THE

PROBLEMS OF METAPHYSIC

A SYLLABUS OF RATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

INTRODUCTION.

DEFINITION AND PROVINCE OF PHILOSOPHY.

§ 1.

Phases of Knowledge: Philosophy and Science.

Philosophy.—The word philosophy is a collective term for the processes of thought by which we strive to attain a conception of the world as a whole, and of our own place, purpose, function, and destiny as factors of the world-whole; such as will be free from contradiction within itself, and be consistent with the facts of experience; and will thereby satisfy the requirements of our reason, and guide and help us in the regulation of our lives. What are we? what have we to do? what may we hope for? these are the questions which it seeks to answer; and it seeks to answer them by inquiring into the constitution of the world as a whole in which we live, and our own relations to the world as factors of the world-whole.

Philosophy, therefore, is not a matter of intellectual or aesthetic interest and curiosity merely. It deals with problems which force themselves on the thinking mind and press for solution (whether final, or merely approximate and provisional), and
regarding which we are compelled to hold some view or other, in order that we may live. The question, therefore, is not one of philosophy or no philosophy, but one of good philosophy or bad—every rational being has a philosophy of some kind.

But philosophy supposes science.—We have therefore at the outset to distinguish between philosophy and science, and understand the relation between them. For the world-whole contains under it many parts and departments. Thus it includes under it the physical world in which the mechanical forces prevail, and evolve the sun, earth, planets and stars, with their phenomena of heat, light and electricity; and the world of living beings in which life predominates, producing plants and animals; and the world of mind with all its products. It follows that we cannot understand the world as a whole without understanding the many departments which, by their co-ordination and co-operation, make up the whole. The study of the different parts and departments of the world is the function of the different special sciences, physical, biological and mental. From this we can understand.

Its relation to the sciences.—(1) Philosophy is partly dependent on science. As we are ourselves factors contained within the world-system, our study of the world must begin from within. That is, it must begin with the study of ourselves and the things round about us—with the constitution of our own minds, and the various constituents and departments of the world within which we live; and must rise from the relations of the parts, to the plan and purpose of the whole. In other words, we must begin with the various classes of things that make up the world as presented in our experience, and the various processes which constitute
its history—with earth, sun and stars, heat, light and electricity, plant and animal life, and rational minds. The study of these different departments of the world separately, each by itself, is the work of the special sciences—physical, biological and mental. Then, from the study of the things which have been evolved, we may hope to rise, by the right use of our reason, to an approximately true conception of the nature and purpose of the power which has evolved the world of things, and given them their order and connection, and given to ourselves our place and function in the system of the world, which is philosophy.

(2) But it is true, on the other hand, that science depends on philosophy; for we cannot understand the constituents of the world, which are the province of the sciences, without understanding their relations to one another as parts of the one whole, and as correlative products of the power which evolves and works in the whole; that is, without understanding their place and purpose in the world-system—which is the aim of philosophy. It follows from this, that the results of science, before their full significance and application to life can be understood, must be interpreted by philosophy. Hence science and philosophy are really correlative to each other, each supplying something which the other wants, in order to be complete and satisfying as knowledge. Science and experience give the facts merely; it is the function of philosophy to explain them.

✔ The method of philosophy.—Thus philosophy must accept as its premises (1) the highest results of all the special sciences, along with the results of common experience, because these give us the contents of the world-whole which...
philosophy seeks to explain; and (2) must accept also the fundamental notions and axioms of reason, because it is by means of these that we rise from the contents to the whole, and are able to understand their relations to one another and to the whole, which is philosophy. The organon of science will be observation of, and experiment on, the contents of the world as presented to us in experience, so as to discover the causes of things; and that of philosophy will be reason, which is the mind's power of discerning how things are related to one another as means to ends, and as factors of a higher whole, and thereby discovering the reasons for things. Starting from these two classes of premises, then, it may be considered to involve two correlative processes of thought, moving in two opposite directions:

(i) From the parts upwards to the whole; by combining and generalising from the results of the special sciences and common experience, it seeks to rise from the parts to a preliminary conception of the world as a whole, such as will be consistent with facts, and free from contradiction within itself—which is the empirical and inductive phase of philosophy, or philosophy based on experience—called experiential or empirical, and sometimes scientific philosophy.

(ii) From the whole downwards to the parts: it applies the provisional conception of the whole thus obtained, as a means of further interpreting the different contents and departments of the world, so as to understand their origin, connection and purpose in the plan of the whole; and considers that conception (or hypothesis) of the world to be nearest the truth which explains most adequately the world as presented in experience—
which is the deductive phase of philosophy, also called rational, and speculative.

Any one of those methods taken by itself—reasoning upwards from parts to whole, or downwards whole to parts—leads to a one-sided and incomplete result. Therefore what is most characteristic of the method of philosophy is this, that it uses each of the above methods as a means of checking and correcting the results of the other. By such self-correction it leads at last to a conception of the world as a system of correlated factors, co-operating together so as to constitute one organic whole; and thereby leads to an understanding of the whole, as not a merely mechanical sum-total of parts, but as made to be what it is by a purpose or idea which evolves the parts, and gives them their law, order and end.

It follows that in philosophy, as in science, hypothesis must play an important part. Philosophy cannot be demonstrative, because finite understanding cannot exhaust the contents of the infinite. The conclusion arrived at by the inductive method from parts to whole is only a hypothesis. The hypothesis has to be tested by the deductive method from whole to parts. In other words, having arrived inductively at a provisional conception of the world as whole, philosophy has to test this conception deductively, by determining whether the world of particular things can be explained by deduction from this hypothesis better than from any other. Hence philosophy may be said to consist in determining which of all different hypotheses is the best working hypothesis on the whole, i.e., is most successful in explaining the problems presented by the experiences of life.

Hence the use of philosophy.—Philosophy, therefore, may be said to consist in combining and interpreting the results of the special sciences and of common experience, and interpreting and applying them in such a way as to arrive at a conception of the world which will be consistent in itself and intelligible to the understanding; and will help us to understand our place and duty in the
world, and thereby to regulate our lives in such a way as to realise our function in the world and thereby our highest good. It does not aim at discovering new things and causes of things, as science does; rather it accepts facts already discovered, and tries to understand them, i.e. to see the reasons for them—their place and purpose in the system as a whole. Thus it may be said that while science seeks to find the causes of things, or how they have come to be what they are, philosophy seeks to find their reasons, or why they have been made to be what they are.

For there must be a “science which investigates the nature of Being as it is in itself, and the attributes which belong to it in virtue of its own nature. This science will not be the same therefore, as any of the special sciences. None of these deal generally with Being as Being. They divide reality into departments and investigate the attributes of each department, as, for example, the mathematical sciences do.”

Hence philosophy is closely connected with religion also: “The thing which a man does practically believe and lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious universe and his duty and destiny therein, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and determines all the rest. That is his religion, or, it may be, his mere scepticism and no-religion.”

Various definitions.—Of the numerous definitions of philosophy that have been given by different writers, most are identical in substance with the above. Some of the most notable may be considered here—

(a) “P. is the universal science which has to unite the cognitions attained by the particular sciences into a consistent system.” “P. is completely unified knowledge.” “The generalizations of P. comprehend and consolidate the widest
generalizations of science." "Knowledge of the lowest kind is ununified knowledge, science is partially unified knowledge, P. is completely unified knowledge"; "P. is knowledge of the highest degree of generality." These definitions are open however, to this objection: they make it appear as if philosophy were nothing more than the adding together of the results of all the sciences, thus making it to coincide with the former only of the above stages (reasoning from parts to whole), to the exclusion of the second (reasoning from whole to parts) by which alone the world can be fully understood.

(b) P. is "the science of principles" or first beginnings. But this word has two applications: (1) it may mean the first beginnings of knowledge, the fundamental notions and axioms on which all knowledge is built; (2) or it may mean the first beginnings of the world-process, the substances, powers, and laws, which have produced the evolution of the world. If we understand 'principles' in the former sense, then the definition will mean that P. is identical with epistemology, or inquiry into the origin, validity and range of knowledge. If we take it in the latter sense, it will mean the science of the ultimate realities underlying all things, as distinguished from the appearances which they present to our senses, and will therefore be identical with metaphysic.

(c) "P. is the science of the absolute idea": this definition assumes that the world is not a product of chance, but of a single absolute power whose activity consists in the working out of a plan, end or purpose, the realising of an idea; so that P. is the attempt to understand the plan and purpose of the world as a whole by thinking over
again, or reproducing in terms of finite thought, the absolute thought which has evolved the world. This is called absolute idealism, because it makes the power which evolves the world to be an absolute idea or mind embodying itself.

(a) "P. is such knowledge of those things which are, or happen, as will enable us to understand why they are or happen" (Wolff). "P. is the science of the universe, not in its particular details, but in respect of the principles which condition all its particulars" (Ueberweg).

(e) The above definitions, it can be seen, agree essentially in making philosophy to be understanding of the world as a whole. Some, however, prefer another definition which seems greatly to narrow its range. Thus, one may say that P. is merely "theory of knowledge," or "the science and criticism of cognition," and therefore identical with epistemology or criticism of knowledge. This definition, then, makes it to be nothing more than an inquiry into the nature of the knowing power, and the conditions which are necessary to the possibility of knowing,—seeking from these, to determine within what limits knowledge is possible, and what things are, from the nature of the case, unknown and unknowable (Kant). The business of P., therefore, is not to know things, but merely to know how we know, and how much we may hope to know. This definition, however, is evidently one-sided. Criticism of the methods and limits of knowledge is indeed necessary to P., but is not the whole of it; knowing cannot be thus isolated from what is known; we must know things before we can know how we know them. The extreme critical philosopher has been compared to the rustic who said that he would
never venture into water until he had learnt how to swim.

The above definition will be justifiable, however, if we can adopt the extreme idealist thesis (c): that the world itself is brought into existence by an energy of thinking,—by a thinking power evolving the material of its own thought. For in this case knowledge of the world will be ultimately knowledge of the thought which brings the world into existence, and P. will be both “doctrine of knowledge” (Fichte) and “science of the absolute idea” (Hegel) at the same time. Or, as another thinker puts it, P. will be the attempt to know what the world of nature must be in order that it may be known by mind; and what mind must be in order that it may know the world (Schelling).

(f) A kindred definition is that P. is the “elaboration of concepts,” by which it is meant that, before we can claim knowledge of things, we must begin by examining the ideas of things which we derive from common experience, analysing them, discovering the contradictions involved in them, and clearing away contradictions until we arrive at a system of conceptions that will be clear and consistent among themselves. Such self-consistency of ideas, it is held, is the only test of truth attainable by us (because we cannot get outside of our ideas to compare them with things); therefore a system of perfectly self-consistent ideas will be the nearest approximation that we can make to knowledge of the world as it really is.

The word philosophy means literally, love of wisdom or knowledge. It seems to have been used first by Pythagoras about 530 B.C. It was brought into common use by Socrates, more than a century later, to express the contrast between himself and his adversaries, the Sophists. These called themselves sophistae, i.e., wise or knowing men. Socrates, with greater modesty, called him-
self only *philosophos*, a lover and seeker after wisdom. Hence, taken in Socrates's sense, the word means, not one who knows, but one who strives to attain knowledge.

§ 2.

*Division of Philosophy.*

Taking philosophy, then, as the attempt to attain to some understanding of the world as a whole and of our own place and function therein, we can determine from beforehand what the principal branches and problems of philosophy will be. We can see that there are three fundamental factors of the world,—soul, including the system of material things and processes,—and God, or the absolute power which gives existence, order and connection to the world of finite things, and makes them to co-operate as one organized system. Hence P. will branch into P. of *Nature*, of *Mind*, and of *God*.

But in thinking these fundamental realities, we have to apply such metaphysical ideas as *substance*, *causality*, *space* and *time*, *evolution*, *life*, *end* or *purpose*, *value* or *worth*, etc., and no consistent result can be attained by P. until clear and adequate definitions have been attained of such fundamental ideas; and an understanding of the content and origin of these ideas will involve analytical psychology. And further, if P. claims to know realities, it must justify its claim by showing what the conditions and means of attaining knowledge are, and proving that knowledge of the realities corresponding to the above ideas, is within its power. This is
criticism of knowledge, or epistemology, as opposed to dogmatism which assumes knowledge without showing how it is attained, and to scepticism which holds that it cannot be attained at all. Such criticism is not the whole of philosophy as some have thought, (c above), but is obviously essential to it as the foundation on which the superstructure has to be raised; we cannot presume to know things unless we can explain how we know them, and show that we have the means of knowing them. Hence we may divide the problems of philosophy into that of the foundation, which is "theory of knowledge," and those of the superstructure, which are philosophy proper, or knowledge of the world. Thus—

I. Philosophy, has to be founded on criticism of knowledge, epistemology, or inquiry into the origin and nature of knowledge in order to understand the conditions on which the possibility of knowing things depends—what things are knowable and how much it is possible to know about them,—and what the limits are, beyond which knowledge cannot go. It proceeds, therefore, on the principle that we should not presume to know the world until we have made sure that we have the mental powers necessary for the knowing of it; lest we should fall into the error of assuming that we know things which we cannot know at all, and thus fall into dogmatism and self-deception. But even after the attempt has been made to apply critical methods to philosophy, considerable divergence of opinion still remains as to the best method of conducting philosophical investigation, and the range of knowledge attainable—in other words, as to the logic and limits of scientific
thought. Thus it has led to a general condemnation of—

(a) The dogmatical method of the older philosophers, which consisted in assuming fundamental principles as self-evident and axiomatic, without explanation or proof, and then deducing conclusions from these unproved premises. Indeed Kant maintained that all philosophy before his own had been vitiated more or less by this fallacy of making dogmatic assumptions as if they were certainties.

But even after such unreasoning dogmatism is set aside, there remain three other methods, each of which has been held by some to be the true method, of philosophy, viz.—

(b) The older empirical method, which consisted in assuming that all knowledge of things must come through sensation and feeling, which are the channels of experience; and that genuine knowledge cannot go beyond what is either presented in sensation and feeling, or can be inferred inductively from these; but held at the same time that, by inference from our sense experiences, we can attain such knowledge regarding realities beyond sensation—soul nature, God—as we really require (Locke).

(c) The sceptical or agnostic method, which consists in carrying out this empirical theory of knowledge to its extreme result; and trying to show that there can be no knowledge that is not expressible in terms of sensation and feeling; and at the same time affirming that nothing can be inferred from what is given in sensation to supposed realities lying beyond sensation and that what lies beyond sensation is unknown and unknowable,
and should therefore be ignored in practical life, as if non-existent (Hume, Mill).

\((d)\) The *rational method*, which consists in showing that sensation and feeling can give only the material of knowledge, and that such material is not knowledge until it has been interpreted by reason; so that knowledge is a product, not of experience alone, but of reason interpreting experience. And to these may be added

\((e)\) The "*critical method*" of Kant, which consisted in making philosophical inquiry turn back upon the conditions which must be present and operative before knowledge can be possible; and made it consists in determining how far such conditions are actually present; and thereby whether and how far knowledge is possible. This inquiry resulted in a peculiar combination of the above three methods because it showed (1) that all knowledge must be founded on materials supplied by experience (which is empiricism); (2) that experience, however, is not knowledge without being interpreted according to conditions and forms inherent in the nature of thought itself (which is rationalism), but (3) that, though rational interpretation is necessary, it cannot establish any reality beyond what enters into experience in the form of sensation and feeling, so that everything beyond is unknown and unknowable (which is scepticism). The critical method, therefore, is opposed especially to the dogmatic. Since Kant's time all philosophy has claimed to be critical. Notwithstanding this, the rivalry of the empirical, rational and sceptical methods remains unreconciled—the empirical, however, tending to coincide with the sceptical.

II. A critical theory of knowledge supplies the foundation on which the superstructure of *philosophy* itself has to be built. The above epistemological question: How do we know things? is only preliminary to the philosophical question: What are the things which we know, and what do we know about them? And such
knowledge will have three principal branches, corresponding to the three principal factors of the world-system, *viz.*—

1. Philosophy of *mind*, or of that which knows things,—both other things as manifested to mind in external perception, and mind as manifested to itself in self-consciousness. The P. of mind (i) will start from the results of empirical psychology, or the phenomenology of mind—the science which deals with the processes and products of mind, feeling, thinking and willing, *i.e.*, the phenomena in which mind (as soul or mental reality) manifests itself to itself in consciousness; and (2) will rise from this to the ontology or metaphysic of mind, which seeks (a) to understand mind, as the reality which manifests itself in, and gives connection to the phenomena of feeling, thinking and willing, and makes them to be manifestations of one mind; and (b) to understand the relation and connection between finite minds and whatever other finite realities enter into the constitution of the world, *e.g.*, between minds and material things; and (c) between finite minds and the absolute power which gives existence, order, and purpose to the contents of the world as a whole; and (d) thereby to understand its own origin, place, function and destiny as a factor of the world-system.

Here we are confronted with different hypotheses as to the nature of soul and its relation to the rest of the world; and the metaphysic of mind takes largely the form of an examination and criticism of these hypotheses, to determine which of them explains most adequately the real nature of mind,—chiefly *dualism, pluralism, materialism,* and *idealism or spiritualism.*

2. Philosophy of *nature*, or of the material world which is the object of external perception.
The natural and physical sciences deal with the outward attributes and processes of matter, as they present themselves to our senses in their different departments, and which are commonly called the *phenomena* of nature (as distinguished from the realities which lie behind, and produce the phenomena). But philosophy, which aims at understanding the world as a whole, must strive to understand how matter is related to mind, and how it occasions those sensations and feelings which are its phenomena or manifestations to conscious mind; and how it produces the phenomena of nature, in other words, how it comes to put forth those powers of resistance, motion, attraction and repulsion, heat, light, electricity, organization and life, by which it works out its own development, as seen in the physical world; and how it assumes the various forms of stars, planets, plants and animals, which experience finds in nature. And in order to do this, philosophy must go beyond the outward phenomena of matter—beyond the outward processes of nature and the sensations which nature occasions in mind—and must advance to the ontology or metaphysic of matter, *i.e.*, to the question, what matter is in itself outside and independent of the sensations which it gives to mind, and how it is related to mind and to God. And the metaphysic of matter, like that of mind, leads back to the various hypotheses of *dualism, monism, materialism, pluralism* and *phenomenalism*—which are different possible ways of conceiving the nature of matter, and the relation between matter, mind and God.

The P. of nature continues to be *empirical* in so far as it merely combines and draws the highest results of the special sciences of nature, and seeks the world in relations to mind and God.

Including the study of its phenomena,

And of the reality underlying them,

With various hypotheses,

The difficulty of nature-philosophy being that
to arrive at the fundamental forces working in nature, and to understand how their working has led to the development of the material universe as it appears to experience. But the phenomena by which nature is known to experience, and which constitute the material of physical science and empirical philosophy, are only the conscious states which nature occasions in mind, viz. sensations. What physical science knows regarding nature is, in the last analysis, only the sensations which nature impresses upon us—science knows nature only as the ground of sensations—the something which occasions sensations in us—and only, in term of these sensations. But P. cannot stop at this merely empirical phase of thought. Reason cannot rest satisfied with sensations; it must inquire what lies beyond, and gives rise to the sensations. And not only must it i.e. it must rise from the phenomena to the metaphysic nature, inquire what matter is, and what mind is; it must inquire also how they are related to, and affect each other; and this inquiry leads it back to the common ground which gives existence and connection to mind and matter. Thus philosophy is compelled to rise from mind and nature into—

3. Philosophy of the absolute, or of God, i.e., it must seek to understand the power which evolves the world of finite things and minds, gives them their order and relations, and makes them all to co-operate together as factors of one system, for the realisation of one absolute end, which may be conceived as the realisation of its own infinity. For it is the nature of reason to reduce plurality of things and events to connection and unity; and it can do so only by finding that they are produced by a single power as means for the pro-
duction of a higher end; as the innumerable cells, tissues and organs of the tree are means to produce and support the life of the tree.

Hence it is the nature of reason to seek to interpret the plurality of things and processes which constitute the world, as a system of parts evolved and co-ordinated by one universal power so as to be factors of one whole, and subject to one universal reason. And by thus understanding the world as an organized system, we can understand how matter affects mind so as to produce sensation, and how mind affects matter so as to produce voluntary movement.

Therefore all rational thought must culminate in the idea of an ultimate power or absolute (God), which gives connection and unity to the whole and must seek to comprehend the relations and functions of finite things as factors of the absolute whole.

§ 3

The Fundamental Problems of Philosophy.

Problems included in the study of mind, matter and God.—Thus philosophy studies the nature and relations of mind, matter and God. And this study clearly involves the study of certain subordinate questions which may be here defined. For in dealing with the nature of mind, world and God, we necessarily make use of certain fundamental notions, which are not only necessary as forms according to which we ourselves must conceive things (logically necessary); but must be regarded as also corresponding to necessary forms and relations of things themselves (metaphysically necessary). And P. may be said to consist largely in determining the meanings of these fundamental ideas, and applying them to the interpretation of mind, matter and God.
Thus, we cannot think of any thing without thinking of it as *substance* remaining the same under successive changes; and as exercising *causality* by producing changes in itself and other things. And we cannot think of the world therefore except as a process or complex system of changes, and therefore as an *evolution* by which the implicit contents of substance expand themselves, so to speak, into concrete things in *space* and events in *time*—such an ‘unfolding’ of things and events being thought of as development or *evolution*. And we cannot think of change and evolution except as tending towards the attainment of some *end* or *purpose*, because evolution implies that something is being evolved, viz., a result towards which evolution is tending. Nor can we think of particular actions and ends except as having *worth* or *value*, and as being therefore good or bad, and as leading on to an ultimate good which has absolute value. These and other fundamental notions are necessarily assumed as predicates of things (whether expressed or not) in all our judgments, and have been called *categories*, or predicates by pre-eminence—those which are necessarily affirmed of all things, and without which they would not be things. And in all our thinking with regard to matter, mind and God, an understanding of these notions is required. The question of the content and origin of these fundamental notions, however, has proved to be among the most difficult in metaphysics. Thus there is—

I. The problem of Substance or Reality.—We know that, underlying and giving connection to the changes going on in our own minds and in the world around us, there is permanent reality or substance which manifests itself
in these phenomena; and that mind and matter in a subordinate sense, and the absolute in a higher sense, are realities. And philosophy must arrive at some understanding as to the question: What their respective realities consist in, and how these realities are related to, and are able to influence one another. What is matter, and how is it able to act on mind? What is mind, and how is it able to act on matter? How are mind and matter related to the absolute reality which gives them existence and connection?

Indeed opinion may differ as to the number of ultimate and independent realities. Are we to hold that there are just two ultimate realities, *viz.* spirit and matter, and that all the phenomena of the world are produced by the operation of these two in action and reaction?—which is metaphysical *dualism*. Or that there is only one, and that all the phenomena of the world are produced by the self-unfolding of the contents of the one?—which is *monism*. In the latter case, we shall have to be either materialists, holding that the one self-existent reality is matter; or idealists, holding that it is mind; or to adopt the hypothesis of *parallelism*, holding that neither mind nor matter is itself substance, but that both are correlative aspects of one substance which supports both, but is not identical with either. Or is it possible that there are many self-existent realities, every one independent of all the others, and that phenomena of the world are produced by the interaction of a perhaps infinite number of substances?—which is *pluralism*. Thus pluralism, dualism and monism (the latter including materialism, parallelism and idealism) are possible hypotheses with regard to the substance of mind and matter, and philosophy must
determine which of them has the best claim to be considered the true theory.

2. The Problem of causality.—All the substance in the world, both mental and material, is undergoing constant change of state and relation; and we cannot avoid thinking that every change is caused, or made to be what it is by other changes preceding and accompanying it, and that every change is itself again the cause of other changes; and that, in fact, all the things in the world depend on one another in such a way that every change in every one thing implies a change and re-adjustment of all the rest. This means that they are all causally connected; and we cannot think of anything without thinking it under this aspect of causality, i.e., thinking of it as an effect of antecedent, and cause of succeeding changes. Therefore one of the deepest of all questions is this: Why does the substance of the world undergo continual change instead of remaining always the same; and why does change in one thing gives rise to changes in other things? Hence to understand causality, or how things produce changes in one another, is one of the chief problems of philosophy.

And along with causality the ideas of space and time have to be considered; because causality makes things to follow one another, one ceasing as another begins, thereby constituting time; or to co-exist outside and alongside of one another, thereby filling space.

3. The Problem of evolution cosmical and organic.—We find that the causes which are operating in the world, co-operate with one another in producing certain complex results. These results again co-operate as causes to produce other and still more complex results. And we find that the results produced become not only more and more
complex, but also more and more perfectly co-ordinated and organized, thereby producing, by their co-operation other results of a still more complex and perfect kind. In this way, by the progressive combination and adaptation of causal forces and products, such results are at last produced as our solar system of sun, moon and planets, the habitable earth, vegetable and animal organisms, and finally conscious minds, animal and human. These products we regard as higher and more perfect than the simpler elements out of which they rise. Therefore we call this process *evolution*, because it is an unfolding, or drawing out and realising, of results which were contained potentially in the power operating in all the processes of the world—viz. in God or the absolute. And we cannot doubt that these products are themselves co-ordinated so as to produce some still higher result in the economy of the world-system as a whole—some ultimate End and Good.

Thus we find in nature a gradual ascent from lower to higher, from plurality to unity, from disorder and opposition to co-operation, from molecular agitation to nebulae and planetary systems, and from these to living organisms, plant and animal, and finally to conscious mind. This is, as it were, a *development*, or unfolding and making explicit, of what was contained implicitly (as if folded up) in the primitive energy. The nature and cause of evolution has been of all questions, the most prominent in recent philosophy.

4. The **problem of end**.—Thus evolution results in the evolving or producing of something higher—it tends towards a more perfect result or product, as the evolving power latent in the organic germ tends towards the development of the perfect plant or animal. But results may be produced in either of two ways. *(a)* They may be
produced by forces working blindly and at random; but it is difficult to understand how any combination of co-ordinated and organized results can be produced by chance. (b) There may be a reason for the production of certain results, and reason may guide the forces of nature to produce them, for active reason consists in making forces (causes) co-operate together as means for the production of a result. When a result is produced by the co-ordinating power of reason, we call its production the fulfilment of an end, or purpose.

Now one great problem of both science and philosophy is to determine whether the world on which we live, and the living creatures upon it, have been produced by forces working blindly and by chance, as some still think; or whether the forces of nature are guided towards these results by reason, and made to co-operate in production, as means to ends, by power of reason. When forces are co-ordinated by reason as means to an end, the end or result for the sake of which they are made to operate may be spoken of as their final cause (finis, end), because in such cases, the end or purpose is what sets the forces working, and the end must have been present and operative from the beginning as Idea.

Hence we cannot avoid thinking of the results towards which the world-process is tending, and considering whether the combinations and co-ordinations of forces which are being evolved, and the ultimate results towards which they are tending, are fortuitous merely, or are in conformity with definite plan and purpose; i.e., whether these changes and evolutions are, or are not co-ordinated in such a way as to realise a definite End which was present from the beginning as Idea.
Indeed we cannot help going farther back, and asking the question why the absolute reality, instead of remaining in a state of perpetual rest, passed over into a state of causality, change and evolution, and why it evolved this particular system of things and no other. Are we to say that its operation has been fortuitous, and its productions, by blind chance? Or must we not rather say that there can be no change without a reason for it? If so, the reason must be a good or end to be realised; and the system of changes constituting the history of the world must be co-ordinated as a system of means for the realisation of a system of ends, and these again as means towards an ultimate end or good; and the whole system of ends, proximate and ultimate, must be present from the beginning as Idea, so that the history of the world will be the realisation of Idea (Idealism).

And this question evidently includes within it the question: how the world with all its contents—its stars, suns, planets, animals and human beings—has come into existence, and come to be what it is; e.g., whether it has been evolved as means to an end, and therefore by a rational power (idealism); or been differentiated out of self-existent substance by blind force inherent in substance itself, without foresight or purpose (naturalism). Different answers to this question are involved in the theological systems of theism, panentheism, pantheism, and atheism.

5. The problem of value, worth, good.
—If it be the case that the changes going on in the world are so co-ordinated as to realise an idea and attain an end, it must be because that end is something good; and subordinate ends in order to be themselves good, must be such as to lead on towards an ultimate good. Hence the questions: What is good, and what is ultimately good in itself and for its own sake? Or, in what does the goodness, i.e., the worth or value of ends, consist? and how is man to regulate his life so as to attain to the highest good? For we must distinguish

Surely the substance of the world would have remained at rest perpetually, if there had not been some good to be attained by change;

Operating as motive force and final cause;

And it regards things as having worth or value, whether as ends, or as means to ends;
between things which are good as means towards other things, and things which are good in themselves, i.e., ultimately good. And we commonly distinguish three attributes as good in themselves and for their own sake. In the life of thought we regard knowledge of truth as good in itself; in physical nature we regard the beautiful as good in itself; and in the life of action we regard moral goodness as a good in itself. Hence the problem of worth will be included in the studies of metaphysics, aesthetics and ethics.

For we feel the perfection of mind as a thinking power must consist in the conformity of its ideas and beliefs with the reality of things, and regard the possession of knowledge as intellectual worth (wisdom). This is the problem of metaphysics. We think of things as composed of many parts so harmonised together as, by their co-operation, to constitute a higher unity, and gratify the perceiving mind with a consciousness of unity in variety, and feel that this harmony in multiplicity is a kind of worth, and call it the beautiful. This is the problem of aesthetics. And as human beings are themselves factors in the process of the world, and their actions either hinder or contribute to the higher evolution of the world, the question arises: what is the true place, purpose and function of man in the world-system? and how is he to regulate his life and conduct so as to fulfil his purpose and realise his end, and thereby attain the highest perfection of his being? This is the ethical problem or problem of moral worth. Indeed the ultimate use of all science and philosophy is to teach men how to regulate their lives so as to realise the highest perfection of their being, which they can do only by fulfilling their functions as members of the world-system.

Hence an understanding of such fundamental notions as, Substance, Causality, Evolution, End and Value, underlies, and is essential to, an understanding of the three more comprehensive problem, of philosophy, viz., matter, mind and God.
§ 4.

Relation of Philosophy to Epistemology,
Science and Metaphysics (Ontology).

Philosophy begins with epistemology, derives its materials from science, and experience, and rises through empirical investigation into ontology or metaphysics. Thus—

**Epistemology.**—Much labour had been wasted in philosophy from the tendency to assume fundamental principles and results dogmatically without proving them, and without even considering whether there is any possibility of knowing them at all. The consciousness of this led Descartes first to consider carefully what ground he had for every successive step in his deductions. It led Locke to analyze more carefully than Descartes or any one else had done before, the nature and working of the faculties by which we arrive at knowledge (analytical psychology of cognition). And it led Kant afterwards to consider still more carefully the antecedent conditions without which knowledge would not be possible (his transcendental method, or method of inquiring into what must transcend or precede knowing, in order that knowing may be possible). Such inquiries have also been called 'criticism,' and 'theory of knowledge,' and more recently 'epistemology' (science of epistemé, knowledge). It is therefore an inquiry into the conditions on which the possibility of knowledge depends, and thereby into the range and limits of genuine knowledge, and therefore into the foundations on which science and philosophy are built.

**Science and Ontology.**—The term science in English is now commonly used to denote those

Philosophy begins with criticism of the methods and means of investigation, or

Theory of knowledge; being compelled to make a

Distinction between reality and its
forms of investigation which can be conducted according to the 'empirical methods' of sense
observation and experiment. Hence it is neces-
sary to distinguish between the scientific and the
ontological aspects of things; and the methods
of study applicable to them. Thus, in studying
both matter and mind, philosophy has to distin-
guish between the methods of study applicable
to each. Therefore in studying both matter and
mind, philosophy has to distinguish between two
stages or strata of knowledge:—

(A) Phenomenology of mind and matter, or
study of their outward processes and products as
they manifest themselves to us within the sphere
of conscious sensation and feeling—without any
attempt to determine what either mind or matter
is in itself. By phenomena, is meant the appear-
ances through which things make their existence
known; and these, in the last analysis are the sensa-
tions which they occasion in us. This is the undis-
puted sphere of the empirical method of observa-
tion and experiment, and of the empirical sciences,
psychology, physics, chemistry, etc., which study
only the 'phenomena,' or appearances which things
present in terms of consciousness. Thus the
special sciences deal with things—

(1) By direct observation and experiment—
that is by seeing, touching, hearing, tasting and
smelling—and drawing inferences from what has
thus been observed under different circumstances
at different times and places, to what will be
observed at other times and places; and therefore

(2) Only with the phenomena or manifesta-
tions of things, that is, the feelings and sensations
which they have given or would give us; because
things can be observed only in so far as they occa-
sion sensations in us, and in terms of these sensa-
tions; and therefore
(3) With things according to their separate departments; because nature consists of many classes of things which affect our sensibilities in different ways, thereby producing different classes of phenomena, which are the subject-matter of the different sciences. The study, therefore, of the phenomena of mind—the processes and products of feeling thinking and willing—by observation, analysis and experiment, is mental science. And the study of the phenomena of matter—gravity, motion, heat, light, electricity and the like—is physical science.

(B) Ontology of mind, matter and God, or the attempt to go beyond the outward manifestations of minds and material things, and understand what it is that thus manifests itself by producing phenomena, mental and material; in other words, to understand things as they are in themselves apart from the sensations and feelings to which they give rise; and to understand what it is that gives them their existence, order and connection, and enables them to give rise to these sensations and feelings in us.

This is the problem of metaphysic; and the metaphysic of mind and nature leads back to that of God or the absolute, as that which gives existence and connection to mind and nature, and makes the world to be what it is.

Thus the empirical sciences consist in studying the different departments of nature and mind only as they affect our sensibility, thinking of them only in terms of actual and possible sensation and feeling. Ontology or metaphysic attempts to consider what it is that lies behind, and gives rise to the sensations and feelings, and without which they would not be possible. The latter inquiry, therefore, has been called the study of real being (onta, the things that really are), and has to proceed by metaphysical methods of study. And
metaphysical study proceeds not by observation of, and induction from, particulars of experience; but by showing that the phenomena of experience are consistent with, or follow from, the fundamental requirements of reason. From this it follows that, while science is essentially inductive, metaphysic is analytical and deductive—analysing the necessary motions of reason and drawing deductions from them. And in doing so it has commonly proceeded in either of these two ways:

\( (a) \) by the dogmatical method of assuming at the outset that the world itself must be rational, and that therefore the nature of the world can be deduced from the fundamental notions and requirements of reason; or \( (b) \) by the transcendental method, (founded on 'theory of knowledge') of inquiring what the world must be in order that it may be known by mind, and what mind must be in order that it may know the world; i.e., by consideration of the antecedent conditions which must exist before a world of conscious experience is possible. This leads us back again to the meaning of

\( (C) \) Philosophy.—Here again we can see the meaning of philosophy and its relation to the sciences and metaphysic. Its work will be not only to draw the highest results that can be drawn from the sciences regarding the phenomena of mind and nature; but also to explain the worlds of mind and nature by attaining an understanding of the ultimate reality which gives them their existence and co-ordination, and makes them to be factors of one world.

For phenomena, both mental and material, considered merely as phenomena, can have no connection nor correlation in themselves, or of their own making. They must derive their existence, order and connection from realities which are above,
and make phenomena. Therefore these realities beyond have to be taken into account if we are to understand the phenomena themselves, and to understand the world as what it is, *viz.* a unitary system, in which all parts are connected with one another.

Thus mental phenomena—feeling, thinking and willing—must get their existence, order and unity as mind, from some reality underlying them which we call *soul* or *spirit*. Material phenomena—form, solidity, motion, molar and molecular, chemical, thermal, actinic, and electric—are modes and manifestations of something which, we call *matter*. But both mental and material phenomena must be products of some higher and ultimate reality which underlies and evolves them all, and gives them their connection, order and unity, as factors of one world-system, working out one ultimate end—and which we call the *absolute*. Hence it is only by understanding how things rise out of this ultimate reality or absolute, (viewing them *sub specie aeternitatis*) that he can understand the world as a whole, because it is this ultimate reality that makes to be a whole.

Thus while the sciences in the narrower sense limit themselves to the empirical methods of observation and experiment by means of the senses, philosophy in the wider sense will be both empirical and ontological:

(1) In so far as *empirical*, it will accept the results of all the particular sciences, and tries to combine them together into one connected system, so as to arrive at a consistent conception of the world as a whole, as it would appear to experience if experience were sufficiently comprehensive to include the whole of it, past, present and future (such a conception as is attempted in the 'Synthetic Philosophy' of Spencer);
With the rational method, which is ontology or metaphysic, and seeks to understand the relation of things to the absolute reality, (2) In so far as ontological, it will try, by power of reason, to go beyond experience of the outward appearances of things, and to understand the realities which lie beyond, and produce, and give connection to the phenomena of experience. And having attained a self-consistent and reasonable conception of ultimate reality, it supplies this conception to explain deductively the origin, co-ordination and purpose of the world of finite things.

But we cannot directly see, touch, nor experiment on God, nor any ultimate reality; experience gives only phenomena—feelings and sensations. Therefore, at this stage, philosophy must abandon observation and experiment—cease to be 'scientific' in the common sense—and trust to power of reason alone. And the study, by power of reason alone, of reality beyond the reach of experience, is metaphysic or ontology.

Thus philosophy in its widest sense includes both these aspects of the world, empirical and ontological, making each supplement and explain the other.

But it may be said that ontology cannot prove anything—that we must begin with phenomena, and that from phenomena we can reason only to other phenomena past and future, and not to anything above phenomena (Hume). Indeed it must be admitted that ontology must apply the method of hypothesis. It must proceed by forming hypotheses as to the antecedent conditions which would be required to produce the world of experience, mental and physical. It must ask what must reality be in order that it may make itself known to mind through phenomena? and what must mind be in order that it may know reality through phenomena? and from all possible hypotheses must select the best working hypothesis. Therefore the only 'proof' that can be offered of an ontological theory of the world is (1) that it be free from contradictions within itself and (2) that it supply a more reasonable explanation than any other, of the world of phenomena.