which consequently are discovered by experience.

*Change* is conceived as entering more deeply into the particular elements than was previously supposed to be the case. Becoming and passing away, youth and old age, are now discovered as exhibited in things which were formerly viewed as static and immutable. Thus the belief in any stability has been surrendered: all things from the greatest to the least are conceived as being in flux.

Corresponding to such a view of Nature as an incessant Change and Becoming is the view of the whole of modern times. Hardly any mode of thought distinguishes so clearly our own day from earlier epochs as the conviction that our circle of life is not something ready-made and enclosed, but that it continually extends and transforms itself. Such a conviction not only sharpened the insight for discovering Change and Becoming everywhere, but became also an incentive for the extrusion of all ideas of Permanence—it became the incentive

for the awakening of all that slumbers within us, and for the taking hold of and extending new possibilities at all times. It became now impossible to retain the old conception of the meaning of Life and the Universe; it became impossible to bring life to a situation of Rest; it became impossible to resolve it into a calm contemplation of itself. But the task became now to strive further towards the endless, to conceive physical things not as something limited but as something capable of indefinite heightening. As early as the fifteenth century we find in Nicolaus Cusanus this sentiment: "To be able to know more and more without end is the image of eternal wisdom. The man who knows may ever know more, and the man who loves may ever love more: the whole world cannot suffice such a man because it cannot satisfy his desire for knowledge." In the progress of such a transformation all aims governing the Change as from the outside disappeared; all now resolves

itself into the heightening of the Change itself—the emphasis is now laid on the ever more complex growth of physical energies towards a self-sufficing aim. All consequences and results had value here only in so far as they led to new tasks beyond themselves.

Biological Science also adjusts Knowledge to this incessant stream of Becoming. Where all is discovered as being in flux and transformation there is no longer possible an immutable truth—a truth which enables man to view things *sub specie æternitatis*, but Knowledge has to follow the course of the stream of Life, and has to present before itself the phases of this stream, and has to apply itself in the best way it can to what is happening at the moment. Hence Knowledge has not so much to *explain* as to *ascertain* and *describe*; it does not now originate from a *complete idea* but only shows the *connections* of simultaneous and successive events. It cannot now attempt to construct a specific and

independent mode of life and confer upon such a mode a value for itself; for it cannot possibly be more than a *means* for the vindication and heightening of the process of Life. It can, it is true, become useful to man because it points out in each case certain situations, and helps to link such situations to human activities, and is able to work for the acceleration of the process of Life. If, thus, not only all Metaphysics but also all the conclusions of the *world of ideas* are sacrificed, an entire compensation for this loss is supposed to be gained in a fuller openness in connection with particular impressions and stimulations as well as in the realisation of untold plenty of the things which change. It is then assumed that when the work of Thought thus gives up its "imaginary superiority and independence," it will flow all the more intimately with the work of life, and will extend over the whole breadth of life. It requires no exposition on our part

to show how conducive in modern times is this mode of thinking to the breaking up of the traditional systems of Thought and of the familiar boast of intuitive experience : this condition is induced by the fact that ever anew unexpected paths appear, and vistas unseen before are opened to view. The whole result of modern technics, with the triumphal march of its discoveries, points in this direction. How often here does the unexpected lead to important results, and how often is physical reality alone proved simply by its actual occurrence !

Thus we have here under consideration a particular development of Life and Thought whose rights cannot be disputed. The question is whether such rights are all-inclusive and all-controlling, and whether the effort of mankind after Knowledge can be satisfied to end in the solution offered. The answer to this question depends especially upon as to whether the conception of life which Biology offers is able to include within itself

the whole of human life. Should human life overstep the boundary marked by the Biological conceptions, what is offered here as Knowledge cannot possibly satisfy.

Now, Biology creates its conception of Life from the world around us : Life is thus nothing other than a development of energy and the movement of elements united together ; it is the self-maintenance of particular points in the web of relations which, as such, expresses reality. Life constitutes also here, in each particular situation, no more than a succession of particular processes which form a concatenation, but out of which *no inward whole*, which is able to bring about a union and survey of these processes, can be established. Behind these processes there thus remains only an inscrutable life-energy which appears in no manner as having purpose or value, but which works merely as a blind fact. It is thus impossible to give any meaning and aim to the movement of Life. Reality therefore is here reduced



entirely to particular threads, and consequently it is held that only human imagination can combine the mechanism into a *whole* and conceive it as a *whole*; and, further, it is held that when Nature is personified and efforts and effects are ascribed to it, we are dealing with what may be allowable as an artistic view but which is not a philosophical interpretation of things.

Now, it is incontestable that such a Life—with its mysterious impulses, its boundless and incessant mobility, its dissolution of all relations into a succession of elements—reaches far into the domain of *human* nature, indeed, far deeper than the illusive appearance of civilisation and culture is apt to indicate. But such a Life in no manner includes the *whole* domain and capabilities of man—it is not man's inevitable destiny. With regard to man, the facts disclose a *More*—they disclose that it is possible for man to *reflect* upon such a natural process of Life, to compare it with his own mental

conclusions, to examine his relations to it, and to test its value by means of a *Standard* that is within himself. In connection with all this, the experience of universal history testifies with undoubted clearness that such tests are by no means invariably favourable to man; indeed, they show that man's life, with its self-assertion and achievements, brought forth at any price, is insufficient and, indeed, intolerable; and further that the binding of his life to this natural course of things appears as a great degradation and an ignoble shackle from which he should strive with his whole energy to free himself. Closer consideration discloses the fact that a similar opposition appears not only in the individual situations but that it also penetrates the whole of history, and that the mental and spiritual movement cannot attain to an independence and well-marked characteristics without engaging in a *struggle*. It is not only this or that element in civilisation and culture, but the *whole* of

these, that seek an elevation beyond such a natural process of Life—that seek a *new* life over against it all.

Thus the fundamental idea involved in the Indian conception of Spiritual Life is the deliverance of man from the darkness and delirium of desire—an idea which wins man's soul and frees him from “the thirst—the contemptible thirst—which has such power over the world.” And Greece, at the summit of its development, blended the pursuit after a merely surface-life with an effort for a life full of content—a life resting in its own activity, a creative life in contrast to a life of a mere contemplation of the Beautiful. And when we come to Christianity, it is evident how it made all things subservient to the anxiety for the redemption of the soul and to the struggle for life eternal. And in regard to the powerful impulse of modern life, life is not, at the point of its highest development, the mere rise of energy but a *personal experience* of this

rise within the *whole* of life; life here means the increasing greatness and strength of the nature and a personal experience of the validity of this in the midst of all its activities. It is this which moves and carries onward and upward the minds and hearts of men.

Again an impartial reflection upon and a critical valuation of the Biological mode of thought which arises from such experiences as we have already noticed cannot evade the fact that the effect upon the minds of its adherents, in so far as it is good at all, depends upon an unstipulated idealisation of the movement of the natural process of Life. It often seems as if Life in general were conceived as in sure progress—as in an unbroken ascent. This admission—of Life's ever further Becoming—may then offer a certain compensation for the seeming failure of other aspects and ends of Life. This admission may inspire man with an intense desire to further the

development of the Universe. But how does it stand in connection with the validity of such a progress? It is true that it holds valid in connection with particular periods, and is able to find a specially favourable soil within certain domains; but it is not on account of this valid for the *whole* of existence. If the world, in the last resort, is nothing more than "mere Nature," every ascent is followed by a descent, every flow by an ebb, every growth by a decay, every life by a death; for this is the iron law of Nature, which governs from the solar system to the minutest elements. Observation of all this may not cause any pain to the mind that clings to the mere moment and exhausts itself in each moment; but to him who, as a *man*, reflects concerning things as a whole there cannot but arise burning questions concerning the results of the whole: the alternate billows and shallows which result in nothing substantial and the transformations of the whole of reality into a blind play of forces

—all this weighs heavily upon the soul, so that man must either deny the possibility of anything higher or take his stand upon a life superior to that of the natural world. Only such as do not think out their thoughts to their ultimate issues are satisfied with a mid-path between these two alternatives.

That this More of Life is, however, no mere fancy is shown in the world's actual development as presented in history. Such a movement would have been impossible if man had been wholly immersed in the blind pleasures of life. In fact, man is driven by such pressure *beyond* that "mere life" which has no concern for the future to a desire for a *personal experience*—to an effort after some kind of content for life, and to some kind of a *new being* by means of the development of an inward energy. In the degree in which this aspiration succeeds in the same degree also arises an effort after an *inner illumination*—after a Knowledge in a higher sense than is verified in a Biological sense.

Such a Biological Knowledge has definite conditions, and sets forth imperative demands, but it does not require much effort to show that such demands can never be fulfilled unless the process of life itself comes half-way to meet them and unless it prepares the way for them.

Knowledge is possible only if a stable fulcrum is able to persist in the midst of the flux of things, and if such a fulcrum is able to furnish durable truths out of the changes and transformations. Biology, however, is bound to come into conflict with such a view on account of the fact that it makes Thought entirely dependent upon the stream of Becoming. Biology has good reasons for seeing Mobility and Change present everywhere in human existence; but whilst seeing this it overlooks another fact—it overlooks the fact that in so far as a life of the mind and spirit of man arises, such a life is something to be contrasted with ordinary Mobility and Change; such a life is something which

initiates and furthers one kind of movement over against another kind. It is this fact which constitutes a *specific history of man* as distinct from his *merely natural* history. Though certainly the life of the spirit of man needs Time for its unfolding, it does not exhaust itself in the passing moment, nor, indeed, in the current of Time itself, but it is able to reach towards something that is independent of all Time and that has permanent validity for all times. The fact that man is able to preserve times and events in his *memory*, and is able to transform these events into a continuous series—the fact that he is able, within his own thought, to reawaken what has passed away in an external sense—is a proof that he is not a slave but a master of Time. Consequently the Past remains for man not merely as a fact of bare reflection but as something connected with his life. This being so, he believes himself to have discovered something in past times—especially on the summits of



such times—which possesses an enduring right and a durable energy—something which ever draws him back to itself, because on such summits of the Past special conditions existed which gave an intense fervour and a fund of energy which are absent in ordinary life, and because with the help drawn from such summits new and specific creativeness is able to kindle itself ever afresh. Thus there can arise something within Time which, by means of its content, separates itself from Time—something which does not lose its youth in the course of the centuries, and of which we may say in the words of Goethe—

*Die unbegreiflich hohen Werke  
Sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag.*

“The Deeds of high and noble nature  
Still wear the glory of their birth.”

Thus out of the labours of History there arises an *eternal content* which forms an arch above the embroilments and worries of daily life. The aspiration after such an *eternal content* is the strongest motive within the

movements of universal history, for without such a *content* all genuine connection is lost. The discovery of such a *content* offers to the work of Knowledge a great goal which is not wholly unrealisable; but such a goal cannot be possessed by Thought until Thought raises itself above Time and Change, and thinks of all things *sub specie æternitatis*.

Further, the movement of Life passes beyond the standpoint of Biology. As certainly as that all genuine Knowledge is self-knowledge—a rediscovery of the self in things—quite as certainly is it that all genuine Knowledge is a wholeness or totality of Life which embraces and holds together the manifold, and which postulates scope within which it may construct a relation of *whole* to *parts*. Such a scope for Life and such an effort from a whole to a whole are not offered by Biology, for Biology reduces Life into purely isolated factors—factors which may well be united and interwoven with one another, but which do not bind themselves together

into an inner totality or whole. Consequently the level of *mere connection* and *association of ideas* is not passed; and he who frames his Thought upon no higher level imports into the *effects* what he has actually and avowedly discarded in *principle*.

Now, all development—and especially all modern development—has brought forth connections of life which enable us to think from the standpoint of a *unity* or *whole*. For hardly anything is so characteristic of the modern world as the severance of independent complexes of Life and Thought from man and his aims, as well as the development of these complexes in accordance with their own methods, contents, and propelling power. It is thus in connection with Science, the Theory of the State, as well as in other provinces of life. A significant change is taking place with regard to the *Form* of every System, whilst the *Idea* of a System, with its demand for a thorough order, gradation, and organisation,

has gained a power hitherto unknown, and has led the *main thought* deeper than ever into a unity and breadth of the material which is handled. The *new Form*, however, would remain an *external schema* did it not serve for the moulding of the specific characters of the various provinces of life. Such a moulding has in fact resulted : the various provinces of life place their multiplicity under an all-embracing unitary idea; the various provinces stamp themselves more distinctly and produce greater effects upon the whole of life and also upon our view of the universe.

How much such a method is able to develop the significance of its value is clearly evident within the domain of industry. So long as this domain was present to man's conviction only in certain particular aspects of experience industry remained in the service of other provinces of life—especially in the service of ethics and religion—and consequently it failed to come to a develop-

ment of its specific mode and demands. It is only by means of its connection within a unity or whole, as has come to pass in modern times, that such a development has taken place; and, at the present day, we witness what mighty power has originated from such an achievement, so that instead of speaking of certain social questions in general we speak to-day of *the* social question and perceive a common problem in all the multiplicity of events.

This advance in importance of the particular provinces of life and of their emancipation from the immediate ordinary form of life is a striking phenomenon of modern times; and life has become incomparably richer and more mobile because of it. Knowledge however, finds a new task on account of a change of this sort, because it has it in its power by virtue of the energy of Thought to place itself within such a unity or whole and to develop the contents and demands implicit in Thought itself. Hence there arises here

a Thought out of the *facts themselves*—a Thought which gains superiority over all opinions and inclinations merely human and individual. Certainly new entanglements here arise. Indeed, the more clearly and energetically the particular individual provinces develop their characteristics the greater becomes the danger of these provinces getting separated from one another, the more urgently there is required a *unity* of life to work against such a dispersal and to clear the way for a better interpretation of things as well as for a transformation of the results of the particular provinces into what will prove a gain to them all. Such a unity is sought by modern man in the idea of the development of civilisation and culture—in a whole or totality of self-activity and spontaneity. On account of the fact that this effort desires a *precise conception* the task of discovering such a synthesis has become the task of tasks. But however much unrest and

uncertainty arise from the relation of the individual provinces to an embracing and governing unity and totality of life the problem, by means of the relation of one complex of life to another, is laid in a sphere above the natural impulses of life and of the mere increase of physical energy; and, also, what is striven after and achieved in this sphere is beyond the domain of Biology.

Finally, Thought would never have become an explanation of the *Object* and would never have become Knowledge if the movement of life had remained simply on the side of the *Subject* and had been unable to draw the *Object* into itself. Thought could never find a path to the *Object* if Life itself were not able to bridge the cleft between *Subject* and *Object*. But this it is able in fact to do; it accomplishes such a feat by means of the further development of the *external* and its transformation into an *internal*. The natural level of life and also the Biological conceptions are susceptible to the effects of work

done upon the *Object*, but the *Object* still on such levels remains largely *external*, and signifies for us only so much as serves our particular aims, whilst we are *indifferent* to the *specific nature* of the *Object*. Indeed, the work in connection with the life of man, for the most part, remains on this low level. But it does not remain there entirely. For upon the summit of mental and spiritual development the *Object* is drawn into the process of *Life* itself; the *Object* is included in the process of *Life*: *Life* here embraces both the potentiality of consciousness and the *Object*, and each receives a further development with and through the other. It is through this alone that life to its utmost circumference is set in activity, and that activity is raised into an activity of the *whole nature* of man; the *division* between *Consciousness* and *Object* lies *within* a comprehensive area of life, and is thus bridged into a unity without the submergence of the multiplicity. It is thus, for example, in connection with



artistic creativeness : it transplants the Object within the region of the Soul ; the Object is here quickened into life and is made a distinctive part of a comprehensive life. It is thus also in the relation of man to man : here the possibility arises, by means of *love*, of binding us together, so that what seemed previously entirely external now becomes an integral portion of our own life. Not less, too, is an inner feeling for the rights of others attained—a feeling which includes both aspects, external and internal, and which constitutes a comprehensive life to which Nature does not offer the least analogy.

Out of all the provinces, by means of these experiences, there arises a superstructure of life—*an inner world*—which signifies incomparably more within the soul than a mere reflection of external events ; there culminates here, within the whole of our life, a *new synthesis*, while our work in the world—*i. e.* the circle of life encompassed by definite work—differentiates itself clearly

from all which lies outside and which merely touches us from without. Just as this—our work in the world—invests us with self-reliance and fixity of purpose in contrast to the confusing impulses of the merely ordinary life so also is it able to point out clear paths for our efforts. All our activity, though our own, is still at the same time something *above* us; it possesses aims and energies; by means of its contact with the environment it constructs specific experiences and thus forms *the basis of a spiritual experience*—a spiritual experience which differentiates itself in the clearest possible manner from experiences “merely individual.” Anything great that has ever been achieved originated out of the energy and necessity of this inner activity. Without the belief in the power of this energy and activity, and without allowing ourselves to be carried along on its current, activity cannot overcome the indecisiveness of personal, emotional reflection, nor find security and joy.

But when thought yields to the *necessity* of the facts, there results an unmistakable elevation and activity in contrast with the ordinary situation of life. But granting that all this happens, is not man even here on a level which is no more than a subjective one? Is not man here only raised to the level of his own full activity, and does not *genuine life* appear still as a high goal, and in no manner as an inert point of departure merely given and ready-made? Genuine life is no ready-made thing, but a difficult problem—perhaps the most difficult of all problems. What is usually termed Life cannot be considered by the spiritual nature of man as anything other than a *semblance* of life or a play with life.

If so much more than the Biological conception acknowledges is imbedded in Life, the Knowledge which such a conception offers is insufficient; so that it is not difficult to show that, strictly speaking, the matter does not deal with any effort for a Knowledge

which ignores the question concerning the elevation of Life beyond the Biological situation. It is the service rendered by Biology to oppose conceptions which treat the world as a "railed-in" system, to prove the presence of effective movement everywhere, so that the *mobile* character of our world has succeeded in gaining due recognition—so that the world is understood as being plastic and fluid enough for adaptation to the transformations that are taking place, and to allow of further development by means of such transformations. In all this, Life becomes something of importance to Knowledge; so that Life does not run like an impetuous stream tearing everything it touches, but must allow of being directed within its proper banks; it must pass from the common, "dead-level" life into a *personal* life; it must develop a content within itself—it must develop itself right through all the unfolding of its energy into *self-subsistence*. This, too, is a Movement;

but it is a Movement which does not remain by itself, but which turns towards permanent "Ends" beyond all the "Becoming," and holds fast to such "Ends." Indeed, the very thinker who enunciated that "all is in flux" still placed over against the flux a Divine reason—a "revealed secret"; for without an elevation above the flux there is no possibility of Knowledge for us.

## CHAPTER V

### RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

BIOLOGY and Pragmatism, in spite of all their differences, are at one in the fact that both alike expect the Life which shall bring forth more immediacy and fulness to Knowledge to come about by means of an absorption in immediate existence, and also in the fact that both repudiate the possibility of an ascent beyond an existence that is nearest to our hands. Both are therefore of an empirical kind. But we have already seen that what is attained in an intellectual sense upon this path does not accomplish and cannot accomplish what we seek for or aspire after in Knowledge.

Indeed, what is to be found, in the form of Knowledge, on the level of immediate

existence, where everything resolves itself into isolated elements of Life, is in contradiction with our main thesis. What operates beyond the empirical level is not the caprice of the metaphysician and his love of conundrums, but is the situation of *experience itself*, which is essentially richer than empiricism presents it. For empiricism takes account of only one side of the facts—only of the *object* which the activity handles and by means of which it creates itself: the *subject*—the vehicle—of life is treated by empiricism as a kind of empty space into which something alien and external enters, and in which various phenomena meet and unite with one another; but the fact is forgotten that experience itself, with its syntheses and classification of phenomena, can never originate unless the vehicle—the subject—exercises *activity*—an activity which constitutes not merely a point of departure but which persists and moulds the subject of treatment into a form very

different from what it was at the start. The problem of the Subject—of “the vehicle”—however, leads immediately into the problem of Life; and, when this happens, it becomes evident that our life is not a mere piece of a “given” existence, and does not exhaust itself in its relation to the environment, but that it is able to pass beyond the concatenation of external existence, to gain an independence of its own, to develop a spontaneity, and to bring into existence a *world of deed*. Such a turn of Life gives an entirely new view of Reality, and places Reality before us as a great quest. The main question now becomes: How external existence relates itself to this *world of deed*; the question is whether external existence corresponds to the demands of the *world of deed* or whether it remains in the rear of such a *world* or, indeed, whether it contradicts such a *world*. It is commonly held in all religions as well as in creative Art and genuine Philosophy that



in connection with such questions as these great difficulties arise. Here the world which arises within the soul and the world which we discover around us and partly within us enter into a sharp conflict with each other. Religion, Art and Philosophy affirm not *given existence* but the "Yea" upon which they all rest; they discover such a "Yea" only in the break with natural existence—only through a convulsion and a negation of the same. This denial becomes to Religion, Art, and Philosophy, in spite of all the distress occasioned by it, an essential factor of Spiritual Life; indeed, it appears as the "salt of life," without which life loses its savour and becomes soulless. It is first of all the negation which leads Life to a right movement, energy, and depth; for he who holds within his soul and turns into a conviction what the world-historical activity of mankind has reached in this direction and what it has experienced in the form of freedom, expansion, and develop-

ment, will view the contraction of life upon "given" existence as an imprisonment in a cage and will repudiate it as a hindrance; he will protest against its being set up as the self-evident and only possible solution of the problem of life.

That the representatives of empiricism do not find such a situation unbearable is possible only because they furtively *supplement* a *higher world*; they reflect upon such a world in their own light, and aim to endow it with "goods" of a lower value. It is thus that the social empiricist explains human society though he discovers a superior life of the spirit present within society; it is thus that he uses such a superior life of the spirit for his own particular ends, and, indeed, that he makes this life serve as a means and instrument for his own development. It is thus that the naturalist ascribes his life and its meaning and significance to the physical energies of Nature. This process of supplementing things in order to view them

in a more complete manner is only too apt to be overlooked, and therefore possibilities and powers are ascribed to environing existence which, in fact, are only achieved through the inner presence of a *quickenig deed-world*. As soon as this mistake is perceived only one alternative remains, viz. to acknowledge such a *deed-world* as the very basis, and to accept what is *within it* as the true standpoint of life. When this is done, the result is that we are carried beyond all "mere nature" and all that is "merely human" to an *autonomous inwardness*—to a *spiritual* life. What "given" existence is, and how much there is to be gained from it, can only be made clear and decisive from such a standpoint.

The matter as hitherto considered shows two main attempts to determine the relation of Thought and Life as well as an effort

to bring Knowledge into a safe path. On the one hand, Thought raises its head independently of Life; it turns Life into a mere tool of its own, and seeks (be it in the form of scientific research or of philosophic speculation) to engender Knowledge out of itself. On the other hand, Life appears as something independent of Thought—imposes its own nature on Thought and transforms it into a mere tool. But in neither of these two modes is a happy solution of the problem reached. Great as is the work of research within its own province, and great as its independent value may be within such a province, still such research, as we conceive it in this book, cannot mean anything more than a mere preparatory stage of Knowledge. Whatever directivity or purpose, in the form of intellectual achievement, is ascribed in this manner to the life which lies nearest to our hands, there is not ascribed to it an *inner connection*, so that whatever can in reality be ascribed to it at all far rather confirms man in

his initial narrowness than frees him from it. And, when we turn to the method of philosophic speculation for the solution of the problem of the universe, we have already seen that this method, in its turn, presents no secure relation to the whole of reality, but that, in spite of all its independent procedure, the conclusions it reaches are no more than a web of forms and semblances.

If neither Thought alone nor Life alone leads to the goal aimed at, there necessarily arises the question whether the two can be made to co-operate, and whether the goals presented can be combined in a free and friendly union. In fact, neither Thought without Life nor Life without Thought is complete: the separation makes Thought merely *formal*, and brings Life into danger of diminishing, or even entirely losing its spiritual character. Thus the establishment of an inner union between the two in the interest of each separate side is an urgent necessity for spiritual preservation.

That this is a problem not for the mere philosopher but for the whole of mankind is evidenced by the fact that fundamental *types of life* arise and proceed right through the history of the world. Thus antiquity shows this fact in the distinction of Greek and Roman, and modern times up to the present day presents, for example, German and English types. The German places the work of Thought *first*, and is inclined to understand practical life only as an application of general principles; he will have everything that appears to him valuable proved and mediated, and thus runs the risk of obviating the immediate impressions of things. The advantage of this mode lies in the setting up of *universal ideas* and in the width of its mental horizon. Also, in the setting up of a systematic and methodical procedure of work the German attempts to lift himself above his surroundings and to quicken something universal within his own soul. But the

advantage which such a method possesses in dealing with the problem of the universe and with the mental creativeness which issues out of such a problem can easily become a disadvantage in dealing with the problems of social life. The German is inclined to remain too much in the region of brooding and reflection, and also to exaggerate the value of mere learning within a special province. Thus Knowledge can easily come to mean something apart from action—something hovering over the waters, and unable to find a resting-place for the soles of its feet. And, further, in this kind of intellectualism there lies an exaggerated opinionativeness—an opinionativeness which believes itself to be something special—something which can ignore the common ends of mankind, and which easily leads even to a petty struggle for rights, and to a quest after things of no real moment. All this, it is true, is only the dark shadow in a degenerated form of something that is

of real significance and value, but it is a dark and dangerous shadow.

When we turn to the English type we discover an inverse danger. Here the strength lies in the development of the *practical* life—in the open mind for the impressions of experience, and in the attempt to grasp any situation that presents itself and to value it; and especially in the building up of a social life in which scientific potentialities soon pass into fruitful activity. On such a ground as this, individuals find themselves together in freedom and are able to subordinate individual proclivities. Such a union produces far more effects in the visible world and far more security for governing the world than the German method. But this method, too, has its dangers in the fact that a society formed on these lines is liable to beget a uniformity of development—a uniformity which injures the development of true individuality. Here, too, it is insufficiently recognised



that the problem of the universe lies not in something connected with life in a supplementary manner, but in something which actually belongs to life from the very outset, and which helps to form its mental and spiritual character. The true originality of mental and spiritual life can suffer detriment through absorption in concern for social ills alone, and it comes very near to a relapse into utilitarianism if there is not a strong, and, indeed, a religious conviction within the social order—a conviction which recognises a background of an eternal order of things valuable for its own sake, and which withstands many of the impressions of life and of society. But we have to bear in mind that behind this *practical reason* there ought to arise an ideal of a distinctive character. Thus each of the two types—the German and the English—stands for an extremely valuable type of human life; but it is clear that each has need of being supplemented in an important way; and it is also

clear that humanity as a whole must emerge beyond the opposition of these two types of life.

In so far as we have dealt with the problem of Knowledge, we have sought for an inner elevation of man through the working out of an inner relation to the world; and we now see that neither can mere Thought guarantee such an effect nor can a *new world* arise within the soul by merely occupying ourselves with the external world as it presents itself to us from moment to moment. Thus there seems only one way out of the difficulty: viz. that a *world* should develop within the domain of man—a *world* which signifies a synthesis of life, which is at the same time man's own possession and also something above him—a *world* which allows man to experience in a form of *immediacy* the *essential depth* of things. We cannot renounce such a *world*: an external world is closed to us; for the creation of a *new* one power fails us. Thus if we are

not to surrender all hope, a *world* has to develop in our own sphere and from our own life. A *new life* of a cosmic character has to arise in us; otherwise there is no Knowledge and no inner elevation. But how all this is to be understood and how it can be reached it remains now to be investigated.



## II.—EXPLANATORY PART



## CHAPTER VI

### THE MAIN THESIS

OUR critical investigation led us to advance the claim that in the human sphere an *independent complex of life*, yea, even a *world*, arises; such a *world* as only results from the movements of life itself and which remains present to life, is able to become a Standard for one's own thought and a subject-matter for one's own knowledge. A relation so vital will not be attained without an essential conversion of the existing situation, but only in so far as it is *new* does such a relation succeed in becoming an anchorage in the various situations of human life. For so far as human life exceeds "mere Nature" and produces effects of a mental and spiritual

kind, it always involves *the tendency towards an independent Wholeness* ; it strives for the development of a kingdom—indeed, of an *entire world*. It is thus in Science and Art, in Law and Morality—everywhere it is a *wholeness* which includes and governs the manifold; it is the presence of a synthesis which gives meaning and value to the *particular* achievements.

But such a tendency towards a whole or totality is in the first instance a mere regulative idea for the individual man, and as long as he remains on this level he cannot possibly attain autonomy or rid himself of an admixture of intentions and opinions “merely human”; he cannot work out the content of his own nature into clearness and power. A contradiction between the *content* as well as between the *claims* of what he is striving after on the one hand, and the *form of existence* on the other hand—*i. e.* the *mode* in which *existence* becomes operative in us—is not to be mistaken. This



contradiction is overcome—a contradiction whose persistence threatens to bring all mental and spiritual movement to nought—if the life breaks loose from such a binding and particularity, and seeks to connect itself together into *a whole independent and self-subsistent*. But for this task the operation of Thought is indispensable. We recognise the peculiar potency of Thought in the fact that it has the power to separate itself from conditions “merely human” and to further develop itself; so that in opposition to such a condition it can bring about *a real event within the soul*; it is able to bring into a *system* what it thus experiences, and endeavours to transform it into a graduated and articulated *whole*. Thought is thus pre-eminently the world-organ of spiritual life—the power whereby spiritual life ascends to an independent reality. Thus, there is present in human nature something *essential and substantial* which is in process of continual realisation, so that here a significant turn of

life follows over against the *natural* order of things; and it is on this fact that all hope for genuine Knowledge rests.

A specific relation of Thought and Life arises within such a movement. Thought now discovers itself to be within Life and realises that it is encompassed by Life as part and member of it; but, at the same time, Thought is able to separate itself so far as to reveal an independent domain of its own—a domain capable of reacting upon the remaining life in a developing and elevating manner. Life as a whole appears accordingly not as a simple magnitude and as a ready-made datum but as something which has first of all to seek itself; and as something which cannot discover itself without a separation that comes about only through toilsome work—as something which climbs to its own summit only by overcoming the contradictions in which it is entangled on the natural level. An intuitive view is thus gained by means of such a cosmic work

as places the totality of effort in the service of such a task; and thus the absolute right and, indeed, the necessity of life are confirmed.

The first condition of this progressive independence of life is this: that the life of the spirit, be it by the favour of special circumstances, or by means of deep feeling, or by a fervent aspiration, or by self-development or self-preservation, always rises above the usual warfare of elements within itself, and takes a specific orientation; it discovers a common goal, creates an all-pervading atmosphere, so that it finally develops a specific mode of life. There can spring from this an incentive to, and fertilisation of, Thought, so that Thought is driven beyond "mere form"—beyond the mere schemata of reality—to the creation of a reality filled with content; and, at the same time, Thought leads Life to an entire autonomy and to a superiority to all that is "merely human." This is the *inverted order* of existence which obtains

in all spiritual life; such an inverted order becomes a progressive independence and freedom over against "mere man"—an independence and freedom which are witnessed in all branches of spiritual work and which bring these branches to flower and fruit. Such an inverted order will further work, over against the prior condition of man, as a rousing influence strengthening and elevating his nature; but it accomplishes all this only because there stands behind it a *wholeness of life* which seeks its own completion within this inverted order. Thought thereby becomes Knowledge, since a reality which arises out of the activity of Thought cannot isolate itself from the domain of Knowledge but percolates into that domain.

This movement takes place in three main stages—the stages of Criticism, of Creativeness, and of Work. As Thought brings to effect its specific method in the process of life, and especially its claim to originality

and independence of life, so it will feel the *prior* situation as one of narrowness and halfness, and will make it its main task to free man from it. Thus all genuine Philosophy is concerned in showing in an urgent and clear manner the insufficiency of the existing situation, in rousing man out of his easy smugness and idle repose, and in revealing the pettiness, insecurity, and semblance of his supposed possessions; and, further, genuine Philosophy is concerned in pointing out the ways and means which will help to remove the danger in which man is placed. Herein Philosophy aims at even heightening the defects and ills of the special historical situation in order that the situation may become a problem and a task to humanity. Consequently the situation increases in difficulty; through the special need of the times now felt Philosophy sees a task for all times. Thus it cannot expect help from the transient achievements of the times, nor from merely momentary impressions;

but only by means of penetrating and permanent transformations can the redemption and holiness of mankind be realised. Regarded from this standpoint, Philosophy presents itself especially as a power of criticism and doubt and, indeed, of dissolution and destruction; it takes from man the faith which hitherto satisfied him, so that it is no wonder that it often seems as a crushing burden and encounters much resistance, and is often regarded with dislike and rejected.

The collision of Philosophy with the historical situation of mankind is especially severe in regard to the problem of Knowledge itself. It was the uncertainty arising from the *idea* of the existence of a firm basis, along with the difficulty of finding it, which filled the great thinkers with wrath and drove them to sharp oppositions and to the most valiant efforts for a solution of the problem. It was only through the fiery furnace of doubt and negation that a

path to truth was discovered. Thus Plato broke away from all the merely human foundations of things; thus Descartes began his work with the acceptance of radical doubt; and similarly Kant reduced all prior solutions of the problem into an intolerable dogmatism. To all the great thinkers Truth appeared unattainable on the path of the preservation and furtherance of *what had already been attained*; it was only by means of a decisive breach with all this and by gaining an entirely new point of departure that Truth could be attained.

Such an opposition of Philosophy as we have referred to is by no means limited to the *intellectual* province; it passes also into the other provinces of life. How questionable did what men had acclaimed as virtue appear to Plato and Kant; how impure did the motives which are wont to govern human actions appear to them; how energetically Philosophy passed, by means of the Beautiful, beyond a conception which allowed sensuous

pleasures and petty aims to enter into the idea and even to govern it; how low and merely shadowy did that which is customarily striven for as happiness appear, and what low motives were often present in religion itself! Certainly Philosophy includes more than this, but it includes this as well. Yet beyond what is included here there arises an effort to overcome the "dead level" life with all its painful ingredients; and it is the task of Philosophy to extend this effort over the whole of human existence and to lead us to struggle *from a whole to a whole*.

Criticism can lead us further only when it is considered not as a terminus *ad quem* but as a terminus *a quo*; the Nay has to be driven further, and this can be brought about only through the energy of a Yea which, though concealed and unfinished, still stands behind the Nay and works upon it with living force. It is in this manner alone that the vague Nay transforms itself into something



definite—into a *question*; it is thus alone that the *quest* is removed from the region of vacillating feeling and assumes a definite orientation. From the mere reflective criticism of discursive thought much feeling arises, but never is anything great brought to birth in such a manner.

But again, it is necessary for the *nucleus*, which is contained in every genuine criticism, to develop, and this development can take place only by means of a *great turn*—only by means of a transposition into a domain of *creativity*. A severance of the movement which accomplishes all this from the “merely human” situation towards spirituality has to take place—a severance which means an elevation beyond needs and ends “merely human” as well as a focusing of everything upon an entire *self-subsistence* which can develop its own potencies and follow its own laws. It is in this manner alone that the life of the spirit becomes superior to the “merely human” and brings

man into a new relation with Reality. This new kingdom does not lie close to our hands—it is not something we can enter into without effort; but it has first to be *built* by us, and in order that this may happen our work and sacrifice are needed. In *the great turn* towards this new kingdom and in the *preservation* of what is actually gained here there lies a *personal deed*—a *deed* which not only forms a bridge to the new kingdom but which also *persists*, carries all along, and tells upon all activity. This new kingdom may be designated a *world of deed*. But throughout it is no work of “mere man”—it is not something which he imagines and spins out of himself. What happens here *within* man is at the same time *above* him and raises him through sacrifice *beyond himself*. In fact, what happens is the unfolding of an *independent phenomenon*—it is the revelation of a *new world* whose realisation makes us quite other than we were before, and which forms the centre of gravity

of our inmost nature. Through all this, our entire view of reality is changed; *external existence* and the *world of deed* get differentiated without falling entirely apart. The *world of deed* cannot develop without demanding an *autonomy*, apart from external existence, for its own original and creative life; it will set the world of external existence in its true light; it will seek points of contact with such a world; it will draw together the separate threads of existence and combine them; it will elevate and unify all the relativity of things; it will not only clarify all existence, but will also envisage existence as a whole and grant it a meaning as a whole. Thus, within man's own domain, *two worlds* appear; and, on account of this fact, man gains an incomparable expansion and greatness. For the first time, definite questions originate concerning the real meaning of existence; and again for the first time, an experience not of "mere man" but of *spiritual life* is gained—an experience which affects the

whole of life and existence. Thus a powerful movement into reality originates; and as such a movement presupposes an entire change and a new standard of life there appears a *Metaphysic* within life itself. Such a *Metaphysic of Life* is not exposed to the opposition which is raised against the prevalent view of Metaphysics; because this Metaphysic of Life is not mere Thought, which constructs a merely conceptual view of the universe, but is a *new life*—a great actuality—which arises within our own domain, and which culminates in the removal of man from what he possesses by nature to a life which is original, and from an atmosphere “merely human” to a superhuman world. Thus the Metaphysic of Life is not something that is merely added to a finished and enclosed world—not something that is as useless as it is impossible: but the world nearest to our hands appears from this standpoint of the life of the spirit as throughout insufficient, as wanting in self-subsistence and

also in a genuine life. It is therefore an aspiration after a true and genuine life as well as after a Reality originating out of such a life which renders necessary a transformation and, at the same time, a Metaphysic. Without such a turn, as well as a constantly progressive autonomy of spirituality, all movement towards spirituality is stopped short, and all human effort sinks into incompleteness and insecurity.

The New cannot possibly seek the proof of its truth by means of an agreement with an *existence merely given*, but it becomes necessary to elevate and to set in a new light all that presents itself to us. Every proof here lies in the fact that the New is able, in connection with all that happens within the life of the spirit, to bind together individual factors otherwise isolated, and to free these from all alienation, and, finally, to lead the whole of life to full originality. But certain as it is that the main work is here done from *within*, still the creativeness does not reach

its entire development by means of *mere ideas*, but has to come into contact with the surrounding world; and it is only through this contact as well as through the overcoming of the world that creativeness reaches its summits. Therefore we perceive *work* and *danger* in our task; but it is a task upon whose fulfilment the self-maintenance of man and also the possibility of Knowledge rest.

That we are here concerned with inner necessities and not with subjective constructions is clearly shown by the universal work of Philosophy. Philosophy shows that every great and fruitful achievement includes a severance of the self from its prior situation and the creation of an actual autonomy of creative power. It is presented thus, for example, by Plato. It is true that he was surrounded by artistic features of life, presented by his people and his age, but it was reserved for him to free all such features from the narrowness and confusion of situa-

tions “merely human,” and to reach an *independent Kingdom of Forms* and of a *self-subsisting World of Ideas*—both of which became the bearers of an original life. This actual autonomy of the *Form* was a purification—an elimination of all that was vulgar and immoral—through which the nature of man effects a greater working out of its characteristics. This actual autonomy of the *Form* was now able to discover within its own domain a principle for co-ordinating the manifold; and out of division and reunion, out of harmony and gradation, there emerged a plastic work of Art which became a fundamental constituent of Reality. The whole of existence experienced here a thorough winnowing: on the one hand, the World of Forms could once more discover itself in existing things; it could draw to itself all that was related to it until it illumined all to their very foundation; but, on the other hand, there remained a *contradiction* and, indeed, a deep darkness which

resisted all illumination. But in spite of this twofold aspect of things, the original chaos, with its apathetic unconcern, was now dispelled; creativeness and analysis had brought forth a *new* view of man and the universe; out of the *whole* into all the *manifold* there were now projected a task and a quest; and thus everything was brought into movement and was compelled to reveal its own nature. Now it became necessary to prove *each* individual object in accordance with its position and work in the *whole*; grades and successions of things now blended into a great life-tissue.

The turn to religion brought forth another kind of view at the time of waning antiquity. Here, again, ordinary life showed a mixture of *higher* and *lower*. In waning antiquity we find, on the *lower* side, a longing of the "natural man" for freedom from pain and need and for a transportation into greater pleasure and happiness, all of which was expected to be brought about in a super-



natural manner without man's own effort; on the *higher* side, we find an aspiration after an elevation beyond all "merely human" modes—an aspiration after an inner communion, and, indeed, after a union with God and after a new nature by means of such a union. It was only in the hands of Philosophy that Life found a corrective for the extravagances of much that existed in this epoch of waning antiquity. The corrective came through such men as Plotinus, Origen, and Augustine; it was through their work that the *anthropocentric* mode of life gave way to a *theocentric* mode, while, at the same time, its full value was given to the *new life* itself. And at the same time, the problem of Knowledge entered upon a new phase. The union of man's nature with the Divine was now seen to grant power to understand and experience the whole of Reality as proceeding from God and as being the fundamental basis and unity from which all the manifold originated. Looked at and illu-

mined from this standpoint, *external existence* was conceived as the *lower* grade of life; each individual thing was regarded as deriving its value only in its relation to the whole and through what it signifies to the whole; everywhere it became necessary to seek for this *Whole* with its Infinity and to submerge oneself in this; all effort thus presented itself as a desire of the Part for the Whole, of the visible for the invisible, of Time for Eternity. Evil and delusion were conceived as having arisen on account of the *individual being* of things breaking violently away from the *unity* upon which their *being* depended and attempting to signify something apart from their source. Knowledge likewise in its inner nature undergoes a transformation; it leaves behind the artistic synthesis of the manifold and becomes possessed by a quest and an aspiration after Infinity in each of the individual situations in which it finds itself; clear conceptions now give way to an insight toned more by

feeling; until it is now held that all the visible is no more than a metaphor.

The modern world plumes itself on having abolished the cleft between man and the world by means of some form of immanental doctrine. But beyond this the modern world is now breaking away from *immediate existence* and is developing a process of life superior to such external existence. This is illustrated especially in the recognition and development of a *reason* independent of the individual and of his situation in life. This development has not only become the basis of Knowledge but also the Standard of life; not only has there resulted an elevation beyond the standpoint of Psychology with its merely descriptive methods; but also the aspiration after a thorough-going elevation of human existence, as well as after a complete dispersal of all darkness and misery—both of which are to be discovered in modern life—derives its rights and its driving-power simply out of the belief in such a *reason* superior to

man and yet present in man. This belief has proceeded into the world as a power of clarification and orientation as well as of a stimulation and further development; it tolerates nothing which contradicts its claims, but what it conceives as valid it unifies the more closely and renders the more effectual. Knowledge, however, receives here its main task, viz. to develop a connected sphere of Thought and to illumine the whole of existence from such a sphere. The logical structure which thus originates—a domain of general laws and unbroken causal connections—seeks to discover everywhere, in such a turn towards existence, simple fundamental forms of occurrences and solid connections in order not only to illumine existence but also to draw human activity into such a sphere of influence. Here, let it be observed, it is by means of the *Form* of existence [as this is found in consciousness] that Reality reveals itself to man; but the fact that the Form

disclosed is not of an æsthetic but of a logical kind is bound to transform, in a fundamental manner, the whole procedure as well as the whole achievement of man.

Particular thinkers show the characteristic features of their thought in the manner in which they understand and treat this *Reason* superior to man; their point of departure becomes specially manifest in the fact that the activity of *Reason* connects itself together more and more from *individual processes* into a *totality or whole*. Thus Descartes in his propagation of "innate ideas" contends for the fundamental idea of the independence of Reason; and the abandonment of this by Locke was in fact an abandonment of the independence of Thought. Accordingly Kant raised the *theoretical* and the *practical Reason* into a connected whole; and finally Hegel conceived of the whole of Reality as being engendered out of the creative energy of Reason. Thus Reason, in the course of such a development, attains more and more

autonomy and unity, so that its effects upon *existence* as well as its transforming power become ever greater and ever more penetrating.

An inverted order of the original human situation is thus manifested in the teachings of Descartes, Kant, and Hegel : they presented an order other than that of the inability to step beyond Nature or than that of viewing man as a mere piece of Nature or than that of following Knowledge downward to mere association of ideas. For unquestionably the immediate existence of man shows—if only in his ideas and imagination—a parting of man from Nature; and an emancipation from a false view of man is only possible if the external world is clearly contrasted with his own mind and spirit, and if the situations which lie nearest to his hands in the external world—situations full of enigmas and demanding inquiry—are worked out by his own mind and spirit into ever larger connections and totalities. Viewed from the

human standpoint, the whole meaning of Nature is an ideal which it is necessary to realise. Whether such a view of a parting from first impressions and such a movement from a whole to a whole present an entirely different characteristic of life from that presented in the results of Naturalism; or whether, within life itself, form and content contradict each other in a manner which cannot be tolerated—all this is a question by itself. In any case, even Naturalism itself declares that all Knowledge consists in an elevation beyond the situation nearest to our hands, and in the setting of life in a new situation—in an independent sphere.

Thus the origination of an independent individual life, and also of social life within the domain of man, constitutes the decisive step for the possibility of Knowledge; for merely out of the situation nearest to our hands such a step is impossible. This turn alone clears away the confusion which sur-

rounded us from the outset, and in whose thick mist all forms disappeared; it places existence, for the first time, from the totality to its elements, face to face with a problem, and demands an answer to this problem. Separation and creation are consequently (as in the Biblical history of Creation) definitely connected together and dependent upon each other; without separation there is no creation, and without creation no separation. There thus opens out a double mode of existence—an experience out of the development of one's own *world of deed*, and an experience out of our relation with the *world of existence*. According to the different modes in which the *world of deed* shapes itself will different things be sought for and found in the *world of existence*; and, also, the *nature* and the *gains* of experience will subsequently become divided. The problem here is not concerning the accidental things of human opinion and inclination, but concerning the appearance of a new life—



of what casts light upon darkness, and of what gives a definite direction to the investigation. True, such a life needs our *continuous deed*, but its actual content and inner connections as well as the obligation it exercises over us prove clearly enough that it depends in no manner merely upon our subjective choice. Here appears, through and through, the life of the spirit, not as a *new arrangement* of an *old world*, but as the inauguration of an essentially *new* one. Human life does not run merely on a flat surface, but discovers its own nucleus only by means of a transition and transformation.

But certainly as the world of creativeness finds itself at the outset placed in the midst of opposition and bound at the same time to proceed on its own course, then it becomes clear that this *new world*—when it becomes a *whole* and governs all—cannot remain permanently within the realm of such stubborn opposites: it must, with-

out giving up its independence, yet return to the world which it had left behind and must attempt to penetrate into it; it must do this most of all on account of the fact that its own development is at stake, for only by some such understanding with things outside itself—only by means of a struggle with its oppositions—can the life of creativeness in man find its way from the great outlines of its ideal-plan to a full and essential development. Along with this, Philosophy moulds itself in the direction of *activism*—an *activism* which, at the outset, seems to turn only towards the *external*, but which in reality reaches as far as the nucleus of life itself and develops further such a nucleus. This entrance of life into the region of the multiplicity of things carries the work of Thought into ramifications and refinements hitherto unexperienced. And as this multiplicity has to remain within an *embracing whole* there originate the idea and the demand of a

*System*—of a systematic order of a World of Thought. And further than this, the movement now extends over the whole extent of the multiplicity and gains quite a different relation to it than has hitherto been the case. This *activism*, however, is able to penetrate into and re-mould its material with a living energy only if it possesses such a transforming and pioneering creativeness at its back; for without this the *activism* does not free itself from nor pass beyond the external order of things and a soulless scheme of ideas. Thus there are two types of great thinkers—heroes of mental transformation and of creative renewal, and heroes of energetic work and of strong will. The former type has to precede the latter; for the former prepares the ground on which the latter must work to sow, to weed, and to reap. A Plato is followed by an Aristotle, a Descartes by a Spinoza and a Leibniz, a Kant by a Hegel. The movement of Thought needs both types,

for it is thus alone that the work can fully succeed.

But as the two types are dependent upon each other it cannot but happen that obstacles and misconceptions should prevail in both. *Activism*, for example, suffers injury when it is considered as merely practice and effect, for in fact it has also to carry forward not only the *external* but also the *internal* situation of things. On the other hand, mental creativeness must be looked upon as something more than a mere preparatory stage for *activism*—it has ever to present us with *norms* superior to the transient aspects and impressions of the world and of the moment, and it has to deal with the orientation of our quests. *Activism* does not connect itself with the external world without effort, but does so through our *deed-world* alone. And, further, *activism* reaches its full development within the domain of the inner life of the spirit itself, for it is within such an inner domain alone

that *external* existence is first of all transformed into something *internal*, since we must not forget that *activism* cannot arise from a mere surface-connection of the *world of deed* and the *world of sense*. The fact that a cleft permanently remains between our own inner *deed-world* and the *world of outer existence* has not always been clearly recognised by some of the great heroes of the World of Thought as, for instance, is the case with Aristotle; and consequently such thinkers appeared more empirical than they really were. Also, in the return to *external existence* the contrast persists: the scrutiny and analysis of the things of external existence cannot be understood as a means for realising the entire meaning of the external world.

Thus three different elements are discovered in the work of Knowledge—*Criticism*, *Creativeness*, and *Activism*. Their equable working-out and their fruitful co-operation constitute an ideal that is only partially

realised at the best. Every disturbance of the equilibrium of the three gives rise to misunderstandings and dangers. Creativeness is, as we have already seen, the enlivening soul of the whole. Without a union with Creativeness, Criticism degenerates into fruitless disputes, and Activism into a mere routine. But Creativeness needs, on its side, the help of the other two elements. Without penetrating Criticism, Creativeness fails to stand out in bold relief from the ordinary shallow life, and fails in self-reliance as well. But unless we pass from both into Activism the necessary clarification is lacking, and effects which are possible come to nought. Therefore the different tasks serve *one specific total-task*. The question where such a total-task lies, what it means, and how it may be accomplished, is the question which has separated the great thinkers of the world from one another.

Thus *Thought* appears as an indispensable co-worker in the perfecting of *Life*. But, at the same time, it is evident that Thought not only *gives* but also *receives*—that, by means of its union with Life it is carried far beyond what it could of itself achieve. For, from its own energies, Thought can only weave outlines and forms—in itself it remains as a quest for a *universal* and as a quest for a means of connecting the *manifold*. But all this is more of a setting than of a solving of the task. The demand of the mind for universality [as mental concepts] and for a connected view of the external world is no more than the programme of what has to be achieved. When all this programme is complete, we have still to inquire in what directions universality is to be sought and in what manner concatenations of things are to be set forth. Now all this remains at the outset in entire darkness; and if no direct orientation is given to Thought and no secure fulcrum given

to effort, activism loses itself in worthless abstractions, empty forms, and semblances. Thought, however, obtains such an indispensable and direct orientation by means of the actually autonomous life which is now raised to a specific atmosphere of its own, and which develops throughout by means of its own activity. The general impression of things confirms this fact, while the characteristics of the main epochs of the world show still more clearly that they conferred a specific character upon the work of Thought, be such work artistic as in Antiquity, religious as in the Middle Ages, or scientific as in Modern Times. In all this we are able to see that epochs do not merely distinguish between a *More* and a *Less*, but that they also conceive the common goal quite differently, and proceed upon different paths to reach it. It is not the *answer* but the *question* which sets each epoch upon a path different from the rest. Such differences reach deeply into the work



done in the world and have shaped each piece of such work in a specific manner; each of the main epochs has its own special conception of Idea and Judgment, of Substance and Causality; each develops a different methodology, and has its own way of binding the manifold into a totality. It is only such a thorough development—it is only such a turn towards the *concrete*—that can lead Thought to a definite connection and combination with things, and can enable it to bring its entire nature to expression.

This turn towards the *concrete* does not signify, however, the overcoming of Thought by the special situation or time, for even in such a turn Thought maintains its own independence and seeks in such a turn its own development; the *particular* mode of the operation of Thought appears here as the continuation of a *general* mode—as a fulfilment of the demand which a *general* mode of Thought involves. In order that the *particular* mode may achieve this, the

difference of these two standards of Thought must be present in the mind; and it has to be made clear ever afresh whether the *general* is present in the *special*, in order to protect the *special* from the contingencies to which it is exposed. Thought thus includes a movement from a *universal* to a *specific* mode—from a contriving and regulating activity to a guiding and productive one. But Thought has not its main task in bringing Reality under the mere form of universality—a conception which constitutes the deepest root of intellectualism, and which is liable to paint the world purely grey in grey. In fact, the *form* of the *universality* is only a way and a means for working out the concrete material; but the turn towards this is not discovered by Thought within itself alone: it is discovered only in union with the autonomous and ever progressive life. Thought is also, after the nature of its inmost construction, placed upon an *experience*; and all Philosophy and Theory

of Knowledge, which reject such an experience and place themselves upon their own brooding reflections, invariably fail to pass out of the realm of appearances to that of genuine Reality.

But though such a union leads Thought to its goal and moulds it in a productive manner, still, at the same time, the union threatens Thought with a loss which far outweighs all gains. We have already seen that there has originated not merely one specific mode of Thought and Knowledge but that different periods produced various modes, and that the actions as well as the beliefs of earlier times must give way to those of later times. Does not this fact lead to a destructive relativity? And will not Truth thus become a mere slave of the age, and will not Philosophy become a mere result of the conclusions of history, civilisation, and past culture, and thus suffer destruction from what succeeds these? Such a consequence would be unavoidable if the

particular phases fell entirely outside one another, and if a later phase entirely displaced an earlier, and if the manifold did not somehow bind itself together into a common unity and a common effort so that each achievement obtained may thus have a value. That such an effort arises is shown by the circumstance that each individual phase does not simply appear as a mere expression of its particular period, but is valid for all periods and is permanent; and it is from this conviction that effort obtains courage and energy for creativeness. That such a conviction is not a vain presumption of contending parties but a well-founded one is shown by the actual achievements of the individual mouldings of life, by the rise of a life entirely active and embracing both inward power and outward material, and by the development of a spiritual sphere of life and of a specific reality. As certain as that the whole of such a movement is no mere mechanism, but carries within itself

a creative energy, quite as certain is it also that Philosophy, when it leads to such a movement towards the summits of life, is no mere passing view of things—no mere reflection of the subject. The fact stands before us that certainly, under specially favoured circumstances, an *inversion* of the customary order of life did actually take place—an autonomy of life arose, and out of itself illumined the world. And the movement of life even passed beyond such an autonomy and found itself still in need of more breadth and depth; and here again the entire originality which is demanded of such an autonomy is not yet won, and consequently life is compelled to pass beyond the situation already attained and even to step into fresh troubles and doubts. But though the universal experience of history shows many movements and transformations still there proceeds *one total movement* right through all the different phases. Life seeks itself within such a total movement—it seeks within such

a movement its own *self-subsistence*, and, at the same time, its own entire content and its own entire depth. It is, in the last resort, one and the same inquiry which constitutes the aims sought in different formations of life. It is true that the struggles and transformations of the ages bear witness with great clearness, on the one hand, that the level and the main direction of the movement are not given us from the outset and that there does not lie within our consciousness a ready-made answer to our problems—answers which are only to be brought to the surface; but, the struggle and transformations bear witness, on the other hand, that our efforts do not entirely go to pieces, but that throughout the whole movement—right up from its very source—*the same necessity* works and relates all the efforts to one goal. The soil upon which Truth can grow is not presented to us from the very beginning, but we have first of all to struggle for its possession within the

experiences of History; but we should not seek for it at all had there not been present a strong *necessity* of our own inmost nature—a *necessity* which proceeds right through the ages.

Such a conviction rejects both an un-historical idealism and the usual form of the doctrine of evolution. For this particular kind of idealism presents the view that either “innate ideas” or a spiritual organism is present in us as a ready-made quality from the very beginning, and that this, by means of the energetic work of Thought, can be immediately set in activity. According to this theory historical work has then no longer any great task or any constraining motive. But such a theory lacks in appreciation and also in introspection if it conceives man as having the value of his life determined by a given fate which compels life to float along its current, or if the individual phases of life and the situations in which man is placed are regarded as mere pieces of

a great mechanism. Whether we take the scientific theory of Darwin or the logical theory of Hegel the main facts we have here under consideration are not at all altered. In both systems Freedom is sacrificed; and our life and actions are driven into rigid grooves if we are not independent co-workers but only mere tools controlled by some external power. The facts stand out quite otherwise in the interpretation which we present here. It is true that in our view of the matter it is recognised that a *self-subsistent life* and a truth superior to Time are somehow imbedded in the nature of man—elements which work within him as driving energies and which become the Standards for all his undertakings. But it is not given him to realise this depth or to transfer it entirely into his own life by means of an immediate effort of will, but only by means of the work of the historical movements of the world with all their experiences and transformations. This movement with



its depth does not flow in one simple direction : it varies its course and meets along its way with sharp oppositions, without, however, being thereby dissipated or lost ; it reasserts itself again and again above the disintegration and connects itself into a whole or totality ; right through all the individual movements there proceeds one total-movement. Further, in support of our present contention we get the evidence of the spiritual unrest which permeates the centuries—the power of doubt and denial in the movement of the world's history. The fact that man has thus to struggle for the whole of his life and has to win the depth of his own nature only by means of battle gives him more freedom as well as more greatness.

History thus becomes a dialectic not of mere thought but of the whole of life. Points of concentration arise and develop into autonomies ; these seek greater originality and aim at governing the whole domain of existence. For a length of time they

succeed in doing much, and consequently man feels himself secure and joyous in the possession of genuine truth. But a still further movement of life destroys such satisfaction and passes beyond the terminus which it had hitherto set for itself. This further movement—venturesome in its nature—meets with stubborn opposition, but so long as this opposition comes from merely without it cannot destroy confidence in the enterprise which is at stake. As soon, however, as flaws appear in the *inward* parts of the movement and its originality seems to become insecure, life, though it has succeeded on its external side, cannot remain satisfied with all this; a weariness follows, and a seeming dissolution seems inevitable—a positive period is thus followed by a critical one. When this happens the particular elements sever themselves from their prior union, and instead of the former tendency to more unity and “togetherness” of things we now obtain a tendency towards variation

and infinite multiplicity—*Expansion* now takes the place of *Concentration*. But if such a critical movement proceeds far and if the connections of things give way, there is danger lest the spiritual character of life fall into an inner decay and into a swift disintegration. When this happens, the aspiration after the preservation of the spiritual self once again asserts itself above the critical situation and connects the movement again into a unity, until at last an inverted order of life is reached and a new autonomy of life is gained. But even such a transformation as this does not bring about a final result—even this will not bind *all* the fulness of life together or bring the movements of life to a final rest. Thus life once again succumbs to the same destiny as before, and proceeds again further and further towards *Expansion*. All this is inevitable because Life is no enclosed and definitely bounded circle; from every conclusion there arise new problems and new entanglements.

For the movement, in a spiritual sense, is not only a movement *forward* but also a *return* movement; it is, indeed, an effort after a standpoint for viewing Time itself and a quest for a Present superior to Time. As true as that the critical movement displaces the completed elements of life so true is it still that such a completed life remains permanently effective in us, and quite as true is it also that a time must come when the struggle between Old and New is superseded and the effort after a union of both is realised. One may complain and scoff at such an effort when one understands it as no more than a mere juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements or as a weak compromise in an insoluble situation; but the effort is seen as a necessary demand and as what serves Truth when it places Life upon a deeper foundation, when it gains a greater scope for its potencies, and when it is able to mould the different elements which present themselves into members and aspects of a

greater totality. Indeed, the more such an effort permeates the course of history not as a constant change of multi-coloured pictures but as an ever further working out of an eternal content, the more it appears as a progressive self-deepening of life to its entire self-reliance and originality, and as a gaining of life itself by means of its inward potencies. Therefore the movement is not something which presses towards some obscure terminus in the distance : it is something which turns towards life itself. For life has not merely to heighten and adorn a situation merely given to it, but has to overcome an intolerable contradiction within its own being; it will attain a content for itself; it will justify its own volition; and it will succeed in passing from a life of halfness and semblance to one of genuine reality. It thus becomes clear that Life is no datum but a problem, and that by the side of all particular struggles *a struggle from a whole to a whole must originate.*

That times of struggle are ever followed by times of collective effort is shown clearly enough in the experiences of history. Christianity in its beginnings viewed the life of the ancient world in no friendly manner; but the Middle Ages made it one of its chief aims to connect both antiquity and Christianity into one world. The period of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*) in modern times inclined towards the refusal of all tradition, but this period itself soon became too narrow, and was unavoidably driven back towards antiquity and Christianity in order to incorporate the eternal content of the two into its own life. Man lives in Time, but he need not live in it alone nor remain merely a product of the moment. He is able to raise himself above these and to gain a life superior to them. Thus the individual is able to construct a wholeness or totality of life superior to the succession of particular events and give to such a life a specific character, while the particular events are, at the same time,

permanently preserved and treated as progressive effects. What appears to the individual as a mere possibility has, however, become for mankind a reality; it has constituted a spiritual atmosphere—a domain of life—in which the individual has placed himself and in which he can view his own or any other period, and can also oppose it if necessary. In so far as the life of mankind culminates in a progressive elevation above Time in so far does it always gain greater self-existence and self-subsistence—in so far does it gain greater originality and content of truth. Therefore Knowledge can become an ever greater conjoint experience of reality.

All this can happen of course only under the presupposition that the ever progressive working out of one's own depth and ever greater transformations into self-activity and originality are possible; and that such a change as this signifies not a mere displacement of the things which present themselves from one side to another but a

new inference, an essential conversion, and a genuine content of life. What appeared first of all as a gift of Nature and of destiny has to become more and more our own work and has, at the same time, to develop life further. Such an advance to self-activity takes place not only in the movement of universal history; but also the character of particular epochs is determined through nothing more than through the fact that what appeared previously as self-evident now becomes a problem—a difficult and imperative task. Thus Christianity made it clear that the morality of antiquity even upon its highest levels was afflicted with merely natural motives, and that the capacity of man for the Good was presupposed in a manner which is in no way proved true and which, indeed, has least of all been justified by the experience of life. This message of Christianity was the means of relegating the question of the immanence of the Good supposed to be



present in the nature of man into the background; and the main question now became how to satisfy the need for Divine love and grace. Thus the whole view of Reality was altered. Enormous entanglements arose out of this conception, but, at the same time, there came a powerful deepening of life; dark abysses now appeared within the nature of man, but there were revealed at the same time great spiritual depths. Such a conception of the deepening of life has never disappeared from the history of the Christian world: what before its discovery appeared as something simple and self-evident has ever afterwards appeared as shallow and even frivolous.

The modern world undertook to bring about a transformation in another direction—in the relation of man to the world—in contrast to the view of Antiquity and of the Middle Ages. According to the main conceptions of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, man appeared securely and solidly surrounded

by a great order or system : the macrocosm carried its content to the microcosm in a manner that left no room for doubt. The growing intensity of the life of the soul in Modern Times led to the dissolution of so definite and certain a connection. Man now breaks away from his dependence upon externals and sets his life independently of them; it became necessary now to re-establish the connection, which could not be now considered as a possession close at hand, by means of one's own activity and even by means of mighty struggles and doubts. To deeper minds there could be no question concerning this necessity—they were convinced that man's reunion with the universe could not take place from the outside nor through shrewd acumen, but could only come about by means of the discovery and development of a cosmic life within man himself. Thus a task was now set him, overruling all tasks and governing his whole view of Reality. It was a task

to whose solution the best thinkers devoted their deepest powers. Thus Spinoza found within Thought the presence of a cosmic life : this cosmic life was put in motion by the necessity of Thought itself, and was something different from all emotion “merely human.” Thus Kant found the same fact in moral activity : in this activity he discovered the proof of an intelligible universe—a universe of freedom and inwardness. Whether these solutions solve the problem in its entirety and whether there do not appear new questions arising out of the old solutions cannot here be discussed. One thing is certain—such achievements accomplished by these thinkers constitute a part of the great movement which forms the very nerve of history—a movement which has transformed life into ever greater self-activity, which has placed life at a deeper point than the situation of the moment, and which has ever awakened new depths within the soul of man and given him an

ever richer content. But this does not signify that life is completed even by its acceptance of this standpoint or by its initial experience. For the more Life depends upon itself the more must it question, and the more must it demand for itself; the more it discovers opposition the more doubts it will have to overcome—the more work will it have to accomplish. The self-evident certitude in which Life previously felt its security now disappears more and more; more and more do the self-evident data transform themselves into difficult problems—the practical, forward movement of the act forces more and more all the presuppositions into the background. Thus the whole process may appear, especially at the first glance, as something shadowy and unreal; and it is not to be wondered at that such a view, which considered the whole movement only from the external side and as something alien to the soul, should now become afflicted with the denial of the

possibility of all fruition and meaning. But if, in dealing with cardinal questions, we step more and more into the very nucleus of the problems—if the struggle becomes ever harder and the path ever more difficult—still all this constitutes but *one* side of the situation; indeed, it constitutes only the obverse side of the fact that the life of man transforms itself into more and more self-activity and has now for the first time become fully *his own life*. The fact that man is capable of all this—capable of taking the burden of life upon himself and of developing a reality *from within*—is what gives him genuine greatness, and what gives his deeds a heroic character. A *Yea* far overtops the *Nay* as soon as it is recognised that the movement of universal history is not a mere web of human opinions and interpretations, but that real further development of life results by means of it, that new aims and energies appear, and that, indeed, a content of life becomes possible for the first time—a con-

tent which develops the life in a manner essentially different from that of the initial stages. Such a movement is not merely of assistance to man: it makes something *essentially new* out of him; it gives for the first time value to the idea of what human life and personality ought to be. The working out of a *self-existence and self-subsistence for reality* which happens in this manner can happen, as we have already seen, only by means of an *inversion of the initial situation*, and not in any way by means of a uniform and calm progress. The Biblical words concerning the builders with the trowel in one hand and the sword in the other hold good in connection with all the development of the life of the spirit as well as in connection with the progressive freedom which occurs within the soul. The fact that we ever remain in the realm of quest and effort and that, indeed, all our developing conclusions reveal our limitations and even our weakness, destroys in no manner the truth-

character of the whole. Though the new movement of the soul, with its superiority to the individual in his merely natural state, does not contain as yet the full possession of truth, still it instils into the soul elements of truth; so that the smallness of the individual becomes a testimony to the greatness of the whole matter. When, however, a great movement takes place within human life for granting Reality a *self-subsistence*, and when this movement becomes a *personal fact*, there results within the soul a new relation to Reality and to Knowledge. Over against all anxiety and doubt concerning any *particular* truths there is signified here the fact of a movement towards Truth—a movement which is very far removed from all subjective inclinations and human opinions.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE MAIN THESIS

#### (a) CONSEQUENCES OF THE MAIN THESIS ON THE SITUATION OF PHILOSOPHY

OUR conception of the relation of Knowledge to Life gives Philosophy a specific position in the whole domain of human effort. In this respect Philosophy does not appear as a cool observer that runs a course independently of Life and that is illumined by Life only in a supplementary manner. For Philosophy participates in all the movement towards granting Reality a self-subsistence and towards the attainment of a genuine originality of life. Philosophy also helps to construct and to develop further life itself. But how could Philosophy be qualified to do this if it were not united, in an *inward* manner,



with the whole of life, and if it were not led forward by the whole movement of life itself?

There is thus inherent in the movement of Philosophy a powerful energy of life. Life does not only find something already existing in the work of Thought, but also itself gives Thought more content and freedom; and the achievements of Philosophy concerning the results, the transformations of life, the further developments of life, and the ascents of life were not at the outset anything intuitive. The leading thinkers were such that in all of them a new life broke forth and a new energy came to development; they were pioneers and conquerors in the kingdom of the spirit, and the effects of their work were more penetrating and durable than the effects of the conquerors of the world of sense. If, to these thinkers themselves, their works not seldom appeared as originating and maturing in calm contemplation and cool intuition, it must be remembered that such a calm was captured

from the experiences of a tempestuous world-mechanism, and had continually to assert itself above such a mechanism; and in order to achieve all this it needed perpetually new energy. Thus, what appeared first of all as a mere rest or calm had to be turned into the inwardness of the soul. Do we not recognise, for instance, the presence of such a movement in the philosophic thought of Spinoza—the master of contemplation—and have not permanent dynamic effects proceeded out of such thoughts? The calm or rest of the spirit is fundamentally different from that which results from an effortless life. The fact that the need for concentrating or focusing their work compelled the great thinkers to hold back from the publicity of life should not blind us to the fact of the energy and ardour contained in their work and to the mighty transformations which have issued from such men and their work. We can take as instances Plato, Descartes, and Kant.

Particular thinkers differ fundamentally in the manner in which they relate themselves to life. In Philosophy we endeavour to distinguish between a Science of the Universe and a Science of the Schools. Philosophy is not a Science of the Universe, and does not deal with the problems of the Universe; for when Philosophy attempts to deal with such problems it is only too apt to do so in a highly scholastic, narrow and prejudicial manner. The business of Philosophy is to preserve a connection with the whole of the life of the spirit of man and to further such life by means of its work. The particular point, however, where this happens and the mode in which it happens show most clearly the characteristics as well as the greatness of the thinkers of the world. If Philosophy loses this connection with the life of the spirit and places itself upon mere knowledge, cleverness, and reflection, it may accomplish in certain directions something that is valuable, but it is unfruitful in the sense we

here conceive of the real meaning and value of Knowledge; for by the severance of Thought from Life and by the suppression of its binding energy Philosophy will either fritter away into noisy individual opinions or cling to the traditions of some creative thinker, reading everything that is new into the ideas of such a thinker and extracting the whole meaning of life and existence out of his ideas. This becomes a scholasticism and is a besetment not only of the Middle Ages but of all times.

Our conception also places the relation of Thought to its own time in a specific light, so that the different aspects of the matter in hand may obtain their entire rights. The thinker stands within the movement of humanity; his environment leads him into a specifically spiritual atmosphere and gives an orientation to his efforts. Can we conceive of a Kant in the situation of a Plotinus, or of a Hegel in the situation of a Descartes? But such a connection of the

thinker to his environment does not in any manner make the thinker a mere interpreter of his age; and it is only the intellectual pantheism of Hegel which could interpret Philosophy solely as "the particular age conceived in thought." For the great thinkers did not only bring to self-consciousness the *substantial* that was already in existence, but they also transformed this *substantial* and raised it to a higher level, whilst, by means of their work, the movement which they initiated overcame the narrowness of the "merely human" and the "pseudo-spiritual" which characterise the ordinary civilisation and culture of their day; their work gained an entire self-reliance; by means of their teaching they succeeded in bringing forth something *new* over against what existed in their age, and they embodied this *new* into the content of their own age. The main fact for them was not what the age *already possessed* but what it *needed*. Though Hegel designates the

great thinker as “ he who gives expression to what his own age needs and who speaks to it and shows it the meaning of its real life,” still there is to be placed over against this truth the fact that any age on the whole needs but little of what is of fundamental significance, but it oscillates insecurely between willing and non-willing, between affirmation and negation until the strong thought and will of a mind creating qualities from an *inner necessity* frees the age from its imperfections. Thus the great thinkers have a twofold relation to their age—that of *relation* and that of *opposition*: they stand *within* their age, and, at the same time *above* it; they lead it further and further and withstand it; they create out of it and struggle against it. Indeed, the more the effects of their works represent and contend for what is not inwardly present within the age the more do they come into contrast with the shallowness of their age. Plato, in the very substance of his ideas,

possessed more of the Greek spirit than Aristotle, and hence he was obliged to come into a sharper opposition to his environment than his great pupil. Voltaire was a truer expression of his age than almost any of his contemporaries, and yet he passed away with his age leaving no deep footprints behind him. Spinoza was in a large measure an alien to his own age, but out of his work permanent results have gone forth.

Another point to be noticed in the relations of the great thinkers to their own age is the fact that they all aimed at giving an individual, specific moulding to what they conceived to be the most important efforts of their age; for without this achievement the thinkers could not possibly attain the thorough essential development which they saw needful for life and effort, and it was just here that their greatness lay. As with all great men, a leading thinker is not a mere representative of some one general principle—is not a mere vehicle of

some "imperative mandate"—but has a unique individuality as well as something incalculable about him. But this individuality is no mere accident: behind it stands something that is *universal*—a *universal* that seeks its incarnation in the *individual*, so that such a *universal* is able to become effective in the whole of life and able to draw at last the whole of mankind after itself. The presuppositions of the Reformation were in all essentials the same; but how differently did Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin create their *intellectual* interpretations from an essentially similar *spiritual universal*! Such a place and significance as we give here to individuality render it impossible to press the universal movements of mankind into any intellectual mould, and such an emancipation from intellectual formulæ does not appear to us to-day as a detriment, but as essentially an advantage.

Our conception of Philosophy explains also the differences of opinion concerning



its proper function and the perpetual strife concerning its value. If, on the one hand, Philosophy is praised as the Queen of the Sciences and, indeed, as the towering height of the whole life, still, on the other hand, Philosophy is represented as something superfluous, injurious, or even impossible. What has particularly brought forth such a conclusion as this is the statement continually made that the work of Philosophy in connection with fundamental questions all along the centuries has not achieved any results absolutely certain and universally valid, and that in the course of history it has not transformed the doubts and struggles which surrounded it into any solid and definite conclusions. Or, as such a statement as we have referred to might present its opposition to Philosophy: Are not the differences in the various modes of thinking—say of the Sophists and of Socrates, of Plato and of Aristotle, of the Stoics and of the Epicureans—absolute contradictions one of the other?

And are not these differences actual problems with us to-day, and do they not give rise to ever fresh strife? But, at the same time, it is clear that periods in which Philosophy is depreciated tend to sink spiritually and to fall into narrowness and stagnation. Men cannot long subsist without Philosophy; so that Philosophy, often rejected, constantly returns.

All this gains a new light when it is recognised that the main task of Philosophy is the transformation of *life*—the elevation of life to *a being and existence of its own* and consequently to a *genuine Reality*. When the matter is so conceived, the differences of estimation, the existence of different starting-points, and the conclusions and results of different orientations can be well understood; but without this understanding, the point of essential significance either becomes obscured or degenerates into a matter of merely subjective taste. The work of Philosophy does not run into nothingness;

and all the differences imbedded in it serve a common end. Granted that the fruits of the labour are no solid results which stand outside the universal movement of life itself, yet the results consist in the heightening of this movement itself—in the increasing transformation of ordinary existence into spiritual freedom and self-reliance; and the gain thus secured far outweighs the lack of concreteness with which Philosophy is charged. This is so because what issues out of *life itself* is in the last resort of infinitely greater value and significance than what is achieved in an *external* sense. The fact, however, that Philosophy has really brought forth, by means of its elevation of life above the narrowness and pettiness of man, the most powerful transformation and that it has worked in a powerful, free, and progressive manner is shown by the whole course of history as well as by each particular epoch. Different epochs have sought different things by means of their Philosophy. It may have

been an effort to place things within an elevated kingdom of durable Being and of pure Beauty, as with Plato; it may have been an effort to bring about the victory of logical power over the ordinary chaotic condition of things, as with Aristotle; or it may have been an effort to raise morality to a sphere of entire self-reliance and of unconditional values, as with the Stoics; or it may have been an effort, by means of Philosophy, to free religious aspirations from the selfishness and egoism of the mere individual and of setting this aspiration in communion with the Alone in order to satisfy the longing soul, as with Plotinus. In all these an elevation of the life of the spirit of man to a level of entire independence was undertaken by Philosophy; it proved itself in all these as an agent of radical transformations and as a motive calling out man's deepest energies.

At the same time, it is clear that what special situations thus brought forth in the

form of tasks and movements did not pass away with the ordinary circumstances of the day or of the age; but nuclei thus formed detached themselves from such ordinary circumstances and became permanent elements of life. The Platonic and the Stoic *Systems* are obsolete for us to-day, but the Platonic and the Stoic *modes of thinking* remain ever fresh and capable of ever new effects—they represent a mode of life expressed in terms of Thought.

Now it is easy to perceive why Life comes to a deadlock and is paralysed when it abandons Philosophy. For Life thus loses the possibility of gaining a self-reliance over against the individual's mere likes and dislikes; it is irretrievably banished into the narrowness of the circle of its own mere individual history and of its accidental interests. Philosophy, despite its emancipating and elevating effects, is rejected only because its elevating effects are not apparent to the senses. These effects cannot be

touched with our hands or seen with our eyes. But when Philosophy is thus slighted and its true meaning and value unrecognised—all this is not the fault of Philosophy. The fault lies in that which has no eye for *inner* movements. Nor is it otherwise in connection with religion, art, and morality : they, too, participate in the danger of being considered superfluous and of being denied. But what is thus considered as a weakness by man in his natural state is in fact something great and lofty ; every elevated quality does not force itself upon any man, but still it aspires after a friendly relationship with man's aspirations and seeks an awakening of his inner life.

As herewith the whole of Philosophy receives a positive value, so a friendly relationship to the great thinkers of the world is gained in spite of all the differences of their conceptions and their systems. It is thus possible to disregard the particular formulation or precise wording

of their thoughts and still recognise fully the acknowledgment of an ascent of life as constituting the kernel of their teaching. The learned treatises of Spinoza lead, in some of their main points, to decisive contradictions. This is especially so in regard to the monism so strongly emphasised in his teaching—it is really a monism only in appearance; and Spinoza's system on closer investigation is seen to be a dualism of Naturalism and Mysticism. But in spite of all contradictions the inner freedom and breadth manifest in his works can be held in the highest honour. Thus there arises a twofold mode of viewing and valuing things: one dealing with a learned *formulation* and a precise wording of the teaching; the other dealing with the stimulating *spirit* present in all the teaching. This twofold aspect explains the remarkable fate—especially the change of valuation—by which many Systems of Thought have been overtaken. Wolff, with his systematic and precise work, was during his own lifetime held

in the highest esteem, and was a distinguished member of all the great European Societies. The absence from his teaching of a stimulating spirit and of an elevated conception of life was not observed by the learned members of these Societies; but when these defects in Wolff's teaching were afterwards discovered the judgment of the members of learned Societies bordered almost on injustice to him. But Spinoza, on the other hand, was ignored not only by the orthodox but also by the learned of his day; such an impartial thinker as Bayle termed the Spinozistic Philosophy a lamentable absurdity (*Gallimathias pitoyable*); and yet Spinoza became for some of the greatest German poets and thinkers their fountain of fresh life. Such a welling-up life is often discovered only where it is active from the outset; and judged according to such a criterion alone it fritters away the history of Philosophy to happenings merely on the external side; but what, however, remains



intact in spite of all this has all the more content and stimulating energy. Thus there come to be in our view of things new vistas and new tasks.

(b) CONSEQUENCES OF THE MAIN THESIS  
ON THE WORK OF KNOWLEDGE

In our discussion Knowledge and Life have been shown as shaping themselves in a specific manner. We have already seen that in the process of Knowledge, Thought and Life present mutual effects. On the one hand, Thought develops, out of its own nature, definite demands and places these into all that it comes in contact with. But these demands of Thought do not lead beyond the *outlines* of things: the filling up of these outlines has to take place by means of the characteristic mode of Life that is brought face to face with Thought. This state of things (and, in particular, this dependency of Thought and also of the work of Thought upon Life) is verified by

the whole experience of philosophic work; while, at the same time, Life shows itself dependent in its moulding of its World of Thought upon the particularity of the process of Life which comes to development and seeks its perfection within it. This process of Life considered in regard to its place of origin, its relationship to the environment, and the tasks thus arising, determines for Thought its orientation and the various directions in which it can move. Thus there stand side by side in the conflict of the minds of the great thinkers not only theories but also views of *life*: the ideas and doctrines bring forth only what was actually differentiated within the basis itself. Locke and Leibniz did not come into conflict with each other's theory because each gave the same facts a different interpretation, but because the facts themselves were different from their very basis—the point of departure was different for each of the two. What has made the con-

flicting ideas of philosophers unfruitful is the fact that the problem is taken up on the side of its *effects* instead of going back to the *causes*. The thinkers consequently speak different tongues; and the conflict between them is in fact only a seeming one. Accordingly we ascertain a general fact when we maintain the dependence of Thought upon Life. But this fact that is clearly ascertained and is now in the foreground was at an earlier time overlooked and consequently ignored; and it is this which presents us with the new situation of the problem. For now it is necessary to shift the problem further back and to change the method of proof in an essential manner; now one mode of life must prove its superiority, its independence, and its originality over against another mode. Thus there opens out a vista into a rich movement. We now observe that different kinds of realities conflict with one another; and the question arises, what kinds will make

other kinds subservient to themselves and carry through their own specific character? Every philosophical system at the present time has in the first place to give account of its relation to Life; it has to show and justify the *process of life* in which it is rooted and from which it draws a knowledge of its own directivity. Herewith all that refuses us this demand becomes insufficient for us and becomes the main source of dogmatism and discord—it presupposes a certain mode of life as something self-evident and consequently avoids all discussion on the matter. In particular, all Theories of Knowledge which undertake to discover the pathway to Truth by means of minute reflection become an unfruitful and a hopeless undertaking. It is imperative to develop another mode of treatment over against this mode and also to see the history of Philosophy in another light. It is necessary to go further back and to bring more into movement.

At the same time, the question arises

whether Knowledge after all be possible—whether a Life which furnishes the necessary demands be revealed to us. A fundamental presupposition for answering this question is the conviction that an elevation of the process of life beyond the level of mere individuality has actually taken place—a process of life which, though not near to our hands, still is accessible to us; and it becomes of importance to discover and to grasp within the human domain a life which is original and which constructs Reality; it is now necessary to bring about within ourselves a scale as well as a conversion of life. Such a *new life* cannot originate out of the ordinarily “given” situation: it originates only in opposition to such a situation—only by seizing a new point of departure. When this comes about, there happens at the same time a breaking away from the old and a progressive autonomy of Thought towards the greatest and most urgent *necessities*; there is now fully accomplished

within the soul a *deed*—a *deed* which does not allow of being forced upon man by any one or any thing, but which claims man's own decision. Therefore all the systems of Thought have to eliminate from the domain of Thought what such a decision conceives as superfluous, and at the same time to disallow all attempts to belittle the autonomy attained and to view it as no more than an eccentricity or over-excitement. These systems may achieve results of some value in other directions. They may, for example, do this by means of collecting and classifying facts of value; but they do not grant us a genuine Knowledge nor an inner experience of Reality. Indeed, strictly speaking, the systems do not at all belong to genuine Philosophy.

But if this turn of life towards self-reliance signifies so much, it includes not only the setting of life in a situation other than its prior situation—it is not only a turn from the Object to the Subject—but the *nucleus of life itself* has now to be changed. Freedom is

now understood not as something merely formal and negative. Freedom does not signify merely an independence of alien powers : it signifies that a new mode of life has actually appeared and that a new Reality has made its presence felt within the aspiring spirit. When the consciousness becomes aware of this, the need for the process of elimination just spoken of is seen to originate from such a spiritual base ; and the *free deed* already referred to is seen as being possible of realisation from such a source alone. Freedom is the indispensable *condition* as well as the *form* of the *new life*, but it is *not* its *content*. Freedom, despite its tension of energy, would issue in emptiness if there did not exist a depth of Reality and if this Reality could not become man's own life. This signifies also that the new life thus disclosed comes to us as something revealed and experienced ; it is not something to be puzzled out by means of speculative ideas, but is discovered only as a *fact*—a fact which certainly does not

lie without but within, and which does not signify a mere succession of particular mental processes, but which gathers together all the multiplicity into a unity or whole. If one were to denominate this turn towards an *original fact* Positivism, such a spiritual Positivism would be fundamentally different from the familiar naturalistic doctrine which is aware of facts only in so far as they are outside the mind that perceives them, which never succeeds in passing from mental processes to a totality or wholeness, which never attains an inner appropriation of Reality, and which can never transform the world from being an alien land to being a home.

What, however, appears as a *real inward fact* is for Thought at the outset a mere conjecture, and has first to prove its own nature in order to be acknowledged. It can do this in no way other than through the production of results which show that this *inward fact* establishes new contents and values which not only bring about



further developments of life in particular directions—not simply fixing certain particular goals and developing certain particular powers—but which, originating from the totality or wholeness of life, accomplishes something quite other than all this—by inaugurating a life essentially *new*, which entirely supersedes the capacity of the individual in his merely natural state and which transforms him into something entirely different from what he formerly was. All this will not take place unless contents and values such as the Good, the True, and the Beautiful—the conceptions of which are usually a mixture of spiritual and merely human qualities—are freed from such a mixture and understood and treated entirely in accordance with their spiritual content as self-developments of the life of the spirit. When this is done, these contents and values will become evidences of the *reality of the turn* which life has taken. For this new grade and new form of life it is essential to

bear in mind that the *Object* does not lie somewhere over against the *activity* of the *Subject*, but that it has now been drawn into this *activity* and is assimilated by it. As this experience now moulds itself into an energy and activity which constitute an encompassing, complete and absolute activity *there originates first and foremost a reality within the soul*; an *actual event*, with its own powers and necessities, now develops, and the emptiness and insecurity of all bare subjectivity is overcome. The present age possesses a strong desire for such an emancipation—a strong desire for a greater content of soul and for the discovery of an *Object* where all this can be found. But mere Thought concentrated upon such an Object will prove fruitless so long as the Object remains *outside* us: we may thus shuffle and waver irresolutely around the Object, but it will remain in its essence for ever alien to us. The Object can be made our own—can become *our own* thoughts—only in so

far as our life is able to develop it out of itself. The matter passes more and more into a state of advance—into a state of progressive breadth and originality—until finally *Life* is seen as being always the *Standard* for the measurement of *Knowledge*.

The essentially new content also requires a *new method*: it is the content that has compelled us to differentiate between a *Noological* and a *Psychological* Method. The latter is by no means to be curtailed of its rights; but these rights must claim for it only a subsidiary place if we are to prevent the worst results from happening. Questions such as the following have to be more sharply distinguished than is usually the case: *What* does the Spiritual Life in man, in the form of a content, develop out of itself? And *how* does that which develops acquire such an experience of Spiritual Life? Untold confusion and error originate on account of the indiscriminate mixing up of these two questions. When

such confusion occurs we obtain disastrous results. On the one hand, the *conditions* of the spiritual stimulation within man are carried into the *content* of Spiritual Life itself; and, on the other, *consequences* which have developed only in such a spiritual content are supposed to have arisen from powers “merely human.”

Thus, for instance, Spiritual Life in man stands under the form of Time, and it is only by means of a gradual further movement—indeed, only by means of an opposition and struggle throughout—that Spiritual Life unfolds into flower and fruit. But, in spite of this, Spiritual Life must never be understood as an entire Becoming—as a mere Process—for, if this were the case, Truth would become the mere slave of its age; and such a state of things would mean an inner destruction of Truth. But, on the other hand, man trusts himself too much when, within his own circle, he considers Knowledge as an absolute point of departure

for his life. It is true that there works in the life of the spirit of man something that is absolutely fixed and original; but man is only able to approach this in a slow and gradual manner—only at the cost of work and trouble, of experience and constant disillusionment concerning the things nearest to his hands. The danger arises of bringing the whole movement to a standstill when man, within his own domain, considers any *terminus a quo* or any *terminus ad quem* as something simply evident and complete and upon which everything else depends. Thus what is an *indisputable Fact* concerning the Spiritual Life of man is at the same time a high and distant goal for him. It is true that he participates in this *Fact* in so far as his nature is grounded in Spiritual Life; but this *Fact* becomes his own possession, joy, and strength only through the uprising of his own creativeness. To hold up simultaneously *fact and task*—to be on guard against losing the possession in one's

quest and the quest in the possession—is the main condition of success in the enterprise.

This *noological* treatment has, however, to extend from the whole of Spiritual Life to the particular provinces. These provinces have to corroborate their rights and discover their particular contents; and since they prove their own standpoint and achievements within this totality or wholeness a further development of life takes place. It is this alone which gives the various provinces an absolute conviction and which disengages them from what is contingent in human situations and opinions. If, for example, religion is based upon the need of man as he is in his merely natural state—be the situation that of the individual or of human society—the occasional, accidental situation is taken as the reality. When this happens one will remain, despite the greatest expansion of life on its *external* side, bound *inwardly* to an unstable situation—one will

succumb to the constant changes of human situations and wishes. Would it be surprising if such a religion came to be regarded as a tissue of mere illusions in which man is enclosed? But the case appears quite otherwise if it is affirmed that Spiritual Life is to be preserved within our own domain—if, right through distress and negation, a new depth of life has been disclosed—a depth which goes beyond all general conceptions *about* Spiritual Life—and if a scale of values comes into existence for us. Here— for the first time an experience valid for all will be gained—an experience superior to the contingency which enmeshes the individual. Coming from such a source, religion cannot any longer appear as a mere product of psychic processes or situations—a conception which not only limits it to one particular sphere of action, but which also lowers it in an inward manner and relegates it almost to the domain of mental Pathology. In every religion there is rooted

a *contrast* between an *old* and a *new* world; for an immanent religion is a contradiction in itself. Religion is not, however, merely a mere expedient for the assistance of natures full of contrast—natures that are tattered and torn in their inward parts and that seek in it a healing balm for their wounds. It is this, but it is something else as well. All honour to the “art of healing” in religion; but to turn it entirely into such an art is to destroy its deepest nature and truth. A torn and tattered condition, on the one hand, and the presence of shadows and gradations within the life of the spirit, on the other, are things fundamentally different. On the one hand, the presence of mere contradictions within the soul would hardly produce a turn towards religion had it not been that a religious atmosphere already surrounded the individual. On the other hand, there can be deeply religious natures in whose lives and work the sharpest contradictions may be fully present but without



passing into a state of rebellion and dismemberment of the soul. And further an inner weakening of the real essence can readily take place if it is assumed that the effects of religion upon man are pre-eminently exhibited in certain sudden and striking psychic acts, instead of issuing from the source of all the work of life and thus penetrating constantly into all work and creativeness. How much injustice has been done to the mystic by failure to realise this truth! Art usually tends to treat things in a different fashion, and as follows: On the one hand, religion is conceived as originating from the confused situations of the soul; but, on the other, religion originates from the harmonious situation of the soul, or, expressed more definitely, from the equilibrium of sensuous and spiritual elements. But we can readily see that all that is expressed in such statements is confined within the soul of the individual: it can never become a spiritual creativeness—

it can never engender a growing reality— which will have value for the whole of mankind, and which will be able to work in an elevating and ennobling manner upon the life of man. And further, unless we conceive of religion as being able to produce such effects, all the intense earnestness, the mighty aspirations, and the deep emotions which appear on the summits of artistic creativeness cannot be accounted for. As the psychological interpretation of religion conceives of it in too pessimistic a manner it tends to look upon the work of Art in too optimistic a manner. Art has its greatness and truth in the fact that it inspires a demand of the life of the spirit, and, at the same time, carries this life further on its way.

Thus there appears a wide interval between the *noological* and the *psychological* methods. The former alone produces an experience valid for all and capable of becoming the possession of all; it thus

reveals a *cosmic movement* within man's own domain, and also raises his World of Thought into what is great as well as into what binds mankind together.

The fact that such a transformation comes to consummation and that a new life breaks forth must consequently alter man's whole view of things. He is now not a mere speck on the face of a boundless expanse, but a co-partner with the universe—a participator in infinity. On account of such a view of man's life and destiny it is impossible for the new life to be adjusted to a state of soul already existing: the wholeness or totality present in the soul must come into activity—it must bring forth an *effort* which does not proceed from the particular to the whole, but from the whole to the particular. Certainly as all Spiritual Life—in the form of a *deed which is entire*—unites the opposites of inward potency and external object, just as certainly spiritual creativeness thrives within us and overcomes the contradictions.

Now, the empirical consciousness stands under these contradictions so long as it feels itself as something over against the things which present themselves to it. The creativeness must therefore rise above such a consciousness. The creativeness with its results appears in such a consciousness, but it does not originate from this source. This is not to be conceived as something subconscious, but far rather as something superconscious to the normal consciousness of man. Man, from this standpoint of creativeness, is not to be interpreted as a mere sequence of psychic activities or as a bundle of so-called "faculties of the soul"; for in that basal unity of his life the particular activities coalesce, mutually permeate each other, and, at the same time, lead to a higher stage. It is through the agency of this living source that percept is raised into concept, and impulse into will. Thus it becomes clear that we are not to seek the nucleus of man's nature in psychic

activities because these are in fact only *appearances* and developments of a basal Spiritual Life. When we view the matter thus we have but little taste for the debate between Intellectualism and Voluntarism, for such a debate places the problem in the region of *phenomenalism*—a problem which is more properly concerned with the *spiritual substance* of life. Still less are such psychic processes of value for a complete view of the universe. As undoubtedly the rising of Spiritual Life within the human domain gives evidence of a *self-subsistence* or *being-for-self* of Reality every idea of such a self-subsisting Reality when presented in the form of human psychic powers is no more than a metaphor. What becomes specific to us and what sets us in an incessant movement is the fact that we are unable to transform into *ideas* that of which we are immediately certain as a whole and as existing in the depth of the soul without, at the same time, drawing it down to a lower

level. Conceptions of the universe which make us look upon the intellect or the will as the vehicle of reality—which seek each other or struggle with each other—are projections of human qualities into the universe: as metaphors they are indispensable, but we dare not make them more than this.

When the *noological* method strives to raise a clear and strong structure of Spiritual Life out of the existing confusion of things—when it shifts Life from effects to causes—an elevation of life will immediately follow; for with such illumination and emancipation of Spiritual Life the method becomes, over against the prior situation, a pattern, a summons, a motive. The “Higher” is not now merely a hope, a wish, an ideal; it is not woven by the mere intellect nor is it added to it, but is the deepest source of our life and a mighty power within us. This *New* way, in relation to the situation nearest to our hands, appears as an imperative—as an Ought—but this Ought is able in this connection

to shake off and overcome all that otherwise would have made it dependent and servile, because here the *Higher* is carried forward and upward by *its own deed* and is present as a living power. We hear much to-day concerning Judgments of Values, but such Judgments possess good rights and a dynamic energy only if they are the expression of a life *effective* within us; and it is only in so far as this *new life* has become *our own real self* that it can work in a rousing and elevating manner: for mere reflections and logical Judgments cannot much elevate and help without this at the back of them.

If the *noological* method thus brings more movement into our life, it drives more genuine content into self-consciousness and also works for a fuller acknowledgment of the spiritual results present in our work; it will not only clarify much in certain directions, but will also perfect our more complete view of Reality into a totality and into an inwardness. If it be a weakness

of the ordinary human mode of conceiving things to resort to ready-made conclusions, such a "dead-level" mode has been accentuated in modern times through its craving for results and its acceleration of the rate of life, so that it is specially inclined to forget practically everything concerning the *what* and the *how* of things; and in its constant attention to the results of its work is only too apt to leave the vehicle of the work entirely out of account. Where, however, as in connection with Knowledge, the whole content has to be valued and appreciated, the *noological* side we have just mentioned must also be valued and appreciated because it determines in an essential manner the character of the whole.

There accordingly arises the task of the criticism of the work of Knowledge—the task of proving whether what is announced as a *result* is in accordance with the *nature* of the work which really led to the *result*. If this harmony be wanting, the whole



cannot maintain itself intact. How far such a whole can break up and how such a breaking up can coercively displace the situation already attained—all this I have attempted to show in my work entitled *Die Einheit des Geisteslebens* (The Unity of the Spiritual Life<sup>1</sup>), especially from the side of modern thought and effort. The modern naturalistic philosopher would, if he could, reduce the whole world into terms of nature, and nature into a mechanism. When he attempts to do this, he dissolves Spiritual Life into a mere epiphenomenon of natural phenomena, and makes the effects of Spiritual Life to be participated by the mechanical order of things. But the *work itself* which leads to such results, shows the matter in a quite different light. This work takes place in the *mind* and shows a picture very different from the

<sup>1</sup> A translation of this important work is in preparation, and will be published by Messrs. Williams and Norgate. [Translator.]

conclusions of naturalism. *This work in the mind* has to be wrought out from a *whole* to a *whole*; it has first of all to prepare the ground for one's own conviction; it has to remould first impressions; it has to exercise perseverance and patience, to plan and to verify its proofs. In all this *the work in the mind* develops a web so subtle that it is only held together by means of a superior Thought; this work presents Thought as so independent in its character that the frame of natural phenomena is entirely broken through. He who treats Nature thus—he who is able to bring his own thought over against it—is *more* than mere Nature. This thinking is also a constituent of reality, and such a mental picture must embrace reality. Consequently, natural science, understood on the side of its mental constructions, most certainly refutes all mere naturalism. The case is similar in connection with the attempt to transform reality into a *process* which, though spiritual, is yet personal. For what leads

the struggle against the narrowness of a life "merely human and personal" is in the last resort *a specific aspiration of life itself*—a quest for a deeper and richer *self-existence* and *self-subsistence*. If the *process* does not find its home in such qualities as these—if it does not hold together a *superior unity* and transform it into a *result*—the whole movement will dissipate itself in the sand. Thus, this view of reality acquires vividness and depth if the emphasis on results does not make us forget the very power through which these results accrue.

All this cannot come to pass if the *world of deed* does not first of all stand out in strong relief from the *world of existence*, and if this *world of deed* is not comprehended purely in its *self-existence* and *self-subsistence*. Without this there is no binding into a *whole* and no distinctive marks of character. But we have already seen that the division between the two worlds is inhibited from being an entire cleavage—that the *deed-world*,

in order to find its own consummation, has to return to the *world of existence*, and has to come to an understanding and arrangement with it. Herewith arises the task of ascertaining and determining in a thoroughly unbiassed way the state and nature of the *world of existence*; and this can only be done if, first of all, the *world of existence* is viewed (by a process of abstraction) as entirely independent of the *world of deed*. In this sense a true empiricism, with its insistence upon simple experience, has its justification as against much of the idealisation and optimistic interpretation of the content of experience now so much in vogue. The strength and hardihood necessary to carry further the spiritual movement fails such optimistic interpretations because they neglect the simple content of experience; whilst a true empiricism calls forth new powers by dint of the oppositions which present themselves, and breaks open new pathways. Not only much confusion of

thought but also much lassitude in action is occasioned by the facile disposition to attribute to experience qualities which can only become its own by means of the spiritual activity it puts forth. It is necessary to work out experience from two sides. There must be, on the one side, a serious wrestling with the *deed-world*, and, on the other, with the *world of existence* if the *spiritual world* of man is to develop and express its full characteristics. But the co-operation of both worlds must not be understood as a kind of combination of two different things—as something to which the *deed-world* gives the *form* and the *world of existence* gives the *material*. Such a combination can never engender a *living whole*—indeed, the two elements can never come together in an *inner* manner. For if the life of the spirit is to progress the conditions and circumstances of the *external world* are rather to be placed upon the ground of the *deed-world*, and are here to be transformed into an

antithesis furnishing motives for the further development of the life of the spirit. The *deed-world* is not a mere side of life but constitutes the whole or totality of life—a whole that can submit to nothing outside itself; but it is a whole or totality that is as yet incomplete, and which can perfect itself only by means of contact and collision with *external existence*. Such an interpretation of this *world of existence* raises important questions concerning its relation with the *world of deed*. The question is, whether and in what manner does the *existing world* take up and carry further a movement different in nature from its own movement, or whether and in what manner does it bring forth strong opposition to such a movement and bring to nought every attempt at illumining the meaning and value of things? This question branches out in all directions—it extends from particular points to the fundamental relationship of the *deed-world* and the *existing-world*.

Does the *existing-world* as a whole enter into the *higher world of deed* either summarily or gradually? Or does it signify, as over against the *deed-world*, an opposition which perhaps in course of time will grow sharper rather than milder? If the former view be held, not only Knowledge but also Life itself will be moulded into what is mental and ideal. If the latter be true, it is simply impossible to overcome an irrationality which seems imbedded in the very nature of things. Which is the true view can never be decided by means of imaginative reflection, but only by ascertaining the real facts. The fact that the life of the spirit is capable of developing only by means of a partial severance from and opposition to the world outside shows that we are placed in a peculiar situation in this world of sense and time—it shows that an opposition has to be overcome and that this can be achieved only in a very gradual manner. But the further question presses itself, whether the

Higher succeeds in obtaining an entire self-reliance or whether, within the human domain, it remains permanently tied to the Lower? Indeed, the question really comes to this: Whether the Higher is not often drawn to the level of the Lower and placed in its service? If this were so, the situation would occasion stagnation and perversion; but this sad experience, in its turn, would call forth a yearning after some counter effect. Thus possibilities upon possibilities arise; and how we are now to conceive of Reality can be decided by means of *experience alone*. We have to guard ourselves here from being drawn to some abstract principle to which some kind of definite solution to the problem is to be credited. But, on the other hand, it often happens in this situation that the easiest and simplest solution which offers itself from the outside is accepted without more ado. But this means nothing less than to make the shallow comfort of man the criterion of reality and to fall under the



imputation of an anthropomorphism which is perhaps even more dangerous than crude. In connection with the Problem of Knowledge we must not for a moment forget, as man possesses a special situation within Reality and finds the life of the spirit within him in a special situation, that the experiences which merely surround him must not be summarily set in the *nature of spirit*, and that even in his relation to his environment his world of thought possesses some characteristics of an *affirmative* kind which point beyond the world of sense.

Such an affirmation appears further in the movements of universal history—movements which, as we have already observed, do not run in a definite direction from the outset, but which have to seek their course and goal through struggles and opposites, through affirmations and negations. In the rise and fall of autonomies within the spirit of man as well as in the efforts to combine the different kinds of products into a totality of life *signifi-*

*cant experiences* have to be taken into account as an interpretation—experiences which, despite all that is “merely human” about them, are still *self-experiences of the life of the spirit*. The work of Thought has to raise up such experiences and to use them for its own ends—it has to discover beyond the individual *parts* a movement of the *whole*; and from this standpoint Thought will strive for a *present* experience which is superior to Time and which spans the events of Time. It is from this standpoint and not from the sequence of the mere events which pass swiftly over the surface of Time that the task of our own day is apprehended.

All these things together point out the direction in which the work of Thought has to seek its main domain. It does not find it in Nature, nor in the individual psychic life, nor in ontological speculations. It finds it in *the inner world of Spiritual Life*—in its dawning and its experiences, its struggles with oppositions, and its own further development. It is

necessary to discover and appropriate within this domain a rich fulness of Reality. The movement of History indicates the readiest point of attack; but History helps and furthers us only in so far as it is set in an *over-historical* light—only in so far as it is understood as a quest for *life itself*, and as it is led towards the *eternal content* which is imbedded in it. Here lies the greatest depth of Reality which man can plumb; here lies also, in the form of a Yea and a Nay, the source of the final convictions of the meaning of Reality and of the possibility of genuine Knowledge. Great minds and different epochs have been divided on the question as to whether Spiritual Life is a fixed quality which reveals itself in different degrees only on its external side, or whether the movements of Life and of History reach to its inmost being and whether History itself extends into the very nucleus of the course of the cosmos. All this gains in intensity with the tasks of

life; but the work of Knowledge has still further to pass out of the region of the Speculative into that of the Positive. How this can take place can only be made clear by further investigation. So much, however, is certain, viz. that it is this *historical* conception alone which gives Life space for its utmost exercise as well as a dramatic character; while, on the other hand, such a character is bound to be wanting when Life is viewed, as in antiquity, as something stable or, as in modern times, as some kind of physical or logical process. The Christian religion (along with other religions, and even more than other religions) gives a thoroughly historical character to our Reality; but it gives Reality this character in a specifically religious sense which has become too narrow for us to-day. And we may state that here are involved tasks for the future.

So much as this is certain: that a work of Knowledge which forces such problems into the background or which fails, in the main,

to recognise them is doomed to barrenness. In regard to this subject the two following questions are to be considered first *separately* and afterwards *together*: these are the questions concerning the *fundamental content* of Spiritual Life on the one hand, and the *mode of its formation* within the human domain on the other; or, as the question might be otherwise stated—the one concerning the *substance* of the Spiritual Life and the other concerning its *form of existence*. In connection with the former, it is necessary to develop what is imbedded within the fundamental content of the *substance*—what the *substance* reveals to us concerning Reality and what is implicit in it in the form of Ends. In the latter, it has to be shown *how* our *thought* relates itself to the *substance* and also what issues through the contact of the *deed-world* and the *existing world*. In the *substance*, *fundamental truths* make their appearance, while in the *form of existence* *facts* of experience are seen. These *funda-*

*mental truths*—as the most original inclusion of Reality and as superior to human particularity—cannot be encroached upon by the most radical contradictions of our earthly situation with its varied points of view. These are also truths which alone place the *world of existence* and all that it contains in a definite light; they are truths which address precise questions, and which free the *world of existence* from the meaningless appearance which it at first presents. Out of the ordinary experiences which arise within the *world of existence* there never arises real genuine experience. Therefore such ordinary experiences must be placed in the scale in order to be estimated at their proper value. When this is done, such ordinary experiences point *beyond* themselves; they lead to something more inward, and become stimulations and motives for the further development of Spiritual Life.

Such a contact between *fundamental truths* and *factual experiences* gives special signifi-

cance to the particular situation of man. There cannot be a doubt that the Spiritual Life in humanity has to develop in a medium very different from, and conflicting with, itself. It may be that the *world of existence* contains possibilities through which may be supplied help and protection for this spiritual development of life, but it is necessary, first of all, to call these possibilities into actual existence; and in order to do this, hard work and continuous deeds are requisite. It is necessary from the outset to possess the ground of our "building" and to safeguard it ever anew from all assaults. Each stage of life shows the truth of all this. As the life of the individual generally deals with what lies nearest to our hands it flows with the sequence of the momentary processes of consciousness. How then can it be qualified to become the vehicle of Spiritual Life with all its demands concerning Totality, Wholeness, and Infinity? When, however, a spiritual movement arises

from the depth of the soul it forms a deeper layer for constructing the basis or nucleus of life, for bringing up out of unity an effort towards a further totality, for gaining self-subsistence for life over against the merely ordinary consciousness — a self-subsistence which is able to hold the manifold of phenomena present in consciousness. Thus we obtain a new view of the life of the soul, but this is not a view which lies near to our hands : it is a view which is ever stimulated and raised up from the soul itself. There does not exist any ready-made depth in the soul as against the superficiality of the merely drifting consciousness of the ordinary moments. Such a depth has first of all to be *established* in the soul.

The collective life of mankind usually presents itself merely in the form of co-existence and sequence. Such a life, however, cannot possibly develop a Spiritual Life. Therefore it is necessary to place a *unity* over against the *co-existence* and a *duration* over against



the *sequence*. This is done by means of the developments and formations of Society and History in so far as these preserve a specific meaning. But Society and History, as vehicles of Spiritual Life, are in no manner qualities ready to our hands—they are in no manner essential parts of what merely exists in the external world, but something which has to be brought forth continuously from the depth of spiritual activities; for these vehicles of Society and History fall in pieces as soon as such spiritual activities slacken. Thus there is need of constant struggle concerning the meaning and value of Society and History. And further, the Spiritual Life can spread so as to cover the whole meaning of Nature only if it connects itself together into a Reality, and if it develops a distinctive character of its own. Thus Spiritual Life cannot in any manner be severed from Reality, nor can it acquire value if it disperses itself and fritters itself away.

Therefore the Spiritual has everywhere to create its own domain in this world of existence; it does not discover it as something self-evident; it does not develop by attempting to jump out of the existing world. It develops *in* the world and elevates the world to its own high level. If Reality thus depends upon a *creative deed* therefore Knowledge cannot operate in any ready-made manner, but must place itself within the spiritual movement itself; it must accompany this movement, discover new possibilities, see new points of departure and of initiative. While thus it serves the forward march of life it gains at the same time unlimited enrichment for itself. Herewith, this significance and tension give to the movement such a field of activity that the Spiritual Life has now to struggle not only on the external side *against* what is infra-spiritual, but also *for* the moulding of its own nature; so that the struggle of the spirit is at the same time a struggle for the spirit.

To the work of Thought there is given incomparably more freshness, fulness, and mobility, so that it now participates in the great Becoming of Life, and has not merely to imitate a ready-made life or merely bring such to self-consciousness.

The close connection of Knowledge and Life advanced in these pages is able to understand opposites and, at the same time, to overcome them—opposites which have often split up the effort of Thought when working apart from Life. From of old there has been a hard and fierce conflict between a *discursive* and an *intuitive* mode of Thought. The *discursive* order of Thought takes in the whole breadth of science; and its main object is to transform the dispersive manifold into a web of a *System*, and here bind all together in such a way as to form a successive and graduated Series. But as Aristotle demonstrated long ago every logical

linkage or System leads finally to Propositions which are clear by reason of *their own immediacy alone*; so that thus all proofs cannot and need not be carried *ad infinitum*. This conception of *Immediacy* has been wont to be designated by the thinkers of the ages as *Intuition*; which *Intuition* has been at certain times viewed as the conception of a *Unity* revealing itself in an æsthetic form within the multiplicity. At certain other times, it takes a religious form in the conception of unity forming itself over against the multiplicity and permeating it all. Thus the claims of *Immediacy* and *Unity* combine in the conception of *Intuition*. If *discursive* Thought resolves Reality into particular Parts and Series, it becomes the task of *Intuition* to point to a union of the Parts with the Whole, and from this standpoint of the Whole to impregnate all the multiplicity with a living spirit. It is no wonder that the idea of *Intuition* has won the minds and hearts of men; nor is it

any wonder that the willing recognition of an indispensable task has treated the question in a manner far more summary than the actual situation warranted. The æsthetic conception doubtless comes into view in the work of Thought; and, regarded from this standpoint, the scientific view of the world has to be carried back and placed upon an æsthetic view. But such a view of the work of Thought had far greater rights in the ancient than in the modern world. For, to the thought of the ancient world, the sensuous and the spiritual appeared far more closely connected than they do to the modern world: inner and outer seemed to depend upon each other in one living cosmos; they sought each other side by side, and in the contemplation on both, each merged into the other. Further, the conviction of the ancient world was that as the process of thinking lay within a consolidated and approachable realm it was bound to furnish a justification for such a conclusion as we

have just referred to. The modern world, too, forbids too sharp a distinction of the spiritual and the sensuous by its constant effort to bring them so closely together; but to the modern world the connection of the two is far less simple than in ancient times. The modern mind has been able to establish a connection only through the help of Logical Thought; and, even further, the modern mind does not any longer believe itself able to grasp in a form of immediacy what is *final and axiomatic*, but pushes such final and axiomatic conclusions ever further into the background, and busies itself most diligently in attempting to transform what previously seemed static into movement. Modern thought further attempts to overcome the antithesis of Subject and Object as well as the function of reflective thought; but it expects to accomplish this feat not by means of any contiguity of Subject and Object, but by spanning the antithesis through the simple force of activity itself

—through an ascent to a creativeness which itself constructs Reality. Thus the main task becomes that of setting the capacities in such a creativeness, and of carrying back this creativeness to an entirely simple original life. What is here in question therefore is not an imaginative view of a ready-made and complete truth actually existent but the *progressive Becoming of Life itself*—a personal experience of Reality from the very basis of life to its highest ideals. What is generally designated as Fancy and Imagination must appear as far too passive for such a spiritual creativeness. For in this way, instead of being presented with an entire illumination of the meaning and significance of life, man gets no more than a mental impression of things: and if nothing beyond this occurs man is rather shut up within his own subjectivity than freed from it and placed at the very centre of a life of creativeness. When dealing with Reality it is necessary to state that the manner of the quest must not be

that of the contemplative artist but that of the general on the field of battle. The artist connects the multiplicity of happenings into one complete picture; but how different is this picture from that of the great general who binds the threads together, and gives them meaning by fitting them into general ideas. It is the latter alone who penetrates into and through all the confusion and conflicting motives by which he is beset—it is he alone who interprets these as a whole or unity from their very origin. What happens in this respect must also be adopted as a method in dealing with the problem of the Universe. In connection with this problem, too, it is necessary to possess a comprehensive and synthetic Thought—a “synoptic” Thought—which contains within itself the power of the synthesis together with the gradations and mutual determinations of the manifold so that a *Complex* of life may develop and may parcel out the life of Reality and bring it to a clear expression—so that all the Parts



may be seen from the standpoint of the Whole and moulded from such a standpoint. It is the consciousness of this kind of task which differentiates the genuine philosopher from the mere scholar who occupies himself with philosophic problems. The two are further distinguished by the fact that the latter reflects upon things on their *external* side and interprets them entirely from such a standpoint, and by the fact that he does not unify in any essential manner the things he brings together. The genuine philosopher, on the other hand, is able to attain to comprehensive and vitalising ideas of things. The power to do this can be extracted by Thought only out of the Life which wells up within it. If Life be unable to connect itself together into a totality or wholeness and to work from such a level, Thought can never take entire possession of what is *within*—it can never hold the manifold together or determine the relative values of its different constituents.

Thinkers like Leibniz and Kant had cer-

tainly a clear and deep view of Reality as a whole; but it was a view in which all the different aspects were closely associated, and from which every aspect received a particular colouring. But did they not owe this power far less to their faculty of perception than to the power of Thought which understood how to mould things from a comprehensive and unifying standpoint, how to weave the web of a System, and how to work from each Whole to a greater Whole? Thus the total-view or synthesis towards which our effort is directed originates inside and not outside of Thought. Such a total-view is not something already existent but something that has to be moulded. Consequently we need not less but more Activism; we require not a cessation of activity but an ascent into a domain in which the activity of the whole of man's nature can operate.

In the reaction of the present day against *Intellectualism* the *logical* element present in the work of Thought may be easily

deprecatèd. It is true that Logic cannot create—it only proves and adjusts; it has to presuppose something as being present before it is able to work at all. But such a work of Logic is indispensable wherever it is necessary to weave a Manifold into a Whole, wherever it is necessary to drive out contradictions and to link individual elements together. The work of art, practical activity, political and social co-operation require the help of Logic. Every fallacy avenges itself in a frittering away of life. How therefore can Logic play only a subsidiary part in the process of Knowledge? Logic by itself is *formal* and *schematic*, and is unable of itself to shape life in any living way. But whatever limitations Logic may possess in this respect, these limitations ought never to suggest a turn towards something like the Romanticism of modern times—a tendency to revel in the illogical and to be at ease in the midst of contradictions. The limitations of Logic ought rather to

drive us to place logical work in further connections and, out of the whole of life, to guide us to the realisation of quickening and directive capacities. Our effort after a complete illumination of the problems of life and existence is doubtless confronted with insurmountable barriers; but should we on this account think little of our own capacities at the very outset and rashly flee to the irrational? He who places Life ever before his view and believes that an ascent of Life is possible will first and foremost aim at a deepening and energising of Thought; and will not flee from Life because Logic by itself does not unravel the whole of the problem, nor will he recommend to himself or to others what is illogical.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TRANSITION TO THE PRESENT

THOUGH the problem of Knowledge is thus connected in the most definite manner with the whole of the life of the spirit of man, such a spiritual life has to discover itself first of all within the movement of universal history and to unfold itself more and more within this movement, so that it becomes indispensable for Thought to grasp and to preserve such a situation. We have to search for such a situation in Philosophy and in the history of mankind. We believe that we can find such a situation in the Philosophy of Kant.

#### (a) ANALYSIS OF KANT'S POSITION

He who to-day appraises Kant's teaching as the acme of the philosophical movement

is liable to the danger of pursuing only a single current in the thought of our own time. It will be easy to show that even in connection with the problem of Life such an estimate of Kant has its good rights; but, at the same time, the estimate ought to signify something more than an uncritical opinion for us.

Before all else, it is the well-known transition from Object to Subject—from external things to man himself—it is this Copernican transition which signifies a segment in the history not only of Thought but also of Life. For this transition corresponds to, and serves the need of, the total-movement of mankind. Though man, at the outset, was thought to be no more in this movement than a sensuous existence, with his life depending entirely upon the external world, yet as the result of ages of thinking an *inverted* mode of conceiving him was reached. The *inner* life of man now developed more and more a content of its own and gained

ever greater self-reliance until at last it became the main standpoint of life, and sought to bring, in a practical and intelligent manner, the external world into subjugation to itself.

The modern world has brought this conclusion to clearer self-consciousness on the side of Thought; it suffices us here to bear in mind the dictum of Descartes—"I think, therefore I am." But, at the same time, the question arises whether the Subject be sufficiently strong and comprehensive to develop a *World* out of itself. Evidently the Subject, in order to do this, needs strengthening; and attempts to give it this strengthening have not been wanting prior to Kant. These attempts, however, did not extend to an entire autonomy over against the environing world; but such an autonomy came to its own through the transformation of *the conception of the Subject* set forth by Kant. The Subject, to Kant, did not mean a mere point isolated from its

surrounding objects, but he discovered within it a web of life—a general mental and moral structure. Thus the individual by himself does not constitute the vehicle of life, and neither does the endless sequence of conscious states form such a vehicle. Such a vehicle is formed in consciousness through the presence of a governing and effective Reason. The main problem then for Kant was to work out the implications of this Reason and clearly to perceive, in accordance with its capacity and limitations, Reason's specific achievements. Thus over against the customary every-day mode of reflection there arose a *transcendental* mode. This transcendental mode obtained its fixed orientation and standard in great *collective* achievements, as, for example, in the formation of a scientific experience and in the development of morality. As Reason carried such achievements towards their conditions, their inner connections, and their consequences a surpassing piece of analysis



was executed, and Life was through and through deepened and refined. Thus, there resulted, within the human domain, a scale of values of extreme importance in its future consequences; science now, in the midst of all its necessary and universal propositions and facts, was lifted above mere association of ideas; and even a domain of moral freedom over against the impulses springing from mere individual wants originated. Even this scale or gradation—this holding forth of a wider view—enabled man to recognise clearly the presence of a freedom and of a distinctive life superior to the natural life. The fact that such an all-important inversion of the accepted order took place was bound to alter essentially man's outlook and the task of his life and even his view of the world and his own capacity over against the world.

To such an emancipation of the Spiritual Life and of the situation of man there corresponds a further inner development. It is true that Kant accepted the disputable

doctrine of the "three separate faculties" of the mind; and, indeed, it was through him that this doctrine first became stamped as current coin. But in fact the nucleus of the Spiritual Life, according to his teaching, lies beyond the supposed "faculties"—in his teaching the movement of life was carried far beyond the *intellect* as well as beyond the *feeling*; and also according to his teaching when the *will* moves within a higher domain, careful examination shows that by *will* is meant not any special faculty lying alongside of other faculties, but a setting of the *whole man in action*. In the manner, therefore, in which the Spiritual Life is raised by Kant above the usual division into "faculties," it is able to embrace all the individual provinces of life, and to set all the tasks of life in their right order. Thus the whole range of life even into all its ramifications is accordingly set in a motion of an upward direction. And at the same time, this outstanding fact of the Spiritual

Life of man makes it possible for him to grasp tightly and preserve continually spiritual demands in all their self-reliance and purity, and, as well, to detect, without any bias, all that is insufficient and, indeed, unedifying. This conception does not represent merely the questionable doctrine of the "radical evil" of human nature as presented in some of the details of Kant's teaching, but is one which pervades the whole Kantian Philosophy and gives it the air of distinct veracity and greatness. No other philosopher of modern times has treated the great problems of life in so lofty a manner and with so deep an earnestness. The thinkers who succeeded Kant have, despite their achievements on the *external* side of things, brought the movement into narrower tracks on its *inner* side. They have all dealt far rather with questionable statements of a speculative nature. Thus Kant remains the overtowering summit of a new epoch in connection with the problem of Life.

But there appears here also what is truly the fate of all transformations upon human soil. In the *nucleus* of things there arises something *new* which produces undreamed-of results, but which, in the carrying out of it, remains too much tied to much that is *old*—to much that the *new* had broken away from *inwardly*. Just as much that undoubtedly belonged to the Middle Ages worked in Luther, so worked in Kant much that belonged to the period of the Enlightenment; and as it is in accordance with the deeper spirit present in Luther to differentiate the elements of the Middle Ages from these *deeper* elements, so it is in accordance with the *deeper* spirit of Kant to free the main stuff of his life and activity from the merely explanatory elements of the *Aufklärung* which had twined around it. In what respect this can be made clear to-day can be only briefly indicated.

The fact that Kant interpreted Reality in the form of sharp opposites has had much

to do in giving his work its penetrating clearness and its overwhelming foreibleness; but still his teaching corresponds to the *analytical* mode of interpretation if the opposites we have referred to cannot be overcome. If we believe that the opposites cannot be overcome, Kant's teaching presents not a few dangers in many important respects. His teaching that *a world of appearance* persists over against a *world of things in themselves* threatens to sever spiritual activity from the great Reality and to place it in contrast with such Reality. If this be so, it becomes difficult to distinguish sufficiently between the demands of Spiritual Life and demands "merely human," and difficult not to glide into a Philosophy of subjectivism—a Philosophy of the "As If" (*Als Ob*).<sup>1</sup> One need only consider critically Kant's alleged refutation of the ontological argu-

<sup>1</sup> An important work bearing this title by Professor Vaihinger was published in 1912 and has created a good deal of discussion in Germany. [Translator.]

ment for the existence of God in order to become convinced that grave dangers are imbedded in the argument. Kant, in the ultimate ground of his teaching, is above subjectivism; but in the working out of this ultimate ground he often falls into subjectivism. Not less doubtful is the sharp cleavage made between *theoretical and practical reason*, where each of the provinces receives too narrow an interpretation, and where the unity of the whole is not sufficiently developed. *Theoretical* reason remains with him restricted to Nature and logical proofs, and the inner movements and experiences are placed at too low a valuation. The working out of the *practical* reason is limited too much to the relations of person to person; and the ethical values of mental and æsthetic work, as, for instance, of science and art, are not sufficiently taken into account. Here if anywhere are found two halves which are far from constituting a whole.

Further, as was the case in the period of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*) Kant also gave an insufficient valuation to History. The *Aufklärung* had good reasons and, indeed, an imperative necessity for recognising a timeless reason beyond the intolerable inconstancy of the historical situation. We, too, hold fast to the conviction that without an experience of a Life *above* Time there is no Truth. But we have to become quite as convinced that such a Life must find its abode as a fact in our deepest nature. That such a Life succeeds only by means of progressive work in being directed towards, and appropriated by, our own activity, and that the fact of the existence of such a Life is also a difficult and continuous task—all this, if not overlooked, was at least insufficiently appreciated by the *Aufklärung*. This Life superior to Time seemed in the teaching of the *Aufklärung* to be present in consciousness in a manner ready at hand, and which could be made entirely clear by means of logical

analysis. Kant himself did not free himself sufficiently from this teaching, and has caused much confusion of thought on this account. Kant's achievements, as a whole, as we have already noticed, present excellences which cannot be over-estimated. But the transcendental treatment in his teaching contains no more than a *possibility* of discovering the Real; it could do no more in the last resort than deepen the content of its own conclusions. But do the achievements, which are by the side of the fundamental truth superior to Time, not contain an element of Time? And have they not first of all to seek for means of their self-evolution? Are they in any manner ready-made? As certain as that we are a thinking nature quite as certain is it that we think according to particular fundamental conceptions—according to categories—and also as certain is it that we bind together all particular propositions in accordance with definite



laws such as, for instance, Causality. But the timelessness of our values in no manner excludes the fact that the further moulding of our nature is brought about by incessant work. In fact, we have a history not merely of the theory of Categories and Causality, but of *categorical and causal Thought itself*. It is of great importance to realise that the *timeless* and the *temporal* are to be held sufficiently apart although they are universally related to each other. This is necessary because it is not only incumbent to obtain a *concrete* conception of the value of the *timeless*, but also to call up our own *activity* to undertake and achieve tasks still greater than any conceptual tasks. It is almost a trait of the Kantian teaching to show that the task of Thought should be viewed especially as self-reflection—should be viewed as evidencing a depth of being found in human life from the outset. The persuasion that we are *more* than we are accustomed to think we are—that we possess greater com-

pleteness and inwardness than we are aware—is certainly a powerful weapon to fight against all that leads to shallowness and the frittering away of life. Such a persuasion constitutes a fixed foundation upon which much is constructed in spite of all assaults; but still it does not sufficiently attest the fact that we have not so much to discover as to *establish* the Spiritual Life. The Kantian proof does not *rouse* us sufficiently—does not offer a path of elevation and further creativeness such as the perplexing situation of the present day demands. The Kantian teaching in this respect is not quite free from the defect that it allows the life of the spirit to fall too readily to a merely intellectual level—a level of much thinking *around* things and *of* things. In this way the level of *life itself* is not sufficiently raised. We find, on this path, much in our possession; but we do not “trade” sufficiently in order to *increase the value* of our possessions.

Finally, it is the Kantian Conception of Reason which retains us too much in the ideas of the period of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*). This conception of Reason has already raised many scruples : it is looked upon as something between an *empirical* and an *over-empirical* conception of Reality ; it passes beyond the flow of momentary experience, but Kant stops short of consolidating this *More* over against ordinary experience. In fact the conception of Reason is here far more unstable and more open to criticism than the conception of the Godhead. But what more than anything else makes Kant's position doubtful is, that he restricts Life and Thought too much to *formal* features, and gives them far too little content and soul. In the closer determination of Reason the *old* and the *new* philosophies proceed on different pathways towards their goals. The ancient world sought its main pathway, on the whole, in general universal conceptions apprehended by Reason. The modern world seeks its

main pathway in the freedom and independence inherent in the nature of man. But neither universal conceptions nor freedom can reach a turning-point unless a *new stage of life* arises within them. They do not engender this *new life* out of themselves : they presuppose it, and constitute only its receptacle and its form of appearing. It is true that the Kantian world of ideas develops a life far fuller of *Content* than these *Forms* are able to engender out of themselves; but this *Content* is not worked out clearly enough nor raised sufficiently above the *Forms*, so that the *Forms* play too great a part in connection with the *Content*, and appear far too much as if they were grounded in themselves.

Thus we find ourselves in essential points beyond the doctrines and formulations of Kant. But we believe we can remain loyal to what distinguishes Kant from the *Aufklärung*, and further believe that by being so we do not fall out of the movement which

his mighty life-work inaugurated. If we understand his teaching in this broad and free sense, we shall be able to liberate the rich development of life which the great systems succeeding Kant brought forth, and appreciate them as a further development of Kant's life and work.

(b) THE DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT

When we understand the effort after Knowledge as a counter-effect to the confusions and the acute needs of our own day, it is not to be expected that we shall find much movement towards the necessary renewal immediately apparent. There is manifest, however, in our own time, however indirectly, the evidence for such a movement in the growing desire to discover new modes of approach to ultimate questions. It would also be easy to show that possibilities arise which meet these desires half-way, and which give them enough to do.

Over against the unlimited *Expansion* of

Life there is awakened once again a need of *Concentration*—a need which is beginning to seek suitable means of satisfaction. Men were drawn into the current which made for *Expansion* because the traditional syntheses of life proved themselves able to answer only very partially the new impressions, experiences, and tasks of the last century. If the *old* mode of conceiving things, especially as it is incorporated in the traditional religious system, embraced securely and with certainty all the manifold in a unity, the *new* mode, in its turn, is handling the infinite multiplicity of events apart from their connection in any such unity. According to the *old* mode, all happenings rest upon an eternal order, and all *Becoming* is viewed as proceeding out of immutable *Being*; while according to the *new* mode, the *Ground of Time* is the creative workshop of all development, and it is this *Ground* which furnishes *Becoming* with the key for the understanding of *Being*. In the *old* mode, the life of the

spirit felt itself on a lofty summit, and in possession of absolute superiority to Nature; in the *new* mode, Nature herself succeeds in obtaining an independence of her own, and even ventures to subordinate the life of the spirit to her own conceptions and measurements. In the *old* mode, the Spiritual Life was grasped after the manner of a human, personal life, and approached by means of immediate feeling; in the *new* mode, the nucleus of the Spiritual Life is laid in an impersonal complex of life such as science, the State, industry, etc., and the *personal* life here falls to the level of a mere instrument of what passes within this impersonal complex. In the *old* mode, anxiety for ethical conditions and for the redemption and eternal welfare of the soul became the all-important concern; in the *new* mode, first and foremost, life is placed in the midst of developing powers—powers external to itself and even working in independence of it.

All this testifies to a powerful trans-

formation—a transformation not of mere doctrines but of *life itself*. How much superiority the *new* mode possesses, and how it has carried mankind along with itself—this requires no explanation. But it is evident that we discover more and more limitations within this *new* mode; and the belief in its all-sufficiency is rapidly fading away. The *infinity* presented by it is of a kind which precludes all attempts at a completeness and originality of character. The exclusive conception of a universal flux transforms Life into an irresistible stream and destroys the possibility of any enduring Truth. And we have to bear in mind that Nature cannot be made to mean the whole of Reality without endangering the distinctive spiritual greatness and also the pre-eminence of man. The positing of human life within an impersonal complex has given us concatenation of events, material powers and “goods,” but these have enslaved the soul of man, and have actually threatened to transform him



into a mere piece of a soulless mechanism of civilisation and culture. The withdrawal of the *moral* elements into this background may appear at the outset as a dissolution of old obstacles and hindrances; but, with our eyes open once again, we shall see that all the heightening of activity on its external sides and all the betterment of the ways and means of life are a loss rather than a gain if there does not correspond to them an *ethical* disposition—a character and conduct of the whole man; and the experiences of our day teach us clearly enough that painful confusions are to be found in this respect.

Indeed, the more perceptible such losses and dangers become the more strongly are we driven to some counter-effect that imperatively demands our consideration of the problem of a renewed *Concentration* of Life. If the particular movement of life in our day shows that the *old* Concentration was too narrow, and is so to-day because it does not sufficiently distinguish and hold

apart the Spiritual and the “pettily human,” and because it depicts the Spiritual too much in a merely anthropomorphic fashion. The direction therefore in which a *new* Concentration is to be found is as follows: It is necessary to lift up the Spiritual Life from its “merely human” level—it is necessary to lay hold of it in *its own existence*, and to understand and acknowledge it as an *independent world*.

Now, the whole of our investigation goes to show that such an emancipation of the Spiritual Life is not only possible but also absolutely necessary for the Spiritual Life itself in order that it may gain a distinctive character of its own, and may work in a stimulating and creative manner. It is only by means of such an autonomy that *spiritual* experience can grow over against an experience “merely human”; it is only thus that *something* can break through the individual situation—*something* that has real value and significance *for all*; it is thus

alone that *something* can appear at a specific point of time which belongs to all times; it is thus that a world of ideas and ideals, common to all and good for all, can appear and construct a deeper layer of life over against situations merely shallow and "pettily human."

Indeed, the more the Spiritual Life lifts itself up from a level "merely human" the more must it seek a foothold and defence *within itself* and the more must it continually develop beyond the customary "dead-level" conception of life. We have already seen how many transformations are necessary in order to accomplish such a turn as this, and how imperfect the ordinary position of man and the reality included within such a position are. But no task which originates from an *inner necessity* should frighten us. And it is this consideration which constitutes a claim upon the men and women of the present to strive for a *new Concentration of life*—for an inner

strengthening and consolidation of the Spiritual Life. It is true that when this takes place much which previously seemed to fall into our lap without any effort now becomes a difficult task, opening out a vista of mighty movement and struggle; but, at the same time, human life becomes incomparably deeper and richer—it comes to be more *our own deed* and, along with this, it becomes for the first time “the life which is life indeed.”

Another aspiration of our day is that which looks for an emancipation from life-systems of mere power and material development. This is an aspiration after a *self-subsistent life*. The turn towards these systems had much to justify it in many of the most important situations of history. It was the strong feeling of a new power and courage in mankind, conscious of its own development, which, in the beginning of modern times, succeeded in turning men from the weak and shy inwardness of the religious

life as then conceived to a firmer grasp of Reality ; a change which, on its external side, worked for a subjugation of Nature, and, on its inner side, for the clarification and mastery, through enlightened reason, of the various situations of life and of all human relations. How much was accomplished in this respect towards the subjugation of Nature and the development of Reason and how much has been gained—all this is known and enjoyed by us all. But, all this fully in view, we are to-day convinced that all the heightening of material power and the increase of such power over the very soul itself have their limitations, and that in no manner do they give life any genuine content. Notwithstanding expansion and prosperity unheard of before, we discover with pain an inward emptiness. We aspire ever more deeply towards a Goal or End to which all increase of material things shall become subservient—a Goal or End into which material things will be transmuted and thus acquire their proper

valuation. We are convinced that all toil and care which fail to serve such an End will finally prove of no avail. We feel this last more and more acutely. Indeed, the more urgent and expansive modern life becomes the more anxiety it lays upon us and the less fitted it becomes to grant true peace and joy. *Either* there is *something more* imbedded in life *or* life passes quickly away into oblivion.

Thus there awakens an ever greater desire for a *content* of life—for greater *inwardness and self-worth*. If, at the same time, it is indisputable that the *old* mode of inwardness has become too confined and too insipid for us—that it savours too much of the puny independence of man in his natural state—then it is necessary to attain an inwardness both broader and more virile; and in order to accomplish this the *self-subsistence of the Spiritual Life* offers a foothold for us. From the standpoint furnished by this foothold it behoves us to hold forth

a system of *essential and substantial development* over against a system of material and natural power; it behoves us from such a standpoint to force our way to the conviction that it is not enough for individuals, nations, and mankind itself merely to become aware of this: it is necessary that the awareness should make us *something other* than we now are—that it should lead us to unfold a *distinctive type of life*, and, in the midst of all the wild and chaotic impulses of our day, to consummate the construction of a *Reality existing and subsisting within itself*. What such a Reality further signifies has to be treated in a succeeding volume. But so much at least is already ascertained that only a *self-subsistent Spiritual Life* can engender *true inwardness*; and, further, that in order to satisfy the aspiration already spoken of that aspiration has to come into contact with another pressing demand of our day. We find the present situation of civilisation and culture far too confusing

and artificial, and long for more simplicity, sincerity, and homeliness. A return to Nature—to what is *below* ourselves—can never bring this about; it will come about only by means of an ascent to a *life of the spirit above* us. We are in danger of forfeiting the true promise of life by overweighting it with what pertains merely to its environment and by the dissipation of our energies; we are in danger of becoming *inwardly lonely* notwithstanding the superabundance of external things. What can save us from this peril except a *conversion to great experiences of a spiritual kind*—experiences common to all and which will mould and illumine our individual destiny? What can accomplish this save the essential cultivation of an *inner world* common to all mankind?

Finally, there goes through our times an aspiration for *continuity* and *eternity*. We are tired of the constant changes and transformations: the idea of these incessant



changes in life and in the situations in which we are placed as well as of the incessant shifting with the environment is beginning to lose the spell which it previously exercised over the minds of men; we are really yearning for something that will not get lost in all the movements of the world and of life—something that will persist and which is capable of endless progress. What therefore the individual experiences and feels attains importance through the problems which are raised by the modern historical method. With growing clearness are different periods of time distinguished—more and more does each period reveal some specific characteristic—and ever more strongly is it forbidden for any one particular period to accept and to retain aspects of former periods. All this is a gain in independence; but it is at the same time destructive of all permanent and persistent results. For as earlier times have passed away so shall we and our day pass away. What we are

to-day clinging to with might and main will be dismissed by a later age as something outworn. Must not then observation of the transiency and fleetingness of all human endeavour destroy our happiness in work and our creativeness? And can we undertake any great and difficult task in a spirit of entire self-devotion if all is to pass so quickly away—if all that does not bring with it its entire results and values to us *here and now* becomes on that account uncertain and futile? Wherefore there arises a yearning for emancipation from this state of instability—a yearning for the possession of a life superior to Time. We cannot possibly return to the *old* conception of *duration* and *continuity* because, according to the conviction of the present day, such a conception confused the Eternal with the Temporal, and placed *Eternal Truth* under the *form of Time*. It is therefore essential that Eternity be placed outside the “merely human” situation and planted within the *self-existence and self-*

*subsistence of the life of the spirit.* Only in so far as we participate in such a life as this do we participate in Eternity; but it is an Eternity which originates in the deepest root of our being and is, at the same time, a high End and Ideal. Only incessant work in Time frees us from "mere" Time. Corresponding to this is also the conception of History as a *coming-to-itself of the Spiritual Life.* The task then is, after having obtained our footing and standpoint within the Spiritual Life, to work out from the material and changes of Time an *essential and substantial Reality*—a Reality which forms an arch overspanning the movements of daily life, as in the ancient conception of a fixed heaven above the lower spheres.

Thus, there goes through our "age" a great desire for unity, depth, and eternity. And it is clear that the particular movements of our day are not separate streams but tributaries of one mighty river. The fact that this river does not as yet carry on

its breast the trivial and shallow things of life is no proof whatever of its failure. It is necessary first of all to govern our own soul and to shape its life. This accomplished, *something more* will break forth and carry the whole of life along with itself. These invisible powers are always in the last resort the greatest of all. To refuse their claims is to render sterile all our work. If the Absolute Philosophy of our day will deny these claims—well, then, it will go the way it went in the beginning of modern times when a mighty spiritual revolution developed entirely outside the Universities. If nations that, through their special characteristics and history, were destined to become leaders, will deny these claims—well, then, others will take their place and assert themselves in order to bring pressing matters to fruition. If any age as a whole deny these claims, that age will inevitably suffer spiritual decay, and the work will remain for a coming people. Done the work will

certainly be; for the spiritual powers which are here in question cannot be destroyed by man, though man destroys himself by alienating himself from them.

A time, however, which stands in the midst of so many entanglements and so great tasks needs necessarily a Philosophy; for it is only through Philosophy that the age can raise problems into Totalities and Principles such as the situation demands. But our generation cannot begin its work without reflecting anew upon its own capacities and upon its situation on all the sides of life. This conviction drives us irresistibly to the problem of Knowledge. What we have already set forth in connection with the problem requires the orientation which the quest must take. The further following of the path and the execution of what is here outlined are reserved in a volume soon to appear.

We connect the main results of our investigation into the following theses :—

(1) Only in so far as we participate in a *self-subsistent life* is Knowledge possible for us. There remains much scope for intellectual achievements which do not contain so much as this, but they do not constitute genuine Knowledge.

(2) Such a *self-subsistent life* must become effective in the very basis of our nature, but it becomes our entire possession only with the help of the work of universal history. He who believes it possible to grasp this content merely by means of an analysis of consciousness undervalues the *deed-character* of our life, and inevitably falls into intellectualism, though it may be intellectualism of a fine kind in regard to its own special work.

(3) History furnishes such a *self-subsistence* not in the form of a mere sequence of happenings, but only in so far as a life superior to Time raises itself above the

movement of these sequences. It follows therefore that all Knowledge issues in something *sub specie æternitatis*. He who presents no counter effect to the flux of Time falls inevitably into a destructive relativism.

(4) The movement of History culminates alternately in *Concentration* and *Expansion*—in Positive and Critical Periods. If only one of the two be present in the individual life, the breadth of life disappears, and the life of the whole is obscured.

(5) To-day the predominance of the *Expansion* side has destroyed the equilibrium of life, and this is to be regained by means of a new process of *Concentration*.

(6) Such a *new Concentration* is possible: the experience of History has prepared it in important respects, and the desire for it is a strongly-marked feature of our times.

(7) We shall succeed in gaining such a Concentration only by means of an elevation above the confusing situations of daily life and by means of a Turn to a *new Metaphysic*

*of Life.* He who fights shy of this Turn renounces at the same time a fundamental renewal of life.

(8) As the present day possesses a specific character of its own and places forth essentially new demands, it is evident that no union with an older System of Thought—not even with that of Kant's—can bring about the necessary progress. We must seek, out of the depth of our own energy, to correspond to the demands of the most important and universal situations, and venture upon our own path. The possibilities of Life and of Knowledge are in no way exhausted; but it is our own courage and deed alone that bring these possibilities into a full activity. Our young people have much to do; and may they rise to the consciousness of their task!



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