

THOUGHTS ON PHILOSOPHY

— AND —

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY.

TWO ESSAYS READ BEFORE THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AND THE KNOX COLLEGE LITERARY
AND THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY RESPECTIVELY,

— BY —

ALBERT H. ABBOTT, B.A.,

Assistant in the Psychological Laboratory in the University of Toronto.



BD 41
A2

Toronto:

PRINTED BY C. BLACKETT ROBINSON.

1896.

BD41

A2



CANADA

NATIONAL LIBRARY
BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

THOUGHTS ON PHILOSOPHY.

ALBERT H. ABBOTT, B.A.

[Read before the Philosophical Society.]

WHAT is philosophy? is a question often asked, doubtless much oftener thought, but seldom answered with perfect satisfaction to the earnest questioner, and when we venture to suggest some thoughts which have been helpful to us in attempting to answer the question, we do it, not in the expectation that they will prove efficacious in the removal of all the difficulties which students of the subject meet, but rather in the hope that they may be suggestive to those who seek to ascertain what the problem and method of philosophy are or should be, and in what relation the various departments of study known under the general head of philosophy stand to each other and to the general problem.

We cannot more than refer to the rise of the problem of philosophy; to trace it with any degree of accuracy and detail would be impossible in a short paper.

From Thales, the first philosopher treated in the History of Philosophy, to the time of the Sophists and Socrates the problem of philosophy was confined to what would now be called "the external world." It would be quite incorrect, however, to state that their problem could be so expressed, for they thought only of *the world*; external and internal aspects of it were not distinguished. Man was part of the world. No distinction was made between the perception and the object perceived. Their problem, accordingly, was to find the underlying reality, the origin of all things. This problem has become in modern philosophy, as intimated above, the cosmological problem of the external world, the world of things.

This point of view remained practically unchanged until the time of the Sophists and Socrates, who turned the attention of thinkers on this subject to the Self. The influence of the Sophists

in this transition was almost entirely negative; but this was preparatory for the positive statement of Socrates—*γνῶθι σεαυτόν*—*know thyself*. The problem of philosophy then became centred in the self. Out of the midst of the Sophistic scepticism Socrates arose with the firm conviction that if the Self, the man, were fully known, truth would be placed on a sure foundation. Thus the self was set over against the not-self, the knower opposed to the thing known, the internal world distinguished from the external world, and the problem became widened so that it included the psychological as well as the cosmological problem of modern metaphysics.

The problem of Socrates was fundamentally an ethical one, for though he sought first of all to reach clear conceptions, he did it with an ethical end in view, viz., to attain virtue. The vital connection between knowing and doing in his mind is brought into clear light in his statement, "Virtue is knowledge." The man who really *knows* truth is for that very reason a good man. We see, therefore, how naturally Plato, following his great teacher, is led to place the Idea of the Good above all other ideas. Thus from the problem of the Self arose the problem of the Divine Being. It is, indeed, in some dispute as to whether Plato himself conceived the Idea of the Good as synonymous with God, and for our purpose we need not attempt any discussion of the question; but whether he did or did not so conceive it, the problem of "The Good" in his philosophy became the problem of God, the supreme power or person.

Thus we have three problems arising; and under these heads we see the great problem of all modern philosophizing: (1) The external world—nature, as it is sometimes called; (2) The self—man, as a thinking being; (3) God, as the Absolute. These three aspects cover all the elements in our field of knowledge, and constitute for us the universe. Whether, indeed, they will always do so is not in question. If a time ever comes when these three aspects do not include every element of knowledge, the problem of philosophy will have to be widened to include a fourth, or even more if necessary.

These three elements of the universe having been distinguished, we have a new problem resulting from the contradictory character of the conceptions held of the three. Had the

conceptions of God, self and the external world been in perfect harmony with each other, philosophy would not have before it the problem which has been, and is still, awaiting complete solution. That problem may be stated thus: How must these three elements be conceived so that they will together constitute a non-contradictory totality. This totality or unity we call the universe.* It will not be an adequate solution if these elements be conceived as absolutely independent each of the others, for then we should have three (universes (if the contradiction in the term may be allowed). They must stand in some relation to each other; in some sense they must be *inter-dependent*. Philosophy, having critically examined the three components, attempts to conceive this relation, and to determine in what sense they are inter-dependent. The problem of philosophy may then be stated as an attempt to conceive a universe in which at least three elements are supposed.

It will thus be seen that philosophy does not attempt in any way to do more than give a consistent meaning to that which is conceived to be real. Sometimes those who have not entered the temple of "divine philosophy," but who stand listening in the courtyard, seem to think that, because philosophers seek to give new meaning, and indeed find it necessary so to do, to the external world, to Self or to God, they are attempting to overthrow these and make them unreal. Far from this being the case, philosophers would never have had their problem were it not that the conviction that these are real in some sense yet to be determined, had laid hold of them.

The conception of the unity of all things is not one which philosophers have deliberately manufactured. It is implicit alike in the earliest thoughts of the child and of the race; and philosophy has only brought to clear consciousness what is everywhere implicit and involved in the thoughts of rational beings. No judgment of truth or error, no distinction between that which is conceived to be real and that which is relatively unreal, no system either of science or philosophy can be made

* Care must be taken to distinguish the universe in this sense, as including the Self and God, from what is frequently called "the material universe." While there is a certain sense in which the latter may be justified, it seems to the writer better to keep the term "universe" for the unity of all things, including the three elements above referred to.

without implying the unity of all things, the conception of a universe; and, in attempting to conceive this explicitly, philosophy is only attempting to rationalize the thought of all men.

The problem is none the less easy, however, because it is inevitable. A glance at the history of philosophy will indicate to us at once how varied are the standpoints from which men have attempted to solve the problem, and consequently, how various and contradictory are the solutions offered. They range all the way from the conception given by the philosopher who is sure he has succeeded in answering the question, to the sceptical conclusion of the one who is only sure of one thing, and that, that the problem cannot be solved. There is, indeed, a third standpoint possible other than these two extremes and the various degrees between them, viz., that the problem as so stated is not a legitimate problem; but we know of no philosopher to the present who has definitely taken this stand, and therefore we need not discuss it here.

Definitions of philosophy are not rare, though here as elsewhere good, all-comprehensive definitions are. The one found most satisfactory to the writer is given by Prof. Hume of our own University. It is as follows: "Philosophy is a reflective inquiry into the meaning and acquisitions of the thinking self." It is a search to ascertain what is true and what false in the opinions held, or differently expressed; it is an attempt to bring the conceptions of consciousness into harmony with each other. This definition calls attention to a fact frequently overlooked, viz., that the self is a broader term than the universe; for while from one point of view the universe certainly includes the self, from another, which is equally true, the self includes the universe*; for the philosopher as well as the scientist can only deal with a universe *as conceived*, and if this be not the real universe, we must write forever over the word: "The Unknown and Unknowable." The problem of philosophy, this conclusion having been reached, will then be gone as a living issue at least, and philosophers and scientists will have to content themselves by playing with something which they are certain is not *the real*, but which, nevertheless, offers food for thought. However, such

* For a full discussion of this and the following point, see Chap. I., in "Descartes and his School" by Kuno Fischer.

a conclusion is not yet proven, nor is it at all likely to be, on rational grounds; for as long as the only material with which reason can work is a conceived universe, it is not by any means probable that sufficient grounds can be found for holding the existence of one of which the only differentia is that it is not conceived, and is indeed inconceivable.

This definition also indicates another point which has not always received the attention it merits, viz., the possibility, or even necessity for thoroughness, of a historical treatment of the problem of Philosophy in its various subdivisions. When the full meaning of the definition is grasped it will be seen that the History of Philosophy is the most comprehensive study of Philosophy both as to the subject matter and method. From this historical study we learn more than what men have thought at various times; we get most important suggestions, both with regard to the real problem and true method of Philosophy, as we discover the errors made by previous thinkers, and ascertain through a critical examination of their systems why they made these errors. It is only through a most critical historical study that we may hope to get a clear grasp of the problem with which Philosophy deals, and of the method by means of which we may expect to solve this problem.

These considerations bring us to the discussion of method. How must we go about it if the question is to be solved, and upon what grounds do we assert that it is soluble at all?

We conceive it to be an irrational procedure to begin by *assuming* either of the divisions of our problem in any definite sense. It might seem unnecessary to state that we ought not to begin where we hope to conclude, for the definite conception of one and of all the elements in our problem must logically be left till the last stage in our philosophizing, since the whole problem is to form a consistent conception of each, but such errors have been made and we must guard against any repetition of these. The philosophy of John Locke, "the father of English philosophy," is founded, implicitly at least, on a definite conception of mind and matter. Matter, or, as he calls it, substance, is an unknown, independent somewhat, the substratum in which the qualities of external objects subsist, and mind is a "spiritual substance," the unknown background in which "thinking, knowing, doubt-

ing, and a power of moving, etc., do subsist,"* a passive somewhat waiting to be impressed by movements originated by matter. In this general conception of matter at least, he has been followed by all materialistic philosophers and scientists since his time. Altogether apart from the conclusions of those who so begin their philosophy, we object to their method. It seems to us irrational to establish a whole system of philosophy upon an assumption which is, at the beginning at least, entirely gratuitous and might quite as well be conceived the very opposite. We should equally object to basing our philosophy, as did Spinoza, on a conception of God. This conception also can only rationally be reached at the end of the process, and hence philosophy can never follow a purely deductive method, taking as its starting-point either a conception of God or any other such idea.

Where, then, must we begin? As it seems to us, at least, we must begin with an unavoidable fact,† one which it would be nonsense to deny, one which could not be evaded by anyone who was really inquiring. This Descartes found, following his method of doubting everything of which he had not absolute surety, in the fact of doubt itself. Surely here he found such a fact as we seek! We, however, do not begin with the method of doubt and so do not follow him in this, correct as his method thus far may have been. We choose rather to accept as our starting-point the occurrences in consciousness as such.‡ To deny

* Essay on the Human Understanding. Bk. II., Ch. XXIII. § 5.

† Concerning facts, the writer agrees with Dr. Kirschmann of our own University, who defines a fact in his lectures on metaphysics, as follows: "That of which I am absolutely certain and to deny which would have no meaning whatever." There are two kinds of facts.

(1) The immediately given states of consciousness—(sensations, emotions, and volitional states).

(2) The axioms of mathematics and their necessary derivatives.

The first class have absolute, but only *assertive* certainty, *i. e.*, they are so, but it could be otherwise. These form the constituting elements of "the world."

The second class possess *apodictic* certainty, or necessity, *i. e.*, I could not possibly think them otherwise. These form the regulative elements of "the world."

Every proposition which asserts something which is neither an assertive or apodictic fact itself, nor derived from such by means of apodictic relations, expresses not absolute knowledge, but contains elements of belief. (In this we say nothing as to the relative value of Knowledge and Belief.)

‡ Concerning the fact upon which we insist as the starting-point of our theory it may not be altogether superfluous to add a few words more. This fact is not the meaning or interpretation of any state of consciousness, for, as we ordinarily

that one has such states as are actually in consciousness at any time would only be nonsense. The method, then, is to reflectively examine these states and note what is involved in them being the states they are.

It is to be noted that as our problem is to harmonize the facts of consciousness, our method is to begin with the simplest facts in consciousness and to reach out at last to the most complex, and so form the facts of consciousness into a systematized whole. This may demand that some *opinions* which have long been held be given up, but it must not do violence to a single essential *fact*.

It will easily be seen that beginning thus and following our method out, carefully guarding every possible avenue of error, accepting only as facts those which it would be absurd to deny, and carefully analyzing these to discover, if possible, what they imply and involve, that at last we must reach a conception of the universe as consistent as our logic has been, and the facts of consciousness will admit. Thus, on the face of it, our problem would seem to be a soluble one if we follow such a method.

But it may be asked: "Is there not also a presupposition in this method?" We frankly admit that there is, and further, that it is the only presupposition philosophy may be allowed to make. The presupposition is this, that Reason is rational, or, in other words, that Reason can be trusted, and the reason we allow it is that it cannot possibly be avoided. It proves itself in the act of denying it, and is therefore a necessary presupposition, one which is made equally by all schools of Philosophy and Science.

understand the term, this may or may not be a fact, (i.e., a truth), and in any case this would have to be determined from previous facts, but it is the state of consciousness itself as such, the occurrence; e.g., it may be the sensation Red, or the feeling of gratitude to God or any other occurrence in consciousness. If we have such a state of consciousness it is simply nonsense to deny that we have this state, while the meaning or interpretation of the state may or may not be deniable. The most absurd picture the imagination can construct is equally a "fact" in the sense in which we use the term here, with the most devout feeling or the most rational conception. Having ascertained any fact in consciousness we endeavor to analyze it to see what is involved in it being the fact it is, altogether irrespective of the truth or falsehood of the meaning given to this state. It may further be noted that in order to get back as fundamentally as possible we ought to begin with a simple rather than a complex state of consciousness, not indeed that this is any more a *fact*, but it seems likely that we should be able to ascertain the implications of a simple state with much greater surety than those of a highly complex one.

For, suppose we assert that Reason is not to be trusted, we must be prepared to answer *why* we have come to this conclusion; in other words, we must be ready to give the reasons upon which we base our assertion. In thus determining that the reasons against the rationality or trustworthiness of Reason are more *reasonable*, and hence stronger, than those for it, we are simply trusting Reason to prove that Reason is not to be trusted, and this is sufficient to prove the rationality of Reason, for we cannot possibly avoid assuming it either explicitly or implicitly. This fact is sufficient to keep us from a thorough-going scepticism, for no matter what we doubt, we can never consistently doubt this. Hence our system of philosophy cannot be agnosticism,* but must be gnosticism in some form or other. Indeed, Reason never doubts of her ability to solve this problem, nor is she indifferent to it, until, as in the case of David Hume, she reaches a reasoned doubt and a corresponding reasoned indifference; but even this kind of indifference is not rational,† for Reason can never, consistent with herself, admit defeat. The trustworthiness of Reason must again be the spur which arouses us and forces us on to the discovery of new truth. We may thus conclude that to rest in scepticism or agnosticism is not rational or consistent with the essential facts of our nature. Indeed, it was the very scepticism of Hume which awoke the great Kant from his "dogmatic slumber," as he himself has told us. In this we see the implicit power of this great truth, for though Kant had to admit the logical correctness of Hume's conclusions, starting from his foundation, he could not admit the rationality of them, and, therefore, went back to see perchance if his starting-point were not weak or even entirely wrong. It has been fundamentally the influence of this necessary presupposition which has led men into philosophic thought in past ages, and it is owing to its influence to-day that we, looking back over the systems which have been advanced and critically noting their weaknesses, are able still to be confident, that, though the last word has not yet been said, and though our problem has not yet been fully solved, it is a soluble one, and the very Reason

* For an able discussion of this subject see an article by President J. G. Schurmann in "The Philosophical Review," May, 1895.

† Cf. Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason." Preface to the first edition.

which brands all previous systems as imperfect, confident of her own powers, believes that, learning from the errors of the past and building only on unavoidable facts with mathematical exactness, the problem may yet be solved in the future.

It is further to be noticed that this solution must be all-comprehensive. We must take into account every fact of science, every so-called law of nature, every fact of the moral and religious life, every necessary presupposition of science, morality and religion, in short, it must comprehend every principle of consciousness, and it must form these into a system in which there are no contradictions, and in which every part is related to every other part, so that all may go together to form a unity—the universe.

One needs no argument to be convinced that the problem which Reason thus sets for herself is a stupendous one, and from the fact that it includes every element of consciousness, it is little wonder that it is found necessary in the philosophic inquiry, for convenient and exhaustive treatment, to divide the work into various departments. Thus we have—Logic, Psychology, Theory of Knowledge, Ethics, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Religion.

It will be noticed in these subjects that there are two general departments, viz., Logic and Psychology, and then two lines of thought, generally distinguished as the Theoretical or Speculative, and the Practical. The former including Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics, and, in so far as it reaches to the Divine Being, Philosophy of Religion; the latter including Ethics or Moral Philosophy, and, in so far as the Ideal of Conduct demands it, Philosophy of Religion. The naturalness of this division is evident, for, while in their reality they can never be separated, we can in abstraction at once think of man from two standpoints:—First, as *Knowing*, that is, as endeavouring to incorporate a world into himself. Second, as *Doing*, that is, as endeavoring to put himself out into the world, and thus to make it a world which he conceives *ought to be* in distinction from what *is*.^{*} Following the terminology of Prof. Ladd of Yale University, the Speculative branches of Philosophy deal with “The Real,” that is, what *is*, and the Practical branches deal with “The Ideal,” that is, what *ought to be*.

We shall then briefly discuss these divisions of the problem,

* Cf. Green's Prolegomena to Ethics., § 85.

taking up, *first*, the general divisions, *second*, the speculative divisions, *third*, the practical divisions.

Though *Logic* cannot well come first in reality, it seems proper to discuss it first in order, because it seems to underlie all the other divisions equally. It is a search after the fundamental laws of thought. Its problem may be stated thus, "according to what principles must man reason if he is to reason correctly." *Logic* seeks to tell us *from the side of the principles of thought* how we may distinguish truth from error. Following Dr. Tracy of our own University, we may define it as: "The science of the *method* of knowledge as distinguished from other sciences which have to do with the *matter* or *content* of knowledge." Wherever we are called upon to estimate the reasonableness or unreasonableness of any consideration or argument, and surely this is at every step in our process, the results of the logical inquiry must be applied. Thus *Logic* is the underlying, most fundamental department, as regards the rational procedure of all other departments.

Psychology is the other general subdivision. It is "The Science of the Facts or Phenomena of Self."* It endeavours to ascertain and classify these phenomena and to determine the laws of their rise and of their combination with each other. It need not, and in fact does not, say anything regarding the external world, and deals with the self as little as possible. Some hold that *Psychology*, being a purely natural science, has properly nothing whatever to do with the self, but must confine itself wholly to phenomena, while others hold, in opposition to this view, that it cannot be a pure natural science since they find it impossible to advance one step in the study without a reference to the self for whom the phenomena exist. There is, however, a third view, represented in our own University, by Drs. Kirschmann and Tracy, to the effect that all natural sciences must have reference to the self since all deal with the facts of consciousness,† and that *Psychology* must not be excluded

* Cf. "Psychology" by Prof. Dewey, Chap. I.

† The general statement of this theory may be taken as follows: "All sciences must base their method and conclusions on *facts*, and there are no facts which are not in relation to the self." The theory further denies the original distinction between external and internal worlds, and holds that that which is immediately given is, before any process of abstraction has taken place, at once external object

from the rank of the natural sciences on this account. The only difference between it and other sciences is, that it has to do with all phenomena purely as phenomena of consciousness, while the others select only a certain class of these phenomena, and treat their relation, etc., in a special way. Thus Psychology has to deal with the fundamental phenomena of all sciences, and hence must classify, etc., on a broader and different basis than any of the other sciences (*e.g.*, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, etc.), since these only take into account part of these phenomena. This third view seems to the writer the most thorough-going and rational, however it does not at all change the fact that phenomena are the essential objects of the study, and its reference to the noumenon for which these are phenomena ought to be as slight as possible, in so far as it remains at the purely psychological standpoint.

It will be seen that in Logic and Psychology we are dealing with questions equally necessary and fundamental for every branch of our philosophic study. Having briefly discussed these, we now take up the two special lines of thought referred to above, (1) The Speculative. (2) The Practical.

In Psychology the phenomena of consciousness are treated in a scientific way, but no question is raised as to their validity as knowledge. Having ascertained and analyzed the facts of consciousness, and having examined their actual and necessary relations, the work of Psychology is done, and it remains for the next branch of our study, in generally accepted classifications, *Theory of Knowledge*, to ask the question as to the validity of these as knowledge. *Theory of Knowledge* asks the question: Can man *know* reality? Do these ideas tell us anything of the real? Is our knowledge *real* knowledge? Thus we have Locke giving us as his problem: "To inquire into the original, certainty, and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion, and assent*," he wishes to "set

and internal presentation. Wundt accordingly calls this immediately given fact "the presentation-object."

Dr. Tracy's statement of the case is, indeed, somewhat different, but as regards the relation of psychology to the natural sciences will amount to the same thing. His statement is to this effect, that all sciences must make metaphysical presuppositions, and psychology is no more or no less a science than any others on this account.

* *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Bk. I., Ch. I, § 2.

down measures of the certainty of our knowledge." These considerations are purely along the line of the Theory of Knowledge. It will be noticed, however, that in this discussion we must either presuppose a theory of the real, or else make it as we proceed in the treatment of the above problem.

Here, then, *Metaphysics* begins its work in attempting to answer the question: What do we mean by *reality*? What is it *really to be*? It will be seen that in raising the problem of the correspondence of perceptions with the real we are also raising the problem of the real itself. Does this perception represent anything real? That depends on what the real is, and here every branch of knowledge must await the answer of Philosophy, for on our conception of the real depends the validity of all our so-called knowledge. The ultimate worth of Science depends on the answer to this question quite as much as the worth of Philosophy itself. If the real is "The Unknowable," Science as well as Philosophy may content itself with a far-reaching agnosticism, and we shall have to admit that while both as mental exercises may be very good, they are only of worth to this extent, for neither can give us knowledge of what really *is*. And just here it may not be out of place to note the acuteness of Locke over many of those who have followed him in an empirical or sensational theory of knowledge. He tells us frankly, and in this we must agree with him if we accept his metaphysics of mind and matter, that no science of bodies is possible.* What astonishes us is that materialists and empiricists since Locke have not seen with equal clearness the far-reaching effects of their system.

The problem of *Metaphysics*, then, is a most vital one, since the answer to it must logically influence every branch of human inquiry. The problem, as stated above, is the general ontological discussion of being, and this divides itself naturally into two branches—(1) *Cosmology* or *Philosophy of Nature*, which asks the question, "What is the real being of the system of things?" (2) *Rational Psychology* or *Philosophy of Mind*, which asks the question, "What is the real nature, and relations in reality to the world, to its fellows, and to God, of the human mind?"†

It will, of course, be quite obvious that these various divisions of the general philosophic problem cannot be separated in any

* *Ibid.*, Book IV, Ch. III, §26. † Ladd's "Introduction to Philosophy," p. 255.

absolute way. Psychology passes over insensibly into Theory of Knowledge, and Theory of Knowledge is so related to Metaphysics that the two must go hand in hand. It will also be clear that in the Metaphysics of Mind especially we do not hold too strictly to the Speculative side of our inquiry, but the results of the Practical side must come in also, though of course the problem is not one of conduct, and hence the Practical is subordinate in this division.

Deeper than this, however, there is a vital connection between the Speculative and the Practical, for when we think of it closely we see that the Speculative side, in fact knowledge in general, is sought primarily that it may help us to live truly. We seek the laws of nature so that, knowing them, we may be the better able to live in harmony with them. Hence our Speculative inquiry must inevitably lead to the Practical. But again, looking back on our procedure, we see that man has been a *doer* in *knowing*. Our first statement of the question was not complete. Man is equally a *doer* in seeking to *know* a world which is, as in seeking to put himself out into the world and make it what he conceives it *ought to be*. Thus the ethical inquiry is deeper than any of those already discussed, and in it ultimately we must see the highest point to which Philosophy can reach.

As already intimated, Prof. Ladd treats what we have called the Speculative divisions of our subject as "The Philosophy of the Real," and what we have called the Practical as "The Philosophy of the Ideal;" he then very suggestively calls the Philosophy of Religion "The Philosophy of the Ideal-Real." These titles seem to bring out the essential points in each division and will suggest to us the relation between the Speculative part of our inquiry and the Philosophy of Religion, as also between the Practical and this department.

Accepting, then, Prof. Ladd's title for *Moral Philosophy*, viz., "The Philosophy of the Ideal," we note at once that the end of this inquiry is to establish an ideal of conduct. It must begin, as must "The Philosophy of the Real," with an unavoidable fact, and endeavour to discover what is implied and involved in this fact being the fact it is. Prof. Green finds such a fact in the consciousness of wants and the consciousness of wanted objects.*

* Prolegomena to Ethics. Book II, Chap. I, § 85.

Working out from these we seek to analyze the content of the moral life, so as to discover, if possible, what man is *in essentia*, and, if there be freedom, what he *ought to be*. Thus we seek an Ideal of Conduct; we endeavour to determine the true nature of man, his relation to his fellows and to God.

Under the name of Moral Philosophy will arise the discussion of the ethical side of the various social and religious problems which come before us as we advance in our system. It will be seen at once how closely Philosophy touches many of the problems of Political Economy and how essentially it is related to Political Philosophy and Law at this point. The relation of Philosophy and Theology we reserve for discussion later; however, enough has been said to indicate that the connection is a very vital one. In dealing with the Ideal of Conduct, Moral Philosophy must approach very close to the whole question of religion, and thus we are led very naturally into the last step of the strictly philosophic inquiry, "The Philosophy of the Ideal-Real," or the *Philosophy of Religion*. The suggestion is that, having discussed the Real on one side, and the Ideal on the other, we ought to find them united in God, and see the Ideal no longer a mere Ideal but as a realized Ideal, that is, the Real.

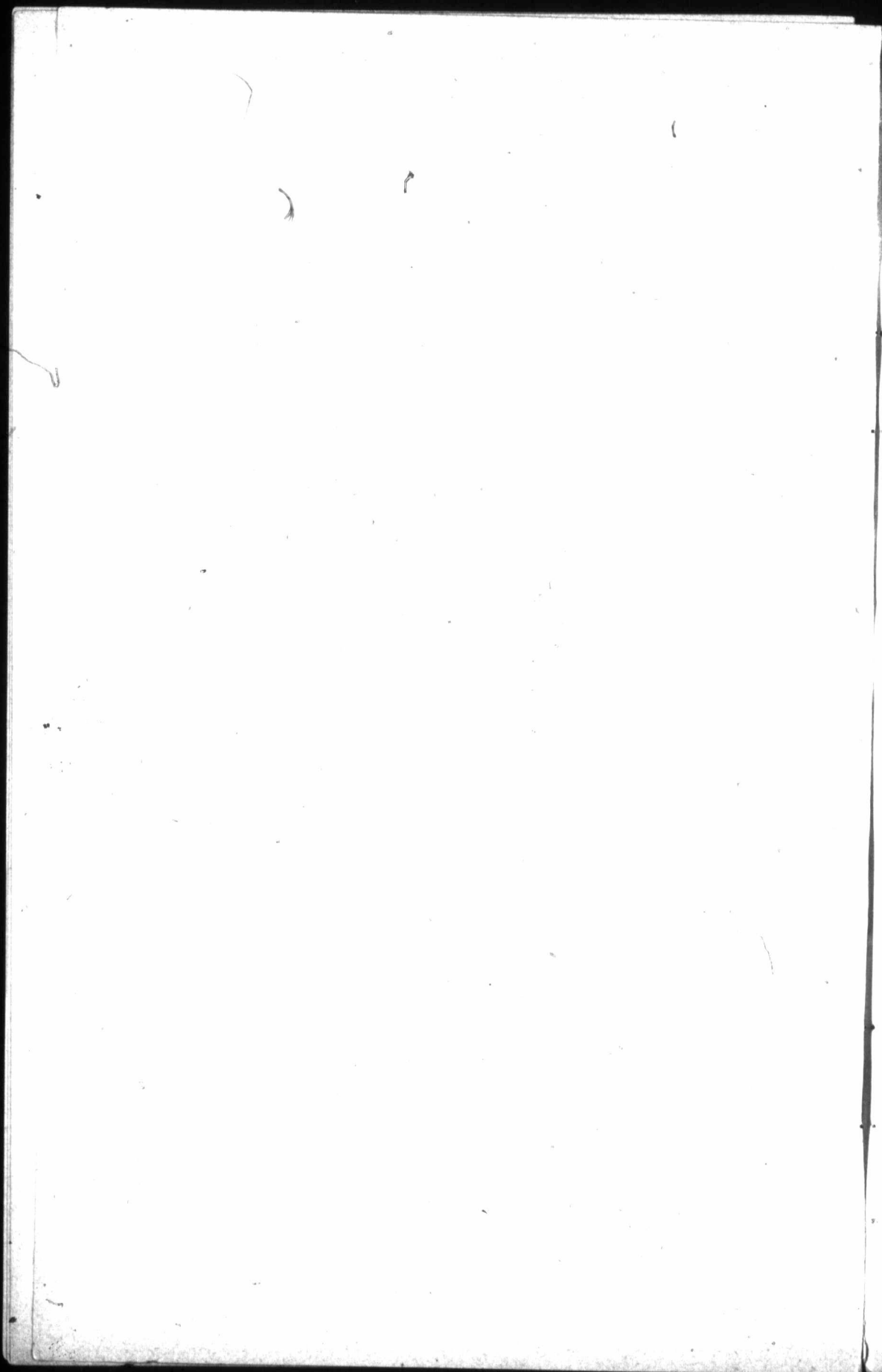
Thus from both the Speculative and Practical sides of our discussion, we approach one point from which the Real gets its Reality and the Ideal its validity.

Under these various subdivisions does Philosophy attempt to conceive a universe. Beginning with the simplest facts, and noting their implications, it approaches more and more the more complex, freeing from contradictions, as it advances, the conceptions with which it deals, until, in a stage yet to be reached, it conceives the universe as a great harmony in which no element stands out of relation to every other element, but where each gets its meaning and reality from this relation; where, therefore, there can be no independent "matter" or "substance" unrelated to the knowing mind, and where the knowing mind or cognizing subject is no longer a "spiritual substance" unrelated to anything else, but where each is what it is because of its relation to the other.

We can only hope to reach this conclusion, as it seems to the writer, by following some such method as that suggested in this

paper. Beginning with an unavoidable fact, and proceeding with mathematical exactness step by step, never "jumping" at conclusions, but rationally reaching them, gradually freeing our opinions from falsehood and error and reaching that which is necessarily true, we may at length hope to attain the end we seek—a consistent conception of the universe with all its multi-form details.

It must not be forgotten that the conception thus reached must be all-inclusive; it must embrace every element of the known world, the principles according to which it is known and the active spiritual sources of such principles. We judge the special work of Science to be the determination of the details of the world in accordance with the principles of knowing, while the special work of Philosophy is the examination of these principles, their meaning, validity and source in the spiritual activity of the self-conscious, thinking and idealizing principle. If this opinion be correct, it will be seen at once that Science and Philosophy can be in no sense opposed to each other, but must together co-operate to give us knowledge, and each has its part to play in reaching the final conclusion—the conception of the non-contradictory totality—for which we strive.



PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY.

[Read before the Knox College Literary and Theological Society.]

THE foregoing "Thoughts on Philosophy" have suggested to the writer some thoughts on the relation which exists between Philosophy and Theology, and in these our thought has not ventured beyond the realm of what seems to us the actual. We do not seek to speculate as to the relation which would exist between an ideal system of Philosophy and an equally ideal system of Theology, nor do we desire to suggest any conclusions which might be reached when this ideal development is attained; much as we may long for the coming of that time, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that neither of these branches of learning has yet reached perfection, and he who would discuss the relation of these two departments *as they are* must strive to deal with facts and to make a careful and critical analysis and interpretation of these, rather than to indulge in any theories regarding the Ideal Philosopher and Theologian. In this paper, therefore, we shall endeavor to leave ideality out of our discussion, and simply discuss what we conceive to be the relation which does exist in actual practice between these two branches of study.

It has occurred to us also that it would make the few thoughts we have to offer on the subject somewhat clearer did we first discuss the question from the standpoint of Philosophy, and after that raise certain problems from a somewhat Theological point of view.

Our first thought leads us to a consideration of the bearing of the problem of Philosophy in the discussion. If the conception of Philosophy above set forth be correct it will be seen that it is a study which alike conditions and utilizes the results of every department of enquiry. If the problem of Philosophy be the harmonizing of the various conceptions of consciousness so that they may together form a unity, a non-contradictory totality, the universe, it needs but few words to prove that it must

take into account the facts of every department of knowledge. If any department were overlooked, or deliberately left out of account, we could not get a complete Philosophy, for within this department there might be facts which would contradict, or at least modify, the system thus formed. *Everything* in the known universe must be included in the final solution. It is quite evident also that no single element out of which Philosophy is constructed will have its full meaning until seen in the light of the whole system. The forming of this system, the freeing from contradictions the various opinions held, is what we understand by *rationalizing* our thoughts. To make any conception or opinion *rational*, is, as we conceive it, to make it such that it will fit in with, or go to constitute, our conception of the universe. We have already stated ("Thoughts on Philosophy," p. 4) that Philosophy is "a search to ascertain what is true and what false in the opinions held." This same idea may be expressed as above, it is an attempt to *rationalize* our thoughts or opinions. If this be true it is at once clear that to a Philosopher his Philosophy is not something apart from his life; it is not a study in which he indulges for mental training alone; it is an earnest search for truth, and in this search he not only *welcomes* all the light which Science and Theology can throw on his path, but he *demand*s that the great principles at least of every branch of enquiry be mastered. It is then his problem to analyze these and to give to them a consistent meaning. Let us not say the Philosopher is presumptuous in this, in that he does not take as final the meaning given to certain principles by the Scientist or the Theologian. It is quite possible that either of these classes of thinkers has failed to take a wide enough view to enable them to say with certainty that a certain meaning is the only consistent one that can be held. They are specialists, and it is possible that the principle may be made to apply within their distinctive department, with the meaning they have attached to it. The Philosopher, however, is not in this sense a specialist, and he must give it a meaning which is applicable equally in all departments in which any particular principle can properly be applied. The Chemist deals with the facts of Chemistry, the Biologist with the facts of Biology, the Physi-

cist with the facts of Physics, the Mathematician with the facts of Mathematics, the Theologian with the facts of Theology, but the Philosopher deals equally with the great principles of *all* Sciences, and it is quite conceivable that he should be compelled to modify or even change the exact meaning given to any principle by any particular Science in view of his wider outlook, but he must tread with extreme care if he ventures to deny the *essential* fact or meaning in any principle of the Sciences; in fact, one may say that no thorough-going Philosopher would ever do this, his work is rather to discover just what this essential meaning is.

We have already hinted at the vital connection between the so-called Natural Sciences and Philosophy. These Sciences accept to a great extent uncritically, their conceptions of Matter, Causation, etc. Philosophy must critically examine these and other fundamental principles of Science, and must reach a Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics which will adequately interpret these principles. Is the real knowable or unknowable? is a question with which Science as such is not concerned; it is, however, one of the great aspects of the Philosophical problem, and we have to say that in the last analysis the worth of Science is determined by the answer given to this question. From certain conceptions of matter nothing but agnosticism can result, and, as we have already said, this is equally as destructive to Science as to Philosophy.

But if Philosophy touches the Natural Sciences vitally in the conception of the external world, or Nature—the Materially real—it touches Theology with equal power in the conceptions of God and Man—the Spiritually real. It is just as necessary to have a Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics regarding these great realities as it is to reach Philosophical conclusions regarding Nature. A glance at current philosophy will show this. Mr. Herbert Spencer and his school hold an agnostic Theory of Knowledge, *i.e.*, the Real is not known; they go further than this, however, and deny that the Real *can* be known, it is, in short, unknowable. If, then, God, as at least one of the great realities, cannot be known, Christianity cannot be true, for it lays at its very foundation the intelligibility of God. It insists that He “hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son”

(Hebrews i: 2), that He has been manifested to us so completely that Jesus could say—"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv: 9). We thus see that Spencer can, consistently with his Theory of Knowledge, do nothing else than deny the validity of Christianity. On the other hand, the Christian can consistently do nothing else than hold a Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics which admits of God and things spiritual being known. The determination of our Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics is, however, as all readily admit, a Philosophical problem, and the vital connection between the two branches of enquiry at this fundamental point may lead us to expect a very close connection between them all the way through.

But this close connection has been denied, and this whole discussion assumes a place of importance which must be recognized because of the history of the relation of Philosophy and Theology.

In the middle ages Scholasticism was but little more than the servant of the Church, and its great work was to prove the rationality of the dogmas taught by the Theologians of the day. In its failure to do this, Philosophy lost all value to the Church, and hence arose the opposition between Faith and Reason, which, unfortunately, has continued among some thinkers down to our own day.

Faith came to designate the mental attitude in relation to all the doctrines embodied in the creed of the Church. These doctrines, it was held, had been received through revelation from God, and were wholly outside of the province of Reason. They were to be received on Faith alone.

Reason designated the characteristic of all truth reached apart from Revelation. Man was free to devote his reasoning powers to every line of thought except one—viz., the doctrines of the Church or things spiritual.

It is not at all difficult to see that some means must be provided in case these two, which had been thus absolutely separated, did not agree. If Faith were alone able to grasp truth Reason might as well give up all search for real knowledge. Reason, however, was allowed full scope in every sphere *but one*, and therefore the following condition arose: Faith was supreme

in one sphere, Reason was supreme in the other, and it was taught that both might be right in its own sphere, and yet the conclusions of the two be contradictory. Therefore, in order to save the domain of Faith from attack at the hands of Reason, the theory of "the double truth" arose and was utilized by the Scholastics in their debates.

Were it our purpose to discuss the implicit relation in which much of the Theological thought of the present day seems to hold the domains of Faith and Reason, we should be disposed to suggest that the effects of this theory of "the double truth" were not all yet effaced from the minds of men. Our endeavor is, however, rather to discover the relation which in actual practice does exist between these domains of Theology and Philosophy, than to undertake a polemic against any theory held as to this relation. We may, however, state that in so far as anything resembling the conception of "the double truth" is taught to-day, whether it be in Science or Theology, it can have no support from a Philosophy such as we deem it necessary to hold.* It is evident that this must be true if the problem of Philosophy be what we have suggested it is, viz., the *harmonizing* or *rationalizing* of the conceptions of Consciousness. *Unity* must be the keynote of all Philosophy. We believe this is inevitable if philosophers be thoroughly consistent, and that it is so because of the Unity of Consciousness. The fact of one connected experience involves the uniting spiritual principle which we know as the Self, in order that we may have such an experience, and unless the unity of experience and of the universe be given up, we must reject as irrational "the double truth," on the ground that the Self is a unity, and for it only one truth exists.

As it seems to us, the realms of Philosophy and Theology, of Reason and Faith can never be rationally opposed to each other. They must be inter-related in some way, so that neither would be what it is were it not for the other; and the remainder of this paper must be the justification of our contention and an outline of some of our reasons for taking this view of the matter.

*For a full discussion of the various theories held as to the relation between Reason and Faith, we refer to Principal J. Caird's "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion."

We wish to raise two questions at the outset, the former of which has, in a general way, already received treatment, but it demands now a more particular discussion; the latter of which is, however, the special problem of this paper, and the former is only of value now as bearing on it. These questions may be expressed somewhat as follows:—

1. *Can* a complete Philosophy be constructed without taking into account the distinctive facts of Theology?

2. *Can* a Theologian with an infallible Bible, construct a system of Theology without implicitly at least making Reason his standard, and so, in the last analysis, building his Theology on a Philosophical Theory.

In the general discussion above as to the bearing of the problem of Philosophy on this question, we saw that Philosophy must include the facts of all Science and Theology. Such an answer is sufficient, in a general way, to decide the attitude we must take on the first question; we wish, however, to go somewhat more into details here.

It is to be noticed that, as *occurrences in Consciousness*, the fundamental data of these two lines of thought are not distinguished at first. The opposition between the two, as regards the facts with which they deal, has been made through abstraction, and in their reality does not exist. But we must notice, further, that as regards the bare facts, but little difference of opinion can exist, so long as these are considered merely as occurrences; the problems only arise when we begin to interpret these facts, and to ask what a certain occurrence means. To bring out our meaning more clearly, we take the Bible as an example. That there is such a book in the world as we call the Bible is not in dispute; that it purports to deal with certain doctrines will also be generally admitted; as soon, however, as the question is raised as to what the existence of this Bible, with such teaching as we find contained in it, involves, difference of opinion at once begins to show itself.

The Bible as a *fact* must be included in a complete Philosophy. If, upon critical examination, it be found that it is but the outcome of its time or times in the same sense in which any other literature is, no special attention need be given to it; but

if the weight of evidence go to show that such could not be the case, Philosophy must provide a theory which will account for, or at least make possible, the production of a book, or series of books, having the peculiar quality of a distinct revelation from God.

What we have said about the Bible will apply with equal force to every distinctive Theological fact. It may not be the work of Philosophy to work these out into a system, to elaborate them to any great extent—this work may be left as the distinct province of Theology—but it must take them into account quite as much as it does the facts of any Science, or department of knowledge, and it must provide a theory which is broad enough to include and render possible a body of facts of so much importance as those which are known as belonging to the department of Theology.

From the standpoint of Philosophy, then, no separation need be made between Philosophy and Theology. Philosophy is the broader, and as such includes all the facts of Theology within its province; in other words Theological facts are not such *as opposed to* Philosophical facts, but rather they are first, Philosophical, and secondarily, Theological. That is, the facts of Theology stand in exactly the same relation to Philosophy as the facts of any of the Sciences, they are data upon which Philosophy is constructed, and which, on the other hand, await the result of the Philosophic enquiry to get their full meaning.

It must be remembered that a Philosopher does not construct a complete Philosophy and after that a pure Theology, but these two must be forming concurrently in his mind. The Philosopher is not, however, searching for a system of Theology, he seeks for a world-theory, a consistent conception of the Universe, and therefore, while he continually goes to the realm of Theology for facts, he does not attempt any elaborate system of these. He is therefore a Philosopher and not a Theologian. His work, however, is, from one aspect, deeper than the work of the Theologian for he attempts to harmonize the facts and general principles of all Sciences. We can see from this that so long as there is progress being made in any Science, so long as the attainments of the Self are not complete, Philosophy cannot say

that its work is done. The method of Philosophy is therefore *critical* as opposed to dogmatic; Philosophy must go on and be progressive so long as there is knowledge yet to be attained.

In our present discussion this is especially to be noticed in the case of the conceptions of Man and God. Since the Philosopher holds his conceptions of Man and God critically, he is always open to new facts, and any such presenting themselves, whether from Theology or any other department of knowledge, may modify or even entirely change his conceptions; it must be noticed, however, that the Philosopher does not accept facts uncritically. No fact is a *truth* for him unless it meets the demands which Reason makes of every fact before it is accepted as a truth. The Philosopher is continually looking for new knowledge, but he does not accept everything which is presented to him for knowledge as really being knowledge; he must critically examine it first and ascertain its claims for acceptance as a truth or as knowledge. No matter, however, how critical his examination or how adverse his conclusion, it must still be that he is dealing with a fact, an occurrence, though he conceive it not to be a truth. We wish to insist on the distinction which we have tried to make clear between a fact as such, as a mere occurrence, and a truth. The latter involves a process of interpretation which the bare fact does not to any extent involve. The Philosopher accepts every fact of Theology as being a real occurrence, but he does not necessarily accept the interpretation given to these facts by Theologians. As Reason is his standard so he only accepts as truths those facts which satisfy the postulates of Reason. With this standard he studies Theology and from its body of facts seeks to gain the essential truths of it, in order to reach the world-theory for which he strives. The Philosopher will not deny the right of Faith but he may discuss the rationality of certain beliefs, and he will distinguish as clearly as possible between Faith and Knowledge, not to overthrow Faith, but rather to show *what is* Faith and what Knowledge. We hesitate to express any opinion which might seem dogmatic on the relation between Faith and Reason, since the scope of our paper will not admit of a full discussion of the question, but it seems to us that the opposition is altogether wrong, since Reason seems to be but another name for the

spiritual principle which we call the Self or Ego, and Faith is but one form of the manifestation of Reason. *Reason* as here used must not be confused with *reasoning*. Reason is a much broader term, and the process which is known in Psychology as Reasoning is but one form of the manifestation of Reason. Reason includes every form of mental activity and will embrace the three divisions given in Psychology—Intellect, Feeling, Will. In Reason, therefore, will be seen the Unity of Consciousness and of the whole mental life. With this we hold, that Faith which is not rational, or reasonable, is not true Faith, but mere credulity; but we also hold that he who seeks to reduce everything to knowledge, to absolute certainty, has undertaken what is in our day an impossible task, and no one knows better than he, who critically seeks to discover what he really knows with absolute certainty, how very limited that knowledge is, and how wide a place Faith must take in our lives; but if Faith be not built on knowledge how can we claim that we are rational in our beliefs? If we examine carefully what we mean by Faith we shall find, as we believe, that it is a state of mind which, while possibly embracing much Knowledge, yet lacks absolute certainty. It includes, therefore, elements of doubt, and it is the presence of these elements which makes us distinguish between Knowledge and Faith. Knowledge has the criterion of absolute certainty; Faith lacks this, and yet in any particular case is more rational than unbelief. The Philosopher does not accept unquestioningly the Beliefs of Theologians; their Knowledge, however, he is bound to accept after a careful examination, though it should completely overturn his theory. We look to Theology as a most important source of information upon which the Philosopher may work, but it can only have a profound influence in so far as it brings forward truths tested and tried by Reason and verified as Knowledge, and it will fail to exercise the salutary influence we believe it can have, in so far as Theologians assume a tone of authority and expect to convince thinking men by means of mere dogmatic assertions.

The answer to our first question is then: Philosophy cannot be complete unless it takes into account the facts of every department of knowledge, and especially for our discussion, the

facts of Theology, but it accepts these as truths only in so far as they meet the demands of Reason, and they await the results of Philosophy to get their full meaning.

We now turn to our second question and attempt to discover if it is possible for a Theologian with an infallible Bible to ignore Philosophy, or if he does so explicitly, to avoid constructing his Theology on Philosophic conceptions which are implicit.

As we approach this side of the problem we wish to guard against possible misunderstanding by stating definitely that we are not discussing the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We cheerfully admit their authority in so far as any *book* inspired by God as a revelation of Himself could be authoritative. We have no wish to discuss the problem of inspiration or any theory of it; for our purpose we may admit all that could be demanded on this line. As far as our problem is concerned, the Scriptures may be verbally correct—the relation of Philosophy to Theology will be essentially the same whether this is true or not. We are seeking to discover the place the Bible, as a revelation of God, really has in our Christian Theology, and the relation of its authority to that which is supreme in the realm of Philosophy, viz., the authority of Reason. Personally, we believe that the Bible contains an inspired revelation of God, and that when we know *what* that revelation is, we have reached truth—and this is always authoritative to any right thinking person—but the whole problem is, in our mind, how we know what that revelation teaches. Further even, we believe that the Spirit of Truth can alone lead us into the truth; but our problem again is, how we know what the Spirit teaches. We are told to “prove the spirits whether they are of God” (I John iv:1), and we are given a mark by which we are to know the Spirit of God; but is all our work over when we have decided in accordance with that mark—that “Jesus Christ is come in the flesh”? This truth may be the corner-stone or foundation of our system of Theology, but it is not the whole system, at least as so stated, and the proving of the spirits must go on far past this point. What mark has God given me by which to distinguish “the Spirit of Truth” from “the spirit of error,” and explicitly or implicitly do not I and all Theologians use this mark?

These considerations plunge us at once into the heart of the problem.

We call to mind again the place the Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics have in the Christian system. At the very foundation of it lies the intelligibility of God. The apostle tells us in the words, "That I may *know* Him" (Phil. iii : 10), what is the longing of his life, and we are further told by our Saviour Himself, that "This is life eternal that they should *know* thee the only true God and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John xvii : 3). We also call to mind that in determining our Theory of Knowledge and Metaphysics we are dealing with a Philosophic problem in the settlement of which Reason is our authority.

Before we reach the point, however, where we begin the construction of a distinctive Theology on the basis of revelation, we must decide another question which is fundamental in the system, and that is, Is the Bible a revelation of God?

In settling this question we must answer at least two questions :—

(1) Is there any need for a revelation of God?

(2) Does the Bible bear the marks of being such a revelation?

These two questions seem to us to be the fundamental problems regarding any alleged revelation of God. The first being a general question will apply with equal force to the sacred books of all so-called religions; the second is a more particular question, and in our answer to it we stamp as spurious all alleged revelations which do not satisfy the demands made upon them by the lives and thought of men, and as true that which does meet these demands.

Regarding the first question we have but little to say. It is hardly necessary to justify it as the first question to be answered, for if there were no need of a revelation seen implicit in the demands of men and in the conditions of their lives, we could find no place for it even if we had such a revelation made to us. The words of Paul seem to come pretty close to the point we here suggest: "What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this set I forth unto you" (Acts xvii : 23). We pass over any discussion as to what these demands are, or indeed as to whether there

are any such seen in the lives of men, since it is not our problem to prove a revelation but rather to discuss what questions must be settled if it is to be proved. If, however, the *need* of a revelation of God must first be established, we notice that it must be proven by distinctly Philosophical thought, and not by the authority of any alleged revelation, since the point yet to be proven is whether it has any authority or not.

The second question we have asked requires a much more careful and critical procedure than the first, since it asks definitely, What are the real demands of life? and, What are the real teachings of the Bible in relation to these demands? The essential mark of a revelation of God upon which we must insist, as it seems to us, is that it satisfies the demands of human life and reason everywhere. If man's nature demands God to satisfy it, and if this in turn demands a definite revelation of God, that revelation must be either—

1. A purely individual revelation—if there be no universal element in man, and if the demands of man be not general in their character, as opposed to merely particular. If this were the nature of the demands of man, God would have to reveal Himself to each individual, and the revelation to any particular person need have no bearing on the life of any other person.

2. A universal revelation—if man's demands be not peculiar to himself, but are equally applicable to all men. That is, God must reveal Himself to the Jew, not as a Jew, to the Greek, not as a Greek, but to both *as men*.

The alleged revelations of all peoples reject the first alternative, they at least demand a national revelation. We have, however, to notice that even a *national* revelation would not necessarily meet the demands of men as men: it meets such demands just in so far as it is made to a nation without special reference to their *peculiar* conditions, and with essential reference to their conditions as men. We therefore claim that the essential mark of a revelation of God is its universal character and its ability to meet and satisfy the demands or needs of human life and reason everywhere.

Revelation must not *create* the demands it professes to satisfy; it will, however, doubtless serve to bring the needs which were only implicit, to a clear consciousness, as indeed

Paul seems to say, "By the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. iv : 2).

If the Bible be found to meet these universal needs, and if no other alleged revelation does this, we may heartily accept it as THE revelation of God, and Christianity as THE religion ; but we have to notice again that the nature of this proof is clearly Philosophical, and to Philosophy we must go to ascertain what the demands or needs of human life and reason are.*

Thus far in our discussion, then, we have seen the most vital relation existing between the Philosophical and Theological spheres, and to the present point we have needed no standard save Reason. We now go on to discuss the place of Reason in forming a system of Theology with an infallible Bible as our guide.

We have seen that when a Theory of Knowledge which admits of God being known at all, is formulated, it is the task of Reason to do the work.

We have also seen that if the Bible is accepted as a revelation of God, the fact of it being such must be proven by Philosophy or Philosophic thought whose standard is Reason.

We are now to discuss the question as to whether, having done thus much for Theology, the usefulness of Philosophy is at an end in the system, and as to whether the standard having thus far been Reason, we are now to substitute another, *viz.*, Revelation. Let us again repeat that we do not desire to discuss this question in a theoretical way, but we wish to endeavor to analyze what in reality every Theologian who constructs a system of Theology does.

Just at the outset let us say that were we to consider the question from an *a priori* point of view, we should have to conclude that it does not seem just reasonable to suppose that Theology,

* The demands of life and reason here referred to may be seen by a careful study of Conscience and asking what is necessary to meet the demands there seen (cf. Heb. ix : 14); by a study of heathen systems of religion, *e.g.*, incarnations in Hinduism, sacrifices in nearly all religions, the nature of the gods worshipped in relation to the life of the people (cf. Psalm cxv : 8); by studying the various contradictions between their theory and their practice, *e.g.*, in Buddhism, which was at first atheistic, but latterly is not so, in the pantheism and polytheism in Hinduism; in short, by studying the needs of men manifested in the moral and religious life of all peoples.

being indebted to Philosophy for the proof of the above fundamental points and having these settled, should suddenly discover that she did not need Philosophy any longer; and that whereas Reason had guided her thus far, she is now able to turn around and not only guide, but dictate *ex cathedra*, to Reason.

However, we waive the above line of thought and attempt *a posteriori* to prove what the Theologian really does.

His problem now is to formulate a system of the doctrines of the Bible, which for our purpose we accept as verbally correct. His first step is to collate the various passages dealing with a certain doctrine, let us suppose—the nature of God. Having these passages, he has a certain body of *words*, and his problem now becomes the giving of a consistent meaning to these. The words are nothing until they are interpreted and a meaning, which is not contradictory, given to them.

As our own Dr. MacLaren says in his lectures on this subject, in speaking of the spirituality of God: "The mere use of the word 'Spirit' in Scripture will not suffice, for the question returns, What does it mean?" But is not this a distinctly Philosophical question, and in asking such a question does not the Theologian implicitly make Reason his standard and the ultimate court of appeal?

Again, in interpreting the omnipresence of God, we have the following sentence:—"God fills immensity, and yet He is present in every point of space in all the fulness of His perfections, at every instant of time." It is quite clear to our mind that in such a statement is included implicitly a Philosophical theory of the objectivity of space and time. Without such a theory we could give but little meaning to these words, nor do we wish to question the correctness of the theory, we only desire to show that it is there, and to note that if space and time be held to be subjective, i.e., forms according to which we think objects, the doctrine of omnipresence, *as so stated*, loses its meaning, and the impropriety of speaking of spirit in terms of space and time at all, is quite evident.

In the interpretation of the words of Scripture it seems quite evident that Reason* is our standard and the rationality or

* In making such a statement as this we do not wish to be understood as favoring what has been known as "Rationalism." If examined carefully it will be seen

reasonableness of a certain meaning over any other is, in the last analysis, the reason for its acceptance. Further, even in the doctrine we have examined somewhat, we see quite clearly that it has at its basis a Philosophical theory of spirit in the first case, and of space and time in the second.

But further still, the Theologian must form the various doctrines he reaches into a system—the system of religious truth—and in doing this it is quite clear there must be weighing of evidence for and against a certain interpretation, with a view of freeing it from contradictions and of harmonising it with the rest of the system, *i.e.*, he seeks to make it rational. In the formation of this system of the teachings of Scripture, Reason is our standard quite as much as in the formation of the Philosophical world-theory, but we must admit, since it is a system of the doctrines of Scripture which we seek, that in this sense and in relation to the system so formed, the test we apply to a doctrine is, as Theologians claim—Is it Scriptural? We, however, ascertain *what* is Scriptural by asking the question either explicitly or implicitly, Is it rational? Does it harmonize with the rest of the system of the teachings of Scripture? and this must, in the last analysis, be our test of its right to have a place in the system.

In so far as no such system can be formed regardless of our knowledge in general, it will be seen at once that the answer to this question and the formation of such a system involves more than the distinctive facts of Revelation, it holds within it all the knowledge we have; in fact, it depends on what *we are*.* It is because knowledge is not complete and

that the theory here stated has but little affinity to "Rationalism." When we make the *rationality* of any conception the basis of its acceptance, we mean no more by it than we have defined the term to mean.—Cf. P. 18.

* Having thus reached a system of the teachings of Scripture, we must recognize that *we* have made the system, and that, therefore, it is colored more or less by our own peculiar views; however, we may overlook this for the moment and endeavor to deal with the question in abstraction. Supposing we could reach a statement and interpretation of the doctrines of Scripture without relation to anything else save the Bible itself, our acceptance or rejection of it as truth must be determined by the relation of the doctrines there taught to what we know with certainty. If they are contradictory to our knowledge, we cannot reasonably accept them.

We might formulate in the same way the doctrines of any other so-called sacred book and, as we can readily see, Reason must be our standard in the formation of

because Reason has not yet attained to her full realization, in short, because we have not reached the Ideal, that we hold that the method of Philosophy must be critical, and the system be continually progressive one; for exactly the same reason we also hold that the method of Theology must be critical and the system progressive, because the meaning we give to any doctrine depends on the point of development Reason has reached or upon the character we have, or again upon what we are.* We may admit that Revelation is complete, that the canon of Scripture is closed, and yet we cannot claim that we have grasped the meaning of the Revelation there made, unless we are prepared to claim that we have reached the highest point of development of which we are capable, and even then it is a perfect *Reason* interpreting Revelation, as now it is an imperfect Reason striving to understand the truth of God as revealed in Scripture.

Our answer to the second great question of our discussion is, then, that in actual practice the Theologian's last appeal is, either explicitly or implicitly, to Reason, and the doctrines he accepts as being taught in revelation are founded on Philosophical conceptions, as we have tried to show in two outstanding cases and which could quite as well be shown all through the system. We do not criticise him for this, for we deem it to be inevitable, but we do plead for a full recognition of the fact, so that, so far as Theology contains within it Philosophical conceptions which are irrational, that is, which are contradictory either to each other or to our knowledge, these may be criticised and changed if necessary, in the light of advancing attainments, and thus our Theology purified, in so far as it may need purification, and the conceptions in it made clear and

this system, but having formulated them, if indeed in all cases such can be done, we at once reject them, to at least a very large extent, because they are not consistent with our knowledge; in other words, they cannot go to constitute, or harmonise with, our conception of the universe—in short, they are not rational.

If we wish, then, we may, remembering always that it is only in abstraction that such a distinction can be made, distinguish between a narrower and a broader use of Reason as a standard: (1) In the formation of a system of the doctrines taught in a certain book whether these be religious, philosophical or scientific; (2) In the formation of the world-theory which determines whether we can accept as true such a system of doctrines.

* This point can be seen more clearly by reference to what has been said above regarding the Philosophical basis in Theological doctrines.

definite. If the Philosophy upon which any system of Theology is constructed be only implicit, it is almost sure to be full of contradictions, and the Theology cannot but be as imperfect as the Philosophical conceptions of God, man, causation, space, time and such like as are used in its construction. We cannot but think that some of the problems which are the bane of Theology to-day, are, in their present form of statement at least, rather the outcome of a false Philosophy than of Revelation as such, and we believe also that the attempt, even in theory, to place any authority over Reason, is one which does not find support from Scripture, and would never have been made were it not for an incorrect Philosophic theory, and a most unnatural opposition between the realms which were thought to be characterized respectively by Faith and Reason. But if we give up the opposition between Faith and Reason, as it seems we must, with it we must also give up the opposition between Philosophy and Theology, and hold that these two great departments of knowledge are each conditioned by the other and that they go together to give us knowledge of things spiritual. The standard of truth can never be anything else but Reason; this, however, should not lead us to conclude hastily that Revelation can have no authority, but it may lead us to reconsider what we mean by Revelation. The demands of a Theory of Knowledge also which holds the knowability of God, may lead us to ask what is necessary, in order that a Divine revelation may be intelligible to a human being. If Revelation be not a revelation of Reason to Reason, it is very difficult to see how the Christian can hold a Theory of Knowledge which admits of God being known, even through the Bible. If, however, it be so, and if human Reason be but the imperfect realization of the Divine, we can understand how we can *know* God, and we can give a wealth of meaning to the many calls to perfection and Christ-likeness which the Bible contains; and further, we can see that only in so far as we have that mind in us "which was also in Christ Jesus" (cf. Phil. ii : 6), only in so far as our characters are developed to be like His, can we grasp anything in a truly spiritual sense, or indeed can we be thoroughly rational at all. Just in so far as we attain that development of Reason can the Holy Spirit lead us into the truth, for it must be in this age as in the time of Christ, that He has many things to tell us

but we cannot bear them now (cf. John xvi: 12). Until that perfection of Reason is reached, our Philosophy and Theology must be imperfect, and our struggle must be to realize our true being and character; for the source of these great systems of thought is, as the philosopher Fichte says, the man himself who has them.