

II.—THE NATURE AND AIMS OF PHILOSOPHY.¹

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AT the present moment, as philosophers would themselves acknowledge, there is no theory that either obtains or deserves unquestioning confidence. All attempts at re-presenting the unity of things have failed.

"A mass, keeps flying off, fining away
Ever into a multitude of points,
And ends in isolation, each from each."

Unprejudiced observers—if ignorance, more or less complete, can ever be unprejudiced—who contrast the long catalogue of defeats sustained by the philosophers and the shattered condition of their ranks to-day, with the solid and advancing conquests of the natural sciences, have very naturally concluded that philosophy is seeking by a doubtful method an unattainable goal. Philosophy has fallen upon evil days, if not amongst evil men.

The sad picture which Hume drew of philosophy in his day, represents with much faithfulness its condition in our own. "Principles taken upon trust, consequences lamely deduced from them, want of coherence in the parts, and of evidence in the whole—these are everywhere to be met with in the systems of the most eminent philosophers, and seem to have drawn disgrace upon philosophy itself. Nor is there required such profound knowledge to discover the present imperfect condition of the sciences, but even the rabble without doors may judge from the noise and clamour, which they hear, that all goes not well within."

I concur with the rabble as to the noise and clamour, but I dissent from the conclusion it draws from them. In fact, I remember with some satisfaction that it is the rabble which infers from the noise and clamour that all goes not well within. The wise from the same premisses will draw the opposite conclusion. They know that there is the vigour of life in a philosophy which excites the clamour of disputants. It is the philosophy which has sunk into silence that is dead. All truth is vocal, and continues to clamour till it is purified from the discordant elements of error. Like virtue, and all *life*, spiritual and natural, truth

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is essentially combative in nature. It continues to strive till it lifts man to its own level and becomes his permanent and peaceful possession. The error of the rabble lies in expecting that this sphere of knowledge can ever be other than the arena of combatants. They forget that a philosophy which has become a tradition, like a theology that has hardened into dogma, has lost all its potency.

But the common error is quite natural. People have been led into it by the philosophers themselves, who have not only striven to erect systems whose validity would never more be doubted, and which would stand fixed and serene outside the changing show of human affairs, but have also assured the world that they have accomplished this task. Descartes in his *Principia* boasted that "There is no phenomenon of nature whose explanation has been omitted from this Treatise". Pretensions of a similar character were set up by the cautious David Hume. The most modest Immanuel Kant thought that he had left little more for mankind than the task of filling in the details of his system. What shall be said of the more generous vaunts of Kant's successors? "Out of the turnings round and round inside," Kant thought that through his effort there would come 'that straightforward world-advance' that we all want. He had "substituted the certainty of scientific method, for that random groping after results without the guidance of principles, which has hitherto characterised the pursuit of metaphysical studies". This discovery of a valid method has been too often confused with the establishment of an ultimate and final system of philosophy.

Now I venture to think that no such system exists; and, what is much more, that a valid, ultimate, fixed system of philosophical doctrine is radically impossible. Indeed part of my present task is to show that to expect such a consummation to the philosopher's endeavour betrays a fundamental misapprehension of the nature of the metaphysical science. I do not believe in a last philosophy, any more than in a last poet. On the contrary, he who expects finality in the region of philosophy, and condemns its votaries for not attaining it, condemns it by reference to an unreasonable criterion and an impossible end: nay, condemns it for that which is its highest virtue.

In order to show this it is necessary to form some conception of the true end of philosophy. A complete definition of that end is as impossible as a complete definition of Goodness. I should describe the metaphysical science, in the spirit of the ancient philosophers and without sinking

any of its ancient pretensions, as the reflective reconstruction of the life of man. It is a process rather than a dogma, a process whereby man lives over again in thought the experiences of his theoretical and practical activities. It is our way, and our only way, of lifting into the clear light of thought those principles which have been acting within us and in the events of our times with the blindness and imperiousness of instinct. It is the wisdom of old age turned back in placid contemplation upon the fervid activities of youth, gathering up the meaning which was hidden during the strife and conflict and treasuring it for a better life in the future. It is not easy to lay too much stress on this truth that the office of philosophy is primarily reproductive and only secondarily creative: that, as has been said, it 'paints its grey in grey and cannot make the old young again'.

"Therefore, I summon age
To grant youth's heritage;
Life's struggle having so far reached its term.

"Youth ended I shall try
My gain or loss thereby;
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold:
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame.
Young all lay in dispute; I shall know being old."

Now, as philosophy is the reflective interpretation of human experience, it must accept the laws of experience as its own. Experience is its starting-point and its whole datum, from which alone it derives both its content and its method. Philosophy never did and never can construct a world from an empty thought by means of deductive logic. It is questionable, even, if any great philosopher ever fell into the error of thinking that he proceeded by this high *priori* road. It is certain that modern philosophy seeks no fulcrum outside the world whereon to base its engines. It derives all its force from the intimacy and inwardness of its relation to experience. Like every valuable theory it is explanatory only; it is ruled by the facts which it explains; it is the fact rendered intelligible, with its potencies laid bare. The fact breaks into the true thought, as the plant bursts into flower. Living thought is the means which the fact employs for manifesting its own nature. It is the relation of mind and the bodily organs to the physical waves which converts the latter into sounds and colours. It lifts them, so to speak, into a higher power; but it lifts

them into a higher power only because they are intrinsically capable of entering into relation with physiological and psychological conditions. The lower, or physical, is 'organic to' the higher, or intellectual. Higher and lower are parts of one whole, and therefore known in their reality only when known in their relation. There is no error of abstract thought more mischievous than that which ignores the activity of thought in the sphere of fact, or that of fact in the sphere of thought, and makes science and philosophy exclusive and rival forms of knowledge. Thought never invents, it only discovers. It starts from what already is, and it only gives to that which is the means of expressing itself more fully.

This is not the place to dwell upon the difference, within the deeper identity, between science and philosophy. Nor do I pause to show in what way philosophy reacts upon the results of the ordinary and scientific consciousness. I only wish, in the first place, to direct attention to the fundamental identity of all thinking activity, and to emphasise the immediate dependence of all thought upon its data—a dependence so deep and immediate as to make the severed elements nothing but unreal abstractions. Philosophy, indeed, as reflexion upon experience, is thought engaged upon thought. But it is a hasty conclusion to conceive that the thought it interprets is empty thought. Empty thought, evolved purely from within, is impossible, and neither philosophy nor any other science can possibly be engaged upon it.

Now if the task of philosophy is to interpret experience, and if experience ordinary and scientific as the datum of philosophy gives it both its content and its law of procedure, we may ask further whether there is any law or principle of human experience which we can agree to regard as fundamental, and therefore as a valid starting-point. I do not ask for a starting-point which is absolutely and unconditionally valid. Indeed, this lecture will fail in its main purpose if it does not show that such an absolute and unconditional point of departure is impossible. The philosophy of our day distinguishes itself from the pre-Kantian theories in nothing more broadly and significantly than in the fact that it seeks certainty not at the beginning but at the end,—were there any end. Instead of setting forth from an irrefragable datum like the Cartesian 'Cogito ergo Sum' or from a direct, immediate, authoritative testimony of consciousness, it starts from the hypothetical and moves through doubt. It seeks stability not in its foundation but

in its key stone ; not in an isolated fact, but in a completed system. Or, speaking more strictly, its test of truth is complete organisation and not any mechanical and rigid relation of part to part ; and, in this respect, it labours under the same difficulties, is liable to the same suspicion and claims precisely the same authority as Natural Science.

In seeking for a starting-point we, therefore, only seek 'a working hypothesis,' that is a conception which, while lacking all apodeictic certainty, commends itself to our notice by the range and the clearness of the light it seems to throw on the manifold data of our experience. Now, I think I find such a valuable, hypothetical starting-point in the conception of human experience as a process of growth. I believe that while there may be some who would deny that 'the world is growing better' and who think that in doing so they are rejecting the doctrine of evolution, neither they, nor any others, are at present able really to escape the evolutionary point of view. No one now denies the continuity of the life of mankind, even if that continuity points in the direction of decay and degeneration. All the sciences, on the contrary, combine in demonstrating with even fuller detail how in language, art, science, morals, each generation gets its starting-point from its predecessor. History is not a series of leaks. Whether the golden age be in the past or in the future it is at least certain that in the large life of man day is bound to day by 'natural piety'. Whether it be for better or for worse, the product of the labour of centuries lies between us and the crude needs and delights of the ages of barbarism.

So deeply is the thought of the present age impressed with the continuity of human experience that it is prone rather to forget the other aspect implied in its history. We forget too often that no generation, or individual, can enter upon its inheritance from the past except by making it its own.

"Was du ererbt von deinen Vatern hast
Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen."

There is a sense in which human experience begins again *de novo*, not only with every age and epoch, but with every individual. Every man, thinks Emerson, is a new incarnation, a fresh experiment in the world of spirit, a new attempt at realising the true and the good. Knowledge cannot come to any one by bequest, although it is a vast gain to breathe in youth the air of culture ; character cannot be inherited, although it is an advantage of incomparable

value to have a stainless descent, and to be born a citizen of a good state. Every individual must, after all, front the world in his own might, be it great or small, and gain from his conflict with it such a spiritual possession as he can conquer in his own strength. Persons are the most solitary things in the world, even though they are capable of the deepest communion. Although they need all the world whereby to realise themselves in knowledge and virtue, yet each of them is as spirit, a world to himself, his own beginning and end and destiny. In fact it is the characteristic of knowledge and virtue, of all spiritual possessions that they must be acquired anew by every age and every person in an age. Nor is this truth nullified by the fact that accumulated potencies are vested in society. For it is *only* potencies that are transmitted. The utmost that one age can give to another is the raw material, which ever demands to be elaborated over again. The movement onward of mankind is thus a movement that is perpetually turning back upon itself and beginning anew. The process of human experience passes through the continual, though only partial, failure of the individual, and like all that is living, it persists by continual reconstruction.

Now, if this be the law of the fact which philosophy seeks to explain, is it not evident that it must also be the law of the movement of philosophy itself? If mind ever gathers itself into new centres and maintains itself anew in each man as against the world, reconstructing that world in thought and subordinating it to the uses of spirit, must not philosophy do the same? If so, then to the question, 'Which, then, remains of all the philosophies?' we may answer with Schiller, 'None, but philosophy itself will remain for ever'. It, too, must die to live.

The doubt which has gathered round Metaphysics, like many other difficulties which meet those who labour in the Sciences of Man, springs from the attempt to treat a moving, changing, living, growing fact from a fixed, static point of view. It is gratuitously assumed that of two alternatives one must be true, whereas fixed alternatives will yield no truth in the sphere of life and mind. A final and ultimate account, an absolute philosophy, is demanded of an object which cannot remain what it is without ceasing to be at all, which is not only always progressing but always changing as a living organism changes. For there is no mere external aggregation in the history of human experience. Every step forward is taken through concretion, in which the past is taken up into the present. Its history is a

continual synthesis of new and old, in which both new and old interpenetrate and the whole is renovated in every part.

Now it follows from this view of human experience that Philosophy which endeavours to reconstruct it by reflexion must itself follow the same law of evolution. A system of Philosophy must fail if it is faithful to its datum ; it must perish with the life it explains, though it perishes only *as* that life does, namely, in such a way as to enter into the larger life which succeeds it. In the fact that system after system fails, becomes too narrow, like many a moral and religious creed, to give adequate expression to the expanding life of man I would find one of the conditions of the possibility of the vitality and permanence of philosophy. If it is true on the one hand that the failure of systems is not of itself enough to secure the success of Philosophy, it is also true on the other that a system which does not fail, a creed which is fixed is dead.

But it may be objected that our argument proves too much, in so far as it implies the continual failure of every form of systematic thought ; whereas there is a definite contrast between Philosophy and the sciences, between the continual retrogression of the former and the steady onward movement of the latter.

An attempt has, indeed, been made to meet this difficulty by introducing the same law of failure into the history of science. It has been indicated, not without truth, that even the proud structure of the natural sciences has been erected with the broken columns of past experiments. Newton's *Principia*, it is argued, is no more the Science of physics ; Euclid's *Elements* is not the Science of geometry : philosophy as regards its history and development does not differ *in genere* from the body of the Sciences. Nevertheless, I do not think that the philosopher has a complete right to use this weapon of defence that lies so ready to hand. On the contrary, I must confess that the Sciences, and especially Mathematics and Physics, have, to use the words of Kant, 'found a sure course,' and 'admit of an indefinite advancement' : while. "In Metaphysics, reason seems perpetually to come to a stand, is compelled to retrace its steps and abandon one path after another". In this arena, "No victory was ever crowned with permanent possession". This contrast is, in the main, valid ; and, while no advancement in knowledge can come by mere aggregation, the sciences actually have manifested a power of continuous movement which Metaphysics cannot parallel. Helmholtz or Thomson can enter into the labours of Newton

and even of Euclid; the edifice grows in grandeur just because the old foundations are sure. Twice two is always four and in Euclidean space straight lines do not enclose a surface. But what philosophical doctrine has this permanent validity? Hume was unable to accept the result of Locke's reflexion, Kant rejected the discoveries of Hume, Hegel reconstructed the whole system of Kant, and his own system looks to-day as if it were crumbling into dust beneath the blows of the minor critics. Why is the first movement of the masters in philosophy always destructive and the continuity of their labours so concealed that its very existence seems doubtful?

I believe that we may get a less prejudiced, and perhaps a truer answer to this question if we direct it against another form of activity, one whose high worth no one doubts even although it, like philosophy, is always turning *back* to the beginning. I refer to the Fine Arts. Their history, like that of philosophic systems, is a record of apparently abrupt phenomena. No one can give the genealogy of the poets. They are all Melchisedecs. We cannot discern the law of the succession of Chaucer and Spenser and Shakespere and Milton.

These great figures rise precipitously from the dead level of ordinary human life like mountains from the plain, and while the Art of Poetry grows greater in their hands no one of them accepts his task from the hands of his predecessor. Poetry no more grows by gradual expansion than philosophy does, and poets no more than philosophers continue the work of those who go before them. No poem begun by one author can receive perfection from the skill of another. There are fragments left by poets which will remain fragments to the end of time.

'Thy great Campanile is still to finish.'

We do not even expect this kind of continuity in the history of Art. Its growth takes place according to no simple law but by a series of surprises. In fact there is the same kind of contrast between the growth of Art and of Science as there is between that of Philosophy and Science; and if we can explain the former we may go some way towards understanding the latter.

I believe that the reason of this contrast lies in the simple fact that we can connect parts together, but not wholes. Art in all its forms deals with wholes; the unity of its products must ever be in the foreground, whether the elements it happens to combine be few or many. Harmony

is its first law. There must, of course, be unity in the case of the sciences also; no fact has value or significance for them except in so far as it illustrates and embodies a colligating hypothesis. But, in them, the unity is more or less latent, operates, as it were, from behind, and exists, not for its own sake, but for that of the details, the facts or events it explains. The harmony of whole and part is incomplete in the sciences, the reconciliation of law and fact is imperfect. While the work of art sustains the detail in the whole, the scientific idea uses up the particular, which has no value for its own sake but as a mere illustration or example of a law. The great pictures in a gallery of art are altogether unlike the series of phenomena explicable by one scientific law. Of the latter each reflects lights upon the others and is valuable only in relation to the others. They are only links in a chain.

But every work of Art is complete within itself. The poetic idea from which it springs has the potency of a living principle which harmonises and vitalises its parts, and so rounds back upon itself as to exclude the extraneous and make the beautiful object stand alone. An object of art, in a word, is the full incarnation of its own law, like a free being, and this is why Fine Art is free. Its reason lies entirely within itself, and to find its conditions or causes is to show that it has come by imitation and not by inspiration. But the work of the Natural Sciences is to find the conditions of one object in another. Their character partakes of the self-externality of their material, and their movement is that of space and time, and their contents essentially incomplete and proceeding by aggregation. This is why one scientific man can, to such an extent, *add* to the work of his predecessor. The physicist of to-day can go on in the line of Newton, and the astronomer in that of Copernicus. But the poet or painter must begin his work from the beginning. All that he can inherit from his predecessors are the subtle suggestions which can speak scarcely more than the language of the emotions, and which can be interpreted only by a spirit which is itself poetic. In fact every poet must look at the world from a new point of view; his touch must be creative; he must strike a new note; add a new string to the lyre of Art; the beauty he reveals must be as unexpected as the new colour in the clouds of the closing day. Hence it is that the surprises of Fine Art, the absence of any simple line of continuity in its products, or of the sameness of mere heredity in its votaries, instead of proving it a failure are the very essence of its success. No worker who

does not begin again at the beginning, make the world new by putting it in a new light, concealing by complete assimilation his debt to predecessors, can be a true Artist.

Now can a similar defence be made for Philosophy? Is the criterion of its success the continuity of its systems or their discontinuity. Should it grow, comparatively speaking, by external accretion or by a series of new creations? Is it, in this respect, like Science or Art?

Philosophy seems to me to partake of the character both of the Sciences and of the Fine Arts; it combines the fundamental characteristics of both, *viz.*, the analytic movement of Science and the synthetic impulse of Art. The sciences confessedly deal with aspects and phases only, and never with wholes. They divide nature, which is one, into fields, and the investigators themselves acknowledge that their divisions are artificial. We require a multitude of Sciences to explain even the simplest object. Geology deals with one of its aspects, physics with another, chemistry with still another. No science pretends to give a complete account of it, but to reveal from an abstract point of view one set of its relations. The Sciences have no direct vision of the unity of the object of investigation, far less do they endeavour to explain it in the light of the principle of the Universal Order which manifests itself in all the endless forms of being.

The objects of the Sciences are in this sense finite, and the finite is incapable by any repetition or multiplication of being infinite, *i.e.*, self-determined, or complete. "Content with tracing out the relation of finite things to finite things, Science never finds it necessary to seek for a beginning or an end to its infinite series of phenomena." Hence also the spirit of Science is essentially secular. "The world of finite interests and objects has, in the sciences, rounded itself as it were into separate wholes, within which the mind of the scientific man can fortify itself and live *securus adversus deos*, in independence of the infinite." Science is order in the parts, but anarchy in the whole. It is directly individualistic, and only remotely and unconsciously organic. There is the need, as Plato showed—a need now deeper and less difficult to meet than ever before—of a Science which shall unite the Sciences. We require an architectonic form of knowledge which shall unite the wings of the great structure that the sciences are building into one harmonious edifice, which shall relate them not only to each other but to the mind of man, the master-workman who impresses his own image on all things. In no age in the world's

history was there so imperative a demand for a form of knowledge which can restore to man the consciousness of the unity of the world in which he lives, and counteract the specialising tendencies of modern life which so limit and impoverish our thoughts and actions.

Now, that unity can be restored to man in two ways: by the imagination which gives to the universal a particular vesture, and where product is always, therefore, 'a noble lie,' and by the reason which gives to the universal a form adequate to itself. If we put the same thought in the order of history we may say that this unity is given by poetry, broken by science and restored by philosophy. The whole aim of philosophy is to articulate, by means of experience, one thought, and owing to the imperious demand for unity it is so like Art that it may be defined as Art made conscious of itself. Nevertheless, this consciousness of itself can be reached by philosophy only with the help of the sciences with their analytic processes. The understanding must come between the imagination and the reason. Art on its side always regards science as a foe. It resents its analytic processes, suppresses differences and antagonisms, and reaches the unity which gives beauty to its object by a method that is intuitionist and in a mood which is saturated with emotion. But philosophy waits for the sciences, and must do so more and more. "The new philosophy," says Zeller, "must enter into closer relation to these sciences, avail herself of their results and their procedures and supplement her former all too-inclusive Idealism by means of a Sound Realism." "Philosophy must be aware of the differences which Science reveals; it accepts with gratitude the sets of relations, the *aspects* of truth revealed by Science, and recombines them into a view of the world as a whole which is articulated and wherein the differences have free play. Its unity must come after criticism has done its uttermost; its affirmation, unlike that of imagination, must come *through* negations; its impulse towards unity must spring from the very negations and contradictions into which the abstract conceptions of the Sciences necessarily break. Nor has it any right to stop in its process of reconstruction till it is able to view the world in the light of a category which is at once the intensest unity and the source of the deepest differences.

This category is that of self-consciousness, as the history of philosophy shows. In other words, we are again brought to the conclusion that philosophy seeks to interpret the world by knowing man. It seeks to be, like religion, com-

pletely anthropomorphic, endeavouring to explain the world in the terms of the human mind. Its task is to apply the category of self-consciousness, as the physical sciences apply in their sphere the category of cause: Self-consciousness is the 'working hypothesis' of philosophy, as a glance at its present position will show. For, whether we be Realists, or Idealists, or Dualists; to whatever different degrees we hold that the world of real being has been retracted into thought and however differently we interpret the implications of self-consciousness, we all agree that our problem, our only problem, is to understand the nature of man's thought. Philosophy, in the hands of individuals, has, it must be admitted, often lost its way and asked foolish questions, such as whether the world be real or not, and whether we know it or not,—facts which *must* be taken for granted in order that there may be any problem to solve. Its true task, however, is to determine what sort of a world that must be which admits of being known, or what is the nature of the thought which is able to know the world. It seeks to comprehend the conditions under which man and the world, thought and thing, do, as a matter of fact, complete one another and enter into one harmonious whole.

Once it is recognised that the fundamental problem of man is man and that he is the key to the secret of the world; once it is adequately apprehended that we work within the limitations of our own thought and that there is no calamitous element in that fact, nothing that justifies us in condemning the world we know as a mere phenomenon and setting up over against it another world which has no qualities except emptiness and transcendence and unknowableness; once, in a word, we consistently regard the world as its own interpreter and man's thought as its finer spirit and essence, the apparent failure of philosophic systems will cease to trouble us. We shall, like Christian, find that the key which opens the gates of the Castle of Giant Despair lies in our own bosom. For the idea of self-consciousness gives us both the continuity and the abrupt new beginnings of human experience; and philosophy, in so far as it is faithful to this idea, manifests itself in the independence as well as in the sequence of systems of thought. It passes through the same process as the life which it explains; that is, it develops through successive systems each of which *must* be an organic embodiment of one principle, and, therefore, a whole which rounds itself upon itself and must, in this sense, be complete; just as the life of humanity is a life of lives, an organism of organisms. On this account,

Philosophy never is purely critical, or purely eclectic, or purely destructive, any more than a work of art is. Criticism, eclecticism, refutation, to have any true philosophic value, must be themselves dominated by, and be the mere expression, which at the time happens to be more or less negative, of a dominant principle. It is only in this way that criticism and refutation can have a place in philosophy. For history shows us that there is no way of linking men's thoughts into the thought of mankind, or generations of men into a continuous humanity except by the dissipation of the individual. While links may be joined in a chain, living wholes must be assimilated in such a way that the earlier passes into the later.

The apparent failure of philosophic systems is from this point of view shown to be the negative process necessarily involved in the development of philosophy itself. Its true analogue is in the growth of civilisation—the expansion of the intellect of man and the improvement of his moral character. The pursuit of the moral ideal is not futile though no individual ever attains it, but at his best is only a temporary embodiment of some of its phases. We know that the inheritance of goodness is real, although every individual must begin to learn the good life at the beginning. Morality is always breaking down, recommencing, and nowhere do we find even in idea an absolute good. In a similar way though systems of philosophy pass away, philosophy itself remains as a witness to the expansion of the mind of man and the reflective expression of his growing life. We may say, if we please, that Plato failed and Aristotle, and Kant and Hegel, and we may safely predict the same kind of failure to the end of time. An absolute philosophy, in this sense, does not exist and cannot come to be till man ceases to be what he is, a being whose very life is strife and failure, and conquest through failure. We have no right to demand finality in an object whose essence is development and whose development is only realised in successive individuals each of which must begin his task at the beginning. In philosophy, art, and morality, fact is bound to fact not by the simple chain of causality whose beginning and end are beyond time and space and whose parts are within them, but the deeper identity and deeper differentiation of growing life. Systems of thought, poems, and moral characters comprehend their own beginning and end. In philosophy, art, and morality, man immediately expresses himself; his products are the direct manifestation of his own ideal of truth, beauty and goodness. In the

sciences, on the other hand, man's thought is subordinated to the material, exists for its sake, and partakes of the self-externality of objects in a world of space and time. Hence comes the possibility, comparatively speaking, of the aggregation of knowledge in the natural sciences; while in philosophy and art aggregation, repetition, imitation, cease to be possible just in the degree to which the thinker and the artist rise to the height of the demand of their subject.

In the succession of systems I find, therefore, a suggestion of the essentially human character of philosophy. It sits as close to man's life as art and morality, and its failure in the individual and success in the whole is strictly analogous to their failure and success. Each of these deeper forms of our spiritual activity are efforts of perfection, the ideals they seek are absolute; and all of them fail. But in spite of their failure, or rather by means of it, they expand with the growing life of man. Philosophy is asking the same questions to-day as it did in the time of the Greeks, as art is pursuing the same ideal of beauty and morality of goodness. Nevertheless I find it manifesting itself in ever richer forms, growing in complexity with the growing complexity of its material, and ever amidst the variety of the practical and theoretical interests of man remaining loyal to the idea of a principle of simplicity in things, and bearing witness, on behalf of the highest interests of thought, morality, and religion, to that unity which makes the world a Kosmos and a dwelling-place for man, whose life must be unbroken and whose mind must find itself reflected everywhere.

Who can now doubt that Socrates, Plato and Aristotle translated into perennial thought and saved for the ages which succeeded them the inner meaning of the evanescent life of Greece, which otherwise would have passed away like a beautiful transformation scene? Hobbes and Locke and Hume rendered intelligible to us the individualistic life of modern Europe, laying its fundamental principles bare, and they enabled us, thereby, to escape its limitations and to overcome its scepticism. The great philosophers who followed them, aided by the poets, set free a subtle power of organic reconstruction from which even modern Science is unconsciously deriving its inspiration and which is gradually re-interpreting for us the world of man. Their work will also pass away, but only when it is *understood*, and when it is understood it shall already have been made eternal by passing into the richer life of the future. Creeds and systems must die in order that religion and philosophy may live as the principles of simplicity and harmony in a world otherwise fragmentary and discordant.