

“only means that its limits are passed, and that the fixed principle in it has been reduced to an organic element in the completer system that follows. Thus the history of philosophy in its true meaning deals not with the past, but with the eternal and veritable present; and in its results resembles, not a museum of the aberrations of the human intellect, but a pantheon of godlike figures, representing various stages of the immanent logic of all human thought.”

Philosophy and human life are continuous. In the deepest sense the philosophy of each individual is the reflex of his character. Stanley Hall says, “Philosophy is not a system, but a developed intellectual character, and hence entirely valid only for the one who evolves it.” Like religion, it is essentially a process rather than a dogma: a process of thought whereby we live over again the experiences of our theoretical and practical nature. “Biologically considered,” says Prof. James, “man’s life consists for the most part in adjustments that are unscientific, and deals with probabilities and not with certainties.” The case is quite similar in the development of philosophy; though, perhaps, we find the best analogy in the growth of civilization. No human embodiment of the intellectual or moral ideal is considered final; yet man still is urged on by the impulse to seek the truth, implanted, as Plato says, by the divine Love; and there is still the response of the beautiful soul to the ravishing ideal. In a way quite similar systems cease to be;—but the impulse to philosophize remains; and as a witness to the expansion of the life and spirit of man ever attempts through reflection, which is its immanent life, the fairer and fuller expression of man’s growing life. Almost all the great leaders in philosophy thought theirs was the final system. “But when the sunset comes, the enigma of existence is still wreathed in mystic shadows, and with the fresh dawn preparation has to be made for the new day of effort.” Philosophy in reality is the human spirit pausing in its march to reflect on the results that it has already garnered: to comprehend more fully in the light of increased theoretical and moral experience the substantial reality which permeates all life—physical, social, and religious. Not everything, however, which has been called by that name can be regarded as an essential link in the chain of development. Many who have assayed a system of philosophy never reached the high level of thought necessary to the adequate