PHILOSOPHY WHAT IS IT ?

F. B. JEVONS

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Personality.

The Idea of God in Early Religions.

Comparative Religion.

Philosophy: What is it?

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PREFACE

One of the branches of the Workers' Educational Association expressed a desire to know what Philosophy is; thereby assuming that Philosophy is a concern of the average man and of practical life, and should not be the monopoly of the professed student. Of the truth of this view there can be no doubt, and this book consists of the five lectures which were given by way of an attempt, not so much to answer their question as to bring out the meaning of the question. Hence the interrogative form of the title—*Philosophy: what is it?*

The attempt was necessarily made, in the discussion of the question, to avoid technical terms as far as possible. Without technical terms it is impossible, it may be said, to go very far in the discussion. But it should be possible, without them,

to go far enough to open the discussion, and to indicate both the nature of answers which have been given to the question, and the reasons why some of the answers are less satisfactory than others. Indeed, each of the lectures was followed by an hour's discussion in class, which served to show that working men and women found the question to be interesting and the answers to admit of debate. The lectures are, therefore, now printed, on the chance that others also, as well as those who heard them, may find the question attractive and the answer worth discussing.

F. B. JEVONS.

HATFIELD HALL
DURHAM
5th March, 1914

CONTENTS

PAGE

CHAPTER I

Philosophy and Science 1

CHAPTER II

Materialism and Idealism 34

CHAPTER III

Scepticism in Philosophy 67

CHAPTER IV

Philosophy in Practice 98

CHAPTER V

Personality and the Whole 129

Index 169

PHILOSOPHY

WHAT IS IT?

Philosophy: What is it?

CHAPTER I

PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE

In the lives of most, and perhaps of all, of us there come moments of dejection, or even of despair, when the burden and the mystery of this unintelligible world come with such crushing weight upon us that, in spite even of religion itself, we ask, "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" The questions are asked in a despair which implies that there is *no* meaning in it all, and no good in life; or that, if there is, at any rate we cannot see it.

But though the questions may be asked, and in moments of personal despair are

asked, in a tone which implies that no satisfactory answer is or can be forthcoming, they may also be considered, in a calmer mood, as questions which call for a reasoned answer, and with regard to which we must ask, as a matter of deliberation rather than of despair, whether an answer is possible at all. Now, it is the calm consideration of these questions in a reflective mood, and of the answers that are to be given to them—if any answer can be given—that constitutes philosophy.

Let us look, therefore, once more at the questions, "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" and let us see what is implied by the questions. The "it" in "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" evidently refers to the experience we have of the world and life. Obviously, therefore, it is with experience that philosophy has to do—with our experience in life; it is from experience, therefore, that philosophy has to start, and it is on experience,

and the things experienced, that philosophy has to reflect.

Next, the questions are put not about this or that particular experience, this or that particular phase of experience, this or that particular department of knowledge, or of life, or of experience, but about it all—what does it *all* mean? It is, therefore, all experience, experience as a whole, being and knowledge as a whole, that philosophy has to contemplate.

Further, the tone in which the questions are put, "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" implies that the person who puts these questions despairingly to the universe, took it for granted, once upon a time, that life was worth living, that there was some good in it and that it had some meaning; but that now he is beginning to wonder whether there is any meaning in it all, whether the universe is rational and intelligible, and whether there is any good in it. He is beginning to be sceptical and doubtful on these points.

Now, you and I may be convinced in the bottom of our hearts that the world is run on rational and intelligible principles, and that there is some good in life, and might be more if only men would think and act reasonably. But, if we are convinced of this, we ought to be able to give some answer to the man who is doubtful and sceptical about it. And if you are to understand his difficulties, you must put yourself in his position. You must put yourself in his place so far as to ask whether there is any meaning in life, any good in it all. And you must ask the question fairly and squarely, *Is there any meaning in it all?* And to answer the question you must turn to experience, his experience, your experience, the experience of all of us, and you must reflect upon it as a whole—that is to say, you must become a philosopher. Each science tells us about some particular set of things; but when every science has done so, the question still remains, "What does it *all* mean? What does it *all* come

to?" And any attempt to answer these questions is a philosophy. It is with the *whole* of experience that philosophy attempts to deal. Philosophy is the attempt to deal with the whole, and with our experience as a whole.

It is from experience we have to start, and to experience that we have to return. We start, and must start, from it, because we have nothing else we can start from. We reflect upon it—and the reflection upon it is philosophy—in the hope that having done so we may understand it rather better when we have thought it over. If that should be the fortunate result, then we shall find that we understand our experience better than we did, and that there is more in it than we thought at first, and even that it is in some respects really different from what at first we took it to be.

Of course there is also the possibility—even if it be but a bare possibility—that the more we reflect upon experience, the more difficult it will be to discover any

meaning in it, or to make any sense out of it. And if we finally come to the conclusion that there is no meaning in the world, or none discoverable by us, the conclusion will still be a philosophical conclusion, because it is the conclusion to which we are brought by reflection upon experience, but it will be a sceptical philosophy.

In philosophy, as in other departments of inquiry, scepticism is the revolt against dogmatism; that is to say, philosophical scepticism, or scepticism in philosophy, is the revolt against the notion that there are some conclusions which we may not question, but must accept without inquiry or reason. But it is the very breath and being of philosophy that it should at all times be ready to reconsider its conclusions in the light of new evidence and fresh facts. Only by doing so can philosophy either grow or live at all. The dogmatism which forbids it to readjust itself to the growth of knowledge is a dead hand laid upon philosophy

and fatal to it. So far, then, as scepticism is a revolt against dogmatism and destructive of it, it is an essential condition of the growth of philosophy.

But destruction, necessary though it often is, in philosophy as elsewhere, is not construction. It may be necessary to pull down an old building before we can build a new one on the site. But if we destroy, it is only in order that we may reconstruct. And that is why scepticism never in the course of philosophy has been, and never in the course of things can be, final. But that is just the important fact which is overlooked by those who consider that scepticism is the last word in philosophy. The truth is that philosophy is a living, growing study; and that, so long as it lives and grows, the last word has not yet been said.

The reason why philosophy is a living, growing, department of inquiry and thought, is, as has already been said, that it is with experience that philosophy has to do: it is from experience that

philosophy has to start. Philosophy is reflection upon experience and the things experienced; and it is on the whole of experience that it must be based, if it is to have any value. But experience is continually increasing; the world is growing older and riper in experience every day. That is to say, the whole of experience never is or can be before us. Finality in philosophy, therefore, is for ever beyond our reach, if by finality we imagine, with the dogmatist, that it is possible to say to the free spirit of philosophy, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." Philosophy, therefore, can never recognise finality in this shape, but must ever pass forwards and onwards. We may take stock of our experience and its results up to the moment when we take stock of it; we may even form some notion of whether the business is going up or down. But the business of experience is a going concern; we are acquiring experience every day, and we do not know how it will stand a year or

a century hence. To say or imagine that we do know is simply the dogmatism which is fatal to the development of philosophy. What we can do is to form *some* notion of how it is going. We can say how things look now. To say how they will look a century hence is simply dogmatism, and simple folly. The philosophy of a century hence must do that. What we have to start from is experience as far as it has already gone. That is the experience which philosophy has to reflect upon, and about which it has to inquire whether it has any meaning, and what is the good of it all.

But if we say this, perhaps we shall be understood to mean that philosophy, being concerned with experience, is concerned only with what is past. That however would be to misunderstand us. As philosophers we are not concerned with the past, or rather are not concerned to write a history of the things that are past and done for. With the past we are only concerned so far as it is related to the

present and the future. If experience has any meaning, if any meaning runs through it, then that meaning has run through all the successive moments of the past, or has been displayed in them, and has been displayed as binding them together into one whole. Those successive moments of the past were each of them at one time future, then present, and then past. Now, we look back upon them and see them forming one whole—a whole of which we have had and still have experience. In the same way, the successive moments, which are not yet past, but are running by us now, are each of them in turn first future, then present, and then past. And if we look upon them, and reflect, we shall see that they, too, are forming one whole; the future moment, ere I can get the words out of my mouth, has become present and has fallen back into the past. But if the past and future moments are thus related, if they are thus indeed inseparable, then they form one whole. We may, indeed,

distinguish one moment from another, but we cannot separate them, just as we can distinguish the sides of a straight line, though we cannot put one side of the line here and the other somewhere else. The past moment and the future are, like the sides of the line, related and inseparable: they are related in the present, when we are continually passing through the one into the other; and they are, though distinguishable, inseparable, because they are parts of one whole. That, then, is the nature of our experience and of its successive moments, which we may distinguish, but cannot possibly separate, from one another. Experience is a whole, and it is that whole which philosophy has to contemplate and on which it reflects.

But to say that experience is a whole is to make a statement which is dogmatic; and which, being dogmatic, necessarily provokes scepticism—that is to say, invites inquiry and requires explanation. To say that experience is a whole is to make a statement which especially re-

quires explanation, because, as we have already seen, philosophy—that is to say, the explanation of experience—never can be final, for the simple reason that experience itself is continually increasing: it never is, but always is to be, completed. If, then, experience never is complete, if philosophy accordingly never can be final, how, the sceptical philosopher may inquire, how can experience ever be a whole?

The difficulty thus raised can be met to some extent by means of an analogy. Thus, a circle, for instance, is a whole. Yet we can understand what is meant if any one speaks of an expanding circle. Experience, on this analogy, may be spoken of as a circle continually expanding. The analogy, however, is obviously imperfect, because knowledge not only increases in extent and in amount, but grows richer and more diversified in its quality and content. We may then, perhaps, find a closer analogy, if we compare experience to an organism. A living

organism is a whole, having its parts, each one of which is different from every other, and no one of which can live apart from the others. And yet the organism, though it is a whole, and because it is a living organism, is continually growing. At no moment in the process of its growth has the organism attained its final shape. And at no moment in its growth has experience, either, attained finality; yet at every moment it is a whole, even though it has the capacity always of further growth.

We may then fairly say there is nothing unreasonable in supposing that experience may be a whole and a growing whole; and that though it grows, or rather because it grows, it has not attained finality. But though there seems to be nothing unreasonable in supposing, to start with, that experience may form a whole, still we can put it forward only as a supposition or hypothesis. To put it forward as a fact would be to commit the error of dogmatising. We should

be forgetting the very point from which we started in this lecture. We started with the question which some men ask about life and experience, "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" And that is precisely the question which philosophy is continually attempting to answer. We must assume either that there is an answer to it, or that there is not. And whether we assume, to begin with, that there is or is not an answer, we have in the end to show that our assumption fits in with the facts. We may, indeed, assume that there is an answer, and we may put forward what we consider to be the answer. If we do, then it is the business of other philosophers to show how far the answer we give fails to be satisfactory; and then it becomes our business to reshape the answer so that it will fit the facts. And this process goes on and will go on, just so long as fresh facts turn up, or so long as our answers fail to account for all the old facts.

Now, this, which is the process of philosophy, is, of course, the process of science also. Science, like philosophy, has continually to re-shape itself in order to find place—and to find the proper place—for all the facts. That is the way, and the only way, in which either science or philosophy can advance.

And here the question may reasonably be asked, since we have science, What is the need or the use of philosophy? What *is* philosophy, anyhow? Well, I repeat, philosophy is the attempt to answer the question which some men ask about life and experience, "What does it all mean? What is the good of it all?" Now, there are many sciences—mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, physiology, geology, and hosts of others—but not one of them even asks, much less answers, the question which is the most interesting question of all—What does our experience come to? What does it all mean? What is the good of it all? It is philosophy and philosophy

alone which puts that question and attempts to answer it.

Each of the particular sciences deals with one particular set of facts. Philosophy, on the other hand, is the attempt to contemplate all experience and all being, not to deal with any one particular set of facts but to regard them as forming one whole, and to ask what is the meaning of the whole. No science does that. No science faces all the facts. In war successful strategy often consists in taking the enemy in detail and in beating one division of the hostile army after the other. And that is the kind of strategy that science employs. Instead of attacking the problems presented by nature all at once, science takes the problems singly and deals with them one at a time. That is why there are so many sciences; each is told off to do its special work and deal with its own particular problems. Each, therefore, can give us information about its own particular department of knowledge, while none can tell us anything

about the work of any other science. Still less can any one science undertake to sum up all the work of all the other sciences.

As I have said, no science faces all the facts. The strategy of science—the uniform method of all the sciences—consists in dividing the enemy's forces, as it were, and so beating them in detail. Every object has a host of various qualities, and each of those qualities is dealt with separately by a separate science—its colour by optics, its weight by physics, its chemical constitution by chemistry, its organism by physiology, and so on. Of course, the colour of a thing does not exist separately from the thing; nor can you take the weight out of a thing, and carry off the weight into one room whilst you leave the thing without any weight in the other. All you can really do is to concentrate your attention on one of the many qualities that a thing possesses, and dismiss from attention all the other qualities. And when we do this, we are

said to abstract that particular quality from the thing; and the quality itself is called an abstraction. These qualities—these abstract qualities—can be studied by themselves in one way only, and that is by pretending that they exist by themselves. And the study of such abstractions is what is called science.

All sciences are abstract sciences. No one of them deals with things as wholes; every science deals with some one quality of things—that is to say, with some abstraction. Every science studies some one aspect of reality separately; no one science studies all the aspects of reality together. And yet it is very necessary that all the aspects of reality—that is to say, the whole of our experience should be studied together, because the question will arise, What does it all come to? What is the meaning of it all? And that is just the question which no science undertakes to answer. And the reason why no science even attempts to answer the question is that every science is

abstract; every science deals with this or that abstract quality of things. No one science deals with all the qualities of any single thing. Much less does any science deal with all things together, and ask, What do they all come to? What is the meaning of them as a whole?

Science, then, is abstract and studies abstractions, not things as wholes. It takes things to pieces, as it were, and studies the pieces separately. Or rather it pretends to take them to pieces, and to take the weight of a thing, or the colour of a thing, and to study these abstractions. But of course it is impossible to separate the weight from a material thing, just as it is impossible for the thing to exist without weight. And science does not imagine that a material thing can exist without weight, or that weight exists apart from material things. Science knows that these are abstractions, and that the abstract sciences deal with abstractions and not with wholes. Science then is abstract in this way.

But science is doubly abstract, for it is abstract in another way also. The man of science concentrates his attention on some one of the many qualities that a thing possesses, and studies it, and gains some knowledge of it. The thing could not be studied unless it were there; nor could it be studied unless the student were there to study it and gain some knowledge about it. If the thing did not exist it could not be known to the student; and neither could it be known to the student if the student did not exist. Both must be there—the student and the thing. But though both must be there, science does not attend to both. The thing has many qualities—weight, size, colour, and so on—but any particular science attends to only one particular quality, and dismisses the other qualities from attention. So, too, though both the student and the thing studied must be present, if any scientific knowledge of the thing is to be attained, science attends only to the thing studied, and pays no attention to the

student. His hopes and fears, his feelings of triumph or of disappointment, as his experiment succeeds or fails, matter no more to science than the clothes he wears or the cut of his hair. Science is concerned only with the thing—or rather the abstraction—studied, not with the student or his indigestion or the dirtiness of his hands. All those things—real though they may be—science dismisses from attention. It is not the student that science is attending to or cares about, but the experiment. The student may be dismissed from attention, just as all the other qualities of the thing, except the one quality that is under examination, may be dismissed. And science does dismiss the student from attention.

Hence it is that science is doubly abstract. It is abstract in the first place because it dismisses from attention all qualities except the one under investigation, and pretends that that one alone exists; and it is abstract in the next place because it dismisses the student from

attention and pretends that the thing under investigation alone exists.

Now, so long as every one remembers that the thing under investigation does not exist by itself, and could not be under investigation and could not be known, unless there were some one there by whom it was investigated and to whom it was known, so long no harm is done. But this simple fact is not always remembered; it is sometimes forgotten, and then those who forget it imagine that the thing under investigation can exist all by itself. Yet the notion that the thing exists all by itself is an abstraction of just the same kind as the notion that weight can exist by itself apart from material things, or matter exist without weight. We never find matter apart from weight, or weight apart from matter. And we never find ourselves apart from everything we know. Neither do we ever find the things we know apart from ourselves. How can we? If we find them, we know them; and if we find and

know them, we of course must be there and they, too, must be there. We can pretend, by abstraction, that they alone are there; we can concentrate our attention upon our work or upon some scene of beauty or of horror, and become so absorbed in it as to forget ourselves and our own existence. But we are there all the same. If we forget our own existence, we must be there to do so.

Just then as weight by itself is an abstraction, and not a reality, so, too, things by themselves are an abstraction and not a reality. Weight is never found in the abstract, but always in combination with many other qualities. And so, too, things are never found in the abstract and by themselves; they are always found by somebody—or else they are not found at all. We never find the things we know, apart from ourselves. Neither do we ever find ourselves apart from all that we know.

We can think of ourselves apart from things, just as we can think of things

apart from ourselves. But in both cases we are thinking of abstractions and not of realities. Things apart from us are unreal abstractions; and we, apart from things, are equally abstract and unreal.

No one would maintain that the inside of a curve could be found without the outside, or could exist without it. You can, of course, concentrate your attention on what is inside and dismiss what is outside from attention. But the one side cannot exist without the other; they cannot be divorced. And science, which deals with one quality apart from others, or things apart from the mind that studies them, does not really divorce them; it simply considers the inside of the curve by itself or the outside by itself. It cannot separate them, for the simple reason that they are inseparable.

But though the inside and the outside of a curve cannot be separated, they are quite distinguishable, and, in a way, opposed to each other. So, too, the person or subject who attends to some-

thing is quite distinguishable from the object to which he attends, and is, in a way, opposed to it.

Perhaps, however, you will feel that the subject or person who attends to things is not always attending to the same thing. And that is undeniable. But if you are not attending to one thing, you are to another; so long as you are conscious at all, you are conscious of something. You are always aware of some object or other. You—the subject—can't get on without some object. You are, let us say, the outside of the curve. Well! you can't get on without an inside.

But what about things? Well! are they things that anybody knows, or things that nobody knows? If they are things nobody knows, no one need pay any attention to them—indeed, nobody can. And if they are things that are known, why! then they are objects of attention, the inside of that curve of which the mind is the outside—or, if you like it better, they are the outside of

that curve of which the mind is the inside.

But the root of the whole matter and the key to all philosophy is that the two sides of the curve, though distinguishable, are inseparable. Subject and object cannot be divorced. We may consider the one apart from the other. But if we do so, we are considering an abstraction and not a reality. We may consider matter apart from mind, or mind apart from matter; we may consider the subject apart from the object, or the object apart from the subject. But in either case we are starting from an abstraction and not from a reality.

We may put our backs to the inside of the curve and walk away from it, or we may put our backs to the outside of the curve and walk away in the opposite direction. And, whichever we do, the further we go, the further away we get from reality. On one side of the curve lies matter and the world of material objects; on the other lies mind and its

various manifestations. Whether we go forward into the world of material objects or into the sphere of mind and its manifestations, we are plunging deeper and deeper into a collection of abstractions, and getting further and further away from reality.

If we go in the one direction we find nothing but matter and motion; and then we shall be tempted to proclaim that there is no reality but matter in motion. If we go in the other direction we shall find nothing but mental states and mental processes; and then we shall be tempted to proclaim that there is no such thing as matter, but only mental processes and mental states. But the truth is that matter apart from mind, or mind apart from objects, is a mere abstraction, an unreality. This I shall dwell on at greater length in the next chapter. For the moment I wish to consider an argument that may already have suggested itself to your minds.

It is this. Granted, you may say,

that every science deals with abstractions, such as the weight of things, or colour, or number; surely that is the proper method of procedure: let us attack the various problems in detail first, and afterwards let us piece our results together. The only way, you may say, in which to see how anything is made is to take it to pieces, and then to put it together again.

Now, this might be a very admirable method of procedure, if it were possible with the things of nature as it is with the things made by man. But it is not possible. A watch that man has made, man can take to pieces and put together again. An egg that a hen has laid may be taken to pieces or analysed by man—but he can't put it together again.

And there are some things that man cannot take to pieces; he cannot take one side of a curve and put it down here, and take the other side of a curve and put it down there. He cannot separate himself from all the things that he knows and

put them down by themselves in one place and himself without any of them in another. Still less—even if he could—would it be possible to bring them together again. Yet that is precisely what was suggested just now as the proper method of procedure. It was in effect suggested that man and the things he knows, or the subject and the object, are, as it were, the two ends of a stick; and that, if you want to separate them and study them apart from each other, you have only got to cut the stick in two, and there you are.

But you cannot separate the subject and the object in that way, just as you cannot cut the end off a stick. Perhaps, however, as some persons think that the subject can be separated from the object, you think you can cut the end off a stick. There is the stick, with two ends, Are you quite so sure that you can cut one end off? Cut a piece off, and then tell me how many ends the stick has! Of course it still has two, and always will

have two, however many pieces you chop off. And so, too, you never can chop off the object from the subject. Every stick has two ends all the time. And they cannot be separated, any more than the two sides of a curve can; or than subject and object—you and all that you know—can be separated.

And now to sum up this chapter.

Philosophy consists in reflecting upon experience for the purpose of discovering whether experience, as a whole, has any meaning; and, if so, what meaning. But experience is continually increasing; and, as experience never ceases, philosophy never comes to an end; it never can be final. The dogmatist, however, thinks that his explanation of the world and life is final; while the sceptic in philosophy thinks that no explanation whatever will hold water; he thinks that experience has no meaning whatever. Both the dogmatist and the sceptic, however, are wrong; the dogmatist is wrong in thinking that any explanation is final; the sceptic

is wrong in denying that experience is a whole. The sceptic says that experience cannot be a whole because it is continually increasing. And he is wrong in saying so, because a circle, for instance, is a whole, and yet it may expand and increase continually without ceasing to be a circle and a whole. We shall therefore hold that experience is a whole. But we shall not lay it down dogmatically that experience is a whole; we shall always recognise that this is only a supposition or hypothesis that we put forward; and that we have perpetually to inquire whether it does really explain all the facts. In this respect philosophy is like science; for science also makes hypotheses and is constantly modifying them so that they may fit all the facts. But though philosophy and science both make hypotheses and then modify them to suit the facts—though philosophy and science are alike in this respect—yet there is a great difference between them. The difference is this: Each science deals with one par-

ticular set of facts and no one science deals with all the facts of experience, whereas it is with all the facts and with experience as a whole that philosophy deals; for the object and purpose of philosophy is to inquire, What does all our experience come to—What is the meaning of it all?

That is the difference between science and philosophy: philosophy deals with experience as a whole—with life as it is lived. Science deals with abstractions: it treats of the movements of the stars, or of the weight or the colour or the numerical relations of things. And these are all abstractions. Again, the things studied by science are studied by somebody and known to somebody; they could not be known unless they were known by someone. But this fact is set aside by science. Science abstracts the things known, and treats them as though they existed without being known. But the truth is that knowledge and existence are like the two sides of a curve; the two sides are different in a way, and yet they are

inseparable. Now, it is from that fact that we ought to start, that the curve has two sides. But some people think that we need only attend to one of the two sides, to the side on which matter is, or to the side on which mind is. They even think we can deny the existence of the other side. It seems rather strange to suppose that a curve has only one side, or that a stick has only one end; but we must inquire what grounds there are for thinking so. And in the next chapter we will inquire.

CHAPTER II

MATERIALISM AND IDEALISM

I SAID in the last chapter that our experience of life is sometimes bitter—so bitter that we cannot help asking, What does it all mean? What is the good of it all? And I pointed out that philosophy is just the attempt to answer these questions. Philosophy takes experience, all together, as a whole, and asks what it all means. Further, I argued that there can be no experience, except where there is some one who experiences something. The some one and the something are, as it were, the two sides of a curve. On the inside of the curve is the internal world of our thoughts and feelings, sensations and ideas, our pleasures and pains; on the outside of the curve is the external world of moving, material things. On the

inside of the curve is mind, on the outside is matter. On the one side is the subject; on the other, the object, of experience.

Now, constructive philosophers assume that experience is really, if we could only see it properly, a whole, and an intelligible whole, with some good in it; and they try to show that such is the nature of experience. Destructive philosophers, however, that is to say, sceptical philosophers, try to show that no such explanation does explain all the facts in an intelligible manner for the simple reason that, as it seems to them, the facts are unintelligible. But constructive philosophers, though they agree that experience is a whole, and that the business of philosophy is to try to understand it, are by no means agreed as to what it is that we have experience of. Some think that moving material things, outside us, are the only realities of which we have experience. Others think that the only things we know for certain are our own sensations.

Let us then examine each of these two views; and let us begin with the one which asserts that the outside of the curve, the external world of matter, and material, moving things, the objects of which we have experience, alone are real. With this view we all must have a certain sympathy. At any rate it is a view which is easily understood. If we are asked what reality is, we may not be able to say offhand; but we can easily point to real things. The walls which we see, the desk which we touch, the chair on which we sit, and the ground on which it rests are all real things. And they are all material; they are all matter in one form or another. Everything that we can see, touch, hear, smell, and taste is real and material. The earth on which we live and the countless stars around it are all real and all of them are matter.

Further we know from personal observation that many of these material things move; and science tells us that every one of these things is made up of molecules,

which are all of them vibrating with great rapidity, though the molecules are so infinitely small that we cannot see or feel their vibration and motion. Thus of every object we perceive or can perceive, whether by the senses or by means of the scientific imagination, of every object and of the whole objective world we can say that it is matter in motion.

Not only can we say of every object and of the whole objective world—of all on the outside of the curve—that it is matter in motion, but, thanks to the labours of science, we even know many of the laws according to which matter moves.

First of all there is what is called the Law of Universal Causation—that is, the great law that nothing whatever can happen without a cause. The value of this law for the purposes of science is immense, for, even when we do not know what is the cause of a thing in which we are for any reason interested, we may be sure that it must have a cause; and so long as we know that, we can go on

trying to find it out, until we do find it out. That is the faith which supports the men of science in their long labours; they know there is a cause for everything that happens, however long and arduous the search for it may be.

Next, there is another great law which is called the Law of the Uniformity of Nature. Not only must everything have a cause, as the Law of Universal Causation affirms, but a cause must always—if not counteracted by some other cause—have its effect; and that is the Law of the Uniformity of Nature; the same cause always has, or tends to have, the same effect.

Indeed, the Law of the Uniformity of Nature goes further, for it assumes that the same causes are uniformly at work. It is because the same causes are uniformly and always at work that we get to know how they work. The Law of Universal Causation would not be of much use to us, if no cause ever operated more than once, and if at every moment

some new cause were at work that had never acted before, and never would act again. In such a case the Law of Universal Causation might still be true, it might still be true that everything had a cause; but if at every moment some new cause came into operation that we had never come across before, there would be no Uniformity in Nature, and we could never possibly know what to expect next.

But if these laws of the Uniformity of Nature and of Universal Causation are true, we can know, or can learn, not only the effects of causes which are at work, but we can discover also the causes of the things we see around us. We can see, or science can see and tell us, how the world around us has come to be what it is. And that is precisely what the theory of Evolution does undertake to tell us. It shows us how the various species of animals and plants have come to be what they are; it traces them back to the earliest speck of protoplasm. It shows how the earth at one time was a molten

mass—as indeed, except for a thin crust on its surface, it is now. It shows how at a still earlier period the whole of what is now the solar system was a nebulous vapour. But nebulous though it was, the vapour was then, as the earth is now, matter in motion.

And not only does the theory of Evolution tell us what has been, and how it has come to be what it is; not only does it tell us the causes of all that we see around us, but it also foretells the effect of the causes at work. The earth and the sun must eventually lose all their heat, for their heat is radiating away into space as hard as it can; the earth will eventually become uninhabitable, as the moon is now, for it will freeze down and at last it will have neither heat nor light to give out, but will become like one of the other black invisible bodies of matter in motion which are moving about in space.

All this follows from the Law of the Uniformity of Nature. The same causes are always at work, and all tend to

produce the same results. There is no freedom in nature, no variety, no spontaneity; everything is according to law—the Laws of Nature. There is only one course which events can follow—that which is determined for them by the laws of Causation and the Uniformity of Nature. If only we knew all the causes at work now and could understand the way in which they worked, and worked in with one another, we could foretell and foresee with absolute certainty everything that is to happen. All that has happened, and all that will happen, is fixed absolutely and irrevocably. Nothing can alter it. It is all predetermined, and we cannot modify or change it by one hair's breadth. We might as well be non-existent, for anything we can do to change it.

And that brings us round to the fundamental question, with which we started in the first chapter, What is the good of it all? We said that philosophy is the attempt to answer, or at any rate to see if

there is any answer to the questions which we cannot help asking—What does it all mean? What is the good of it all? Well, then, how far does the philosophy, which I have been expounding to you for the last few minutes, seem to you to answer those questions? It started, you will remember, from the assumption that the only real things are things that we can see and touch—that is to say, that the only reality is matter in motion—that the things on the outside of the curve are real, and that the things on the inside, our sensations and thoughts and feelings, are not. If this assumption leads to conclusions which are felt to be satisfactory, we shall accept the conclusions. If not, we will try some other assumption. But, at the present, what I wish to ask you is whether the conclusions are satisfactory.

Starting from experience we asked, What does it all mean? What is the good of it all? We are told that the only reality we find in our experience is matter in motion; and consequently that

the only meaning, in all that we do and suffer and go through, is that particles of matter move about according to the Laws of Universal Causation and the Uniformity of Nature. That is the only lesson there is to be learnt!

It may be one lesson that is to be learnt, but it certainly is not the only one; nor is it the most important or the most interesting one. It may be true that particles of matter are continually in motion; but there are many other truths which are of much higher value. The experience that each one of us has gone through means much more than that. What does all our experience mean? It is absurd to say that its only meaning is that particles of matter move about. That may be true, but it is not the whole truth or the fundamental truth. It is not a satisfactory explanation of experience —indeed, it is not an explanation at all. If experience is to be explained, it is necessary to show that it has some good end. If it has no good end, it is no good;

and there was no good in our going through it. An explanation of our experience, if it is to be a satisfactory explanation, must explain what is the good of it. And what conceivable good is there in particles of matter being moved about?

The philosophy then—the materialistic philosophy—which endeavours to explain the whole of our experience by saying that there is nothing in it but matter in motion, that what our experience all comes to is that there is no reality but matter in motion, proves to be an unsatisfactory explanation, because it can give no answer to the very natural question, Then what is the good of it all? But if Materialism is reduced to admit that it cannot see or say what good there is in it all, it may be that Materialism is based upon an assumption which is false. Now, the assumption on which Materialism is based is a double or twofold assumption. It is the assumption, first, that the material things which we see, feel, and touch, and hear are real; and

next, that those material things are the only reality of which we have experience. At first sight it may seem, however, that to say that the material things around us are real is not an assumption. It may seem to you that it is not an assumption at all, but a simple fact, that the material things around us—the walls and the ground, the tables and chairs, and so on—are real. We will, therefore, for the present not argue that point, though we may have to come back to it hereafter.

But what about the other point, that the material things around us are the only real things that there are? That plainly is an assumption; there may quite possibly, and quite conceivably be, for anything we know, other things that are real and yet are not material things. Your thoughts, feelings, ideas, sensations, are quite real, but you cannot see or touch a thought. You may talk of an idea as a great idea, yet you cannot measure it with a tape. You may speak of weighty

arguments, yet you cannot really put them on a pair of scales and weigh them. Your thoughts and ideas are quite real, though you cannot measure them with a yard-measure, or touch them with your fingers. They are quite real though they are not material things.

Thus, though it may be true that material things are real, it is an assumption that material things are the only realities we are aware of. Now, the assumptions that we make in the ordinary course of life may turn out to be true, or they may turn out to be false. When we make an assumption we think it may, or even that it will probably, turn out to be true, but we don't know that it will. It is only experience which will show. I assume that my train will be punctual. That is an assumption which may turn out true or not. Experience alone will show whether it is or is not. And the assumptions we make in philosophy are of just the same kind: when we make them, they seem likely to turn out true,

but experience alone will show whether they prove true.

Thus in philosophy some of us assume that there is a meaning in our experience of the world, and that there is some good in life. But whether the assumption is true or not depends on what experience has to say. So, too, in philosophy some people assume not only that material things are real, but that they are the only realities. Whether this assumption will explain all the facts is a question which can be tested only by experience. If in your experience there are things, such as joy and grief, thoughts and ideas, which are indubitably real and undoubtedly not material things, then the assumption, that matter in motion alone exists and alone is real, is an assumption which does not account for all the facts. And in philosophy what we want is an assumption which will fit in with the whole of our experience, and account for it all.

Now, the theory of Materialism is a philosophical theory. That is to say, it

is an assumption which is made in the belief that all the facts of experience will fit into it, when we come to examine them. If some of the undoubted facts of experience do not fit in with it, then it is an assumption which does not explain all the facts, and it cannot be accepted as the correct explanation of our experience. Materialism certainly does not account for all the facts. It is an obvious fact that it is we who have experience. That is just as plain as it is that there are things which we experience. But Materialism leaves out of account us who have the experience, and attends only to the things. As I have already said, Materialism sees only the things on the outside of the curve—the world of material objects. It closes its eyes to the inside of the curve—our thoughts and ideas and sensations and pains and joys.

Not only does Materialism close its eyes to them at the start, and say that in the beginning there was only matter in

motion; but it never accounts for the existence of consciousness. Indeed, if it were right in its assumption that matter alone really exists, the consequences would follow that our thoughts and ideas, our joy and grief, and our very consciousness do not exist. But we have no doubt about our own consciousness and our own existence; and we see accordingly that the assumption on which Materialism is based is a false assumption, for it assumes that our feelings and thoughts are not real. It is an assumption made for the purpose of explaining our experience; and it accounts only for one side of our experience, viz., the outside of the curve, the world of material objects; and it leaves, unexplained and unaccounted for, the inside of the curve, the thoughts and sensations of the subject.

It is, therefore, not wonderful if other philosophers have tried to account for what the Materialists have left unexplained. The Materialist placed his back to the outside of the curve and walked

forth into the world of matter and material objects; and the further he advanced the further away he got, until he forgot and even denied that the curve had an inside. The only realities, he declared, were the material things, the matter in motion on the outside of the curve. But since the thoughts and ideas, the griefs and the joys that we all have, are undoubtedly real, it was inevitable that some philosophers should turn to the inside of the curve and seek to find reality in its contents. These philosophers place their back to the inner side of the curve and plunge in that direction in the search for reality. And we have now to follow them.

And you will see at once that the further they travel and the deeper they get into the inside, the greater is the danger that they will forget that the curve has an outside, just as the other philosophers, the Materialists, forgot that it had an inside. However, you are quite sure that the material things which you can

see, touch, feel, hear, taste, and smell are real. There does not seem to you to be any supposition or assumption about that. It may also be true that your sensations and thoughts and feelings are real; but you have no doubt that the chair on which you sit, the ground on which it rests, and the things around you are both material and real.

You have no doubt about the existence of matter. You have the evidence of your senses to prove that it is there. You look at the desk and you have a sensation of sight. You run your hand over it and you have the sensation of smoothness. You press your hand on it and you have the sensation of resistance. Or, you have an orange in your hand and, when you peel it, you have a sensation of smell. When you put it to your mouth you have the sensation of taste. Or, there is a bell in the tower and, when the clapper strikes the bell, you have the sensation of sound. But the sensation of taste, of course, is in

your mouth: if you had no palate you would have no taste. And the sensation of smell is in your nostrils: it is not in the rose. The sensation of sound which arises, when the clapper strikes the bell, is in your ears and not in the bell: if you were stone deaf, the clapper might strike the bell ever so hard and you would have no sensation of sound. So the sensation of sound is in you; it is not in the bell. And the sensation of taste is not in the plum-pudding in the shop-window: it is, or will be, in you. And so, too, if nobody smelt the rose, there would be no sensation of smell.

Evidently, therefore, the sensation you have when you smell the rose is not the same thing as the rose. And the sensation you have when the bell is rung is not the same thing as the bell. Nor is the taste of the apple the same thing as the apple. The sensations of taste and smell and sound, when you have them, are in you, and not in the apple or orange or bell.

But you can see the apple or the orange, when it is before you. And since you can see it you know that it is there, a real, material thing: seeing is believing. But you will admit that what you mean by seeing a thing is that you have a sensation of sight. And evidently the sensation of sight is in you and not in the thing. So the sensation of sight is just like the sensations of sound and smell and taste: they are all in you and not in the things.

But you may say, "The apple is here in my hand; I can feel it, smooth and hard." Yes! you can feel it. But what does that mean? It means that you have a feeling—the feeling of smoothness or the feeling of firmness and resistance. You have the feeling or sensation, just as you had the sensation of smell or of sound or of taste or of sight. And like those sensations, the sensation of smoothness or resistance is in you, not in the things. All the sensations you have are, without exception, in you.

But, you will say, "The real material things are not in me; they are quite separate from me and independent of me and my sensations. They are there!" Well, then, I want to know, first of all, what exactly is there; and, next, whether it would matter if it was not there.

Let us start once more with the orange. When you have it in your hand, you have sensations of sight, sensations of firmness and roughness, of smell and of taste. But you say that there is something more: there is the matter of which it is made. Now what is this "matter"? It is not, you say, any of the sensations which you have. It is not your tasting, smelling, seeing, touching; they are all sensations, and matter is something different from any sensation. Well, then, if it is different from any sensation you ever had, or ever can have, what is it like? what can it be? and how can you know it? All that you know about any of the things around you, you know by your sensations. Go through everything you

know about the orange and you will find all you know about it is the sensations of sweetness and firmness and roughness and smoothness, and so on, that you have.

But you will obstinately have it that over and above these sensations, or below or behind them, there is something more, which you call "matter," and that this "matter" is quite different from any sensation that you have of it. What it is, or what it is like, you cannot possibly say. And yet you ask me to believe in it. How can I?

If anybody came up to you, for instance, and told you that there was something there which neither he nor you nor anyone could see or feel or touch or hear or taste or smell, but he was sure it was there—what should you think of him? Of course you would think that he did not know what he was talking about. Well, when people talk about "matter," are you quite sure that they know what they are talking about?

Anyhow, it is not easy to understand exactly what they do mean. Generally, they seem to mean, as I said just now, that matter is quite different from any sensation that anybody ever has of it. And then, as we have seen, they cannot say what it is. But as they, like you, are quite sure that matter does exist, would it help to improve things and make them a little more intelligible, if, instead of saying that matter is quite different from any sensation anybody has of it, we were to turn it round and say just the opposite—that matter and material things are just exactly what we see, and nothing more or different? That seems to remove all mystery and make everything plain.

But how does the case stand then? We have sensations of sight, touch, sound, taste, smell; and when we ask "And what is matter?" we are now told, matter is just those sensations, and nothing more or different. But, if that is the case, then there are sensations of sight, touch,

taste, and so on, but there is nothing more than sensations, nothing different from them; and, in that case, there is no "matter."

Once more, then, we are driven to the conclusion either that matter does not exist, or, at any rate, that it is very difficult to understand what is meant by the people who say that it does exist. And this brings me to the other question I raised a minute or two ago: Suppose matter did not exist, would it make any very great difference? If I have the sensations of tasting and eating a meal and of feeling refreshed and fit to work after it, I am satisfied. Certainly I shall not be in the least disturbed by discovering matter does not exist, or by discovering that those who believe in it have to admit that it is something which nobody can possibly see or touch or taste or hear or smell or feel—that it is in itself something unknown and unknowable.

Now, I do not suppose that what I have said is enough to convince you that

matter does not exist; but I hope it is enough to show you that if anyone asks you, "What *is* matter?" the question is not one which it is easy to answer. Matter is not the sensations or feelings that you and I have. And if you take any object, such as a chair or a table, which you are in the habit of calling a material thing, and ask yourself what you actually know of it, you will find that all you can say of it is that you have certain sensations of touch and sight, and so on. And if that is so, why should you say anything more? Why should you say that, besides the sensations of touch and sight and taste and sound, and so on, which you have and which you know, there is something else which you don't know, and which you call Matter? Why not confine yourself to what you do know from experience—that is, the fact that you have sensations, and that certain sensations go together, so that when you have a certain sensation of yellowness and roundness, you know that you can

have a certain sensation of taste? The orange will taste and smell exactly the same, whether you believe that over and above all your sensations there is some mysterious thing which you call Matter, or whether you don't.

Now, there are some philosophers who say that we know we have sensations and that we don't know that there is anything else. And as they maintain that sensations are the only reality, they are called Sensationalists or the Sensational philosophers. Or sometimes, because they do not believe in Matter, but do say that we have sensations and ideas, they are called Idealists. They are, of course, altogether opposed to the Materialists.

The Materialists, you will remember, assume that there is matter, matter in motion; and that there is nothing else. The Sensation philosophers assume that there are sensations, and that there is nothing else. And why do they make these assumptions? For the simple

reason that, when we reflect upon our experience of the world and life, we want to know what it all comes to, what it all means, what is the good of it all.

It is clear that, when we ask ourselves what our experience means, and what it all comes to, we do not know what it all means, or what it all comes to. And it is because we don't *know*, that we have to make suppositions and frame hypotheses. And when we have framed a hypothesis, or made an assumption, we have to see whether it does what it is intended to do, that is to say, whether it does really explain our experience, and show us what it all comes to.

The assumption or supposition which the Materialist makes is that matter, matter in motion, alone exists. And it is clear that that supposition will not explain all our experience, because we certainly have experience of our own thoughts and feelings, and they certainly are not material things; they cannot be weighed in a pair of scales or measured by

a foot-rule. So the supposition of the Materialist, that matter alone exists, will not explain all our experience. Even if matter exists and is real, our own thoughts and feelings and sensations and ideas are real also.

Accordingly, other philosophers, the Sensationalists or Idealists, put forward another supposition or assumption. They say, let us suppose that sensations or ideas exist; and—what is more—they say, let us suppose that sensations or ideas alone exist—that there are no material things, or matter. The question then is whether these suppositions, which the Sensationalist invites us to make, will explain our experience and enable us to understand what it all comes to. For if they will not, we shall have to abandon them and seek for some other supposition which *will* explain our experience as a whole and show us what it all comes to.

Now, every curve has both an inside and an outside; and neither can exist without the other. You can look at the

one side and forget the other; but it is there all the same. And so, too, in experience, there is the person who has the experience, and there is the experience which he has. You may look at the one and forget the other; but it is there all the same. And Materialism looks at the one side of the curve, and sees the world of material things—and seeing them, it forgets the other side of the curve altogether. The supposition which it makes is that material things, on the outside of the curve, alone exist and are real. Its supposition, therefore, leaves out of account one half of our experience—the half that lies on the inside of the curve. Its supposition, therefore, offers no explanation of one side of our experience. It cannot, therefore, be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of the whole.

The Sensationalist philosopher looks at the other side, the inside, of the curve, and sees the inner world of our thoughts and feelings and sensations and ideas—and, seeing them, the Sensationalist or

Idealist forgets the other side of the curve altogether. The Sensationalist, like the Materialist, makes a supposition; but whereas the Materialist says, let us suppose that the material things, on the outside of the curve, alone exist and are real, the Sensationalist says, let us suppose that the sensations and ideas, on the inside of the curve, alone exist and are real. So the Sensationalist leaves out of account one half of our experience—the half that lies on the outside of the curve. The supposition, therefore, that the Sensationalist invites us to make, offers no explanation of one side of our experience—our experience of the external world. It cannot, therefore, be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of the whole of our experience.

But if the supposition or assumption which the Sensationalist invites us to make cannot possibly be a satisfactory explanation of the whole of our experience, it must be a false assumption. We must look into that point in the next chapter.

There can be no experience, except where there is some one who experiences something. The some one and the something are, as it were, the two sides of a curve. Materialist philosophers hold that the outside of the curve, the external world of matter and material, moving things, the objects of which we have experience, alone are real. The material things which we see and touch are, on this assumption, the only realities, and they move and behave in accordance with the Laws of the Uniformity of Nature and of Universal Causation. The theory of Evolution can be set forth in accordance with these laws and with the assumption that material things alone are real. The philosophy of Materialism, however—that is, the assumption that matter in motion is all that we have experience of, affords no answer to the question, What does our experience mean—what is the good of it all? And it accounts only for one side of our experience—the outside of the curve, the world of material objects;

and it leaves, unexplained and unaccounted for, the inside of the curve, the thought and sensations of the subject. It makes what you at any rate must consider one great omission; for you may truly say, "It leaves out *me!*"

We turn, then, to the philosophers who hold that the inside of the curve, our sensations and ideas, alone is real. They are the Sensation philosophers or Idealists. For the existence of matter we have the evidence of the senses—that is to say, sensations. But the sensations we have are all in us, not in the things: What then is "matter"? It is not any sensation you have, but something different from any sensation—that is to say, something totally unlike what you see or feel or smell or taste or hear. Then, if you suppose matter not to be what you see or feel or taste or hear, would you or anybody miss anything, if you supposed it did not exist? If you have the sensations of seeing, feeling, tasting, eating, and digesting a meal and feeling

refreshed after it, why should you say that in addition to all the sensations there was a mysterious something else called "matter"—and why should you make this statement, when you cannot prove it?

To return to the simile of the curve: every curve has an inside and an outside. The Materialist says, let us suppose that what is on the outside of the curve, viz., matter in motion, alone exists; and then it follows that the curve has no inside. The Sensationalist says, let us suppose that what is on the inside of the curve, our sensations and ideas, alone is real; and then it follows that the curve has no outside. But the object of philosophy is to find out some supposition which, if made, will explain the whole of experience, both the inside and the outside of the curve. And if the Sensationalist hypothesis fails to explain the outside, it cannot be a satisfactory hypothesis. But why it is thus unsatisfactory remains to be inquired.

CHAPTER III

SCEPTICISM IN PHILOSOPHY

THE questions in which philosophy has its rise are whether our experience, when we come to reflect upon it as a whole, has any meaning, and if so, what. The only way in which philosophy can answer those questions is to make some supposition or assumption about experience; and then see whether that supposition enables us to understand experience as a whole and to understand what is the good of it all.

Now, when we speak of experience, we imply not only that there is experience but also that somebody has it. The person who has the experience and the experience which he has are, as it were, the two sides of a line; we may, if we will, distinguish them, and as a matter of

fact we do. We cannot confuse them or mistake one for the other. But we cannot separate them. We cannot take one side of the line away from the other. The two sides cannot exist apart. We can attend to one side; and, whilst we are doing so, we can forget about the other. When we do so attend to one side and forget about the other, we are said to be dealing with an abstraction. And it is, as has been said already, with such abstractions that all science deals. Physical science deals with abstractions on one side of the line—with such abstractions as weight, or light, or heat, or motion, or matter. Psychology, or the science of the mind, deals with abstractions on the other side of the line—with such abstractions as sensations, feelings, will. And when the question arises, what is the meaning of our experience? what does it all come to? some philosophers look out from one side of the line and say that they can see nothing but matter in motion; while others look out

from the other side of the line and say they can see nothing but sensations.

The supposition which the Materialist philosophers make is: Let us suppose that matter in motion alone exists. But that supposition obviously will not explain all our experience, for our thoughts and ideas and sensations certainly exist, and certainly are not material things. The supposition which the Sensationalist philosophers make is: Let us suppose that sensations exist and that sensations alone exist. But that supposition obviously will not explain all our experience, for the world of things around us certainly exists.

Then, if the Sensation philosopher is wrong in saying that our sensations alone exist, and that the world of objects around us has no existence and no reality, are we sure that he is right even in saying that there are such things as sensations? That is an important question, because if there are such things as sensations some very remarkable consequences follow.

Now, it may seem at first very absurd to ask whether there are such things as sensations, because, of course, everybody knows that we have sensations of sight and touch and taste and hearing. But the Sensation philosopher says not only that there are sensations, but that sensations alone exist, and that they can and do exist by themselves. And that, when you come to think of it, is just as absurd as saying not only that some things have weight, but that weight can exist and does exist all by itself. Some knives are sharp; but it would be absurd to say that sharpness exists, all by itself, and that knives do not—that there are no knives. And so, too, it is absurd to say that because we have sensations, therefore sensations can exist and do exist all by themselves. Sensations by themselves are, of course, abstractions, not realities, just as sharpness is an abstraction and not something which you find going about all by itself.

But that is just the supposition which

the Sensation philosophers make, and which they ask you to believe—that sensations can and do exist all by themselves. They say, let us suppose that there are sensations, separate sensations, all by themselves, and then we shall be able to explain experience as a whole and to show what is the good of it all. Well, it does not seem to us in the least likely that by starting from sensations by themselves, which are abstractions, not realities, that we shall ever get reality out of them: sensations by themselves do not exist, they are nought; and by adding nought to nought, all we shall get in the end is nought. However, the Sensation philosopher says that if with him we suppose the ultimate facts of our experience to be loose and separate sensations, we shall be able to explain experience as a whole. So let us try to suppose it.

Of course, if the Sensationalist is right in saying not only that sensations exist, but that sensations alone exist, it naturally follows that matter and material

things do not exist. We will concede that to him right off. When we have the orange in our hands, we have certain sensations of touch and resistance, of sight and colour and smell, and we may have certain sensations of taste. And if anybody asks us what else there is in the orange, and what we mean by saying that the orange is a material thing, or made of matter, we will reply that that is a difficult question. We will look the difficulty boldly in the face—and pass on. If, indeed, sensations alone exist, then, of course, matter and material things do not. That naturally follows from the supposition which the Sensation philosopher makes: his supposition is that the world of material things, on the outside of the curve, is not real and does not exist.

The one thing, and the only thing of which I can be certain, if the Sensation philosopher is right in his supposition, is that I have sensations and that my sensations exist. If I see an orange, I am

certain that I have a sensation of sight. If I feel it, I am certain I have a sensation of touch. If I eat it, I am certain I have a sensation of taste. But if I go further and say that in addition to my sensations of sight, touch, taste, and so on, there is something else—that there is a real orange, then, according to the Sensation philosopher, I am talking nonsense, and saying I know not what.

The real orange, according to the Sensationalist, is simply my sensations and nothing else. Very good! but, if this is true, let us see what follows. Suppose I am talking with somebody, say with you. What do I know of you? I see you, that is to say I have certain sensations of sight, as I look at you. I hear you speak, that is to say I have certain sensations of sound, as I listen to you. I shake hands with you, that is to say I have certain sensations of touch, as I feel the grasp of your hand. And then, according to the Sensation philosopher, I go further and say

to myself that in addition to the sensations of sight and hearing and touch that I have, there is something else—that there is a real person before me, and that you really exist.

But, according to the Sensation philosopher, if I say that, I must be talking nonsense, just as, according to him, I was talking nonsense when I said before that I was eating a real orange. The truth, according to him, was that then I was not eating a real orange but that I was having certain sensations. And the truth, according to him, is that now I am not talking to a real person but that I am having certain sensations. If in the one case I was not eating a real orange, but only having certain sensations, so in the other case I am only having certain sensations and not talking to a real person. Just as, according to him, there is no real orange but only certain sensations that I have, so there are no real persons besides myself, but only certain sensations that I have.

Thus, if we agree to the supposition which the Sensation philosopher makes, it not only follows that there are no *things* beyond my sensations, but that there are no *persons* either. I am the only person who exists. That may be a conclusion very satisfactory to me. But how do you like it?

Of course, when the Sensationalist concludes that the table or the chair does not exist, the table or the chair cannot object, because the table and the chair are not alive and are not conscious of their own existence. But you are. And you may object to being told that you are only certain sensations that I have, and that you have no real existence. Perhaps you will say to the Sensation philosopher that you are not like the table or the chair; that you do exist; and that you are as real as he is. And doubtless the Sensationalist will feel that there is something in that; he will have to admit that you are as real as he is. And you may think that that settles the

question. But it does not. And that brings us to the next consequence which follows from the supposition that the Sensationalist makes.

The Sensationalist has said, as we know, Let us suppose that we have sensations. And you saw nothing wrong with that: of course, we have sensations. Very well! then, he said, if we have sensations, there is no need to suppose that there is anything else. If we have the sensations of seeing, touching, and tasting an orange, and always can have them or get them when we want them, what on earth is the need of supposing that over and above them there is something else — a real, material orange? There is no need, he said. And if I have the sensations of seeing and hearing and touching other people, what is the need of supposing that over and above or behind the sensations there is any person? There is no need, he said, to suppose that there is anybody in existence, or anything in existence, but myself

and my own sensations. But, you said, I am as real as you are, my sensations are as good as yours. And, as we saw, the Sensationalist has to admit that. And you thought that settled the question.

But it does not settle the question. That is just where a difference of opinion comes in. And the difference is this. You tell the Sensationalist that you are as real as he is; and you mean that you are both real persons. He will admit, he cannot deny, that you are as real as he is. But, then, he does not believe that you are real. And accordingly he must admit that if you are not a real person, neither is he himself. And he not only admits it, he maintains it.

The Sensationalist says, you believe, or think you believe, in the existence and the reality of yourself; but what do you mean by yourself? Let us clear up our notions, the Sensationalist will say, and see what is really the meaning of the words we use, and we shall find out that there is no

more meaning in the word "self" than there is in the word "matter."

We have seen that, if we suppose we have sensations, there is no need to suppose that there really are material things: if we have the sensation of seeing an orange and feeling it and smelling it and tasting it, there is no need to suppose that there really is anything more than the sensations we have had of it, or may have of it. Indeed, if we come to think of it, "matter" is a word which has no meaning in it; for what is supposed to be meant by it?

Something purely negative. Matter is not what we see—it is not the sensation of sight. It is not the sensation of touch, or the sensation of smell or taste or of sound. It is not any sensation or perception that we have. The truth is, the Sensationalist says, matter is not anything whatever at all. Take away from a thing everything we know of it, every sensation or perception that we have of it—and what there is left, he says, is nothing—that is "matter."

Well, he goes on to say, if you apply the same course of reasoning to the self, you will find that you are driven to the same conclusion.

Just as in all your sensations or perceptions of sight, touch, sound, taste, smell, you never come across anything but the sensations or perceptions and never find any "matter," so too in all your sensations or perceptions of sight, touch, sound, taste, or smell, you never come across anything but the sensations or perceptions—you never come across any "self." Like the word "matter," the term "self" is merely a word which we use.

The Sensationalist philosopher, Hume, states this quite clearly and plainly. He says:[1] "When I enter most intimately

[1] "There are some philosophers who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF; that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence, and are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity. . . . . Unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience which is pleaded for them, nor have we any idea of Self, after the manner it is here explained. . . . For my part, when," etc.

into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. . . . If any one, thinks he has a different notion of *himself*, upon serious and unprejudiced reflection, I must confess I can no longer reason with him. . . . He may perhaps perceive something simple and continued which he calls *himself;* though I am certain there is no such principle in me. But setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions."

Self, then, according to Hume and the Sensationalists, is a mere word: it stands for "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions" or sensations. In reality, according to the Sensationalists, there exists nothing but perceptions or

sensations; and though people will believe that they themselves exist, and that things or matter exist, the truth, according to Hume, is that matter and self are mere words and nothing more, or, at any rate, if they are anything more, we do not know and cannot possibly know what they are.

The object of philosophy is, let us remember, to discover whether our experience of the world and life has any meaning; and, if so, what. For this purpose, philosophers make suppositions or assumptions. The Sensation philosophers say, Let us suppose that sensations exist, and we will explain the meaning of experience and what good it all is. We, therefore, have listened to their supposition—and what is the result of it all? The result is that if we suppose that there are such things as sensations—abstract sensations, all by themselves—then there are no persons and no matter, or, at any rate, we cannot possibly know whether there are or what they are.

Now, that conclusion is philosophical scepticism; it is that everybody believes that there are persons or things, but nobody can possibly know whether there are or what they are. And that conclusion is the logical result of the supposition which the Sensationalist invited us to make, viz., that there are such things as sensations, loose and separate sensations, all by themselves. We were invited to make that supposition on the ground that, if only we would admit it, then it would be possible to explain the meaning of experience and what good it all is. And now we find that, so far from explaining our experience, this supposition leads us to the conclusion that if there are persons who have experience, and if there are things of which they have experience, it is impossible to know who or what they are.

The truth, of course, is that sensations exist—but not all by themselves, loose and separate. There is no such thing as a toothache, loose and separate, all by

itself, floating about in space, with nobody to feel it. If nobody has the toothache, there will be no toothache in existence. If nobody feels anything, there will be no sensation at all. So, too, if there are no things to have experience of, nobody can have experience of them, and there will be no experience at all. And if there is nobody to have any sensations, nobody to have any experience, there will be no experience and no sensations at all.

But the point we have started from all along is that there is experience, and that what philosophy has to do is to inquire whether experience has any meaning—what it all comes to—and what is the good of it all. Plainly, then, if there is experience there must be some one who has the experience—the subject of experience—and there must be something which he experiences—the object of experience. They are the two sides of the curve, the inside and the outside, and they may be distinguished, but they cannot possibly

be separated. Still less is it possible to deny the existence of either the one side or the other.

Hume, in the passage already quoted, does deny the existence of the one side; he denies the existence of the self—he denies the existence of himself. But how could he deny it, if he did not exist, himself, to do it? He says, in effect: When I enter into myself, I find that there is no self and that I do not exist. But if there is no self, how can he enter into it? If he is right in saying that I do not exist, how can he be right in saying that "I enter into myself" and find this sensation or that? The plain truth of the matter—simple enough for the simplest of us to see—is that no man can say "I do not exist" without contradicting himself, for, unless he existed, he could not say it. And if, when he says, "I do not exist," he contradicts himself, then he is wrong in saying so, and he does exist.

But what if, when he is talking to you,

and arguing with you, he says that you, at any rate, don't exist? Well, then he is contradicting himself again, for he says: "I am arguing with you. I know very well what you mean when you say that you exist. And I tell you that you don't." Now, if you didn't exist, he could not tell you that, or anything else. But he is telling you. So he is just contradicting himself once more, when he is trying to make you believe that you don't exist. If you did not exist, he could not convince you. And if he does convince you that you don't exist, he must be wrong, because he could not convince you, unless you were there to be convinced. So anyway he is wrong in saying that that side of the curve—the side which is you or me, the side which is the subject of experience, does not exist.

And he is just as wrong in saying that the other side of the curve, on which lie the things we experience, the objects of experience, does not exist. Just consider what Hume says. He says: Let us suppose

that there are no things or objects; let us suppose that there are only loose and separate sensations. For instance, let us suppose that there is no real orange, but that we have only loose and separate sensations of colour, shape, touch, and taste, and smell. Of course, you will agree that if, indeed, there is no real orange, then there can only be the sensations of smell and taste and colour and shape and touch.

If, however, there is a real orange, as you and I believe, like everybody else, then the various qualities it has of colour and shape and smell, and so on, belong to it; they are found in an orange and nowhere else—the orange is the only thing in which precisely those qualities are found. But if, as Hume says, there is no real orange, in which those qualities are to be found combined, then the qualities—or, as he calls them, the sensations—of colour, smell, taste, and so on, are not combined, but are, as he calls them, loose and separate.

But though the sensations are, according to him, loose and separate, and have no connection with each other in themselves, still he admits that when we have one of the sensations, we expect the others—when we have the sensation of seeing a lemon, or of seeing somebody eat a lemon, our mouths water, or at least we have that sensation—we can almost taste the sourness of the lemon.

So, then, this is how things stand: Hume says: Let us suppose that sensations are loose and separate, and that, when we see a fire—that is, when we have a certain sensation of sight, there is no real reason why we should, when we go up to the fire, have a certain other sensation, viz., a feeling of warmth. Then, we say to Hume, if there is no real reason why the two sensations should be connected together, why ever do we expect the one sensation when we have the other—when we see fire, why do we expect warmth? Surely, we say, the reason why we expect them together is that they are really connected

together. No! says Hume, the two sensations are quite loose and separate: they have no connection together whatever; all that happens is that you have got into the habit of thinking that they go together, but that is merely a habit and nothing else.

You have got into the habit, Hume says, of expecting the one when you see the other, but the habit and the expectation are in you and in your mind, not in them: the connection is in your thought, there is no connection in them; they, as he has always said, are loose and separate. That is what Hume has said all along: Let us *suppose* that sensations are loose and separate and not connected together. And when you say: "But they are not loose and separate; whenever I see a fire I find it hot"; he says, "Oh! that is only a habit you have got into."

Now, the fact is that Hume has begged the question all along. The question is whether there is a fire; and Hume has said in effect, though perhaps you did not

notice it, Let us suppose that there is no fire; let us suppose that there are only sensations—the sensations of seeing a blaze and feeling it warm—then I shall be able to convince you that there is no fire. And, naturally, if you admit to begin with that there is no fire, you will have to admit to the end that there is no fire. But the idea that there is really no fire was, at the beginning, only a supposition which Hume invited you to make. And he asked you to make it, on the ground that then he could do what it is the business of a philosopher to do, viz., explain our experience, and tell us what it all means. And if he had done so, then we should have had to think that after all, unlikely as it seemed that there was no real fire, there might be something in the supposition.

But, what has been the result of making the supposition that there is no real fire and that there are no real objects of any kind?

The result has been a perfectly natural

and logical result and exactly what we might have expected. If we begin by supposing that there are really only loose and separate sensations in the world, we must end by believing that loose and separate sensations alone exist, and that there are no real things or objects, such as a fire, and no real persons; and that no rational man can believe that there are any real things or any real persons. And, plainly, any rational man who begins by assuming that there are no real things —that fire, for instance, does not exist— must, if he is consistent and logical, maintain up to the end, that there are no real things—that the external world, the world of things on the outside of the curve, has no existence.

But no rational man, when he comes to see what are the consequences of assuming that loose and separate sensations alone exist, will agree to the assumption. The rational man wants some assumption that will explain experience; and if such an assumption as that

which Hume and the Sensationalists make results in the conclusion that experience has no meaning at all, the rational man will set aside that assumption and seek some other.

Now, can we learn anything from Hume and the Sensation philosophers? Yes, we can. We learn this, that if we begin by denying the existence of the outside of the curve—that is, of the external world, of such objects as fire, for instance, we can never reach an explanation of anything. Very good! then, if we want to learn what our experience all comes to, what is the meaning and the good of it all, we must begin by supposing that the outside of the curve is real, that objects do really exist.

And what of the inside of the curve? Well, as I hope you will remember, we saw that some men of science started by assuming, for their own part, that the things around us, the things on which they experimented, were real and were the only realities. But, of course, those

things were things which they observed and on which they experimented. Things which nobody can observe or form any opinion about are things which physical science declines to have to do with. Science deals only with things that can be presented to the mind. Mind is essential to science: science can't get on without it. The outside of the curve—the world of objects—is essential to science; and the inside of the curve—the mind to which those objects are presented—is equally essential to science.

The reason of that is of the very simplest: neither side of the curve can exist without the other. And what is true of science is equally true of all knowledge and all experience: there must be a subject who knows, and objects which he knows. And neither can exist without the other. We can abstract the one from the other; and whilst we are examining it, we can forget the other. But the other is there all the same.

A mind without anything to know,

would not be a mind: if it were conscious of nothing at all, it would not be a consciousness, or a mind. And an object which nobody whatever knows to exist, is one of which nobody can say whether it exists or not. Obviously it is not an object of knowledge, for nobody even knows whether there is such a thing. And if nobody knows whether there is such a thing, it cannot be of any use for explaining things, or for any other purpose. Consequently, if that is what is meant by matter, then nobody even knows whether there is such a thing or not: it is something which nobody whatever knows to exist, and of which nobody can ever possibly say whether it exists or not. If there were such a thing it would be of no use to us; and we do not know whether there is such a thing or not.

If anyone were to tell us that there is something such that no mind whatever could know it, or know whether it existed or not, we might very well say to him, then how, pray, do you know that there

is such a thing? And of course he could not tell us, for a very simple reason: he would be talking nonsense. Very well! then, if we are going to use the term "matter," and to put any meaning in it, it must be something that we know—partially, at any rate—and not something that we can never know. It must be an object of knowledge, and something that we can find out about. In that sense of the word, as something that can be the object of knowledge, it stands for the outside of our curve. And the outside of a curve may be distinguished from the inside, but it never can exist apart from it.

The Sensationalist undertakes to explain experience, if we will trust to our five senses and assume that sensations alone exist. From this assumption, however, it follows that, when I am talking with you, I have certain sensations of sight and sound, and so on, but that those sensations alone exist, and you do not, just as it follows on the Sensational-

ist argument that, when I am eating an orange, I have certain sensations, but that no real orange exists. If you insist that you exist just as much as the Sensation philosopher who says that you don't, if you maintain that there is as much reality in yourself as in himself, his reply is that he sees as little reason to believe in the existence of himself as of yourself: "self" is merely a word with nothing to correspond to it, just as "matter" is. There is no reason, he says, to believe in the existence of either persons or things.

Thus the Sensation philosophy, which begins by assuming that sensations alone exist, so far from solving the problem of philosophy and offering some explanation of our experience, ends up in philosophical scepticism, and in doubting or denying that either persons or things have any existence at all.

But this sceptical conclusion is plainly self-contradictory, for it requires us to say, "I know I don't exist"—and if I

don't exist, I can't know that or anything else, whereas, if I do exist, I contradict myself by saying that I don't.

In the same way this scepticism requires us to say, "I know things do not exist." But this also is a self-contradiction, for if things do not exist, I can know nothing about them, nothing whatever, not even so much as whether they do exist or not. On the other hand, if things are known to me, if anything whatever is known to me, then I am contradicting myself if I say that "I know things do not exist."

The plain and simple truth is that both sides of the curve are known to us, even if our knowledge does not go very far in either direction. We know that the self or subject exists and that things or objects are known to it. But though the outside of a curve may be distinguished from the inside, it can never exist apart from it.

Finally, it is impossible to deny the existence of either side of the curve, without denying the existence of the other

side. You may deny the existence of the one side, and not see at first that, when you do so, you are really denying the existence of the other side also. But, when you come to see this, you must do one of two things: you must either say with the sceptic, "Very well, then, neither side exists—neither matter nor mind"; or, if that seems too absurd, then you must say that both sides exist—that you who know something exist, and that the objects which you know also exist. In other words, you must give up scepticism and fall back on common sense.

CHAPTER IV

PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICE

Every form of philosophy—and in different ages philosophy has taken many forms—is built upon some supposition and is the working out of some assumption or hypothesis. And the supposition or assumption is always based or supposed to be based upon experience, and is applied to experience. Even philosophical scepticism, inasmuch as it is a form of philosophy, is an assumption made about experience: it is the supposition that experience is essentially unintelligible. Scepticism when pushed to that extreme is obviously untenable, for experience is certainly not altogether unintelligible: we can and do work it in practical life with a considerable amount of success. But the scepticism which, without

going to this extreme, points out to any form of philosophy that there are things which that philosophy does not succeed in explaining, is very necessary to prevent the philosophy of the time being from falling into dogmatism. The use and the value of scepticism is that it reminds philosophy, sometimes very sharply and disagreeably, that no form of philosophy is final; and that any form of it is useless and simply cumbers the ground if it does not live and grow.

The supposition by which we have tested the philosophy of Materialism on the one hand, and Sensationalism on the other, is the assumption that experience is intelligible, and in some sense a whole, and that there is not only meaning but also good in it. But on this point — on the question, What is the good of it all? a question that certainly deserves considering—we have said nothing hitherto, because we have been examining Sensationalism and Materialism, and they profess to consider only what is, or what

existence is, or what reality is, and they do not go on to ask what is the good of matter in motion, or of loose and separate sensations. And yet it is clear not only that we find in our experience matter and mind, or subjects and objects, but that we also find action and will.

Any philosophy, therefore, which professes to offer us some supposition which will explain experience, ought certainly to try not only to explain knowledge and existence, but also to explain action and will. When we will things and do them, we have some reason for doing so—we have some end in view; and, at the time, we consider the end we have in view to be good. So philosophy ought to consider whether there is really any end, and any good, in our experience, and if so, what it is. And, as has already been said, the supposition on which we have been going is that there is some good in our experience, and in experience as a whole, just as we have assumed that there is some meaning in it.

You will see, therefore, that from this point of view, on this supposition that is to say, philosophy is intensely practical. We want to know what is the meaning of experience—that is to say, to what end it is directed, what good it achieves or attempts to achieve. The questions we started from at the beginning were, What is the meaning of experience? What does it all come to? What is the good of it all? These questions are practical questions; and the attempt to answer them, in word and deed, is philosophy in practice.

Philosophy, in a word, is practical. It does not deal with abstractions, as science does—for science deals with such abstractions as weight or heat or light; and it deals with them not only as if they existed apart from things, but as if these abstractions could exist without being known by the person who abstracts them.

Philosophy again does not deal with such abstractions as knowledge and existence are, if they are taken by them-

selves. Philosophy, being practical, deals with life as it is lived, with knowledge and existence as they are manifested and actually experienced—that is, with the very life of experience itself.

The object of philosophy is not merely to construct a system of truth: to do that, it would have to consider knowledge and existence as things apart from our actual lives as we actually live them; and if it did so consider them as something apart, then it would not be constructing a system of truth, for it would be leaving out the most important fact of all—that is, our life as we actually live it. Such truth as philosophy would attain, if it confined its attention to knowledge and existence, would be partial, incomplete, and abstract truth. Or, rather, since philosophy does sometimes confine its attention to knowledge (epistemology) and existence (ontology), such truth as it does then attain is partial, incomplete, and abstract. And so it is like such truth as is attained by science, but with

this difference, that science deals only with material existence, or with matter alone, and consequently the truth which science attains is even more partial and more abstract.

The living truth is truth which is carried into action. I tender you a coin, and ask whether it is a sovereign. You look at it and say that it is. Now, if you will give me twenty shillings for it, what you say is a living truth: it is readiness to act and results, if necessary, in action. If you say that it is a sovereign, and won't give me twenty shillings for it, your words are not a living truth.

Now, philosophy aims at the living truth—a truth you can live by, and act on. Philosophy, when it is practical, is not merely a system of truth but a method of action. It is not merely abstract truth but living truth. It is, that is to say, not merely the truth about what is, but something more—the truth about what ought to be, the only truth in the light of which it is possible to live. When

a man acts, he intends to do something which is as yet not done; and he intends to do it because it seems good to him to do it. He has an end in view which he means to accomplish; and he means to accomplish it, because he thinks good to do so. The end at which he aims and the good which he means to realise are the same thing. But the end and the good which he aims at must be known to him, otherwise he could not aim at it, and intend it. Being known to him, it must have some reality and existence; but, being something which he is engaged in doing and resolved to accomplish, it is something not yet achieved, not yet realised. The end and the good, therefore, that he has in view is real, because it is known to him and intended by him; and yet it is not perfectly realised because he is still engaged in doing it and has not yet fully done it.

Now, that is the description and character both of every moment of our lives, and of all our life. We are, at every

moment, and all through our active life, engaged on something which is as yet not done but only in the process of being done. The end and the good is never at any moment realised, but always and at all times in process of being realised. The end and the good is never done but is always to be done. It is in this that the continuity of our lives consists. What makes them continuous is the fact that, all the time, we are engaged in doing something not yet achieved; we are always in process of doing something not yet done. Life's work is never done. It is never fully accomplished. And the work of life is the good and the end which you are always striving to realise and are always finding to be not yet realised.

To some extent and in some sense, the good exists and is known to you, otherwise you could not aim at it or strive after it. Your will is set on it, and your action directed to it; and to some extent you are achieving it. And whatever you

are engaged in doing, you are trying to do because you think it good, and because you think it ought to be done, and because you think you can do it. You would not be trying to do it, if you thought you could not do it, or if you did not think good to do it.

Well, then, if at every moment of our lives we are engaged in doing something that is as yet not done, and if we are trying to do it because we think we can do it, and because we see fit, or think it good, to do it, what is the end or good, the work of life, which is never fully accomplished but is always yet to be done? What is the meaning of experience—that experience which is the life we live? What is the good which, in experience, is partly disclosed to us but never fully realised by us, and which is or may be partly, but is never wholly, attained by us?

Those are the very questions from which we started out in the first chapter—the questions which philosophy is the

attempt to answer. And they are practical questions. Further, they are questions to which every man is always giving a practical answer by the way in which he lives. But though he is giving a practical answer, he rarely stays to consider what the answer is, or whether it is the right one. The moment he stays—if ever he does stay—to put those questions to himself, he becomes a philosopher, and tries to frame some answer to them.

We see now, however, that experience is not merely something that we suffer but also something that we do; and that the important question is not so much, What is the nature of the experience which one has, or through which one goes? not so much, What do I suffer? as, What should I do? The fundamental fact about our experience is that we are always, at every moment of our conscious lives, trying to do something and in process of doing it.

The most important question, then, that we can raise is, whether we are

engaged in trying to do the right thing. And if we want to answer the question, as we do want, seeing that we are philosophers—that is to say, practical men, we can turn only to experience. To it alone can we look for an answer, because we have nothing but experience to turn to. And the experience to which we have to turn is the experience of living beings who are engaged always in trying to do something and are in process of doing it. That is in truth and in fact the only experience that is known to us.

Experience is not mere knowledge, or knowledge of existence: it consists in what a conscious being tries to do, and is in constant process of doing. It is conscious being and doing.

We must, therefore, now revise the conception of experience which we adopted in the previous chapters when we were concerned principally with the question of knowledge and existence—the questions whether matter in motion alone existed, whether existence without knowledge was

an intelligible proposition, whether loose and separate sensations could exist without being known by any person.

In the earlier chapters, our supposition was that knowledge and existence were inseparable, as are the sides of a curve. And we left action altogether out of account. But we stuck to the supposition that experience is in some sort a whole: we were logically bound to do so because our purpose was to find out what could be said of experience as a whole—whether as a whole it had any meaning and any good. We recognised that experience had two sides or presented two aspects, mind and matter, knowledge and existence, subject and object. On the outside of the curve lay the world of material things; on the inside, the world of thoughts and sensations. As regards the outside of the curve, science is every day making it more and more probable that through all the host of material things one system runs; and that there is some reason for supposing

that that side of experience forms a whole.

But what of the inside of the curve, on which lie thoughts, sensations, emotions, passions, desires? On the inside there lies evidently and undeniably not one mind or human being, but countless minds, all the individual human beings that make up the human race. Well, here we can see that even they have some unity and in some sort form a whole.

In the first place, they are not wholly cut off from one another: they communicate with each other. They have thoughts in common. They have or may have common purposes. They take or can take common action to realise the purposes and carry out the ideas that they have in common. We live to a large extent in and for one another. Indeed, were that not so, no one of us could live at all.

Again, we say, and with more truth than perhaps we imagine, that we can enter into one another's thoughts. And when we do this, and put ourselves into

the other man's place, we find the difference between us less vast: in spite of apparent differences, the man's a man for all that. There is the bond, which unites or is capable of uniting all the countless individuals, who occupy the inside of our curve.

But though we thus see vaguely that what is on the inside of the curve forms, in a way, a unity of which the individuals are members; and that what is on the outside of the curve probably forms one system; still, even if this be so, what we have on our hands forms two wholes. And the supposition which we originally put forward was: Let us suppose that experience forms one whole. If, therefore, we are to suppose that experience forms one whole, evidently we must give up the simile of the curve—that is to say, we must recognise that the division of experience into knowledge and existence, one on the inside and the other on the outside of the curve, is a distinction which we draw, and must draw, when we

see in experience only knowledge and existence. But it is not a distinction which we can maintain, when we come to see what is a simple and undeniable fact, viz., that we are active beings, always and at every moment of our conscious lives engaged in trying to do something and in process of doing it. That is the character and actual nature of experience: it is conscious being and doing. And if we suppose, as we do suppose or assume, that experience forms one whole, though it contains an infinite number of parts, then that whole must be realised in the existence, and known to the mind, of a supreme being, who is at once omniscient and perfect—the being, in short, whom we call God. Only to Him is real existence and full knowledge of the whole possible; and thus each one of the parts, as it comes to comprehend that the parts cannot exist without the whole, declares: "Without Thee I cannot live." It is God, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

Thus our assumption that experience is a whole, and has a meaning and a good, proves, when we examine it, to require a previous assumption, viz., that God is, and that in His will, and in doing His will, our good and the only good consists.

Philosophy, then, is practical. It does not deal with abstractions, but with life as it is lived and as it should be lived. Always and at every moment we are engaged in trying to do something and in process of doing it. As practical men we are philosophers—even if we are philosophers without knowing it. And it is only so far as we are philosophers, and consciously philosophers, that we are truly practical.

Even so, much or most, of what we do, we do without knowing to what end it tends or what results it will bring about. The steam plough is the direct descendant of earlier forms of the plough; and they were all descended from the digging-stick first used. And yet the man who used it first had no conception of what it

would eventually become. So we for the most part are similarly ignorant of what will come of what we, as active, living, conscious beings are always, and at every moment of our conscious lives—at this moment, for instance—engaged in trying to do and are in process of doing. That ignorance would be appalling, if you and I were the only conscious beings in existence; or if all conscious beings were as ignorant as you and I of the meaning of experience and of the good that is being achieved in the process of experience. But we cannot believe that experience is thus blind throughout.

Nor would the supposition, made by philosophy, that experience expresses a meaning and attains a good, be of much value; nor has it indeed any practical force so long as it remains a supposition merely. Unless it is not merely known but also felt, it is not practical philosophy or actual experience but a mere abstraction from experience, as lifeless as that other abstraction, matter; and as unmean-

ing as those other abstractions, loose and separate sensations. If the supposition is to be anything more than an abstraction merely known, if it is to be a reality felt—still more, if it is to be a reality acted on, then the man who is to feel it and to realise it must have access in his heart to God.

The questions from which we started at the beginning were: What is the meaning of experience? What does it all come to? What is the good of it all? And philosophy, I said, was the attempt to find out whether there is an answer to them, and if so, what. For the purpose of finding out, it was, I said, open to us to make any supposition or assumption or hypothesis that we liked. The one and only rule of the game was that as the hypothesis or supposition or assumption had no other purpose than to provide an explanation of experience, any supposition, which failed to explain experience satisfactorily, must be ruled off the board.

I also said that as experience is continually growing, any supposition we might make could only be regarded as provisional and not final, even if it seemed to explain all the facts known up to the time. But there is no supposition which does explain all the known facts to the satisfaction of all philosophers. And that is one reason which makes philosophy so interesting and so exciting. And for fear you should imagine, when you have got a supposition which commends itself to you, that all the excitement is over, and that nothing but the shouting remains to be done, I will just indicate one or two of the many points on which a considerable difference of opinion exists.

Like the philosopher, the man who is a philosopher without being aware of it makes assumptions, all of which require testing by experience, and some of which fail under the test. One assumption made by the ordinary man, and adopted by science, is that matter and material things exist whether anybody is aware

of them or not; and this supposition is disputed by some philosophers, who suggest the assumption that the only things that are known or can be known are objects of knowledge, which exist only as known to exist. The first supposition, that matter and material things exist, whether anybody knows them or not, carries with it the further supposition that such material things exist in space—a supposition which is made alike by the ordinary non-philosopher and by the man of science. If this supposition is true, then it ought to be at least an intelligible supposition, consistent with itself and with any other supposition which we make.

But when we come to examine the notion of space, we find it inconsistent with itself. It is inconsistent with itself in the first place, because we cannot conceive whether space is or is not infinite. One or the other it ought to be: it cannot be both infinite and not infinite. And yet, if we suppose that space really exists,

we find that we must contradict ourselves and say both that it is infinite and that it cannot be infinite. It appears first one and then the other; and both appearances cannot be real. Hence the other supposition, that space is only an appearance and not a reality.

In the next place, the very term we use for the purpose of expressing the supposition that space exists—the terms "here" and "there"—contradict each other, and each of them contradicts itself. Consider both points. They contradict each other: what do we mean by "here"? Certainly we mean, or rather we suppose that we mean, "not there." Very well! then. By "here" we may mean, here in this room, here in this county, or here in the north of England, or here in England, or here in this world, or here in this universe—and beyond that we cannot go, there is no "there" left. The "here" swallows up the "there"; they contradict each other. Everything is contained in the "here," and there is no "there."

But by "here" we may also mean here in this room, here at this desk, here on this paper, or this word on the paper, or this letter in the word, or this dot upon the letter "i," and a dot is a point, and a point is position without magnitude, something, that is to say, which has nothing inside it and no room inside it for anything—that is to say, which is not space at all, for space is supposed to be that in which something is. Thus the very notion of "here," that is of space, contradicts itself.

And yet you believe in the assumption that space exists; you suppose that it does. But the supposition is one on which it is possible for a difference of opinion to exist. It is a supposition which is made to account for that other supposition that there are material things which exist whether any conscious being—whether God Himself—knows them or not.

So much for space. But there is another assumption which we all make

without thinking about it; and that is that time exists.

Once more, if we make a supposition, it ought to be one which does not contradict itself: if it is self-contradictory, there must be something wrong with it. Well, look at this supposition that time exists. There is past time, present time, and future time, or we may say that there is the "now" and the "not now." And these two terms like the "here" and the "there" contradict each other; and each of them contradicts itself. For what do we mean by "now"? Obviously, there can be no "now" unless there is also a "then": there could be no present unless there were a past and a future. But the past exists no longer and the future has not yet come into existence—that is to say, both the future and the past are non-existent. But we said just now that there could be no present unless there were a past and a future. And now we see that the past and the future do not exist.

Perhaps we shall see this more clearly, if we ask ourselves what we mean by the present, by "now." "Now" means the present time, the present hour, the present day, the present age, the present century, the present dispensation. The "now" spreads itself out as far as ever we can go and swallows up every "then" that comes in front of it. Everything that exists, every event, I should say, that takes place, takes place "now." Very good! but look at this "now." It means the present time, the present hour, the present lecture, the present minute; but the present minute has sixty seconds in it; then "now" means the present second; but that is over, long before you can get the words out. The present moment is, as it were, the line which divides the future from the past. And a line, as you know, is length without breadth. Length without breadth! There is no such thing. Then there is no such thing as the present: it is just as imaginary as

length without breadth. It is the imaginary division between the past and the future. And the past and the future do not exist. The one is already over and non-existent; the other does not yet exist, for it has not come into existence. The time-divisions, past, present, and future, are all alike imaginary. They are divisions and distinctions which we *suppose* to exist; but the supposition is simply a supposition which we make; and it is a supposition which contradicts itself. And it is a supposition contradictory to our belief that all things — both those things which we call present and those which we call future—alike are known to God.

Evidently, therefore, this supposition is one about which a difference of opinion may exist: people may fairly ask themselves whether the supposition is one which we can really hold, or really understand—whether it is not really self-contradictory.

It appears as though the present alone

existed; and it also appears as though the present were a purely imaginary line of division between the past and the future. It appears first one and then the other; and both appearances cannot be real. And we have seen that space, in the same way, appears both to be finite and infinite, as does time itself.

Thus we are brought face to face with a third point on which a considerable difference of opinion exists amongst philosophers—the relation of appearance to reality, and what we mean by the two terms.

A thing, such as a building, looks rather different—presents a rather different appearance—from different points of view.

From one point of view you see one side of it, from another another; from each of the sixty-four different points of the compass it presents a different appearance. And from the inside it appears different again. A surface, which feels smooth, and looks smooth,

when examined by the naked eye, does not appear smooth, when examined by a magnifying glass or microscope. Which is it *really*—smooth or not smooth? A thing which appears simple, and for long is considered simple, may prove on further examination to be compound: as you know, science, which discovered that things appeared to be made up of atoms, then discovered that the atoms were made up of molecules, and then that the molecules were only appearance and the reality was something else, electrons, or what not. And probably they in their turn will be pronounced to be ways in which the ultimate reality appears to us.

Then, can we ever know the ultimate reality of things? Surely, it must always appear to us, if we are to know anything about it. And if so, it is the appearance alone which will be known to us. At least, so some philosophers argue. But other philosophers say: You talk of appearance; well, then, something appears, and what appears is the real thing,

reality. Take the case of the building which presents sixty-four different appearances from the sixty-four different points of the compass. It is one and the same building which appears. Whatever point you view it from, it is the same building: view it from sixty-four different points, and it is still the same building. Any one appearance can only be misleading if it is mistaken for the only appearance that the thing can have and is alleged to be the reality and the whole. We, indeed, never see the building or anything else from every point of view at the same time. But, though with the senses we never can *see* the whole building, we can conceive, and, as a matter of fact, we always do conceive it to be a whole; and the whole is what we conceive to be the reality. Very good, then what is true of the building is true of the universe: we never can with our eyes see the universe as a whole, but we do *conceive* it to be a whole. As it presents itself to us through our senses, it presents only

appearance; and it is a mistake we make if we imagine that the appearances presented are the reality and the whole.

Still some philosophers hold that reality, even if it appears to us, can but appear; and consequently that we can never know anything but the appearance. Perhaps the truth is that "we now see as through a glass darkly"; and that God alone is not separated from reality by appearances, but is Himself the reality and the source of the reality, that He alone knows as it really is.

In our experience we find not matter alone, as the Materialist says, nor sensations alone, as the Sensationalist says; we find, further, not only knowledge and existence, but also action and will.

Philosophy, therefore, which inquires of experience, what it all comes to, cannot help inquiring also what is the good of it all. That is a practical inquiry, and philosophy, therefore, is practical: philosophy does not, like science, deal with abstractions, but seeks a living truth—

that is, a truth you can live by and act on. When a man acts, he has an end in view which he wishes to accomplish, because it seems good to him to do so. At every moment of our lives, and all through our lives, we are engaged on something which is as yet not done, but only in the process of being done. That is the fundamental fact about our experience; and consequently the most important question that can be raised is whether we are engaged on the right thing.

Thus, once more we are brought up against the question, what does our experience mean—what is the good of it all? Hitherto we have likened experience to the two sides of a curve; and now, even if we assume that material things, on the outside of the curve, form one system, and that the countless minds, on the inside of it, are or might be united into one system by the bond of love, we still have on our hands two systems, and not one whole.

But if we are to adhere to our original

assumption that experience forms one whole, then that whole, the one ultimate and fundamental reality, must be God. That is a further supposition implied by our original assumption. If, however, it is to be more than a mere abstraction, if it is to be a reality felt and acted on, then the man who is to feel it and to realise it must have access in his heart to God.

CHAPTER V

PERSONALITY AND THE WHOLE

The moment a man begins to reflect on his experience and to ask himself, what it all comes to, he becomes a philosopher: when he inquires what it *all* means, he assumes that experience is a whole. When we say of God that "in Him we live and move and have our being," we make a further philosophical assumption, viz., that the whole is a personality. But this, which, from the point of view of philosophy, is an assumption, is, from the point of view of the man who feels and knows that in his heart he has access to God, no assumption but the living truth.

Treating it, however, from the point of view of philosophy, as an assumption, and as an assumption made for the purpose of explaining experience, we have to

inquire what consequences flow from it and whether they also help to explain experience.

If, as we assume, experience is a whole, then its parts are not independent either of each other or of the whole: they have no separate, independent existence. On the contrary, they are interdependent.

An illustration will perhaps make this clearer, and we may borrow one from a Hindu philosopher. A chariot is made up of the wheels, pole, and body; so long as the chariot exists, they are its parts. But, take the chariot to pieces, cast the pole down in one place, the body in another, the wheels somewhere else, and there is no longer any chariot. If, then, no chariot exists, it has of course no parts; and the pole, body, and wheels, consequently, are no longer parts of the chariot, for there is no chariot for them to be parts of. If you went to a watch-maker for a watch, and he offered you a trayful of wheels, levers, and so on, and tried to pass them off as being a watch, you

would say that you wanted a watch, not a heap of wheels and levers. You would say and feel that they were by no means the same thing as a watch.

Now, we may put this in general terms and say that the parts of anything are by no means the same as the whole. And, consequently, a whole is by no means the same thing as the parts. We can go further, indeed, and say that the parts have no existence separate from the whole; for, if the whole is taken to pieces, the whole ceases to exist; and, if there is no whole, it can have no parts; and, only where there is a whole, can there be any parts.

But now, having gone thus far, can we say that the chariot is a whole? Obviously without horses the chariot is not a chariot in the full sense of being able to fulfil its function of carrying the driver about; it is just as useless as the watchmaker's tray of levers and wheels. Without horses, the chariot is not a chariot, for without them it won't go, just as without

wheels it can't go. But, further, the driver is just as necessary as the wheels or the horses. And unless there were ground for the chariot to go on, and places for it to travel to and from, the chariot would not be a chariot.

Plainly, then, the chariot is part of the world. And, speaking again in general terms, we may say that everything which has size or extension, and occupies space, is part of the spatial world or whole. And evidently the parts cannot exist without the whole; nor can there be any whole without the parts. Thus we come round to our starting-point, which was that parts are not independent of each other, or of the whole to which they belong, and of which they are parts: they have no separate, independent existence.

But, if this is true of the world regarded from the point of view of space, perhaps it may be true of the world regarded from other points of view. But from what other point of view can it be regarded? Well, we can regard it from the point of

view of time. We say that "things take time to do," meaning that the process of doing them takes time. And a process is something that is going on and is not yet complete. It is not the whole, but part of the whole. Naturally, however, we are tempted to say that, when the thing is done, it is done—whole and complete. But, so too, we were tempted to say that when the pole, wheels, and body were put together, then we had a chariot, whole and complete. But, when we came to think of it, we recognised that the horses were just as necessary as the wheels; and that without the horses the chariot was not whole and complete. Well, so too it is with things that take time: no sooner is one done than another is begun. Indeed, we do one thing which takes time for the sake of the next, which also takes time: we eat for the sake of being strengthened by the food, we sleep for the sake of being refreshed for the next day's work. Eating and sleeping, like everything else that we do, are

processes through which we go. And processes are going on all around us, also; and one process leads on to another always. That is to say, each process is but a part. And parts, as we have seen, cannot exist save in the whole, to which they belong, and of which they are parts. The various processes—both those in which we are engaged and those which we watch going on—are parts of the world-process as a whole, and cannot be conceived as having any existence without it. There can be no parts, unless there is a whole. Thus, when we consider time, we come to the same conclusion as we arrived at when we were considering space, viz., that parts—in this case moments of time—are not, after all, independent of each other or of the whole to which they belong and of which they are parts.

The world, then, regarded from the point of view of space, is a whole, and none of its parts has any existence separate from, or independent of the whole. And, regarded from the point of

view of time, as a process, the world-process is a whole, whose parts or moments imply the whole, and cannot be separated from it.

Then, is there any other point of view from which the world can be regarded? For if there is, then we ought to consider whether the world, when regarded from it, presents the appearance of a whole.

There is another point of view from which we can regard the world. We can regard it from the point of view of will and action. And when we come to examine it from that point of view, we shall find that it is a whole, the parts of which are not detached from one another or independent either of one another, or of the whole of which they are parts.

Here, too, in the world of will and action, at first we find ourselves in the same attitude of mind as we were when we considered the chariot. We are engaged on doing something; we do it; and we regard what we have done, the action that we willed, as a whole, com-

plete in itself. So, too, at first, we regarded the chariot as being complete in itself, a whole; but we soon saw, that without horses it was not really complete, nor without a driver. In exactly the same way, when we come to look at any action, willed and performed, we shall see that it was willed and performed with some purpose and for the sake of some end. If we had had no purpose or object in view, we should not have done it: as the chariot without a driver would not be complete, so an action without a purpose would not be a rational action or an action willed.

We are, therefore, in the world of will and action, always doing something, for the sake of something else. Our actions are always parts of our purpose; and, being parts, they imply a whole. In that respect, it is the same with them as we saw it to be with the parts of space: everything that has size and occupies space is part of the spatial world or whole; and the whole cannot exist without

any of its parts. The whole implies its parts; and the parts imply the whole. And it is, as we saw, the same with time as with space: all the various processes that are going on, in us and around us, are parts of the world-process as a whole, and cannot be conceived as existing without it.

The world of will and action then forms a whole, just as the world of space may be regarded as a whole—or the world of time. We may regard the world-process, and the time it takes, as forming a whole, in one sense and from one point of view; and we may regard the world of space as similarly forming a whole. Each of them forms a whole in the sense that its parts are not independent of each other, and are not independent of the whole. No part of space, that is to say, can be cut out of the whole and taken away from it: the parts exist only in the whole. No moment can be really cut out of time and taken away from it: we distinguish, or pretend to distinguish, separate moments,

but they do not exist; they are not to be found scattered about anywhere. In time the moments, that is to say the parts, exist only in the whole.

But, though time may be regarded as a whole in this way, and though space may be regarded as a whole in the same way, it is clear that time and space are not altogether independent of one another: to move from one point in space to another takes time and implies time. We can measure space by the time which it takes to go from one place to another; and we measure time by means of the clock-hands which travel round the dial, or by the apparent motion of the sun.

Now, if, as some philosophers suppose, matter in motion is the one ultimate reality, then the space in which particles of matter move, and the time they take to perform their movements, may be distinguished from one another by us, but they do not exist separately and apart from one another. Motion, if it is to take place, requires both space and time;

and in motion you cannot have the one without the other. They are not two separate and independent wholes: each implies the other.

Further, if matter in motion—that is, matter moving in space and requiring time to do so—is, as is supposed by one school of philosophers, the ultimate reality, then one movement of matter, or one set of movements, produces another. One movement is the outcome of another, and is its inevitable outcome: from beginning to end, the whole course of matter in motion is inevitable, for each movement is determined, or rather pre-determined, by the previous movement. The whole course, indeed, was pre-determined from the start, or rather by the start: once set going, it had to go the way it was started. At the present time, not only is the past unalterable, but the future is fixed and pre-determined. And, if matter in motion is the one ultimate reality, then we are matter in motion, and our movements are all

pre-determined, and our future is fixed, as fixed and unalterable as our past.

All this follows logically, consistently, inevitably, from the assumption which some philosophers make, when they ask you to suppose that matter in motion alone exists. They have every right to make that supposition, if they think that by making it they can explain experience. If, however, their supposition fails to explain experience, then their supposition, that matter in motion alone exists, breaks down; and, if we want to explain and understand experience, we must try some other supposition.

Then, is there anything else in our experience besides matter in motion? and, if there is, is it something which is pre-determined? or is it something which is not matter in motion and which is not pre-determined?

There is something else, as we have already seen. There is not only the matter in motion which is studied in its many various forms by the man of

science: there is also the student who studies it and manipulates it and experiments with it. There is his knowledge of it, as he studies it; and there is his action, as he experiments on it.

It is to his action we now turn. Or, rather, it is to the action of any one of us, for we are all students of life, and making our experiments upon it—even if they are boggling ones.

We are always doing something, or rather we are always in process of doing something. Consequently, we are always looking forwards—to what will happen, if we do what we are thinking of, or to what will be the consequences, if we don't. Our eyes are fixed on the future, we say. But strictly speaking, our eyes travel to and fro from the consequences of doing the thing, to the consequences which will follow if we don't. The fact is, that the alternative consequences are, both of them, possible futures. And so long as both of them are possible futures, there is no future

which is fixed. And if there is none that is fixed as yet, there is none that we can see. We only see, and only can see, possible futures.

But, eventually, that is, after considering the consequences on the one hand of doing the thing, and on the other of abstaining from the thing, we act—that is to say, we choose one of the possibilities, and realise it. And then it may turn out that we did foresee—did indeed actually foresee—the future.

We are, as already said, always in process of doing something. Life is a process of doing something, of action. The process of life is being continually realised—and realised precisely because we choose a possibility and make it a reality. If we had not chosen the possibility we did, the other possibility would have become the reality. The future, then, is continually becoming what we (and others) make it. It is perpetually being shaped. The future is never finished: it is never finally and unalterably fixed by our action.

There always and forever are alternative possibilities—the possibilities of acting or not acting—between which we choose. It is by our choice we make, or help to make, the future; the future is not predetermined, independently of us.

Thus, we arrive at a conclusion quite different from that reached by the Materialist. And the difference follows very naturally from the fact that we started from different premisses from his. He started from the assumption that nothing exists really but matter in motion—matter moving in space, and requiring time to do so. We started from the assumption that matter in motion could not be known, to begin with, unless there were some person to know it; and that we, being persons, are always in process of doing something.

It is, however, not the difference in our premisses that need be insisted on here. The question is rather as to the difference in our conclusions. The Materialist's conclusion is that the future is already

made, because matter in motion—which, according to him, alone exists—has all its movements pre-determined. Our conclusion is that it is the active, conscious person who is always making the future, and that he is always making it because he is always in process of doing something. We have no use in our system for ready-made futures. We allow a choice between alternatives, none of which is already made-up; and all of which are possible until one of them becomes actual.

It is, then, because the Materialist starts from the assumption of matter in motion as the one reality, that he comes to the conclusion that the future is pre-determined and ready-made. Whereas, if we start from the assumption that nothing—not even matter in motion—can be known to exist unless there is some one to know it, and that no action can be performed unless there is some one who does it, we come to the conclusion that the future is not pre-determined and ready-made, but is continually being made

by beings who choose between alternative possibilities.

Let us, then, trace the consequences of this assumption of ours, for the interesting question is whether it is an assumption which is capable of explaining experience as a whole. An assumption which fails to do so fails to do what it undertakes to do, and is philosophically untenable.

Suppose, then, that the future is not fixed and pre-determined, but is incessantly created by the free choice of conscious, active beings choosing between alternative possibilities. Then, the notion of pre-determination is an erroneous notion. But it is one which logically and necessarily follows from supposing that matter in motion is the sole reality, that matter in motion alone exists. Therefore, the supposition that matter in motion alone exists must be erroneous. Matter is, in fact, an abstraction, reached by concentrating our attention on one part of our experience. And being an abstraction it is not a reality.

Matter, then, regarded as the sole reality, is an abstraction and a falsity. The behaviour of matter, so regarded, however, is consistently and necessarily regarded as pre-determined. But, if matter, so regarded, is a false conception, its pre-determination, or the predetermination of its movements, is part of the falsity of the conception. Matter, then, as an independent reality, existing by itself, we will put aside, as being, with its pre-determined movements, an abstraction and a falsity.

After matter let us take space, for the notion of matter is closely bound up with the notion of space. Matter is in space, and space is that in which matter is and moves. Our position, that is to say our assumption or supposition, is that experience is a whole, and that its parts, though they may be distinguished, have no existence independent of the whole, or apart from it. And we have seen that space has no independent parts: you cannot cut a piece out of space and take

it away somewhere else, and you cannot separate one piece of space from another. Regarded in this way, as having no parts that are independent of one another, space bears a resemblance to a whole. And yet neither those who believe the space, in which matter is, to be a reality, nor we, regard it as being a whole.

Those who believe space to have a reality of its own believe also that space is infinite. And if we conceive it to be infinite, we cannot conceive it as a whole —there is always some of it left over. That is due to the simple fact that the notion of infinite space is evidently a self-contradictory notion. It is the notion of a whole that is never a whole. It is a nightmare—the nightmare of trying to pack up your box, and finding that the more things you pack in, the more there are that you can't get in. You can't get any whole which will include infinite space.

Thus, though space, as having no parts

that are independent of one another, bears a resemblance to a whole, not even those who believe in the reality of the space in which matter is, can believe, or do believe, it to be a whole. Much less can we, who believe experience to be a whole and the only whole—much less can we believe that space is that whole. If it were the whole, there would be nothing else but space and the matter it contains. But what we are supposing is that in experience we find much more than space and matter: we find, for instance, as a matter of experience, that we have knowledge and perform actions. Space, then, is but part of the experience we have, an element in the whole: it is not the whole of experience, nor is space itself a whole. Whatever view we take of the ultimate nature of reality, there can in the last resort only be one whole: if we suppose there are two, we make a self-contradictory supposition, for if we suppose that there are two, we thereby suppose that neither is *the* whole.

The simple fact is that space, by itself, like matter by itself, is an abstraction, and not a reality. And every abstraction proves self-contradictory if it is supposed to be not an abstraction but a reality.

Space, then, on our supposition that experience is a whole, and the whole—space we will put aside, as being, together with the matter it contains, an abstraction from experience, and so a falsity. The infinity of space is a self-contradictory notion, due simply to the mistake of forgetting that space is an abstraction, and mistaking it for an independent reality.

But, matter, moving in space, requires time for its movements. The question, then, is at once suggested whether time also is an abstraction, just as we have seen that matter and space are abstractions, and even that matter moving in space is an abstraction from experience, and not the whole of our experience. That is a most interesting question. And for this reason: so long as we were

only talking about particles of matter, moving in space, we were talking about abstractions, which did not include our conscious selves, and so did not seem to affect us. But, when we come to time, we can no longer pretend that it does not affect us. Even if we were to dismiss matter and space as mere figments of the philosophic imagination, and to say that the one and only reality is the experience of conscious, active selves, still we should be confronted with the fact that it is in time that thoughts succeed each other and that actions take place.

We ask, then, with some interest, whether time, like matter and space, is an abstraction.

First, we cannot help noticing that time bears some resemblances to space; and, like space, bears some affinity to a whole. Thus, the parts of a whole, though they may be distinguished from it and from one another, have no existence independent of the whole and apart from

it. And it is clear that time, like space, has no independent parts, for you cannot cut a period out of time, and move it backwards or forwards to some other point in time; you cannot disintegrate time into moments, and separate a present moment from the preceding or the following moment, for the present glides into the past, and the future into the present, without any break or interval between the two. Regarded in this way, then, as having no moments or parts that are separate and independent of one another, time bears a resemblance to a whole, as we saw that space does.

Time resembles space, again, in yet another respect. Those who conceive either time or space to have a reality of its own, believe that time like space is infinite. Stretch out time as far as you like, backwards and forwards, and yet, when you have stretched it out as far as you can, what there is, before it and after it, is more time. If it is infinite, it is infinite, and has no end either way.

We cannot conceive it contained in any whole whatever.

Once more, as in the case of space, the reason for this is that the notion of infinite time is a self-contradictory notion; and to ask us to imagine it is the same thing as asking us to conceive a whole that is not a whole. When we try to do so, we are moving, once more, in the region of nightmares: the more we try to pack up infinite time, the more there is that won't go in.

We, then, who suppose that there is only one whole—the whole of experience—cannot suppose that time is a whole, any more than we could suppose that space was a whole, for there can, in the last resort, only be one whole. Time may be an element in the whole, as we suggested that space might be. But the simple fact is that time by itself, like space by itself, is an abstraction, and not a reality. And every abstraction proves self-contradictory, when it is supposed to be not an abstraction but a reality.

But though time, regarded apart from the experience of conscious, active selves, is not a reality but an abstraction, still, we may say, for all that, it is a reality in their experience, and as they experience it. It is, we may say, just like any other abstraction, for instance weight. Weight as an abstraction, as something all by itself, is something which has no existence; yet, as it is found in our experience, it is real enough. We cannot say that no things are heavy. In the same way, moments of time are an abstraction. If moments are conceived as abstractions, if, that is to say, each is regarded as something standing by itself, and is supposed to be separated, somehow, both from the moment which precedes it and from the moment which follows it; if moments are conceived to be, as it were, so many separate dots, and time is understood to be the whole row of dots, then both the dots and the row are simply things which have no existence in our experience. Moments are not experi-

enced by us as independent realities; and the conception of time as made up by adding these non-existent moments together is a false conception. A moment by itself, independent of what precedes and what follows it, is non-existent, is nought; and as by adding nought to nought you can only get nought, so by adding one non-existent moment to another you can only get what is non-existent—you can only get a non-existent time.

Thus time, space, and matter are not experienced by us as independent realities; and, if conceived as independent realities, they lead to false conclusions: matter leads to the false conclusion that everything is pre-determined; space leads to the denial of the reality of any whole; time leads to the notion of events as abstractions, unrelated dots, which are supposed to be independent of the whole and yet to be parts of it.

Let us now turn from moments of time, which are not real, and of which we have

no experience, to our actions, which are real and of which we have experience. When we act, we act with a purpose, for the sake of some object, with an end in view. Our actions are never independent of the end they are directed to, future though it be. Our actions are never separate, independent dots; they are a continuous process, which is always going on: we are always engaged on something; life's work is never done. An action has no meaning, except as being directed towards an end, which is conceived and intended. And the end to which actions are directed is implied in them—that is to say, they would not be performed at all but for the fact that they are aimed at some end and directed by some purpose. Our actions, therefore, are a process by which, or in which, an end is being attained.

If, now, we regard the actions which are being performed by us, and the actions which we see going on everywhere around us, as making up the whole of reality,

that is, of our experience, we shall have to say that everywhere there is activity, action; that the whole of reality is in activity—that is to say, is in process; and that reality is the whole which is in process.

The moment, however, we say this—that reality is the whole which is in process—we shall find ourselves in difficulties; and being in difficulties we shall have alternative courses open to us. We may, that is to say, be frightened by the difficulties, and decide to retrace our steps, to give up the supposition that has led us into all this difficulty—or not. The supposition was that experience is a whole, and that none of its parts can exist independently of the whole and separate from it; and, accordingly, that the notions of time, space, and matter as having existence independent of the whole must be abstractions and therefore falsities.

On the other hand, if we are not inclined to be frightened because difficulties threaten to loom up, we shall stick to our

original assumption—which was to suppose that experience is a whole—and we shall go forward to meet the difficulties.

The difficulty that now confronts our supposition, that experience is a whole, is that we ourselves have said that experience or reality is a whole which is in process. And, in saying so, we seem to have landed ourselves in a self-contradiction of exactly the same kind as we said that the notions of time, space, and matter led to; for, surely, to speak of a whole as being in process is to contradict ourselves. If we assume that experience or reality is a whole, we cannot go further than that. Beyond the whole there cannot be anything. If, on the other hand, we assume that experience or reality is in process, then, as long as it is in process, it is not the whole.

Thus, we seem to have landed ourselves in a difficulty, and to be saying that a whole is both a whole and not a whole. And the only way of escape would seem to be to give up one or the other of these

self-contradictory assertions. But that is the counsel of fear. So, instead of following it, let us look at the difficulty and see whether we are really compelled to suppose that a whole cannot be both a whole and not a whole.

If there were anything exceptional or unusual about saying that a thing—call it A—both is A and is not A, then perhaps we might feel rather apprehensive. But there is nothing unusual or exceptional about statements of this kind; you are constantly making, or implying, them about everything. If you say, of the thing A, simply that it is A—that a man is a man—you may be saying something that it is very necessary to remind your hearers of; but you are not adding to knowledge. If you wish to make a statement that conveys any further information about A, beyond the fact that it is A, you must say that A is B; and B must not be simply A over again. B must be something different from A. It must, that is to say, be not A. Then you

have indeed given us information and told us something new. You have told us not only that A is A, but also that it is B. In short, you have said, what you are constantly saying in effect—that A both is A and is not A, that is to say is B.

If, now, A stands for "the whole," and B stands for "in process," there is obviously nothing exceptional or unusual in saying that the whole, both is the whole—that A is A—and that the whole is in process—that A is B.

If it is felt that it must be merely a verbal quibble to say that A both is A and is not A, that is to say is B, the only way to dispel the feeling will be to turn away from symbols and words to facts. Let us, then, turn to what even the Materialist will admit to be facts; and we shall discover that there, too, we find this to be no verbal quibble, but a simple statement of the facts. According to the Materialist, the material world, or the material universe, being matter in motion, is in constant change, and its condition at

any given moment is the outcome of its condition at the previous moment. And its condition at the one moment is different from its condition at the next. But, we must point out, it is the same universe all the time. So the same universe, A, both is A and is not A.

If we are to deny that, we shall have to say that there are as many different universes as there are successive moments. And that is plainly absurd; there cannot be more than one universe, because "universe" includes everything—if it does not include everything whatever, it would not be the universe.

Perhaps this may be made clearer if we take an illustration from chemistry. At the beginning of a chemical experiment the chemical constituents are enumerated; and, at the end of it, precisely the same chemical constituents are found to be there. You start with two molecules of hydrogen and one of oxygen; you pass an electric spark through them, and you still have H_2O, though now you have

them in the form of a drop of water. You have the same three molecules all the time; the only difference is that at one moment they are water, that is A; and at another they are not A—not a liquid but a gas.

As a simple fact, then, every whole, or anything that we choose to regard for the moment as a whole, is in process.

The solution of any difficulty that may yet be felt lies in the fact that the difference between saying that A is A, and that A is B, is not a difference in A but in the point of view from which you look at it, or apprehend it. If we look at A from the point of view of B, if, that is to say, we look at the whole as being in process, we say accordingly that the whole is in process. And that is, as a matter of fact, the only way in which we human beings can actually apprehend the whole. But we can also suppose that there is a point of view from which the whole is seen as a whole, as a reality, as a being, not a becoming. Now, each of us human

beings can only say "I am becoming." There is only one being who can say I AM. In that, the full and perfect sense of the word, there is only one perfect personality; and that is God.

But this conclusion is really the supposition which was implied in the assumption which we made at the very beginning, when we inquired what our experience all came to, and what it all meant. In asking that question, we assumed that experience was a whole and had a meaning. And now it turns out that that assumption requires a previous supposition, the supposition of the existence of a perfect Personality, and the belief that "in Him we live and move and have our being."

On the assumption, which we now see that we have made from the beginning, that experience is a whole and has a meaning, and that the reality of the whole is a perfect Personality, it will follow that our human personalities are but feeble copies of it, if for no other rea-

son than for the reason that none of us can say that we are not in process, not becoming, that as yet we are. We are copies, made in the image of God. As copies, we have free-will, given to us by Him who made us. Because we have free-will, the future is not predetermined but will be what we help to make it. Because we have free-will we are helping to determine—for better or for worse—what the future will be. The whole, that is to say, is in process. and we can help to advance it or retard it. Process, or activity in process, implies an end—a good which is being realised and an end which is yet to be attained. That good is expressed in the words: "Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and thy neighbour as thyself." And that love is in our power to give or to withhold; we are free to do so or not to do so.

To sum up then. If we assume that there is an answer to the question which we put, when we inquire what our experi-

ence all comes to, we assume that experience is a whole; and thereby we assume that its parts are not self-existent and not independent either of each other or of the whole.

In the case of things occupying space, such as the chariot, we saw that none were self-existent or independent of each other. We saw it also to be equally true of processes which occupy time, and of the moments into which we suppose time to be divided. And in the case of actions, which we will and perform, we found that none are separate and independent; but that, in all our actions, we are doing something with a purpose—that is, for the sake of something else.

Next, we saw that, although we distinguish between space and time, yet the idea of matter in motion implies both time and space: we can suppose no movements of matter, unless we suppose that they take place in space and occupy time. Neither space nor time is self-existent, for movement requires both.

But matter in motion, or the movement of matter, if taken by itself, requires us to believe that one movement is determined by a previous movement, that is to say, is pre-determined. And, if matter in motion alone existed and were self-existent, there would be no more to be said. But we exist and we act; and, when we act, we choose between alternative courses, both of which are possible; and, as both are equally possible, neither is pre-determined. We do not deal in ready-made futures.

The next point is that if the future is not ready-made and pre-determined, the idea which leads to the belief that it is pre-determined must be a false idea. And the false idea is the notion that matter, with its pre-determined movements, is an independent and self-existent reality. In truth, on our assumption, matter in motion is an abstraction from reality; and the idea that it is not an abstraction from reality, but is the whole of reality, is a false idea.

Its falsity is shown by the fact that it requires us to believe that space is infinite; and, if space is infinite, it cannot be a whole. But infinite space is an abstraction from reality, and is neither a whole nor the whole. Similarly time, and especially time regarded as infinite, is an abstraction from the whole of experience, and is obviously not the whole of reality.

Thus time, space, and matter are not experienced by us as independent realities. As experienced, they are elements in our experience as a whole. It is only when they are abstracted from experience that they are considered to be independent realities; and then, because they are abstractions, they are not realities.

Turning, then, from these abstractions —time, space, and matter—we find that our experience is the experience of activity; and that activity is a process. But it is part of our original assumption that experience is a whole. To us, human beings, and from our human point of view, reality must present itself as a process.

Only to God can it present itself as a whole.

The conviction, therefore, with which we started, that experience, as a whole, must have some meaning and some purpose, is the conviction, it turns out, that there is a perfect Personality, and that "in Him we live and move and have our being." And our actions are not predetermined. We can, if we will, do His will, and draw near to Him both in our hearts and in our actions. But, to draw near to Him, we must love Him, with all our heart and with all our soul, and must love our neighbour as ourself. So far as we do that, we are acting up to our philosophy, are putting our philosophy in practice, and are practical philosophers.

INDEX

A

Abstractions, 16–20, 21, 22, 26, 28, 68, 70, 71, 101, 102, 114, 115, 145, 146, 149, 153, 165
Action, 100, 108, 112, 126, 135, 136, 137, 140, 141, 155 ff., 163, 164
Analysis, 28
Appearance and reality, 123 ff.
Apple, 52, 53
Assumption, *see* Hypothesis
Atoms, 124
Attention, 23, 24

B

Bell, 51, 52

C

Causation, universal, 37 ff.
Causes, 37 ff.
Chariot, the, 130 ff., 135, 164
Circle, expanding, 12, 13, 31
Clapper, 51, 52
Common sense, 97
Conceptions, 25
Consciousness, 49, 93
Consequences, 141, 142
Constructive philosophy, 35
Curve, the, 24, 25, 26, 28, 32–36, 48–50, 61–65, 83, 85, 90, 91, 92, 96, 109, 110, 111

D

Destructive philosophy, 35
Digging-stick, 113
Dogmatism, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 30, 31
Dots, 153
Doubt, 3

E

Earth, 40
Effects, 39 ff.
Egg, the, 28
Electrons, 124
End, the, 104 ff.
Ends, 29, 30, 163
Epistemology, 102
Evolution, 39, 64
Existence, 49, 109, 111
Existence and knowledge, 32
Expectation, 87, 88
Experience, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 30, 31, 60, 62, 63, 64, 67, 82, 83, 90, 91, 106–113, 114, 115, 129, 157
Experiment, 21, 31

Explanation, 43
External world, 63

F

Feelings, 49, 53
Finality, 8, 13
Freedom, 41
Free-will, 163
Future, the, 10, 141, 142

G

God, 112, 115, 119, 122, 126, 128, 129, 162, 163, 167
Good, 2, 9, 14, 15, 41, 42, 43, 44, 99, 100, 104 ff., 115, 126

H

Habit, 88
"Here," 118
Hume, 79 ff., 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91
Hydrogen, 160
Hypothesis, 13, 31, 66
Hypothesis, of matter in motion, 42, 44

I

Idealism, 34–66
Ideas, 61
Ignorance, 114
Infinity, 149, 151, 152

K

Knower and known, 29
Knowledge, 108, 111, 141
Knowledge and existence, 32, 33

L

Laws, 37 ff., 64
Life, 2, 3, 102 ff.
Love, 129

M

Materialism, 34–66, 126, 143
Material things, 109, 116
Matter, 26, 27, 33, 35, 42–44, 51, 54 ff., 65, 78, 79, 93, 145, 146; in motion, 68, 138, 139, 165
Meaning, 1, 2, 3, 4, 30, 47, 100, 101, 106
Mind, 26, 33, 35, 93
Mind and matter, 26
Molecules, 36, 37, 124, 160
Moments, 137, 138, 151, 153, 154, 164
Moon, 40
Motion, 27, 37

N

Nature, uniformity of, 38 ff.
Nightmare, 147, 152
"Now," 120

O

Object and subject, 25, 29, 30, 36, 37, 49, 50, 85, 92, 93
Ontology, 102
Orange, 51, 52, 55, 72, 73, 95
Organism, 12, 13
Oxygen, 160

P

Parts, 130, ff., 151, 154
Past, the, 10
Person, 62
Personality, 129 ff., 162, 167
Philosophy, 1, 64, 67, 81, 107, 113, 114; in practice, 98 ff.; and science, 31
Plough, 113
Possibilities, alternative, 145
Possibility, 142
Pre-determination, 41 ff. 139, 140, 144, 146, 165
Process, 134, 142, 156, 166
Psychology, 68
Purpose, 109, 155, 167

Q

Qualities, 17, 18, 19, 20

R

Ready-made futures, 144, 165
Real things, and real persons, 73 ff.
Reality, 35, 42, 44, 46, 74, 157, 166
Reflection, 5

S

Scepticism, 6, 7, 11, 30, 31, 67 ff., 98, 99
Science, 4, 15, 16, 17, 68, 91, 92, 124; abstract, 18, 19, 21, 31
Sciences, the separate, 17
Self, 79, 80, 84, 95
Sensationalism, 68, 69, 70, 71, 126
Sensationalists, 59 ff.
Sensations, 45, 51 ff., 69 ff., 75–80, 94, 95, 109, 110; loose and separate, 82, 83, 86, 87, 90
Senses, the, 36
Sight, 53
Solipsism, 75
Space, 117 ff., 132, 134 ff., 146 ff., 166
Species, 39
Stick, the, 29, 30, 33
Student, the, 20, 21, 141
Subject, the, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 49, 61, 83–85, 92, 96; and object, 25
Suppositions, 60, 61, 62, 81, 82, 98, 114–117, 122, 129
Synthesis, 28

T

Taste, 51, 52
"Then," 120
"There," 118
Things, 45, 46, 47, 53, 96; in the abstract, 22, 23; material, 36, 63
Thoughts, 46, 49, 50, 109, 110
Time, 10, 120 ff., 133, 150 ff., 166
Toothache, 82, 83
Truth, 103

U

Uniformity of nature, 38 ff., 64

Universal causation, 64
Universe, 159, 160

W

Watch, the, 28
Watchmaker, 130
Weight, 17, 19, 20, 23, 28, 153
Whole, the, 3, 5, 11, 13, 16, 35, 111, 125, 129 ff., 146, 147, 148, 154, 157, 158, 166, 167
Will, 100, 113, 126, 135, 137
World, the, 2
World-process, 134

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