

not care to make.”\* Nor is the matter different when we pass from the theoretical to the practical sphere. “Moral scepticism can no more be refuted or proved by logic than intellectual scepticism can. Moral questions cannot wait for solution upon sensible proof.” Science can tell us what exists, but it cannot tell us what ought to exist. Thus “the question of having moral beliefs at all, or not having them, is decided by our will. . . . If your heart does not *want* a world of moral reality your head will, assuredly, never make you believe in one.”†

Not only in the general belief in truth and goodness, but in more concrete problems, we are forced to adopt an alternative for which no preponderating evidence can be adduced, and this choice is forced upon us just in those cases that are most momentous for us. In scientific questions we are not thus driven to the wall, because “the option between losing truth and gaining it is not momentous,” and therefore we can afford to miss the chance of *gaining truth*, and “at any rate save ourselves from any chance of *believing falsehoods*, by not making up our minds at all till objective evidence has come.” “In our dealings with objective nature we obviously are recorders, not makers, of the truth. . . . Throughout the breadth of physical nature facts are what they are quite independently of us.” What difference does it make to us whether we have or have not a theory of the X-rays? Here there is no forced option and therefore it is better to go on weighing the reasons *pro* and *contra* with an indifferent hand.‡ But are there not options

from which we cannot escape? Mr. James answers that there are. Such options we have in the case of all moral principles. Here in the absence of proof our “passional nature” must decide. It is the heart and not the head that makes us believe in moral laws. Thus we obtain the general thesis that “our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds.”§ Again, while it is true that even in human affairs in general the need of acting is seldom so urgent that a false belief to act on is better than no belief at all, yet there are cases in which our principle applies. Healthy relations between persons demands trust and expectation, and indeed the desire for a certain kind of truth here brings about that special truth’s existence. If you assume the nobility of a man, even where you have no objective evidence for your belief, you are likely to create in him that quality even if he did not originally possess it. So a social organism of any sort is possible only on the basis of mutual trust. “Whenever a desired result is achieved by the co-operation of many independent persons, its existence as a fact is a pure consequence of the precursive faith in one another of those immediately concerned. A government, an army, a commercial system, a ship, a college, an athletic team, all exist on this condition, without which not only is nothing achieved but nothing is attempted.” “There are, then, cases where a fact cannot come at all unless a preliminary faith exists in its coming.”\*\* There is still another case,

\* *Ibid.*, p. 10. † *Ibid.*, pp. 22-3. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 20. § *Ibid.*, p. 11. \*\* *Ibid.*, p. 25.