X.—THE TREATMENT OF HISTORY BY PHILOSOPHERS.

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HISTORY is the methodical record of public events, the study of the growth of nations and of the whole course of human affairs. The business philosophy has with it is to determine the purely epistemological questions connected with historical investigation and to take account of human history in connection with process as a whole, in order to determine whether history is a process of which, as a whole, an explanation can be given. Regarding the presuppositions of historical investigation I shall say very little. Regarding the way in which man must pronounce his final judgment on history I shall say a good deal.

Human history has as a background the whole world, of which human beings are a part. It is

“Rolled round in earth’s diurnal course
With rocks and stones and trees.”

Can historical process be adequately explained by principles which have sufficed for the explanation of the processes of inanimate nature? or, if it cannot, are we compelled to question whether, after all, mechanical principles suffice even for the explanation of the world of nature? The central importance of the interpretation of historical process is evident. As Professor Ward says, the two forms of determination which we may contrast in a man saying that he is determined to face the wind, and in his saying that the direction in which the dust blows is determined by the direction of the wind, are distinctly different. The latter form, implying in the last resort the categories of mechanism, underlies our scientific description of the realm of nature. Man has emerged from this world to find himself acting, as it appears, not in accordance with

mechanical but with final causes. Is this an illusion? or, if not, may the world as a whole not have a final cause to which the mechanism it exhibits is entirely subordinated? A philosophy of history thus cannot evade the question whether the world as a whole is to be explained in terms of purpose or not. If it is, human purpose must be related to this final cause. But, if the world as a whole is realising some purpose, it is one we can scarcely formulate, because we must be imperfectly conscious of it, and the human purposes subordinated to it are also possibly completely transmuted by it. Man's activities, often fully conscious and rational within their own sphere, may be, with regard to this wider sphere, much on the level of those instincts which in certain insects are the means to ends of which they are unconscious. Men may know what they are doing, but not why they are doing it.

In any consideration of final cause in history we are compelled to face the question of the nature of time and its relation to ultimate reality, and we are forced back to the source and primary meaning of causality as we find that in ourselves as active or efficient. A use of the principle of causality applicable to most scientific investigations, having as its presupposition the connexion of all constituents of the universe within a whole, such that change or difference in one part involves corresponding change and difference in other parts of the whole, seems not strictly acceptable when dealing with human causes, unless it can admit spontaneity or individual activity as a fact. You must meet the question, Are determination by personal agency and determination according to universal law really mutually exclusive? The question of the freedom of the human will is thus quite a real question for anyone writing a philosophy of history, and so also, I am afraid, is the question of the reality of time; because we have to ask what strictly we mean by the evolutionary character of history strongly advocated by Herder and Hegel and many other eminent thinkers. This appears to be the leading idea

of everyone who desires to get a grasp of historical facts; but evolution means a very different thing according as you understand by it the appearance of a timeless reality, most completely revealed where the consciousness of man attains its maximum of artistic, moral, religious, and philosophical achievement, and always and completely existing in finite conscious centres, everything that happens happening by a logical necessity that insures this result, or a process of what has been called epigenesis, that is the origination by integration of new properties in the whole which its constituents in their isolation did not possess, and which the whole could not be said to possess previous to their emergence whereby it became more completely a whole. Both views have eminent exponents. Is there really any reason for assuming history to be an evolution either in the one sense or the other?

If time is unreal then what we see in history may indeed be the fragmentary presentation of something eternally perfect, but it may give us only glimpses of an ultimate chaos. If time is real the end is not yet attained of course, seems, indeed, never completely attainable, and that to some people appears an insuperable objection. But the thing must be one way or the other. Now a philosophy of history may be written by one genuinely convinced of the unreality of time, and such have been written. A thinker of this kind, however, cannot place the importance of history very high. For Dr. Bosanquet, for example, "history is a hybrid form of experience incapable of any considerable degree of being or trueness." "The doubtful story of successive events," he says, "cannot amalgamate with the complete interpretation of the social mind, of art or of religion." But history will appear somewhat differently if we regard it as the record of an actual achievement by which reality in some way appreciates in value. This notion may be incoherent, but some have held it, and it must be considered. From this point of view the evolutionary character of history might exhibit not so much

wholeness in becoming as becoming in wholeness. If history exhibits the working of one evolutionary law producing one line of becoming which is unrepeatable, it cannot be possible to forecast the supposed end of historical evolution, because the historian, and I would add even the philosopher, is himself a link in the evolutionary process he tries to discover. He is, as Dr. Driesch says, "really in the position in which an embryonic cell would be supposing it were a thinking being and we asked it to say whether the strange collection of processes amidst which it stands is a supra-cellular unity or not." Thus the thinker who is convinced of the importance of time and of human achievements will regard the interpretation of their record as a profoundly important matter, but one admittedly very difficult to set forth. But, though he may be unable to deduce final cause in history from the ultimate idea of the good, he may inductively ascertain principles regulating human actions on the whole, and see indications of its probable line of development.

By whomsoever it is written history purports to be the record of what really happened. Actually it is always only an approximation to a perfectly truthful record. How does it proceed? Not by merely putting down the facts as they occurred and saying when they occurred, but by interpreting them. A fact of history is a microscopically small amount of immediate experience caught in a net of relations which are the very nature of consciousness itself; a fact in history is a fact in and for man's spiritual life, by which alone it can be interpreted. As has been said, nature may make the man who knows, but the man who knows makes history. This is not to be understood, however, to mean that he can make of it just what he likes. One may relate history to any particular centre of conscious experience, but, as related to some centres, one will find the greatest difficulty in arranging his material causally or even employing the whole of it, and such speculation upon the concrete events may be incompatible with leaving

them unimpaired facts. Historical materialism is an instance of the choice of what is on the whole a false centre to which to relate historical facts. It claims to give an immediate copy of reality, but it is clearly a formation of the given according to certain theoretical demands and assumptions which are incapable of exhibiting its whole nature. The only meaning historical materialism retains is that events occur *as if* man were governed solely by economic conditions and motives, and we know that this is not so. The historian—and the writer of a philosophy of history—is always a species of artist in the arrangement of his materials, and cannot avoid being to some extent partial, because he cannot completely penetrate the reciprocal influence of all historical factors, and, since it alone constitutes the real unity of history, each unified picture possible of the total process only comes into existence through constructive one-sidedness. But as in all art so here: the greater the art, the better it displays vital truth. I should say that relatively to historical materialism what may be called historical idealism is greater art and deeper truth. It seeks to relate historical fact to what it conceives to be the highest human experience. Thus for Dr. Bosanquet, the latest and perhaps the best exponent of the school of thought I wish to indicate, “the test of a philosophy in dealing with historical progress is to reconcile the sense of creative achievement in the self with its recognition and acceptance of a perfection which is not won by its own finite activity though represented in it in the highest experiences of art, of religion and of social service.” If I dissent from the claim of this school to exhibit the complete truth of history, which with great diffidence I do, it is on the score of its somewhat arbitrary selection from historical data. It regards too many things as irrelevant which I can never bring myself so to regard. It may be mere intellectual weakness on my part, but, if I take the privilege **accorded** by some of these writers of regarding time as real if I **don't take** it to be more

real than it is, I do not know where to draw the line ; and it may be pure human weakness on my part which merits no consideration, but I value human beings too highly to feel perfectly satisfied with the account this school gives of their place and importance in reality. That individuals might come and go so long as the Absolute went on, or rather was on, for ever, seems to some of us who bear the burden of life rather an inadequate account of the sufferings of Time. Whether the contention of mere pessimism that pain and evil preponderate in human experience can be made out or not, there is more than enough of both in this strange world in which tragedy is the highest form of art and a crucified God the greatest religious symbol. Now the reason of all this which the philosophy of history I am disposed to criticise offers amounts to nothing more than the assertion of the worthlessness in and for itself of the historical individual. "The probably limited future of the race will," Dr. Bosanquet says, "probably increase our grasp of the whole both in practice and theory and aid us in a profound and considerable transvaluation of values, but what really matters, what alone in the main the future can conceivably have to offer, along with an increased wealth and harmony of finite existence, is a profounder sense of the worthlessness of the finite creature in and by himself." And again he says, "Human freedom will continue to assert itself substantially not in direct proportion to material and scientific progress, but in proportion to such progress so far as accompanied by the insight, won by sad experience of its failures, into the insignificance of its value except as controlled by a consciousness which is aware of that insignificance and of its relation to what in truth makes life worth living." "There is no stability nor security," he adds, "of the finite self which has not in principle drawn its confidence out of the ultimate despair." In so far as it unflinchingly accepts the suffering and imperfection of the transitory world, I have great respect for this school of thought, which reaches an austere nobility of

expression with Dr. Bosanquet; but in so far as the account it gives is held to satisfy human questioning and still for ever human dissatisfaction I feel compelled to dissent. To say that a world is rational because everything in it is in logical sequence does not convince everyone who realises that he has by logical ground and consequent to treat as on one level mechanical cause and effect and human motive and action. When we ask "why?" such a theory may tell us "how," but it is mistaken in thinking that it thereby answers the question. The great purpose of the world, if there be one, may wreck on the passage to its fulfilment this or that human purpose and we may still continue to call it rational; but, if it wrecks all human purpose and is incompatible with the conservation of any purely human value, I am not so sure that we ought to continue to speak of it as rational. If a finite being could get an answer to the "why?" expressed by the Absolute in merely human terms it would apparently be, "because I cannot help it"! This may satisfy some, but it cannot satisfy all, and everything must turn on the discussion of worth and permanence. In this matter I feel it is hopeless for man to attempt to be superior to what Bacon called the *Idola Tribus*; we must regard things in their relation to us, just as we seek to discover final causes in nature because our own actions depend on such. We find a frankly human treatment of the question in Lotze's *Microcosmus*. Lotze says that, "he who sees in history the development of an idea is bound to say whom this development benefits or what benefit is realised by it." "If we were forced to believe," he continues, "that all personal life is but a stage of development through which an impersonal Absolute has to pass we should either cease our efforts" (Lotze's assumption that we *could* do so is of course somewhat bold), "since we could discover no obligation to co-operate in helping on a process totally indifferent both in itself and for us, or we should feel that, despite its finitude and transitoriness, human life was somehow richer and nobler than

the logically necessary development of the Absolute." And Lotze goes on to express himself with passion. "As long as we have breath," he says, "we shall strive against this superstition which though so calm is yet so frightful, spending itself wholly in veneration of forms and facts, thinking of importance only that everything which exists should recall symbolically something which itself it is not, should ring in unison with activities which it does not exercise, with destinies which it does not experience, with ideas of which it remains ignorant. When in history the rich-hued ardour and passion of human life are unfolded before adherents of this doctrine, they ask if there is no way of reducing this grandeur back to something poor and small, of imposing the tedious emptiness of a logically necessary development upon man as the final meaning and end of the universe. And therefore will we always combat these conceptions which acknowledge only one half and that the poorer half of the world; only the unfolding of facts to new facts, of forms to new forms, and not the continual mental elaboration of all these outward events into that which alone in the universe has worth and truth—into the bliss and despair, the admiration and loathing, the love and hate, the joyous certainty and the despairing longing, and all the nameless fear and favour in which that life passes which alone is worthy to be called life." "And yet," Lotze says, "no doubt our combating will be wholly in vain. For those whom we oppose will ever seek afresh to cover the imperfection of their ideas with the cloak of a generous putting aside of self."

I think Lotze is in the main right. To discover a meaning in the world which cannot be translated into terms of human purpose, or clearly related to human purpose, is the same as acknowledging that, though the world may be intelligible, it is, for man, substantially meaningless; it is a place within which he builds up his isolated system of human value and meaning, to which it is indifferent. To help us to decide the questions at

issue let us look in the broadest outline at the way in which man writes and interprets history.

Personally, I am not friendly to the school of historical theory that assumes universally constitutive forms and a fully undetermined and indifferent matter, and that deduces value from epistemological principles. The most important postulate we must make as the historical *a priori* is a relative identity for psychical constitution. The great ideas operative through history we must, as far as possible, try to understand as psychical structure, although psychical comprehension appears to find its limit in the self. We understand events because we bring to them this form necessary for their comprehension. The souls of other persons are intelligible connexions of processes because our own is, and facts are naturally best understood where they emanate from a definite character. The principles according to which we proceed in dealing with a group seem to require fuller explanation. A unity has to be sought and is somehow found, but scarcely according to any one definite principle. The psychical processes considered are at one time those of its leaders, at another those of a constructed average type, or, again, those of the majority. The psychical context, the space left for deviation, the eking out of innumerable fragments to a complete picture, may be implicitly logical, but is certainly dependent upon psychological experience. Certain of our experiences, though they are ours, appear to us not so much personal as typical experiences. An historical person is somehow grasped and reproduced as an association of universal psychological elements. What we call historical truth is got by spiritual activity, which of its material makes something which it is not yet in itself, not merely through its grasp of detail, but by virtue of the questions it asks, the significance it elicits, the fashioning of the past to a something which is worth our present while. The material is in the last degree **complex**, and of it historical laws are an excessive simplification ; we do not have identical

repetitions in history, if we ever have them, and the formulation of a principle of causation applicable to individual occurrences has yet to be made. What we have are such rough generalisations that we cannot talk of laws of history, or of a science of history, in the same breath with a science of physics or laws of nature. The concept of progress is also *a priori* and universal, but it is a blank form filled up in the most varied fashion. In various ways, according to the grasp and scope of our minds and the nature of our interests, we give concrete form to this concept of progress. If one asks, Is there progress in history, and why should there be? we have only to reply, What do you consider it desirable should result from human activities, and how far has the result been brought about by them? Some may find progress in increased vitality, others in the wisely regulated extinction of life regarded as in itself an evil; for some it may consist in the fuller appearance of the eternal, for others in the amount of socialistic legislation achieved, and for a few in the production of exceptional natures great enough to trample on the insignificant ideals of ordinary people. Whatever it is, your ideal is your idea of progress, and the question whether there is progress is at least formally invalid. The concept of value, also *a priori*, takes such varied forms that it has no easily discoverable universal element, and and in this perplexity you often find people entertaining a strange faith in mere change, and regarding immobility as the only absolute antithesis to progress. Again and again, one encounters the expression of a strange horror of a merely static universe, even if that universe were perfect, so that one can understand why the thinking of Bergson, which puts change at the very heart of reality, should have had such a striking resonance; but the philosophy of Bergson shows just exactly that change is not necessarily progress. Regarding all change we have to ask, Is it of value? Does it produce and conserve value? And that brings us sharply back to the question, In what do you put value? When one answers that question we have his measure

for progress. But if change is not necessarily progress, progress is necessarily change, and I am doubtful if the concept is quite disingenuously employed by those who deny the reality of change. "The only question of attainment that can be raised about this progressive endeavour" (the effort of the finite creature to pass beyond himself in achievement) "is," says Dr. Bosanquet, "whether or no the finite being recognises, it may be implicitly or explicitly, the full significance of his own nature. It is this that determines the relation of his progress to its aim." And again he says, "that our mastery of the whole must be in some sense relatively and within our connected course of history progressive, is guaranteed by the nature of the self-conscious being, whose 'duration' or affinity with the timeless lies in his accumulating a past which he carries along with him, adding to it what comes after. This is in some degree true of the race. But that what he keeps and gains always exceeds in value what he lets go would be a bold assumption," for which Dr. Bosanquet can see no justification. This in effect denies that there *is* what most people mean by progress in history; because it scarcely fills this *a priori* form to say that certain individuals have been great and noble souls, or that certain periods have been characterised by great spiritual attainment. Most people would demand, if we are to continue to talk of progress in history, that periods recognised as periods of progress should be in some real way affiliated, and that events in general, despite undeniable deviations, do tend in one desirable direction. There appears small ground for belief in progress if we cannot believe that, in all the permutations of society and through the apparently isolated activity of individuals, some one principle is being realised which unites and explains those epochs of human history which we regard as epochs of progress. This, I think, is implied in the concept of progress. In the actual state of our knowledge there is something to strengthen, and much to shake, our faith in its objectivity. It may for example be true that

Greek civilisation embodied all that was of worth in Cretan, but it may be that much was for ever lost of that strange genius, the relics of which are at least artistically so astounding, and the ruined cities of Yucatan attest a kind of greatness which clearly once was, but which, so far as our knowledge goes, led to nothing. Here I should like to say that I protest against history being taken in a narrow sense, as when one hears that certain western nations alone have exhibited an historical development. Much of this is the expression simply of the bias of happy exercise and sheer inevitable ignorance. Just as it might have been possible some time ago to write a history of aesthetics which ignored the contribution of China and Japan to the development of art, but is so no longer, so we never know at what moment a people whose historical development we have been complacently ignoring may come in vital contact with our own.

Man has always been busy giving a content to his idea of progress. Aristotle in his doctrine of a final immanent causality interpreted the process of becoming as a passage from potentiality to actuality, but seems never to have considered history in the light of his theory of development. During the Roman Empire the more philosophical students of history thought of events as moving in cycles, with which idea the Stoics united the idea of the unity of the human race, giving perhaps the germ of a real philosophy of history. Christianity brought the idea that human history marked a steady progress towards a goal fixed from all eternity, and the highest principles of value according to which historical events were appraised in the Middle Ages were found in the extent of their contribution to man's welfare in another world. With the Renaissance the idea of progress was associated with the attainment of self-sufficing activity and personal freedom. In the seventeenth century Leibniz emphasised the importance of philosophical development. In the eighteenth progress was largely held to lie in deliverance from prejudice and irrational authority, and

the importance of human happiness as a sign of progress was strongly enforced. Turgot was perhaps the first to lay down a clear conception of the idea of progress which he did not find in extension of knowledge, refinement of external civilisation or perfection of technical methods, but in an elevation of the whole of human nature to which these might be, but could only be, auxiliary. He declared in his *Discours sur les progrès successifs de l'esprit humain* that progress was being realised because observation showed that intelligence had become clearer, manners milder, nations more companionable, feelings finer and nobler, sympathy wider, and life a thing more happy and beautiful. To this conviction Condorcet gave glowing expression in his conception of the infinite perfectibility of mankind. Herder is principally noteworthy in this connexion for his attempt to give a decisive influence to empiricism in the construction of historical ideals. One may, he says, approach the study of history with a principle of value, but that will become precise and full and may conceivably be modified by the study of actual historical progresses. Herder himself found progress in an unrestricted peaceful unfolding of man's natural faculties, in his progressive realisation of his rationality, freedom and likeness to God. Kant laid stress upon the conservation of achieved progress in the institutions of a well ordered society which made individuals stronger than they could be in themselves, and for him progress consisted at once in the development of man's faculties and in the establishment of a just social order. It is for him a postulate of reason that historical development must be the realisation of ethical value, and its final object to free man from the mechanism of nature and make him capable of acting freely and morally. Hegel, taking one of his many cues from Kant, taught that the great moment of historical development lay in the development of the State. Individuals he treated as mere transition points in the development of the Idea and the different forms in which the one

common spirit had realised itself as the only things worth consideration in history. The leading historico-philosophical ideas associated with the German romantic movement are still, of course, of moment and influence. Their highest concepts of value were expressed as the evolution of the nature of spirit, that is of reason and freedom, realisation of the idea of personality, complete and harmonious human activity. Such an ideal may be held to have been realised even in the midst of great unhappiness and misery, perhaps by means of these, but in no sense impaired by them. But a hedonistic view of progress is always found set against an idealistic, and insisting on the importance for progress of the elimination of unhappiness and misery; and this may appear an important moment even to those who are convinced that absolute and eternal values realise themselves in history, because happiness may go with their attainment and may be treated as an indication of progress; because we should scarcely seek absolute and eternal values if that were not a very real way of seeking happiness. Many limited and relative points of view, dictated by some special interest or by patriotic or sectarian feeling, have found expression in the histories that have been actually written, and it would be difficult to extract any common standard of progress from them. We find Gibbon questioning whether mankind has progressed at all since the days of the Cæsars, because then peace and happiness and good government were universal. Against this we may infer that others would protest, because the peaceful thriving of nations is not the highest good, since it does not give full opportunity for the free unfolding of the noblest forces of life. In general it may be said that all men mark as progress increase of culture and the development of a many-sided individuality in persons and nations, such that each generation should have a better chance than the preceding of living worthily as men and significantly as spiritual beings. And I should say that while most men feel, however they may give expression to that feeling, that it

is somehow implicit in man's striving to pass beyond itself, few people regard society as the final end of the individuals who compose it. It is for most people a means and not an end, existing only to improve the material comfort and spiritual efficiency of its individual members. Of course universal social creations go to constitute the mind of the individual and form the general background of his thought and action; but from this common ground individuality emerges, and in it it is never lost. Höffding gives a new turn to Kant's thought when he says that perfection in a society is the degree in which each personal being is so placed and treated that he is not only a means but also at the same time an end.

How does our present-day philosophy deal with the bewildering mass of historical fact, traditional interpretation, and popular belief? Unsatisfactorily, I venture to think. The inheritors of the great philosophic tradition seem now more effectually "thirled," as the Scotch say, to science than philosophy ever was to theology, and somehow impatient of merely human questions. There may be some greatness in this which I cannot appreciate; but, at least, I want to urge the reconsideration of the attitude. However much a metaphysic of history may be a play of the phantasy, its deepest justification lies in this, that its roots are those interests but for which we should have no care for the knowledge of events. It is certainly a natural desire of man that his history should not be held to be merely the record of how he appeared in time, satisfied a few animal wants in himself and others, had a few moments of supreme insight into his own utter unworthiness, and then disappeared, having utterly ceased to exist, except vicariously, as an influence and a memory. It is with most people a postulate that their history must surely mean something more than this, and the inability to see what more it can mean is felt as peculiarly saddening. If it is the final reasoned judgment of philosophy that no more is to be said, many minds, ready enough to acknowledge and enjoy the

incidental charms of existence, would feel, regarding man's life as a whole, not so much a tragic exaltation as a bewildered scorn.

Lotze says: "The presentiment that we shall not be lost in the future, that those who are before us, though they have passed away from the sphere of earthly reality, have not passed away from reality altogether, and that in some way the progress of history affects them too, seems to be the conviction that entitles us to speak of humanity and its history." "History," he says, "cannot be a mere slender ray of reality slipping on between two abysses of absolute nothingness, past and future, ever consigning back to the nothingness in its rear that which its efforts had won from the nothingness in its van." Lotze may not be talking here as a profound philosopher, but he is voicing the pretty general feeling of mankind. There is this peculiarity about the value acquired by a human experient that, if it is ever lost by the extinction of that experient, it is hard to see how its painful acquisition was ever in itself valuable. It looks as if it ought to have been stamped in somehow as a permanent conscious gain. In discussing Green's doctrine of the conservation of personality, Dr. Bosanquet comes to the words, "Or we may content ourselves with saying that the personal self-conscious being which comes from God is for ever continued in God," and the following words, "A capacity which is nothing except as personal cannot be realised in any impersonal modes of being," on which he comments: "Here, I think, we begin to see that the fulfilment of the personal conscious being may lie rather in that which it would most wish to be assured of—its fundamental interests—being eternally real in an ultimate being and in the universe of appearances than in itself, with the formal personality which belonged to its proper name, being consciously perpetuated in a proper existence." On this I would comment, that we no more desire the immortality of our proper name than we do of our corns, but that *our* fundamental interests cannot continue

if *we* do not, although interests in which we were interested may still be represented. The important point for Dr. Bosanquet lies in his conception that the ultimate being can be conceived as comprehending in itself the human spirit and all that it is capable of becoming; but it is not so clear that the ultimate being is conceived as comprehending in itself human spirits and all that *they* are capable of becoming. And this is the important point for those who feel that such a preservation of personal values as Dr. Bosanquet depicts is somehow unreal. In a word, as he says himself, it is not primarily that the goal of development should be our personality, but that it shall be a personality.

If the words concrete and abstract were not already differently appropriated, concrete might describe that which has grown up with the unity of our personal consciousness. He who has to do with anything else has to do with a relatively abstract object. In any picture of the macrocosm, the living point of contact with the individual experient is lacking, because all scientific investigation is a defective instrument for dealing with the personal, the supreme synthetic sphere. The world which is presented in laws and rules of scientific experience is not on a level with the varied world of such concrete experience. There are in human individuality those two aspects by which we view it as a member of society or as a microcosm, and all protests that appear in the philosophic guise of individualism or personalism or pluralism have arisen because thousands of interperpetuating activities have failed to reduce this individual aspect to a purely dependent creation, or to convince the individual that his contribution to objective reality really exhausts his meaning. As Professor Ward says, "The course of history shows us the gradual building up of society and civilisation, but ever widening social groups and ends of ever increasing scope are still in every case individual and concrete. The higher over-individual ends, politics, industry, science, literature, art, imply differentiation among men that in spite of

its significance would defy classification." And such individuals have an undoubted being for self, and it is only natural that to many thinkers the value of what we see going on in history cannot consist entirely in its objective products, but also, and mainly, in the effect of these upon the lives of individual human souls. The course of history would indeed be the moulding of souls on each of which is laid the task of bringing all the manifestations of reality to a unique decisive unity. Of course the nature of personality stretches beyond the empirical individual and any attempted reduction of one's thoughts and aims to his merely empirical self would be the cardinal sin. But that does not mean the blowing of one's self up and out like the frog in the fable in an impossible emulation of the Absolute: "a fragmentary being inspired by an infinite whole which he is for ever striving to express in terms of his limited range of externality. In this he can never succeed." In this world he does in some measure succeed. That is, there is increase of spiritual energy and continued conservation by unique centres of their hardly acquired values, which, as Dr. Ward says, distinguishes the historical evolution of experience from the steady downward trend of the physical world. Perhaps as Leibniz said, *tout est comme ici*. I hope so. If, on penetrating to the depths of reality, it is shown that human striving is but a part of the effort of the whole to sustain itself, it seems desirable also that it should be shown that the whole sustains human striving.

In the last of his Gifford Lectures, Professor Bergson summed up by saying that what characterises the person is the continuity of movement of its inner life. That it seems as if the continuity of inner life had been sought after from the beginning and that each stage of the psychological evolution corresponds to an effort to acquire that continuity. That is, evolution has tended towards constituting distinct personalities, and that, from this point of view, the series of the species which are prior to man may be regarded as a gigantic telegraph wire,

over which has been sent the message of which the separate words constitute what we call human personality. According to the valuable summary which Professor Seth has given of these lectures, M. Bergson considers the modern doctrine of personality to be a form of Neoplatonism, weakened by the attempt to combine the theory of Plotinus with a philosophy of nature as a merely mechanical system obedient to mathematical laws and by the disappearance of the important Greek idea of the movement from the unity of the eternal and intelligible to the multiplicity of the sensible and material as a process of degeneration or degradation from true being. It regards all action as the result of desire, and therefore of incompleteness. It means the endless pursuit of completeness, but condemns the agent to failure; for it is the attempt to arrive at unity in time which is the sphere of multiplicity. All this is, in M. Bergson's opinion, a mistake, because the traditional philosophy of time is mistaken, and the application of this view of time so as to analyse the unity of personality into the multiplicity of the several states of consciousness is artificial and misleading. The life of personality is an unbroken and continuous change in time. Personality has two aspects, memory and will, a backward-looking and a forward-looking phase. Will is an *élan en avant*, the creative aspect of personality which utilises the past as an element in a new and larger life. And, since the activity of personality is creative, we seem warranted, M. Bergson thinks, in regarding the entire evolutionary process as the mechanism necessary for the creation of creators.

I do not know how these later deliverances of M. Bergson fit in exactly with his previous writings, but they show, at least, that he is now very much awake to the importance of this central problem of personality. Hitherto he had only arrived, as it seems to me, at a retrospective teleology, life had an identity of impulsion, not a common aspiration; and he gave us what appeared a disheartening account of human history,

as if we were part of a force that is spending itself rather hopelessly and blindly, and which might, apparently, be overthrown by its own creation. He spoke, indeed, of the possibility of its overcoming all obstacles, even death, but in no very confident tone, and actually it was deviated, divided, opposed to itself. He admitted that everything takes place *as if* life had some purpose to realise; but we had no very sure promise and guarantee of this. His subsequent Gifford Lectures will make his attitude on these questions clearer. At all events, the problem whether philosophy can give any adequate interpretation of the place and purpose in reality of individual systems of energy and those ideal constructions which gather round unique centres is a very important one. If it cannot, is not some leading principle of philosophy in need of revision, as M. Bergson maintains? Each human life is a relative whole within the unity of the world, deriving from its dependence on nature and society everything except its individual fashion of acknowledging and taking interest in this dependence and responding to it by its deeds. We have our degree of reality within the temporal series at least, and cannot treat the questions arising within temporal experience as unreal; the finite consciousnesses of human selves cannot be reduced to meaninglessness by setting in opposition to them the systematic structure of reality as a whole. Even the fact that my experience is also the experience of an infinite consciousness, if there be such, does not make it any the less mine. Ultimate reality may be free from all *discord* and yet embrace within it those aspects which we distinguish as the finite and infinite spheres, and may contain an infinite consciousness which distinguishes the realm of finite selves from itself as a not-self by the possession of a separate centre of consciousness, and in ultimate reality these aspects, which *we* struggle to comprehend as perfection and imperfection, may be somehow harmoniously related. But there would remain these two

inseparably related aspects to fall within the ultimate system of reality, and, as there cannot be a consciousness higher than the infinite, if we admit it, I should prefer not to talk of ultimate reality as consciously uniting these differences in any such way as would shatter the independence of the finite consciousness. For infinite consciousness has one undeniable characteristic, it is not the finite consciousness as such, and does not know things in the way that finite consciousness does. If it knows my difficulty, for example, it can never know it, as I occasionally do, in entire ignorance of its solution. I mean that the minus that the finite consciousness necessarily exhibits entirely alters its cognisance of what the infinite consciousness knows. I cannot help thinking that there is an argument here to prove the independent real existence of the finite and infinite consciousnesses. Certainly, unless we can prove that the finite consciousness is real, the problem of human history does not properly speaking exist for us. But if we regard conscious endeavour taking place in finite centres as a real factor in development, we may be dissatisfied with the mere establishment of an external causal connexion between the elements of historical process and tend to treat it from within as a purposive process acquiring new meaning as it unfolds itself. Professor Ward with fine insight and rare humanity has faced the problem, and its solution seems to him to involve the concepts of Theism and creation; and much the same conclusion is reached by a writer who is certain to be more spoken of before long, I mean Varisco. To his views, as less known than Dr. Ward's, I shall in conclusion refer. *En passant* I might note that Eucken, a thinker who has a large measure of popularity at present, would agree with those who regard meaning and worth as raised above time, but, as I understand him, not with those who would regard all meaning and worth as eternally realised. In the higher spiritual activities there is being fashioned an entirely new spiritual reality, the construction of which is the great object of historical progress.

The whole spiritual nature of man is raising itself a stage higher, and in him something more than human is being revealed. Spiritual life has to adapt itself to temporal conditions, stretches into time and forms a history there, but rises out of mere time to lasting truth and possession. Man cannot be immortal either as a mere creature of nature or with all his equipments, but only as regards his spiritual position; and he quotes, with approval, the saying of Augustine: "*Quod Deo non perit, sibi non perit.*" What is Eucken's precise relation to the older historic Idealism I have never been able to understand. But, although he attempts to give no representation of its exact mode of continuance, he defends what he calls the immortality of the human core that belongs to the spirit world and strives to avoid what he calls a pantheistic evaporation of the soul life.

To turn to Varisco and to take first his views on causality. If all possible relations were logical relations of ground to consequent, there could not be any real time or anything real happening in time. But causal relations are not reducible to the logical nexus or deducible from it in so far as they are due to the subject's spontaneous activity, which is a source of absolutely new beginnings. Every event in so far as due to the subject is not caused by any previous event, although it may be connected with others and fall within the sphere of logical relation. In the world, unity and multiplicity, necessity and contingency, are equally essential. They are all held together by the common fact that they all *are*. Being is our most general notion of which all other notions are determinations. If we suppose that the concrete realities of the phenomenal world are the only necessary determinations of Being, then among these we must put time and all that happens therein, and the universe would always be, by logically intrinsic necessity, the full self-realisation of Being. At any moment in its history it would have attained, through experiencing subjects, human societies, and, above all, philosophers,

to complete self-consciousness. In such a universe there would be partial and transient teleological systems, but no preservations of value for either individuals or societies. The value of all determinate particular realities would be measured by their degree of reality, and, in a sense, value would be neither lost, preserved, nor created. But we cannot ignore man's desire for the conservation of value he has consciously achieved or regard these as sufficiently condemned by calling them selfish and individualistic. Does experience reveal values which are not mere instruments of timeless necessity, and which, to be and remain values, require as an essential condition some permanence of personality? The subject would have no value of its own if its activity had not characteristics differing from those of physical reality, which in itself is indifferent, having no value except for the subject, who brings into existence a value of physical reality with respect to itself. The theoretic consciousness has no value except as allied with practical consciousness. We are always brought back to the primitive nature of the concept of value. Activity, to be of value, must be conscious and practical. The value of the subject is realised in feeling, feeling and theoretic consciousness being bound together in the unity of the subject and mutually modifying and conditioning each other. Consciousness and the spontaneity of each subject are developed in a field governed by law, but seeming to escape precise determination. The "I" only acquires full consciousness of its value in its relations with its fellows and the world. What is essential in these relations, many of which might be different without the "I" being substantially changed, stands in the structure of the whole, in its supreme law. It is then essential to the "I" to attain to a true conception of the whole. Can the determination of facts within the whole be absolutely rigorous, or is there in facts a non-logical indeterministic element, a spontaneity without which there would be no happening? Facts are connected in virtue of laws, but it is

yet to be proved that law suppresses spontaneity. Are such centres of variation illogical, or is it simply the case that their intrinsic spontaneity is only outside logic, not contrary to it? Is not knowledge itself a product of the spontaneity of the subject? Real happening as taking place in time cannot be reduced to a system of logical relations only, for these are outside time. Real happening presupposes centres that may be bound by logical relation, but are none the less endowed with independence, such that the varying of each centre is not merely the necessary logical consequence of a varying already in process. The universe exists necessarily, but may it not necessarily have determined itself into centres of spontaneous happening? Within the universe we seem to recognise an undoubtedly purposeful factor in conscious spontaneity. Can we suppose that in the unity of the whole there are implicit laws essentially final? It is important to decide, because life is developed in the bosom of a mechanism and depends upon it. The universe considered in its all-inclusive unity seems purposeless, its existence a perpetual varying of parts which leaves the whole fundamentally unchanged. Mobile equilibrium is not an end to which it tends, but a fixed characteristic invariably possessed. The spontaneity of every centre, if we consider it apart from its interference with those of other centres, is a principle of variation devoid of external purpose but not of value. The interference gives rise to complications and to the first external purposefulness, the avoidance of evil. Physical formations lack purpose and value; biological have evident purposefulness but in general slight intrinsic value; man as the simple subject has not much more value than that of the other higher animals nor of a different kind. But man is also a self-conscious subject, an "I," as such he proposes ends to himself clearly and makes towards them with a fully conscious activity. The end that is essential to him is to know the world and himself and to develop activity in accordance with such knowledge. This union of purposefulness and value is only realised as the "I" realises it, it is

not an accidental mechanical formation. It presupposes the activity and rationality of Being, but organises these in a peculiar unity of consciousness. The "I" can form and develop itself on our earth, but the earth will end. Will the immense work accomplished by mankind in order to arrive at cognition and mastery of self be lost for ever, and the evolution of life perhaps begin afresh without knowledge of, or benefit from, that course of evolution through which we have run? Being potentially contains everything, but potentiality is not actualisation. Suppress the individual unities of consciousness and the happening which is a consequence of them, and contrast, harmony, action, value, all vanish. Certainly my personal value is the value of *the* person and not of a particular person myself. But, to conclude from this that persons *qua* persons can be reduced to one would be no more reasonable than to assert that a cube has only one face because every face of the cube is a face of cube, and that this is a characteristic common to each. Every person to be constituted requires the particular of spontaneity, of distinct consciousness with a partially distinct content, and the universal of law. The absolute continuity of development, the permanence of values, cannot be preserved in any way, if concrete objects are the only determinations of Being, if the potential value of Being becomes actual only in the individual persons; for these, being subject to the bonds of a necessary and therefore non-final causality, can only be transitory, each individually and their groups collectively. To preserve the permanence of the values we must admit that causal necessity is subordinate to an intentional finality, admit, that is, that Being is endowed with determinate forms other than concrete objects and produces concrete objects in itself, not through the necessity of self-determination, but to attain an end, to actualise a pre-arranged design. In this case the concept of Being transforms itself into that of God. It remains to be known if the Divine exists only as immanent in things, or whether it is not a unity of consciousness

which would be transcendent with respect to the individual consciousness.

No one is content with the immediate present. No one would rejoice at the birth of a son if he foresaw that in a few days both son and mother would be dead. The present only has value in relation to the future, about which man cannot help asking. And yet he asks vaguely and contents himself with vague answers; but, we must insist, if values are not permanent they do not exist. A reality in which values arise must possess intrinsic value, but a reality in which the demand of the "I" to attain and conserve value was intrinsically unable to be satisfied, which could not find its climax in a lasting harmony of conscious values, would be a failure. Personal value does not vanish entirely if we do not admit its permanence, but its true characteristic of value implies its permanence. So far Varisco.

Evidently, then, history presents philosophy with problems which cannot simply be ignored, problems connected with such concepts as efficient and final cause, finite personality, value, and with questions as to the reality of time, the nature of real possibilities, the relation of mind and body, and the relation of mechanism and teleology. The contest is ultimately between spontaneity or individual activity and the scientific concept of inert matter as a constant quantity. We picture, as Dr. Ward says, the course of history as continually foreclosing genuine alternatives and the course of nature as throughout completely determined, but, if you include the doings of men as well as the motions of matter under the phrase uniformity of nature, then you assign to all determination the necessity of science. The problem of free will *versus* determinism Mr. Russell considers mainly illusory, but he admits that in part it is not yet capable of being decisively solved. The fact that the universe is mechanical, he says, has no bearing whatever on the question whether it is teleological, and yet he had said previously that "the world which science presents for

our belief is purposeless and void of meaning," and that man was but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms and destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system. I submit that, if the universe is this sort of mechanism, the fact has very considerable bearing on the question whether or not it is teleological. Of course, as Mr. Russell says, a mechanical system of the world might realise purpose, and the question whether or how far our actual world is teleological cannot therefore be settled by proving that it is mechanical, and the desire that it should be teleological is no ground for wishing it to be not mechanical. Mr. Russell says there is one sense, and a very important one, in which the future is determined quite independently of scientific laws, viz., the sense that it will be what it will be. I have no difficulty in believing that the present may be explained by the past, just as it may explain the past and the future, because the things are all related. But there is no formula by means of which the future of our volitional experience can be exhibited and calculated as a function of the past. We can do something of the kind regarding physics, and all who regard our conscious experience as determined in a sense which seems to many people objectionable mean by that that it belongs to the material deterministic system. Mr. Russell, however, admits that it is quite possible that some volitions, as well as some other things, are not determined except in the sense in which everything must be determined, that is, cannot be other than it is, a mere application of the law of contradiction. There is, he goes on, the question whether volitions form part of a system with purely material determinants, that is, whether there are laws which, given certain material data, make all volitions functions of these data. It may be, Mr. Russell says, that the same system which is susceptible of material determinants is also susceptible of mental determinants; thus a mechanical system may be determined by sets of volitions as well as by sets of material facts. And he concludes that the reasons which make people

dislike the view that volitions are mechanically determined are fallacious. Determinism does not imply that actions are necessary in the sense that they will be performed however much the agent may wish to do otherwise, and even if volitions are mechanically determined, there is, he considers, no reason for denying freedom in the sense revealed by introspection or for supposing that mechanical events are not determined by volitions. Perhaps not, but, as Mr. Russell has said, the question is not yet capable of being decisively solved, and some of us feel the greatest difficulty not only in seeing how it ever can be the case that spiritual wholeness results from processes such as the inorganic processes known in physics and chemistry, but also how any material processes in the brain and nervous system can even symbolically represent what really happens in consciousness. As Dr. Driesch says, "In action nothing is fixed in the sense of what fixation means in anything like a machine. In acting there may be no change in the specificity of the reaction when the stimulus is altered fundamentally, and again there may be the most fundamental difference in the reaction when there is almost no change in the stimulus." And this he considers works against the theory that the psychical phenomena are but the other side of an unbroken causal series of the mechanical type. "The relation of various objects to a single subject has," he says, "nothing similar in the mechanical world, and the power of the subject to think and to imagine seems to lack possibility of mechanical parallel, while psychical progress seems to mean the formation of something new." "The so-called material continuity of life may," Dr. Driesch says, "mean simply that there are certain areas of matter, certain material systems embracing an enormous number of possibilities of happening in the form of differences of potential that are permanently under the control of non-mechanical agents. By their regulatory, relaxing action in a system in which an enormous variety of possible events had been suspended by them, it

may happen that an equal distribution of possibilities is transformed into an unequal distribution of actual effects. Nature would be that which satisfies the postulates of a rational theory of becoming, and which behaves at the same time as if it were independent and self-persistent in itself. If in a given natural system an increase of the degree of manifoldness, if, that is, the number of different kinds of relations among the 'things' present, is greater in the second state than in the first, and if we know that this increase has not been prepared in any way inside or outside the system in space, then we are obliged to introduce non-spatial factors of becoming. We give to this type of possible becoming the name of unifying causality. The word 'teleological' may be used whenever a result that is a whole is reached by a succession of various steps or phases of becoming, each of which is subject to unifying causality." There are, Dr. Driesch considers, signs of wholeness in history, changes which we regard as progress, the bringing forth of spiritual values; while the sort of mutual adaptations discussed by Professor Henderson in the *Fitness of the Environment*, such as that between water and carbonic acid, on the one side, and life on the other, seem to point towards a certain wholeness or teleology of the universe in general, including organic and non-organic nature. "Some speak," says Dr. Driesch, "of the union of universal teleology and mechanism, meaning by this phrase that the universe would appear as one ordered whole and as a mechanical system at the same time, if only we had a sufficient knowledge of spatial reality, which is supposed to furnish us with a symbol of everything that there is. It would be strange if there were one order with regard to spatial reality and yet we could discover nothing of it, and there is not this ordered wholeness in spatial givenness, and, if there were ordered wholeness in spatiality, we could not speak of mechanism, and from mechanism, in a true sense, nothing but geometrical wholeness can arise, which can surely not be the other side or symbol

of what biology, history, psychology and ethics lead us to attribute to reality."

Are we driven to believe that our difficulties in regarding Beings as having intrinsic creative spontaneity and not being merely logically automatic is due merely to ineffectual thinking? Are there intrinsic values that are not merely forms of logical necessity, and that may be, and perhaps only could be, preserved through the conservation of persons, or are these questions merely fanciful? I have said little to enforce the significance of feeling, because that is something to which philosophical reflexion is supposed to be indifferent. But we cannot decide the ultimate essence of value without deciding the significance we are to give to feeling. The distinction of selves is not overcome, even in our highest emotional experience, although that may give rise to osmotic processes among selves, and I question if even the most rapt mystic would be satisfied, if the value he realises in his love of God were preserved as another's and not as his experience. Again, if I am told that to require happiness in addition to wholeness is to show that I am still unconscious of the true nature of personal worth, why, if I believe happiness to be the expression of the harmony of myself with other selves and with the world as a whole, should the wish for it be regarded as impairing the value of personal worth? In history we lay our count with nothing short of the whole world. We have little evidence to show that we can rely upon the goodness of the world, but we cannot afford to be indifferent to the question, and if to the final end of the world those elements that we recognise in our experience as happiness are indifferent, then by any criterion that man should apply the world is not merely beyond good and evil, it is positively bad, and the fate that it has bound round our feet no light misfortune. But the world has produced those highest emotional experiences which alone have rendered tolerable for us much else that it has produced, and since our experience is

in time, it is no unreasonable desire on man's part that those experiences most expressive of eternal value which are at the same time accompanied by a happy acquiescence in his experience should fill more and more of the time he has to live, and not only his time but that of all other subjects capable of experiencing values. Without the existence of that great scale passing from simple human happiness to supreme exaltation of soul, I do not believe we should ever have spoken of value as something actually existing in the world; but I must not be taken as meaning that emotional coherences can be standardised as apart from rational.