

The conflict, waged so long and often so bitterly, seems of late to be drawing to a close. A truce is proclaimed. Metaphysic seems to be less influenced by her old-time counsellor, Religion, and making terms with Science: and even the fortress of Psychology is now under the joint occupancy of the two powers. As a result of the compact Synthetic Philosophy, in the *magnum opus* of Herbert Spencer, has presented a grand and unique system—a nobly executed map of the Sum of Things, with every part of land and ocean outlined—save around the poles.<sup>(2)</sup> We are invited to behold the Universe under one and the same law of Evolution in all its infinite permutations and combinations: one stupendous mechanism with all its parts, organic or inorganic, suns and stars or specks of dust, subject to the joint law of the conservation of matter and the conservation of energy; one vast and ever-spreading network of life from monad to man; and even man himself, possibly, but a link between the past and some coming race,<sup>(3)</sup> which, even if this little planet never lives to see it, may be existing now in some of the multitude of globes around us. For Philosophy says to man:

“This truth within thy mind rehearse,  
That in a boundless universe  
Is boundless better, boundless worse.

Think you this mould of hopes and fears  
Can find no statelier than his peers  
In yonder hundred million spheres?”<sup>(4)</sup>

So we see that Philosophy itself, like all things else, has been subject to the law of Evolution, developing from a vague, incoherent, homogeneous beginning to a highly complicated and yet coherent state of thought: and it looks forward to further developments, and doubtless imagines it may yet forecast the

one far-off divine event,  
To which the whole creation moves.

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2. “Positive knowledge does not, and never can, fill the whole region of possible thought.” *First Principles*, sec. 4. See also chap. 3, sec. 21, *Ultimate Scientific Ideas*.

3. See Helmholtz' Lecture on *The Origin of the Planetary System*.

4. Tennyson. *The Two Voices*.