

# The Way Out of Agnosticism

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# **The Way Out of Agnosticism**

**The Philosophy of Free Religion**

**Francis Ellingwood Abbot, Ph. D.**

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## Note.

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THE following papers (with the exception of the Introduction) are based on notes of forty-one lectures delivered in 1888, in the "Advanced Course, Philosophy 13," Harvard University. Originally published during the year 1889 as a series of contributions to a monthly periodical in Boston, they are now addressed, not to those who are impatient of serious thought or incapable of following a close and continuous argument, but to those (and their name is legion) who, though able and willing to think, have been distressed or dismayed by the seeming inability of theistic writers in this age to meet and defeat agnosticism on its own professed ground,—the ground of science and

philosophy. By a wholly new line of reasoning, drawn exclusively from those sources, this book aims to show that, in order to refute agnosticism and establish enlightened theism, nothing is now necessary but to philosophize that very scientific method which agnosticism barbarously misunderstands and misuses. Of the success of the perhaps unwise attempt to show this in so small a compass, the educated public must be the judge. But it may be well to quote here these wise and true words of Arnold Toynbee, one of the noblest young men of the century, whose early death was a calamity to England and to the world:—

“Had liberal theologians in England combined more often with their undoubted courage and warmth definite philosophic views, religious liberalism would not now be condemned as offering nothing more than a mere sentiment of vague benevolence. Earnest and thoughtful people are willing to encounter the difficulty of mastering some unfamiliar phrases of technical language, when they find they

are in possession of a sharply defined intellectual position upon which their religious faith may rest."

F. E. A.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., Feb. 10, 1890.

## Introduction.<sup>1</sup>

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**I**N its relation to religion, the century now drawing to its close is emphatically the AGE OF AGNOSTICISM. All the leaders of its characteristic thought have more or less consciously, more or less completely, broken with Christianity,—that is, broken with that venerable theory of the universe for which the Christian theology and the Christian church have definitely stood for nearly two thousand years. But these leaders are paralyzed when it comes to constructive thought. They have no other theory of the universe to propose; they aim at none; they agree, if they agree on anything, that no theory

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1. This Introduction appeared in *THE NEW IDEAL* for January, 1889, under the caption, "Creative Liberalism."

of the universe is possible. What is known as the “philosophy of evolution,” certainly so far as its great champions and expounders are concerned, strictly limits itself to a mere knowledge of “phenomena,” and strictly denies all possible knowledge of “noumena”; it formulates a mode of happening, a uniformity of process, a law of co-existence and sequence, but claims to demonstrate the impossibility of comprehending ultimate causes, or of arriving at any theory of the universe as an intelligible unity. Whether the phenomenal universe is the product of intelligence or of unintelligence,—whether the human being is a creative first cause or a mere link in an endless and eternal chain of effects, and whether his conscious existence ceases at death, or continues beyond the grave,—all these vital questions, fundamental to any real theory of the universe, it declares to be necessarily and absolutely unanswerable. God, Freedom, and Immortality, the supreme interests of human

thought and human life alike,—these, to the evolution-philosophy in its present form, are insoluble problems, the eternal rock-barriers of the ever-restless ocean of human speculation. Every form of the evolution-philosophy which is founded on “the Unknowable” is founded on agnosticism, or denial of the possibility of any comprehensive theory of the universe; and agnosticism is the prevalent philosophy of liberalism in the nineteenth century.

This statement needs no proof, for it simply records a fact of observation, patent to every onlooker. A single significant illustration of it is enough.

The two most successful novels of the past summer hinge on the conflict between traditional Christianity and modern liberalism. In “Robert Elsmere” and in “John Ward, Preacher,” portraits are painted of the modern liberal, as seen by keen-eyed observers; and in each case the liberal is an agnostic.

Says Robert Elsmere, only a few days before his death: "I often lie here, Flaxman, wondering at the way in which men become the slaves of some metaphysical word—*personality*, or *intelligence*, or what not! What meaning can they have as applied to *God*? Herbert Spencer is quite right. We no sooner attempt to define what we mean by a Personal God than we lose ourselves in labyrinths of language and logic. But why attempt it at all? I like that French saying: '*Quand on me demande ce que c'est que Dieu, je l'ignore; quand on ne me le demande pas, je le sais très-bien!*' No, we cannot realize Him in words—we can only live in Him, and die to Him!"

Helen Ward expresses no less clearly the same bewilderment and defeat of thought: "But, after all, this question of eternal punishment is such a little thing, so on the outside of the great puzzle! One goes in, and in: Why is sin, which is its own punishment, in the world at all? What does it all mean, anyhow? Where is

God, and why does He let us suffer here, with no certainty of a life hereafter? Why does He make love and death in the same world? Oh, that is so cruel,—love and death together! Is He, at all? Those are the things, it seems to me, one has to think about. But why do I go over it all? We can't get away from it, can we?" And again: "To some of us God is only another name for the power of good,—or, one might as well say force, and that is blind and impersonal; there is nothing comforting or tender in the thought of force. How do you suppose the conviction of the personality of God is reached?" And once again, when, after the death of her beloved husband, a friend tries to comfort her by saying—"It is so much happier for him now; he must see so clearly; and the old grief is lost in joy,"—Helen answered wearily: "No, you must not say those things to me. I cannot feel them. I am glad he has no pain; in an eternal sleep there is at least no pain. But I must just wait my life out, Gifford. I cannot hope; I dare not.

I could not go on living, if I thought he were living somewhere, and needing me. No, it is ended. I have had my life."

The deep pathos of these two noble works of fiction, far truer to life as it is than many so-called biographies, lies in the remorseless fidelity with which, perhaps unconsciously and unintentionally, they expose the intellectual beggarliness of liberalism in its present unfledged state. Such dearth of great ideas, such piteous poverty of comprehension, as is exhibited in the mental condition of these two typical liberals, simply shows that liberalism, so far as it claims to be the custodian of high truth, is to-day infinitely inferior to the Christian mythology which it has displaced. Periods of revolution are doubtless necessary, but only by way of transition to periods of higher construction; and, if liberalism could by any possibility fall permanently into the arrested development of agnosticism, it would be no heir of the future. Robert Elsmere and Helen

Ward, lovely and noble as personal characters, represent, as agnostic thinkers, the lowest and crudest, because the least intellectual, type of liberalism. It is an awful tragedy of the human soul, when its holiest affections and impulses and aspirations, guided no longer by the ancient superstitions which, in whatever coarse and prickly envelope, contained nevertheless most precious *thoughts*, are bereft of all other guidance, gasping for life in the exhausted receiver of mere *vacuity of thought*.

This merely negative attitude of mind, this emptiness of all positive ideas respecting the supreme problems which man is set to solve, is indeed the present characteristic of liberalism, but only because liberalism is at the very beginning of its career. Agnosticism, in itself considered, is nothing but intellectual bewilderment, confusion of thought, a mere temporary defeat and despair of human reason in the presence of questions which it has not yet learned how to answer. When liberalism

once comes to understand itself,—when it once discovers how to go to work, how to handle these questions, how to synthesize the facts and laws which modern science has established beyond reasonable doubt,—then it will see its way clear to a theory of the universe founded upon modern knowledge, and will no longer fancy its mission to mankind discharged by merely overthrowing a theory of the universe founded upon ancient superstition. The era of constructive or creative liberalism is fated to come; and what it will create is necessarily a new theory of the universe, without which no religious movement can live. The real moral of “Robert Elsmere” and “John Ward, Preacher,” has been as yet drawn by no one; the real lesson of the helpless and hopeless liberalism they too justly depict is deeper than any of the critics have as yet perceived. Briefly put, it is this: *men must either learn to think more profoundly, or else unlearn to feel.*

That is the dilemma to which agnosticism reduces the human spirit. If all knowledge of God, Freedom, and Immortality is impossible to man, the only escape from intolerable anguish, in the constant presence of pain and death, must lie in a stoical suppression of the power to feel—in a desperate resolve to think and feel no more, but to extinguish all deep thought and all high feeling through frantic self-absorption in the soulless details of life. Yet what an impossible escape! In every noble nature, deep thought and high feeling have become a necessity; the only possible escape for such lies in deeper thought and higher feeling. Here is revealed the supreme duty of modern liberalism to press resolutely forward, away from agnosticism, to a positive, scientific, all-comprehensive theory of the universe. It is infinitely false that such a theory is unattainable. The agnosticism which professes to prove its unattainability is nothing but one of two things—either intellectual imbecility or intellectual

cowardice. The one unpardonable sin of the intellect is to despair of itself. Liberalism has always stood for *freedom*—freedom from dogma and freedom from ecclesiastical control. Well and good: let it always stand for that! But now it must stand for *truth as well*, and for the power of human reason to attain the truth. To liberalism alone can poor humanity, losing day by day its hold upon the Christian theory of the universe, look for a new theory that may guide its thought and life. The paramount duty of construction and creation to which liberalism is now called is that of working out such a theory, bravely, hopefully, patiently, reverently, devotedly; and THE NEW IDEAL will justify itself to the world, if it proves itself to be that *New Thought* which is the world's deepest and most imperative need.

# The Philosophy of Free Religion

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## I.

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IT is with no little hesitation and reluctance that, yielding to the editor's urgency, I undertake the difficult task of attempting to write out, in as simple and untechnical a manner as the nature of the subject permits, an outline of the theory of the universe which, if I mistake not, lies latent and implicit in the scientific method, and which must become explicit, whenever this method shall be faithfully applied to the great problems of philosophy. The reasons why I should not undertake the task are numerous and formidable. First and foremost, perhaps, is the fact that, although the ground-plan of this theory is already thoroughly matured, the literary execution of it is as yet scarcely even

begun, and from want of opportunity may never be completed; and it seems almost absurd to present the abridgment of a work which does not yet exist to be abridged. Next, the impossibility of doing justice to any philosophy by discarding its appropriate diction, suppressing its necessary subtilty of distinction, and curtailing its indispensable reasoning, renders such an attempt almost a crime against philosophic truth itself. Further, the fit place of publication would naturally be some journal specially devoted to philosophy, rather than a journal like THE NEW IDEAL, which does not address itself in particular to a philosophic audience. Again, the agnosticism so widely diffused among liberals at the present day makes me gravely doubt the utility of any such publication; the thought is suited to no self-satisfied ignorance, but to the determined, keen, hopeful spirit of investigation, to the spirit which counts present failure as only a stepping-stone to future success, to the spirit

which is fixed, resolute, indomitable in the effort to wrest knowledge from Nature, and which repudiates the imbecile philosophy that founds itself upon "the Unknowable" and pretends to set up "limits of human knowledge" in a universe everywhere penetrable by patient and persistent reason; in short, it is not to those who believe a theory of the universe impossible, but to those who know that a sound theory of it is inevitable, whenever science ripens into philosophy, that I can look with any expectation of intelligent sympathy. Lastly, I am painfully aware that to state my results briefly and without due argumentation must subject me, however unanswerable and conclusive the necessarily omitted reasons for them may be, to groundless charges of assumption, presumption, dogmatism. These considerations (with others needless to mention) are quite sufficient to render the proposed undertaking anything but a source of pleasurable anticipation to myself.

Nevertheless, there are reasons on the other side which have led me to consent to make the attempt, whatever the consequences may prove to be. Chief among them is the wish to render some little help to the brave and devoted editor of *THE NEW IDEAL*, in whatever way he himself judges he most wants help, and to further as far as possible his bold enterprise of giving once more to liberalism a journal of high constructive aims and earnest helpfulness to man. Moreover, there is in my own mind a lurking hope that even now, scattered here and there, may be found spirits already eager to welcome the higher thought of the future, already prepared to demand an interpretation of the fact of Evolution which shall be freed from the humiliating and entangling alliance with phenomenism, agnosticism, or know-nothingism, and already ripe for the reception of a thoroughly free philosophy, at once grounded in science and culminating in the loftiest moral and religious ideals. To the

young I look for such spirits as these, for in the young is the hope of the world. There is no possible redemption for mankind from the political, commercial, industrial, and social immoralities of the present, except in the speedy development of ideals which shall fire the souls of the rising generation to give battle to this hydra-headed monster of corruption, and fight it down in the power of the higher life; and the power of the higher life is the power of the higher thought. Here, in this crying need of a higher thought than agnosticism has ever given or can ever give, lies the necessity of a new, constructive, non-agnostic liberalism; and I cannot resist the call to do my little part in answering the deepest need of my own time.

So much for the reasons why I should gladly, yet must not, refuse the task now laid upon me.

In justice, however, to all concerned, let it be distinctly understood at the very outset that the theory of the universe now to be advanced, as the intellectual foundation of a NEW IDEAL

OF LIBERALISM, claims no other support than its own inherent and evident truth. It does not claim to be the philosophy of THE NEW IDEAL or of its editor; no one is authorized to declare this except the editor himself, and he must not be held responsible for anything said in this series of papers, unless he himself sees fit to approve it explicitly in words of his own. It would be unfair and ungenerous to him, if, merely because he has urged me to write the series, I should allow it to be imagined that I am in any sense his authorized representative or spokesman; and it would be equally unjust to myself, to the depth and strength of my own convictions, if I should allow it to be imagined that this theory of the universe needs any other corroboration than manifest congruity with the facts of the universe itself.

Furthermore, in entitling these papers "The Philosophy of Free Religion," it must not be understood that I claim for them the sanction of the Free Religious Association, or of any of

its officers or members. These must speak for themselves; I do not speak for them at all. But I do claim the right to call by that name the philosophy which, in my own mind, had begun to shape itself, and which, in the *Christian Examiner* of September, 1865, and March, 1866, had begun to utter itself, before the Free Religious Association was organized,—the philosophy which, substantially the same as now, though less matured in form, impelled me in 1867 to join in the founding of that Association,—the philosophy which impelled me in 1869 to become the editorial founder of "*The Index, A Weekly Paper Devoted to Free Religion*," in entire independence of the Free Religious Association,—the philosophy which impelled me in 1880 to procure the donation of *The Index* to the Free Religious Association by the Index Association,—and the philosophy which impelled me in 1886, in the last issue of *The Index* itself, to protest against the transfer of its "good-will" to a new journal which straightway

justified the protest by devoting itself avowedly to "Monism and Agnosticism...as positive and negative aspects of the one and only rational scientific philosophy." The title of this series of articles seems to me appropriate because they aim to develop the philosophy which must (consciously or unconsciously) underlie any and every free religious movement or institution: namely, the philosophy which results from the faithful application of the scientific method to the universe as a whole. They aim to sketch this necessary philosophy, as a theory of the universe logically involved in the scientific method itself, but not yet historically evolved from it in the intellectual consciousness of the world; they cannot, therefore, claim to represent the present convictions of any one except the writer, but they do claim to indicate the necessary philosophical goal of the great movement of modern scientific thought. And by this claim they must stand or fall.

What remains of this first article of the series must be devoted to a concise statement of the beginning and the end of the road now opening before us, in order that the reader may know exactly what to expect.

*1. The universal results of the special sciences, including the method common to them all, are the only possible data of philosophy or universal science.*

This principle, which alone can give to universal human reason a firm foothold in reality as universal human experience, is the necessary beginning-point of all philosophy which deserves to be called scientific. It means that philosophy cannot begin until the innumerable individuals of the human race have accumulated a common stock, great or small, of universal knowledge which has been proved, tested, or verified by their universal experience, and from which all the errors of individuals have been eliminated. It means

that this common stock of verified knowledge of the universe, gained through long ages of experience and clarified by science, is the only solid ground of reality upon which philosophy can build; and that the only legitimate business of philosophy is to organize, systemize, and make the most of this universally verified knowledge—to combine the fragmentary and disconnected data of the special sciences in such a way as to unite them in one harmonious, comprehensive, and trustworthy theory of the universe as a whole.

II. *The universe is known as at once infinite machine, infinite organism, and infinite person—as mechanical in its apparent form and action, organic in its essential constitution, and personal in its innermost being: it is the eternally self-evolving and self-involving unity of the Absolute Real and the Absolute Ideal in GOD.*

This principle, which alone can give to universal human experience an intelligible unity

in universal human reason, is the necessary end or outcome of all philosophy which deserves to be called scientific. It means that philosophy cannot end in the Infinite Impersonal without stultifying reason and experience at once,—that the Infinite Impersonal is below even the Finite Personal, and immeasurably below the Infinite All-Person,—that the Infinite Super-personal (or unknown and transcendent God) must include the Infinite All-Person (or known and immanent God), precisely as this includes the infinite organism and the infinite machine,—that the Infinite Impersonal can only be the false dream of an Infinite Sub-personal,—and that to identify a universe containing finite personalities with an Infinite Sub-personal is to wreck all possibility of conceiving Being as One, by making its oneness a self-contradictory thought. In other words. Infinite Impersonal Being is an impossible conception which never has been, and never can be, thought by any one; to think Infinite Being, however, is the necessity

of all philosophy, and it can only be thought as at once infinitely mechanical, infinitely organic, and infinitely personal.

III. *The universe itself, as eternally self-evolving and self-involving unity of the Absolute Real and the Absolute Ideal in God, is the Ethical Realization of the INFINITE DIVINE IDEAL, which reflects itself in the FINITE HUMAN IDEAL as the sun reflects itself in the dew-drop; and the splendor of its reflection is proportioned to the intelligent, free, loyal, and loving obedience of the human soul to it, as at once the supreme law of Human Nature and the supreme known law of Universal Nature.*

This principle is the only one which can give universal and necessary objective validity to the Moral Law, kindle such an "enthusiasm of humanity" as shall illumine both the inner and the outer life with divine radiance, or furnish an adequate and indestructible foundation either to Ethics or to Religion; and it can only be

derived from the theory of the universe which has been indicated above. These papers aim to trace the main lines of rational connection between the beginning and the end of this Philosophy of Free Religion, and thereby help to lay solid intellectual foundations for a new and true Ideal of Humanity—in the conviction that no ideal can ever become practicable, unless it first becomes comprehensible.

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## II.

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§ 1. The foundation or beginning-point of all genuinely scientific philosophy, as already intimated, is the principle that *the universal results of the special sciences, including the method common to them all, are the only possible data of philosophy as universal science.*

In other words, philosophy cannot begin by throwing away the vast treasure of universal human knowledge, gathered by the coöperative and long-continued experience of mankind, in order to construct it afresh from the sole standpoint of individual consciousness. Such a reconstruction is impossible without using, in the very process itself, that knowledge which the individual has previously learned

from others, from mankind; it is, therefore, a manifest, undeniable, and philosophically fatal "begging of the question." For this reason (not to mention many others for which here there is no room), the famous formula of Descartes, "I think, therefore I am," recognized by all competent writers as the foundation of so-called modern philosophy, represents a beginning-point which does not really begin; the very words in which it is expressed, and without which it could not be clearly thought at all, whether French, Latin, or English, were learned from others, and transmit knowledge to the individual which he tries in vain to sweep from his own mind, in order to make a fresh beginning from his immediate self-consciousness and philosophize without the necessity of acknowledging indebtedness to his fellow-men. The common experience of mankind has accumulated an immense fund of common knowledge, which enters more or less into the education of every individual; he spends years in learning this before he can

possibly begin to philosophize on his own account, and is never able to separate it wholly from what he acquires through his independent activity. "Common sense" designates the *crude* mass of this common knowledge, mixed with much error; "science," in the form of numerous special sciences which sift out the error, establish the truth, and make fresh discoveries, each in the special direction of its own limited line of investigation, designates the *purified* mass of this common knowledge, freed from the crudities of "common sense," but left still in a disjointed and unorganized condition; "philosophy," just so far as it deserves its name, designates that more profound and comprehensive thinking which combines the fragmentary data of all the special sciences, blends them into one rational whole, and constitutes the *organized* mass of this common knowledge, freed not only from the crudities of "common sense," but also from the fragmentariness, half-views, and inevitable limitations of "science" itself. In other words,

“common sense” studies the universe, but only with reference to the immediate needs of practical life; “science” studies it with reference to the needs of exact knowledge, but only in arbitrarily limited fields, provinces, or parts; “philosophy” studies it in its wholeness, totality, or unity, not only with reference to the needs of exact knowledge (universal science), but also with reference to those of practical life (ethics). Hence no individual can possibly limit the foundation of philosophy to the mere data of his own immediate consciousness, since these are themselves founded on the data of “common sense” and “science” alike, and presuppose that common knowledge which he has previously more or less learned from the human race in general. There is no help for it: philosophy must begin by taking the existence and reality of UNIVERSAL HUMAN KNOWLEDGE as its own given fact, datum, material, subject-matter, foundation,—or it can never begin at all.

§2. But where is this universal human knowledge stored? Where is it to be found? Where does it exist as a concrete reality? For, if philosophy founds upon a mere abstraction, it will itself be a mere abstraction in the end.

Universal human knowledge exists in UNIVERSAL LITERATURE, using the term in a sense so broad as to include every permanent record or register of human thought. It is only through *communication* (that is, the "making common") that individual knowledge enters into, or adds to, the great stock of common knowledge, and thereby universalizes itself in a true sense. Uncommunicated individual knowledge perishes with the individual; only communicated knowledge can become general or universal. Not all literature is knowledge; all completely universalized knowledge, however, derives its universality from its incorporation into literature, and exists in literature alone. For literature, in its essence, is not the mere material instruments of communication, but

rather the *meaning* which was originally put into these things by living intelligences, and which, if it had not been put into them, could never be extracted from them by other living intelligences. It is not true that the reader gets from a book only what he himself freely constructs in the reading by the activity of his own mind. Not a little trash of this sort has been said and printed; but whoever receives a letter from a distant friend may easily know, if he will, that he receives from it *information or knowledge* which he himself could not possibly have originated or constructed in his own mind. Universal literature is, so to speak, the whole mass of letters or extant correspondence which has been bequeathed by the past to the present; it constitutes now the capitalized knowledge of the human race, and grows in bulk from age to age by the additions of each new generation. It consists, not in parchment or paper as such, but in the essential meaning, the objective thought, the new grouping of old

symbols so as to make them express new ideas, which originated in the mind of the writer, and now reaches the mind of the reader through these outward signs alone. The medium is material, but the message is intellectual. This is the true “telepathy” (not a whit less wonderful because it is a fact of commonest experience), by which *human consciousness communicates with human consciousness through that which is not human consciousness*. The meaning communicated must pass through some material medium, vehicle, or bearer, or it could never be communicated at all; and the bearer of universal human knowledge, that is, the total message which man in the past has sent to man in the present, is universal literature.

§3. Now universal literature, being that by which alone human knowledge can completely universalize itself, depends upon UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE, as a world-wide fact. The plurality of languages in no wise obscures this fact. There is a universal grammar which finds in every

language universal parts of speech, universal modes of combining them in judgments or universal propositions, and universal elements of the latter in UNIVERSAL TERMS. Every word, in every language, no matter what may be its grammatical function, is essentially and necessarily a universal term; that is, it must be of universal application, or it would be utterly useless as a word.

§4. Thus we find that the universal human knowledge which supplies to philosophy its only possible datum, subject-matter, or foundation, is all contained in universal literature, or, in the last analysis, in universal terms. The results of science must be permanently stored in this form, and can only be found in this form. Museums, laboratories, observatories, and all other machinery of science, are only so many feeders of literature, and exist for the sake of libraries, as so many treasure-houses of human discovery, study, thought; and all the libraries in the world, considered in their essence, are

only a vast mass of universal terms. Hence philosophy cannot take the first step towards comprehension of the results of science, or of the method which has produced them, without first comprehending what universal terms really are; and the actual underpinning of every possible philosophy, whether the fact is admitted or not, consists in its consciously or unconsciously adopted doctrine of universal terms—in its THEORY OF UNIVERSALS. So much penetration as it shows in its Theory of Universals, so much, and no more, will it show in its interpretation of the Scientific Method, and this will exactly measure its worth to mankind in all time to come. In truth, the Scientific Method involves the Scientific Theory of Universals, and the Scientific Theory of Universals involves the Scientific Method; and henceforth philosophy has no legitimate business whatever except to interpret more profoundly, develop more highly, and apply more searchingly, rigorously, and universally, that perfect method of science

by which man has mastered all he really knows of the universe he inhabits. The first great task of philosophy, then, is to lay deep and solid foundations for the expansion and ideal perfection of human knowledge in a bold, new, and true Theory of Universals. For so-called modern philosophy rests complacently in a Theory of Universals which is thoroughly mediæval or antiquated, and shows itself daily more and more powerless to construct a theory of the universe tenable in the light of modern knowledge. There is no room here for any criticism of the past, or even of any adequate exposition of the Scientific Theory of Universals itself; but it is necessary to make a compact statement which shall give at least a glimpse of its three chief aspects.

§5. The first form of the Universal is the universal term or WORD. A few primitive words, radicals, or roots, at first used indiscriminately, gradually developed into distinct parts of speech, and through phonetic modification,

addition of prefixes or suffixes, composition, or other modes of internal or external change, gave rise at last to the numberless words of existing languages, the relations and affiliations of which are studied by comparative philology. Every word has its own genealogy, reaching far back into pre-historic ages; it lives a universal life quite independent of the individuals who successively use it, and constitutes a permanent organic product of a permanent organic community of speaking beings. Its universal life lies in its universal use by the community, to express some constant, or imperceptibly changing, universal meaning.

§6. The second form of the Universal is the universal meaning, conception, or CONCEPT. Just as all speaking is only a combination of words into sentences, so all thinking is only a combination of concepts into judgments or propositions. The concept is a permanently organized and growing thought, entering into countless judgments formed by the individual

mind, yet always retaining substantially the same organic form. This permanent organic constitution of the concept, quite independent of the individual minds which successively form and use it, is the most significant fact about it; for the permanent and independent constitution of concepts alone explains the permanence and independence of words, as bearers of common concepts of the race, and demonstrates an ultimate origin of the concept which is independent of any and every individual as such. Every concept lives a universal life in the individual mind, appearing and re-appearing as a fixed or constant element in conscious thinking; its universal life lies in its universal use by the individual mind, as the essential meaning of its corresponding word; and this essential meaning is necessarily determined by the nature of the *what-is-meant*.

§7. The third form of the Universal is the universal *what-is-meant*: that is, the universal classes or kinds of things, the universal genera

and species under which all known existences are discovered by science, or, in one word, the GENUS. Here we come to the very bottom of all philosophical analysis. Science claims to know real existences, to declare their real classes or kinds, and, at least to some extent, to explain their real mutual relations, interactions, and affiliations. The total results of all the special sciences may be summed up in two words: classification and genesis. Indeed, the one word classification suffices, for genesis means only the derivation of class from class, or kind from kind. Nothing is known by itself alone; it is known only through its kind. The essential constitution of every genus is that of *many things in one kind, one kind in many things*: the unity and the multiplicity are known inseparably together. Hence the genus is in no sense an abstraction, but the concrete totality of many realities in one reality; and this essentially organic constitution of the genus is the universal *what-is-meant* of the concept, just as the concept is the universal

*meaning* of the word. Science itself may be defined as KNOWLEDGE OF THE GENUS: that is, knowledge of the universe, as the highest kind which includes all other kinds.

§8. Thus the genus is the universal kind; the concept is the universal thought of the universal kind; the word is the universal expression of the universal thought of the universal kind. There are here three distinct grades, or ascending orders, of universality: objective universality in the genus, subjective universality in the concept, and objective-subjective universality in the word. To borrow the terms of mathematics, the genus is a universal of the first power, the concept a universal of the second power, and the word a universal of the third power; and, just as the cube and the square of any quantity presuppose the first power, so the word and the concept presuppose the genus. The word speaks the concept, and the concept thinks the genus; at the bottom of all, conditioning the very possibility of concept and word, lies

the genus, as the only possible unit of known existence. If science is not the knowledge of objectively real genera or kinds, then there is no real knowledge, and a philosophy of the universe is impossible. But, if science is indeed such knowledge, then the *Scientific Theory of Universals* (here scarcely more than hinted at) is the *Atomic Theory of Philosophy*; and the GENUS, the CONCEPT, and the WORD are the ULTIMATE MOLECULES OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

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### III.

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§9. The importance of the Theory of Universals in the past, present and future development of philosophic thought cannot be overstated. Every philosophy has grown out of some form of this theory, consciously adopted or unconsciously inherited, as its very life-germ; and every philosophy must follow out the line of development which its own peculiar form of the theory marks out for it beforehand. The character of its Theory of Universals moulds, controls, and predetermines the character of its Theory of Knowledge and its Theory of Being; and it is the union or fusion of these three theories in one comprehensive whole which constitutes a philosophy. Ignoring, therefore,

all minor distinctions, it is necessary at least to glance at three great and fundamentally different forms of the Theory of Universals, which for convenience may be styled the Greek, the German, and the American.

§10. The Greek theory recognizes the UNIVERSAL in its threefold reality as the GENUS, the CONCEPT, and the WORD, although without sufficiently distinguishing these one from another. It teaches that the Individual Thing is alone real, as the unit of existence and of knowledge alike; but it also teaches that the Universal, as sum of all the real characteristics or marks which are common to all things of one kind, exists whole and entire in each individual thing of that kind, and alone constitutes its intelligible reality as a fact in Nature. This is at least to conceive the Genus as depending on man neither for its existence nor for its intelligibility,—as being the real intelligible essence of the individual thing in itself, and, as such, an ultimate origin of the Concept and the

Word. Hence this undeveloped Greek theory, teaching the *Reality of the Universal in the Individual Thing*, has been for centuries fittingly denominated REALISM.

§11. The German theory recognizes the Universal as the Concept and the Word, but denies it altogether as the Genus,—denies it, that is, as a reality in a real Nature known by Man, yet independent of him. It teaches that the Individual Thing in Nature, even if it exists, cannot be known either in itself or in any of its real relations, internal or external. It teaches that the Universal is absolutely nothing but the work of human reason, has no real existence except as the Concept and the Word, and, as such, has nothing to do with individual things in themselves, which cannot possibly be known to exist. It teaches that the Concept and the Word have no ultimate origin but Man, and that the notion of real intelligible genera in Nature, existing independently of Man, is a monstrous fiction of mere untutored

imagination or "common sense." Hence the German theory, teaching the *Mere Ideality of the Universal in the Concept and the Word*, completely extinguishes, merges, or absorbs the Genus in the Concept or Idea, and has long been fittingly denominated CONCEPTUALISM or IDEALISM.

In this German theory of Universals lies the deep, secret, and generally unsuspected source of all modern Agnosticism, a result which was uncritically accepted, ready-made, by Spencer and Huxley from Hamilton and Mansel, borrowed by Hamilton and Mansel from Kant and the post-Kantian Idealists, and originally developed by Kant out of Hume and other adherents of Scholastic Nominalism.

§12. The American or Scientific Theory of Universals, like the Greek theory, recognizes the Universal in its three-fold reality, but in a much fuller, higher, and profounder sense. The Word is the UNIVERSAL OF SPEECH; the Concept is the UNIVERSAL OF THOUGHT; the Genus is

the UNIVERSAL OF BEING. The Word speaks the Concept, and the Concept thinks the Genus; the content or meaning of the Word is identical with the constitution of the Concept, and the constitution of the Concept (provided this be verifiable or scientifically true) is identical, so far as it goes, with the constitution of the Genus. The Genus itself is not a mere sum of characteristics or marks common to all things of one kind, and therefore real in a lower sense than the things themselves; on the contrary, it is *the self-related organic whole of many real things in one real kind*, and therefore precisely as real or concrete as they. So defined, the Genus, or Universal of Being, and not the Individual Thing as such, is alone real. It alone is the real unit of all known existence, and therefore constitutes an indispensable co-factor with the understanding in originating the Concept and the Word; while the individual thing can neither exist nor be known out of necessary relation to its kind, but can exist and

be known only in, with, and through its kind, which, again, can exist and be known only in, with, and through a higher kind. What is known through the Concept and the Word is never the *independent, isolated, or unrelated thing, nor yet the common essence of many unrelated things as a mere abstraction*, but always the *concrete kind of many interrelated things as one self-related reality*. Hence it is not true, as the Greek theory teaches, that the Universal exists whole and entire in *each individual* of the same kind; on the contrary, it exists only in *all the individuals* of that kind, as necessarily united in the Genus or Universal of Being. Neither is it true, as the German theory teaches, that the Universal has no real or intelligible existence in things in themselves, that is, in Nature as a reality independent of Man; for this is to deny the very possibility of science, as verified knowledge of such real Nature. Hence the American theory, teaching the *Reality of the Universal in the Concrete Kind or Genus, as the*

*Sole Object of the Scientific Concept and Sole Meaning of the Scientific Word*, and thereby preserving all the truth, while correcting the errors, of both Greek and German theories, is fittingly denominated SCIENTIFIC REALISM.

§13. These three fundamental forms of the Theory of Universals, therefore, may be shortly contrasted as follows:—

I. The Greek theory teaches that the Individual Thing-in-itself is the ultimate reality, but that the Universal is also real, in a lower sense, as the known essence of the Individual Thing-in-itself.

II. The German theory denies that the Individual Thing-in-itself is known at all, and teaches that the Universal is real only in the Concept and the Word.

III. The American theory teaches that the Universal is equally real in the Word, the Concept, and the Genus; and that the Individual Thing and the Universal Kind are known, each *in* and *with* and *through* the other,

in the GENUS-IN-ITSELF. The Word, the Concept, and the Genus are the ultimate molecules of universal human knowledge; and universal human knowledge itself, in its purified form as science, is all reducible in the last analysis to KNOWLEDGE OF THE GENUS,—that is, to knowledge of the innumerable genera, classes, or kinds of existence which together constitute the Universe or Highest Kind (*summum genus*).

Thus each of the three theories determines in a different way the OBJECT OF KNOWLEDGE, and thereby predetermines a different THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE and THEORY OF BEING. To the Greek theory, the sole object of knowledge is *the Universal in the Individual Thing*. To the German theory, the sole object of knowledge is *the Universal in the Concept or Idea*. To the American theory, the sole object of knowledge is *the Universal Kind and the Individual Thing as necessarily correlated in the REAL GENUS-IN-ITSELF*.

§14. For all present purposes, it must suffice to exhibit, without criticism or argument, these three theories side by side, and leave the thoughtful reader to be arguer or critic for himself. The American or Scientific Theory of Universals underlies and supports the whole fabric of modern science. Science presents itself as exact and verified knowledge of genera, classes, or kinds of real existence, at all times observable and verifiable in the Universe as the supreme Genus. This knowledge embraces a vast body of scientific concepts, expressed in scientific words; and the truth of each concept depends absolutely on the identity of its constitution, so far as it goes, with that of the genus which is its correlate or object.

§15. But the identity of constitution between a subjective concept and an objective genus requires that there should be something in common between thoughts and things—something which may exist indifferently in either. Such a common term is found in the

INHERENT SYSTEM OF RELATIONS OR IMMANENT RELATIONAL CONSTITUTION; for relations may subsist indifferently between things or between thoughts, and therefore be the same in both. For instance, the relation or ratio between the circumference and diameter of a circle chalked on a blackboard is precisely the same as the relation or ratio between the circumference and diameter of a circle conceived in imagination; both relations inhere necessarily in the constitution of the circle as a circle, wherever found, and are necessarily identical. In other words, equal ratios are one and the same ratio. Aristotle recognized the truth of this principle unequivocally two thousand years ago, when he said that, in such cases, "equality is unity." If this principle is true, then the immanent relational constitution of a concept may be strictly and absolutely identical, so far as it goes, with the immanent relational constitution of a genus.

§16. The Scientific Theory of Universals, therefore, which science presupposes in every statement of cosmical fact or cosmical law, necessarily involves the great, profound, and all-embracing principle of the OBJECTIVITY OF RELATIONS: namely, the principle that *relations are no less real, discoverable, verifiable, and intelligible in the objective world than they are in subjective thought*. The real object of every scientific concept is a self-related genus in Nature; and the possibility of observing and verifying it is the absolute condition of the possibility of science. The whole business of science is to observe, verify, and understand real genera in Nature,—that is, to discover them; it does not attempt the impossible task of proving the possibility of its own discovery, since every such proof is a manifest begging of the question. The only philosophy, therefore, which either does or can harmonize itself with science is that which defends the discoverability of real genera in Nature, or (what is the same

thing precisely) recognizes *objective generic relations as the intelligible essence of a real environment not dependent on man either for its existence or for its intelligibility*. Such a philosophy is that which founds upon Scientific Realism, as opposed to Philosophical Idealism; and no other can justly lay claim to the epithet "modern."

§17. No philosophy, it is true, can demonstrate by pure reasoning that the Genus exists, since all reasoning, however pure, assumes the existence of the Genus. But science has already demonstrated its existence in the only possible way, not by pure reasoning, but by observation and verification. If observation and verification cannot demonstrate the real existence of the Genus, philosophy itself, in any sane sense of the word, is annihilated; for philosophy has nothing to work with except concepts, and, since concepts can think nothing whatever but genera, the doubt or denial of genera is the destruction of all concepts themselves. The

legitimate work of philosophy is to take from science the concepts it has already acquired by scientific observation and verification, to combine them in new and higher concepts through philosophic hypothesis, and to confirm philosophic hypothesis by philosophic verification,—in a word, to discover still larger genera than are presented in the limited fields of investigation of the special sciences, and thereby to increase knowledge of the whole real universe. Philosophy, in truth, is only the completion or higher evolution of science itself, and can never attain to any *higher kind of certitude* than that to which science has already attained. This recognition of the results of science as the foundation of philosophy is not to “beg the question,” “take the universe for granted,” or “build on mere baseless assumption”; for the existence of the Genus has been long ago demonstrated by science in the only possible way, to wit, by observation and verification. The sole “postulate” of philosophy

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is the TRUTH OF SCIENCE—which is disputable by no educated man; and, at bottom, the truth of science is the truth of the Scientific Theory of Universals.

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## IV.

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§18. It has been thus far shown that the real object of knowledge is not, as the Greek Theory of Universals teaches, the “tode ti” or INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVE THING-IN-ITSELF; nor yet, as the German Theory teaches, the “Vorstellung” or UNIVERSAL SUBJECTIVE CONCEPT-IN-ITSELF; but rather, as the American or Scientific Theory teaches, the UNIVERSAL OBJECTIVE GENUS-IN-ITSELF. That is to say, the real object of knowledge is not the concept at all (though this, too, may become a real object of knowledge), but that which is really known by means of the concept: namely, the REAL UNIVERSAL KIND OF REAL INDIVIDUAL THINGS, internally so self-related as to constitute one

essential whole out of many essential parts, and rendered intelligible through this real internal self-relation.

§19. Against this determination of the object of knowledge may be arrayed the current notions of the “relativity of knowledge.” This doctrine, a truism or a falsity according as it is conceived, is too often made to take account only of the cognitive relation between the object and the subject, ignoring altogether the internal self-relatedness of the object in itself—which is the main part of the business. The argument commonly founded on it is that, since the object can only be known in relation to the subject, and since man’s knowing-faculty is necessarily limited and imperfect, therefore *man can know nothing of the object as it is in itself*. This conclusion is far too large for the premises. From these it only follows that man’s knowledge of the object is limited and imperfect—which is true; it does not follow that man knows nothing of the object as it is in itself—which is false.

The above conclusion makes two enormous assumptions: that the object *as known* must of necessity be totally different from the object *as it is in itself*, and that the object as it is in itself cannot be known *at all*, unless it is known *wholly*. Neither of these assumptions has any foundation in reason or in fact. Just so far as man discovers the real internal self-relatedness of the object, just so far he knows it as it is in itself; for to know it “in itself” can only mean to know it in its internal relations. Science, which is his verified knowledge both of external and internal relations of the object, is at once the measure and the proof of his knowledge of it as it is in itself.

Rationally interpreted, the doctrine of the “relativity of knowledge” means merely that man can know the object so far only as he has the capacity to know it—which is surely a very innocent proposition; but to interpret it as meaning that man cannot at all know the object as it is in itself is to commit the absurdity

of denying the very possibility of human knowledge. For “not to know the object as it is in itself” is either (1) to know it as it is *not* in itself, which would be *absolute error*, or else (2) not to know it *at all*, which would be *absolute ignorance*. To one or the other of these all human knowledge is reduced by the common interpretation of the doctrine of the “relativity of knowledge.” The world needs a wiser doctrine.

§20. So important to a truly scientific theory of the universe is thorough comprehension of the Scientific Theory of Universals, and, in particular, of the principle of the \*Intelligible Reality of the Genus-in-itself, that a single clear and simple illustration of this principle will be no waste of space. Let us take the “family” as an easily conceived instance of the real genus in itself.

In modern civilized communities, the political unit is the individual; but the social unit, as distinguished from the political unit, is

the family, since society as such consists only of complete and incomplete families. The married individual is a member in each of two complete families—that from which he sprang and that which he himself founds. The unmarried individual is an actual member of the family from which he sprang, and also a possible founder and member of a new family of his own; hence he must be regarded as existing partly in a complete, and partly in an incomplete family.

Every complete family as such is essentially and necessarily composed of several individual members—father, mother, and one or more children. The father is related to the mother as husband, and the mother to the father as wife; their reciprocal relation is marriage. The father and mother are both related to the children as parents, and the children to the father and mother as offspring; their reciprocal relation is parentage, on the one side, and filiation, on the other. The children are related to each other

as brothers and sisters: their relation is that of brotherhood or sisterhood. Father, mother, and children, although separate individuals, are constituted a real family by these interrelations of marriage, parentage, filiation, brotherhood, and sisterhood; these family relations themselves, in their totality, make up the family constitution, and are precisely as real as the individuals related, inhering in the family *as such* and *as a whole*, and subsisting neither in any one individual member nor in any outside observer. If there is to be either a real father, a real mother, or a real child, then there must be a real family of all three; there can be no father without a mother and a child, no mother without a father and a child, no child without a father and a mother. Nay, more: no individual as such can exist except as a member of some family precisely as real as himself; the reality of his family is the absolute condition of his own reality, and, *vice versa*, the reality of several individuals is the absolute condition of the

reality of the family. All individuals compose the genus family. All families compose the genus society. All societies compose the genus mankind. All individuals = all families = all societies = all mankind.

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In this union and interrelation of many in one and one in many, in this immanent relational constitution by which many individuals exist and are indissolubly united in one kind, lies the very essence of the family as such; it is this system of inherent relations, precisely as real as the individuals related, and wholly independent of any outside observer, which constitutes the intelligible and essential reality of the family as a genus in itself. Every family must be relationally constituted in order either *to be* a family or *to be known* as one; every genus must be relationally constituted in order either *to be* a genus or *to be known* as one. Immanent in the very nature of being, this principle of the objectivity or reality of generic relations is the absolute condition of the

possibility of a WORLD-ORDER; and, immanent in the very nature of knowledge, it is no less the absolute condition of the possibility of a WORLD-SCIENCE.

§21. Now in order to escape from the dense fog of error which, generated by the doctrine of the exclusive subjectivity of relations, has settled heavily down over so-called modern philosophy under the malign influence of the German Theory of Universals, let us imagine an outside observer, as knowing subject, set in actual relation to a particular family, as object known.

I. First of all, it is to be noted that the observer and the family are, numerically considered, *two distinct and independent realities*. So far as they are now related in the mere act of knowledge, one is the subject and the other is the object of this act; to this extent they are reciprocally dependent,—that is, the present act of knowledge is conditioned upon their being brought into present relationship. But, so far

as they exist in themselves, neither subject nor object is at all dependent upon the other; the observer is *intelligent in himself*, independently of the family, and the family is *intelligible in itself*, independently of the observer. The present relationship of knowledge is necessary neither to the intelligence of the subject nor to the intelligibility of the object, nor yet to the real existence of either.

II. Next, it is to be noted that *what the subject knows of the object*, in the present relationship, is identical with the *concept which results from that relationship*. If the observer's knowledge is real (that is, if it is neither error nor ignorance mistaken for knowledge), then his concept of the family reproduces subjectively and accurately the objective relational constitution of the family. What the observer knows is, not his own concept, but the family itself; the concept is simply his knowledge of it. Otherwise, the family would not be the object at all—which it must be in the case supposed. As

self-conscious, the observer doubtless knows his own knowledge, too; but his knowledge of the family, if real, is primarily knowledge of the family itself, and only secondarily of the concept of the family.

III. Further, it is to be noted that the degree, quantity, and quality of the observer's knowledge of the family, in the case supposed, depend on *two conditions*: (1) on the fulness and accuracy of his previous knowledge of the real genus "family" in general, and (2) on the fulness and accuracy of his observation of this family in particular. If the observer were only a child, he would know little of the real family constitution in general, and would necessarily form a very vague and inadequate concept of this particular family; and so, likewise, if he were a chance visitor from some planet where babies grow on trees or fall in raindrops. Only he who already possesses profound knowledge of a real kind will quickly and thoroughly comprehend a new case of that kind, and then only if he keenly and

comprehensively observes it. The adequacy of a concept to its object must always depend on previous thorough understanding of the genus to which the object belongs, and of the lower and higher genera to which this genus is related in Nature. Our observer can “know” the family, as object, on no other terms than these. The price of all knowledge is *experience*, and this price he must pay.

IV. Lastly, it is to be noted that the concept (that is, the observer's actual knowledge of the family) is a *product of two equally real co-factors*, the observer and the family as subject and object. The observer is intelligent in himself,—more or less so according to his native capacity and the amount of his previously acquired knowledge; the family is intelligible in itself,—its intelligibility (since all relations as such are essentially intelligible) being simply the necessary consequence of its relational constitution. The concept, as actual present knowledge of the family by the observer, *results*

from bringing an intelligent subject into actual relationship with an intelligible object; it is determined to be what it is, and not otherwise, by the united determinant influences of both. Certainly, if the object did not impress, affect, or act upon the subject in some way or other, it could never be known by the subject at all, and the concept would not in the least degree reproduce its relational constitution—which the concept incontrovertibly does, if it is real knowledge of the object at all. *How* this result comes to pass is a difficult problem, to be solved, if possible, by the Theory of Knowledge; but *that* it comes to pass is an undeniable fact, if any real knowledge exists at all. Whatever theory may be advanced to explain the “origin of knowledge,” every such theory must recognize the truth that subject and object are equally real co-factors in all real knowledge, or else must come under the ban of all theories which despise and falsify facts. The influence of the object is proved by the fact

that real knowledge of it exists; the influence of the subject is proved by the fact that this real knowledge is limited and imperfect. But the very limitation of real knowledge of the object in itself is proof that such real knowledge exists; for nothing can be limited that is not itself real.

§22. Now let us inquire how the observer, as subject, and the family, as object, would be related, if the German Conceptualist Theory of Universals (namely, that the subjective universal concept, or "Vorstellung," and not the objective universal genus, is the real object of knowledge) were true.

It follows from the German Theory that, like husband and wife in the old common law, *the observer and the family are one, and the observer IS that one*. According to this theory, the concept is the only real object of knowledge; the genus cannot be admitted to have any reality at all, as distinguished from the concept. But the concept of the family, in the case supposed, exists nowhere but in the

observer's mind; hence the family, so far as it really exists, exists only in the observer's mind, and cannot exist at all outside of the observer himself.

The only apparent or plausible escape from this absurd conclusion is to argue that the family at least exists in the concepts of many observers, and therefore must exist outside of any particular observer. But to this argument the reply is obvious and crushing: namely, that "many observers," if thus unguardedly and most naively conceded to exist, would necessarily constitute a real objective genus, independent of our particular observer and all his concepts; and that, if one such real genus may exist and be known as separate from his concept of it, it is preposterously illogical to refuse to recognize another such genus in the family. The German Theory of Universals has but one logical terminus—*SOLIPSISM*, or the philosophy which denies all real existence except to the solitary philosopher himself.

In short, the German Theory, if logically adhered to, altogether absorbs or extinguishes the object in the subject, the family in the observer, the universe in the theorist, and destroys thereby the possibility of *any real or scientific knowledge*; while, if not logically adhered to, it is totally worthless for science and philosophy alike. Further criticism of it is unnecessary here. The Scientific Theory of Universals, applied in practice, is the SCIENTIFIC METHOD; and that will be the subject of our next paper.

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## V.

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§ 23. What is the SCIENTIFIC METHOD? Nothing is more common or more confusing than a loose, vague, and indeterminate use of this phrase. It is the object of the present paper to give definiteness and scientific precision to a much abused expression, by showing that the Scientific Method is neither more nor less than the UNIVERSAL LEARNING-PROCESS—the process by which man, individual or collective, has learned everything which he now knows; and, further, by showing that this universal learning-process is neither more nor less than the SCIENTIFIC THEORY OF UNIVERSALS APPLIED IN PRACTICE TO THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE.

§24. If science is real knowledge of the universe,—that is, neither ignorance nor error mistaken for knowledge,—then, self-evidently, the “method” of science is nothing but the way in which that knowledge has been acquired. It is no mystery; it is the familiar process by which we have learned whatever we really know. Common-sense applies this process clumsily on a small scale; the separate sciences apply it skilfully on a large scale, but in arbitrarily limited fields of investigation; philosophy, or WORLD-SCIENCE, applies it skilfully on the largest scale to the universe as a whole. The fundamental identity of the learning-process in common-sense, in science, and in philosophy,—in other words, the absolute *unity and continuity of method in all acquisition of knowledge*,—is the constitutive and distinctive principle of scientific philosophy as such.

Nothing could be more unscientific, unphilosophic, or disastrous to the cause of ripe reason, than the contempt for so-called

“common thinking” which is fostered by the unmodernized philosophy grounded on the German Theory of Universals. Common thinking is only immature and inaccurate thinking; but the maturest and most accurate thinking must first pass through the stage of immaturity and inaccuracy. The difference is one of degree only, not of kind. There is but *one universe*, whose particular phenomena change, but whose essential laws are unchanging; there is but *one human reason*, whose special applications vary, but whose essential laws are unvarying; the fundamental unity of the universe and the fundamental unity of human reason logically necessitate a fundamental unity of method in the application of human reason to the universe. Hence it is a thoroughly irrational and incredible supposition that there should be any philosophic method whatever which is fundamentally different from the Scientific Method. The absolute unity and continuity of method in all acquisition of real knowledge

is, we repeat, the first principle of a genuinely scientific philosophy.

§25. Consider once more, in the light of all that has preceded, how the Scientific Theory of Universals determines necessarily the OBJECT OF KNOWLEDGE, and then note how this determination of the object of knowledge explains the one and only possible way of acquiring knowledge—the universal learning-process or Scientific Method.

I. As already shown at length, the complete object of knowledge is never the *Individual Thing*, never the *Universal Concept*, but always the *Universal Genus*. The Genus is the unity of many individual things reciprocally related in one universal kind; and the intelligible essence of the Genus is this internal relational system of the whole as a whole. The Genus may or may not be related, as a present object of knowledge, to a present subject of knowledge, in a present act of knowledge; but this non-essential and transient relation to a subject in

no wise affects or changes the internal self-relatedness in which the intelligible essence of the Genus consists. Nothing but this internal and permanent relational constitution of the Genus-in-itself can explain the fact that, whenever it becomes an object of knowledge, many independent minds or subjects of knowledge derive essentially one and the same concept from it. This significant and pregnant fact did not escape the eagle eye of Kant himself, when he said (Prolegomena, §18): "There would be no reason why the judgments of other minds should necessarily agree with my own judgments, were it not that the unity of the object to which these judgments all refer, and with which they all agree, requires them all to agree one with another." If Kant had only adhered to this profound insight into the independent, immanent, and determinant constitution of the object as a *known thing-in-itself*, and if he had not constantly neutralized it by declaring the *thing-in-itself unknowable*, the

German Theory of Universals would not have been for a hundred years the chief obstacle to the progress of philosophy.

II. The Concept is not an intermediate third term between the object and the subject of knowledge, but is itself the very act or relation of knowledge between them. *The knowing an object is itself the concept of it.* Even a false concept is only partially false—the false combination of elements separately true. Nothing could have been more unfortunate for philosophy than the clumsy “hypostasis,” or transformation of a mere act or relation into a thing, by which the Concept has been set up in German metaphysic as itself the only real object of knowledge. The permanence of conceptual knowledge is a fact due to memory; but this fact does not wipe out the other facts that *the object of all knowledge is the genus known, and that knowledge perishes when the genus is forgotten.*

III. To the question, "What is that?" the invariable answer is, "A book," "A house," "A tree," or some other kind of things—a genus always. The amount of information imparted by the answer is measured by the amount of knowledge respecting that kind of things already possessed by the inquirer. Nothing whatever is or can be known as absolutely single or unrelated, that is, as out of its kind. The only possible answer to the question, "What is that thing?" is to tell the kind to which that thing belongs. Know the kind, and the thing is so far known; know all the kind to which it belongs, and the thing would be absolutely or exhaustively known. If absolute or exhaustive knowledge of anything is unattainable by man, the reason is that his knowledge of the innumerable kinds of things is necessarily incomplete. But it is much to know in what knowledge consists—much to know that knowledge is always of the thing through its kind and the kind through its things: in a word, that its object is necessarily and

invariably the Genus-in-itself. For it is the fact of the independent, permanent, and immanent self-relatedness of the Genus-in-itself which renders the universe intelligible; and it is thorough understanding and appreciation of this fact which render a philosophy of the universe possible, nay, inevitable. Science has already accumulated abundant materials for a comprehensive world-conception: nothing is now needed but ability to comprehend them.

§26. From all this it follows that the learning-process, identical in common-sense, science, and philosophy, must be the patient and continuous DISCOVERY OF GENERA BY EXPERIENCE. If the internal self-relatedness of the Genus exists independently of human reason, yet is knowable and discoverable by it, then the only possible learning-process must be the OBSERVATION OF NATURE. Such has been from the beginning the Scientific Method; and this is nothing but reducing to practice the Scientific Theory of Universals, namely, that the

real object of knowledge is the Genus alone. As so often happens, practice has gone in advance of theory; yet theory alone ultimately explains practice. Scientific practice took for granted the existence and knowableness of genera and species, and their discoverability by observation. Indifferent to all philosophical skepticism, it resolutely set to work to discover them; and the result has been such a vast accumulation of indubitable knowledge of Nature as to confound and overawe skepticism itself. In making the initial assumption of knowable and discoverable genera in Nature, and in employing observation and experiment as its means of investigation, science has only improved upon the immemorial method of common-sense—the method which every child necessarily adopts in its earliest acquisition of knowledge, the method which every man adopts in the world of affairs, the method which every skeptic himself adopts in his ordinary life. And it turns out in the end that

this practical method, tested by a thoroughly modernized theory of universals, is at bottom the only philosophical method—the only possible foundation of a scientific philosophy.

For from the German Theory of Universals, that the real object of knowledge is the Concept alone, it follows that the whole learning-process consists in the mere DISCOVERY OF CONCEPTS BY CONSCIOUSNESS and the DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS BY PURE REASON, independently of real genera and species in Nature as a known thing-in-itself. Hence Kant unequivocally declares (Prolegomena, §36): “The [human] understanding does not derive its own *a priori* laws from Nature, but prescribes them to it.” Again (§38): “The unity of objects is determined merely by the [human] understanding, and indeed according to conditions which lie in its own constitution; and thus the [human] understanding is the origin of the universal order of Nature, since it comprehends all phenomena under its own laws,” etc. In other words, Nature,

as a reality existing independently of the human understanding, has no discoverable unity or order whatever, and is absolutely unknowable in itself. This is a flat denial of the results of science, which consist in verified discoveries of an *immanent and generic* order and unity of Nature, known by, but in itself independent of, the human understanding. Thus the German Theory of Universals, denying all knowledge of real genera in themselves, denies the truth of science, and the possibility of any method by which the immanent constitution of Nature may be learned by man; and there we leave it.

§27. Now the Scientific Method, whether practised unskilfully and narrowly by common-sense, skilfully and broadly by science, or profoundly and comprehensively by philosophy, consists in three essential steps.

I. OBSERVATION. Man *observes* Nature, and thereby gradually discovers its real genera. Since the real object of knowledge is invariably the Genus-in-itself, there must be observation and

comparison of many individual things before the generic relations which unite them in one natural kind can be even in part discovered,—that is, before knowledge as such begins. These generic relations ramify far beyond the reach of exhaustive observation by man. Hence result the actual limitation and imperfection of human knowledge, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the absurdity of setting up any arbitrary or fixed limits of human knowledge, so long as there is a possibility of making further observation, or of inventing artificial aids to observation, or of strengthening and developing the observing powers themselves. Grant the existence of observing powers in Man and the existence of genera to be observed in Nature, and science is possible; deny either factor of human knowledge, and science is impossible. It is wholly immaterial to the truth of science whether we can, or cannot, frame a Theory of Knowledge which shall explain exactly and fully in what observation itself consists.

*How* we observe may be doubtful; *that* we observe is indubitable. Kant reasons that we have no faculty by which to observe things in themselves, and therefore cannot know them; scientific philosophy reasons that we do know genera in themselves, and therefore must have faculties by which to observe them. The very first step in learning anything is Observation, and common-sense, science, and philosophy alike would be impossible without it.

II. HYPOTHESIS. Man not only observes real genera in being, but also creates ideal generalizations in thought. By imagination, inference, and reasoning, he combines the data of observation into tentative concepts of possible real kinds. All reasoning is classification. Deduction is reasoning from the constitution of the universal kind to that of its individual things; induction is reasoning from the constitution of the individual things to that of their universal kind. The syllogism itself, the universal type and instrument of all reasoning, affirms both

in premises and in conclusion the reality of generic relations, and absolutely presupposes the truth of the Scientific Theory of Universals. Hypothesis, the only means by which man can freely enlarge his intellectual horizon, is itself a mere bridge between initial observation and final observation. For no hypothesis as such is knowledge; but hypothesis becomes knowledge, when new experience has set upon it the seal of its own confirmation.

III. EXPERIMENTAL VERIFICATION. This is the testing of hypothesis by fresh observation. If an ideal generalization, subjected to this crucial test, proves to have been a genuine anticipation of experience, it can only be because fresh observation at last finds the real genus which the ideal generalization anticipated, and to the discovery of which it successfully guided. This is the essence of all Verification, the last step of the Scientific Method, the confirmation of hypothesis by fresh observation, the discovery in Nature of a real genus which an

ideal generalization sagaciously divined in thought. The Scientific Method begins with OBSERVATION, proceeds with HYPOTHESIS, and ends with FRESH OBSERVATION IN EXPERIMENTAL VERIFICATION; and what it observes, what it anticipates, what it verifies,—in one word, what it learns,—is invariably the REAL GENUS-IN-ITSELF.

§28. Thus the Scientific Method, or the universal learning-process by which all human knowledge is acquired, is neither more nor less than the Scientific Theory of Universals reduced to practice. The doctrine of the REAL GENUS-IN-ITSELF, as discovered by the Scientific Method, is the THEORY OF BEING; and that will be the subject of our next paper.

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## VI.

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§ 29. The Scientific, Modern, or American Theory of Universals, which results necessarily from analysis of the Scientific Method, is SCIENTIFIC REALISM, as opposed to PHILOSOPHICAL IDEALISM; and it determines the subdivision of scientific philosophy into its three great departments, the theories of BEING, of KNOWING, and of DOING. The Scientific Theory of Being results from analysis of the GENUS-IN-ITSELF, and constitutes Ontology or CONSTRUCTIVE REALISM, as opposed to all forms of Constructive Idealism. The Scientific Theory of Knowledge results from analysis of the CONCEPT, and constitutes Psychology or CRITICAL REALISM, as opposed to all

forms of Transcendental or Critical Idealism. The Scientific Theory of Conduct results from analysis of the WORD, and constitutes Anthroponomy (including Ethics, Politics, and Art in its widest sense). Sociology, or ETHICAL REALISM, as opposed to all forms of Ethical Idealism. The Scientific Theory of the Universe, as the absolute union of Being, Knowing, and Doing in the One and All, results from comprehension of these three theories in complete organic unity, and constitutes Organic Philosophy, Scientific Theology, or RELIGIOUS REALISM, as opposed to all forms of Religious Idealism.

§30. The problem of the scientific theory of Being is to determine, so far as it can be determined by the philosophical use of the scientific method, the actual constitution of the universe as a whole, that is, as the *Highest Known Kind of Real or Concrete Being*; and thereby to form a SCIENTIFIC WORLD-CONCEPTION.

§31. In order to grasp the full meaning of this problem, let us take, for example, a familiar instance of the known kind in the human race. The words "Man," "Humanity," and "Mankind," although in popular use employed vaguely and almost interchangeably, will serve our turn, if for present purposes we may be permitted to limit their signification by precise definitions.

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By "Man," then, let us understand the CONCRETE INDIVIDUAL; that is, any and every living member of the human race in the fulness of his individual reality, including, on the one hand, all that is peculiar to him as a particular man, and, on the other hand, all that is common to him with other men in general.

By "Humanity," let us understand the ABSTRACT CLASS ESSENCE, including only the universal nature which is common to all men as a class, and excluding all that is peculiar to each particular man as an individual. "Humanity" thus expresses what we all know as "human nature," which everybody recognizes as a mere

abstraction by itself alone, and which nobody nowadays mistakes for an independent reality; it is real, but real only as existing in all real men.

Lastly, by "Mankind," let us understand the CONCRETE UNIVERSAL KIND OR GENUS, the human race as a whole, including all concrete individuals with all their individual peculiarities, and including, therefore, that universal "human nature" which, though a mere abstraction by itself alone, is nevertheless completely realized in each real individual, and in the race as a real whole of real individuals.

§32. These definitions bring out clearly the fact that "Humanity," the abstract class essence, is realized equally in the individual, "Man," and in the genus, "Mankind"; it constitutes that by which we reason from one to the other. Such is necessarily the case with every genus. In every genus, the constitution of the CONCRETE INDIVIDUAL and the constitution of the CONCRETE KIND reciprocally make known or reveal each other, just so far as each realizes and

contains the ABSTRACT CLASS ESSENCE. True, the individual has his individual peculiarities, such as his "face" or "make" of individual features as a whole, which is never exactly duplicated in any other individual; while the genus equally has its generic peculiarities, such as heredity, bisexuality, gregariousness, and all other attributes which can exist only through the social correlation of many individuals in one kind. These peculiarities are not common both to genus and to individual; but the abstract class essence, unreal by itself alone, yet realized in both, is common to both. Hence the constitutions of the genus as genus and of the individual as individual, containing equally this common identical element, necessarily repeat, reflect, or reveal each other to that extent; knowledge of this common element in one is necessarily knowledge of it in the other also. The individual is a known fact; society is no less a known fact; but each is known only through the other, and what makes either known is what

makes both known at the same time. This is the reason why, in general, the individual thing can be known only through its kind, and the kind only through its individual things. Upon this great principle of the RECIPROCAL REVELATION OF THING AND KIND rests, on the one hand, the possibility of *Induction*, or reasoning from the constitution of individual things to that of their universal kind, and, on the other hand, the possibility of *Deduction*, or reasoning from the constitution of a universal kind to that of its individual things. It is the antecedent condition, not only of all scientific hypothesis, but even of the syllogism itself, the universal type and instrument of all reasoning whatever. It is safe to say, therefore, that no principle, whether in formal or in applied logic, has a firmer foundation in science, nay, in the eternal constitution of reason itself, than this principle which results from analysis of the Real Genus-in-itself: namely, THE INDIVIDUAL CONCRETE THING AND THE UNIVERSAL CONCRETE KIND

REVEAL EACH OTHER THROUGH THE ABSTRACT CLASS ESSENCE WHICH IS COMMON TO BOTH. On its logical side, this principle is the *Fundamental Law of Human Knowledge*; on its ontological side, it is the *Fundamental Law of the Natural Self-Revelation of Being to Thought*. It constitutes, therefore, the foundation of the Scientific Theory of Being,

§33. Now it is precisely this profound and irrefutable principle, this indispensable basis of all science and all reasoning, this necessary constitution of the Real Genus which renders the universe intelligible by mind, that Agnosticism unwittingly and blunderingly violates. Philosophical, conceptualistic, or idealistic Agnosticism builds in vain on the exploded German Theory of Universals (see §§9–22), and needs no further notice here. Popular Agnosticism, however, which has no Theory of Universals and therefore no Philosophy at all, professes to build on the facts of science, and to be as realistic as science itself. While it claims

scientific knowledge of genera and species in Nature, as real kinds of real things, it at the same time denies all scientific knowledge of Nature in its infinite unity, as the supreme Kind of Kinds,—denies, that is, the possibility of a SCIENTIFIC WORLD-CONCEPTION. It thus proves itself totally incapable of perceiving that, from the mere logical nature of the case, *scientific knowledge of finite genera-in-themselves is necessarily, just so far, scientific knowledge of the Infinite Genus-in-itself*—totally incapable of perceiving that *two* in one hand and *two* in the other hand constitute *four* in both hands. In other words, popular Agnosticism possesses all the elements of a Scientific World-Conception, but does not possess synthetic ability enough to put them together or see the whole in the sum of the parts.

For, precisely as the individual thing is related to its kind, so is the kind related to its superior kind, this to the kind next superior, and so on till that highest kind of all is reached which is

identical with Nature, the Universe, the One and All of Existence,—with Infinite Real Being; and, precisely as the constitution of the lowest kind is manifested or revealed in the constitution of the lowest individual thing of that kind through the abstract class essence which is common to both, so is the constitution of the supreme Kind of Kinds, or Infinite Real Being, manifested or revealed in the constitution of the whole vast chain of kinds down to that *individuum* which closes the series, be it atom, ether-unit, monad-soul, or what it may. The minimum of real knowledge, therefore, is, *just so far*, real knowledge of the constitution of the Universe in its unity, totality, and infinitude. In other words, the nature of the Infinite Whole reveals itself necessarily in the nature of each and all of its infinitesimal parts and each and all of its included kinds, in proportion to the relative elevation of each part or kind in the scale of being. This not only is so, but must be so, if the Scientific Theory of Universals is true; and there

is no truth in science or in human reason, if that theory is false. It is logically impossible to deny all scientific knowledge of the Universe in its infinite unity without at the same time denying all scientific knowledge of it in its infinite multiplicity; for knowledge of the least of its parts is, precisely to that extent, knowledge of the whole. If popular Agnosticism only had enough philosophy to understand and follow out the logic of its own denials, it would be a mad plunge into bottomless, shoreless, sky less Ignorance—the suicide of reason itself in a delirium of cowardice and self-distrust. From this self-annihilation it escapes only by contradicting itself more stoutly and more unblushingly than the Athanasian Creed; and for this reason alone it is safe to predict that the reign of the Agnostic Creed over modern liberalism will be short.

§34. In its simplest form, then, the problem of the Scientific Theory of Being is: "*What kind of a Universe is this?*" Either the Universe is

of no kind at all (which is absurd), or else its kind must be determined and discovered in strict accordance with the known universal law of all kinds: namely, the *Reciprocal Revelation of Thing and Kind through the Abstract Class Essence which is common to both*. The problem can be solved only on the principle that the essential constitution of the Universe more or less repeats, reflects and reveals itself in miniature in the constitution of each of the innumerable concrete kinds of which it is itself the absolute unity, although it cannot completely reveal itself except to itself in this same absolute unity. It is not necessary that all of these kinds contained within the Universe should be known by man, in order to enable him to attain real knowledge of the constitution of the Universe as a whole, and thereby to form a scientific world-conception; real knowledge of any of these kinds is, just so far, real knowledge of the Universe as the supreme Kind of Kinds, and, the better its internal subordinate kinds

are known, so much the greater will be man's knowledge of the supreme Kind of Kinds itself. Hence the orderly progress of science is the natural growth of man's knowledge of Infinite Being, and constitutes REVELATION in that strictly natural sense of the word in which alone science can employ it.

Anything arbitrary, miraculous, or supernatural, anything beyond or contrary to experience, anything inconsistent with known fact or known law, anything incapable of verification by ascertained congruity with the already ascertained Order of Nature, would be utterly inadmissible in scientific philosophy, and therefore utterly inadmissible here. For this reason the thoroughly transcendental conception of the "Unknowable," in any other sense than that of the *Non-Existent* or the *Nonsensical*, must be rigorously excluded as a mere superstition, since it confessedly denotes that which is beyond all possible knowledge or experience. The Unknown, however, must be

admitted to be as certainly real as the Known, since every step in the triumphant march of science, every discovery in the long history of man, has essentially consisted in the conversion of the Unknown into the Known, and since thus, by the widest possible induction, the reality of the Unknown has been established beyond all controversy as an object of perpetually possible experience. No “transcendental” conception—no conception, that is, which transcends actual or possible experience—can be recognized as legitimate in scientific philosophy; there is no such thing, therefore, as “Transcendental Realism”—a name which is self-contradictory, and hence utterly devoid of meaning.

It remains now to apply the principle of the *Reciprocal Revelation of Thing and Kind* to the solution of the problem of the Scientific Theory of Being: “What kind of a Universe is this?”

§35. The Universe, as the supreme Kind of Kinds which contains all other kinds within itself, is the real genus-in-itself in its absolute

and all-comprehensive mode of INFINITE BEING. It cannot, therefore, exist as one among many universes of like nature; it must be the One and All, or it is not the universe. Hence the multiplicity involved in the essence of every kind as such must be found, in the case of the supreme Kind of Kinds, not outside of, but within, its own infinite unity; that is, the constitution of the Universe as a whole cannot be discovered by comparing it with other infinite wholes (but one infinite whole being possible), but only by studying the constitution of its own finite parts. Each known part reveals one real character of the whole; all the known parts together reveal all the real characters of the whole which have thus far come within the reach of human knowledge. Whatever parts or characters remain still unknown can only supplement, never subvert, the reality of those already known. Otherwise knowledge itself is an absolute impossibility, science is all an

illusion, and, as Pindar sang, "Man is a shadow's dream."

§36. Now each of the real and concrete forms of existence which are known to man, boundless as their number and variety may appear, falls nevertheless under one or another of three great categorical TYPES OF REAL BEING: namely, the MACHINE, the ORGANISM, and the PERSON. The grounds of this division cannot be given at present; they will sufficiently manifest themselves in the course of what follows. The original question, "What kind of a Universe is this?" becomes now the more definite question, "To which of the three great types of real being, Machine, Organism, or Person, does the Universe belong?" The subject of our next paper will be to consider whether the Machine alone constitutes an adequate basis for a scientific world-conception.

## VII.

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§ 37. The real essence of the individual thing and the real essence of the universal kind more or less repeat, exemplify, and manifest each other through the abstract class essence which is common to both. This fundamental law of the RECIPROCAL REVELATION OF THING AND KIND (see §§31, 32) is inherent in the constitution of every real genus-in-itself; it is equally inherent in the constitution of every concept. Hence it constitutes, on the one hand, the LAW OF THE NATURAL SELF-REVELATION OF BEING TO THOUGHT, and, on the other hand, the ABSOLUTE CONDITION OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE; and the scientific method is the practical application of it in the study of Nature, The

abstract class essence of a kind, determined exactly (though never exhaustively) by the scientific method, is identical, as a system of relations, with the SCIENTIFIC CONCEPT of that kind, and, by means of scientific nomenclature, receives measurably exact verbal embodiment in the SCIENTIFIC DEFINITION. Upon the possibility of this exact determination and discrimination of real kinds in the real system of Nature, giving rise to a complete hierarchy of scientific concepts of abstract class essences, depends unconditionally the possibility of all SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION. Science would vanish into Nescience, if these principles of Scientific Realism could be overthrown.

§38. Now the great system of natural classification, carried as far as possible by the various special sciences in their various limited fields of investigation, must be carried still further by scientific philosophy or World-Science, and culminates in the discovery of THREE PRIMORDIAL TYPES OF

REAL BEING IN NATURE, so far as Nature has yet come within the scope of the investigating faculties of mankind. The physical sciences find their ultimate concrete unit in the ATOM, as individualized out of universal cosmical Ether,—the physiological or biological sciences in the CELL, as individualized out of universal living Protoplasm,—and the psychological or moral sciences in the SELF, as individualized out of universal human Mind; but they find their proximate concrete units respectively in the MACHINE, the ORGANISM, and the PERSON. It is upon these three Natural Types of Real Being, as actually known in human experience, that scientific philosophy must found its only possible scientific world-conception or IDEA OF NATURE.

§39. Let us, then, begin by determining exactly the scientific concept of the Machine, as we find it actually and concretely presented in human experience, in order to discover how far it throws light upon the total constitution

of Nature; that is, how far it is scientifically legitimate, in accordance with the law of the reciprocal revelation of thing and kind, to conceive the Universe in its unity as a Machine.

§40. Professor T. M. Goodeve (*The Elements of Mechanism*, London, 1886), begins his treatise with the following definition: "A Machine is an assemblage of moving parts, constructed for the purpose of transmitting motion or force, and of modifying, in various ways, the motion or force so transmitted."

A distinguished physicist, in a private letter to the writer under date of June 6, 1889, gives another definition, substantially identical with the preceding, but in some respects more precise from an exclusively mechanical point of view: "My definition of a Machine is a collocation of matter having for its function the transference of motion or the transformation of motion."

It will be noticed by keen critics that, in these definitions, (1) the Machine is only vaguely

conceived as a unit, and (2) that the expressions “constructed for the purpose” and “having for its function” both introduce extra-mechanical conceptions—the former a conception which is strictly psychological, and the latter a conception which is strictly physiological (not here mathematical). It is possible to devise a rigorously mechanical definition, as follows:—

*A Machine is a material Whole of collocated material Parts, by which, both as Whole and as Parts, Motion is either transferred or transformed.*

§41. For all the uses of mechanics or physics, this last definition is quite sufficient, because these sciences very properly limit their consideration of the Machine to its exclusively physical and mathematical relations, which have nothing to do with the questions, “Who made it?” and “What was it made for?” They are satisfied, therefore, with an extremely imperfect and mutilated concept of the Machine; their special problems never involve that concept in its fulness and integrity, as

it is derived from all actual experience. The anthropological sciences, however, such as sociology, archæology, or political economy, could not advance a step, if they were limited to that skeleton concept of a purely ABSTRACT MACHINE, transcending all actual and possible experience, which satisfies all the requirements of physics or mechanics; it is the REAL MACHINE, not the ghost of it,—or rather the full and integral concept of the Real Machine as drawn from human experience, not this same concept with essential parts omitted,—which alone can satisfy the requirements of the anthropological sciences. Hence we find two widely different concepts of the Machine, one lopped or truncated in physics and mechanics, the other rounded and complete in anthropology, yet both equally scientific and equally useful as the basis of sound scientific inferences.

§42. For instance, take the axe—a tool being only a very simple case of the Machine.

Physics would consider the axe in use (an axe not in use would cease to be a Machine at all) as being only a mass of matter in motion, and doing work in the communication of motion to some other mass of matter—would calculate its momentum, or quantity of motion, as the product of its mass by its velocity, and its striking force, or kinetic energy, as the product of half its mass by the square of its velocity. That is, physics would conceive the axe *solely as a link in the great chain of physical causes and effects*—would recognize it only as under the law of causality, and ignore it altogether as under the law of finality—would treat it exclusively as a material fact, and refuse all inquiry into its origin or purposes as involving extra-physical conceptions and problems. And this eviscerated concept of the Abstract Machine, being sufficient for all purely physical problems, would be all that is properly admissible into the science of pure physics.

But anthropology would consider the axe only as a Real Machine—would conceive it as essentially a tool or weapon constructed by man, and constituted as a causal means to some definite human end, such as chopping wood or killing an enemy. This is the concept of the axe in its essence and its integrity, as a Real Machine known in human experience. If a stone axe-head were found buried deeply in some ancient alluvial deposit, archæology would take it to be a cogent proof of the existence of man himself as its maker in immemorial antiquity, and would reconstruct out of it a whole past of palæolithic or neolithic savagery. This inference of archæology would be precisely as sound, scientific, and necessary as any possible inference of physics, and would lead to this general anthropological definition:—

*A Machine is a Causal Means between Man and some definite Human End, both external to the Machine itself.*

Is it not plain that, in order to understand the Real Machine in its integrity, as opposed to the Abstract Machine in its partiality, science itself requires us to supplement the physical with the anthropological concept of it, at least so far as to recognize the causal and the teleological elements as equally essential in its constitution?

§43. Scientific philosophy, however, must see further than physics, anthropology, or any other special science. Franklin described man as “the tool-making animal”; and the construction of machinery in general unquestionably lies at the foundation of all civilization. From the simple tool, such as the axe, the needle, or the fork, up to the vastest and most complicated machine, such as the printing-press, the Jacquard silk-loom, the ship, the factory, the cathedral, the railroad, the telegraph, or the city, the construction of machinery, as the practical work of intelligence in the subjection of external Nature to man, is, in one point of view, at once the cause and the effect of all

human progress in the knowledge of Nature; for, in telescope, microscope, spectroscope, laboratory, observatory, museum, or library, science, no less than industry and commerce, depends upon the Real Machine.

But man is not the only animal which makes machines. Honeycombs, ant-hills, spider-webs, birds-nests, beaver-dams, fox-burrows,—all such constructions are essentially machines; nay, even climbing-plants convert projections or mere roughnesses of contiguous surfaces into ladders or machines for raising themselves into the sunlight. It matters not whether the end which a given machine effects originates in human reason, in animal instinct, or in the depths of organic constitution as such: the essence of the Real Machine is *to mediate causally between an Organism and its End*, and whatever does that is a Real Machine.

§44. Let us see, then, whether it may not be possible to comprehend all the elements of truth contained in the physical and the

anthropological definitions of the Machine in a higher philosophical definition. It is the aim of physics to include only the strictly causal element in its concept, and carefully to exclude from it all recognition of the teleological element; hence the result is a definition of the Abstract Machine, quite adequate to all the problems of physics, but totally inadequate to problems involving the Real Machine. It is the aim of anthropology to include in its concept both the causal and the teleological elements so far as they relate to man, but no further; hence the result is a definition of the Real Machine, adequate to the problems of anthropology, but inadequate to all higher problems. It is the aim of scientific philosophy, however, to include in its concept ample recognition of both of the equally essential elements, causal and teleological, and, by scrupulously adapting it to all known forms of the Real Machine, to render the concept itself adequate to whatever problems actual human

experience may present. Hence we may accept the following as a partial and provisional philosophical definition:—

*A Real Machine is a material Whole of collocated material Parts, constructed by an Organism as a Causal Means to some definite Organic End of its own, and so constituted throughout as to effect this End by either transferring or transforming Motion.*

§45. This concept of the Machine, as is self-evident, contains all the essential elements of the physical and the anthropological concepts, but is more comprehensive than either. It recognizes fully the physical or causal element, and thereby completely includes the Abstract Machine of physics; it recognizes fully the teleological element, and thereby converts the Abstract Machine of physics into the Real Machine of anthropology; it universalizes the Real Machine of anthropology so as to relate it to the whole organic kingdom, shows that the concepts of the Machine and of the Organism

are universally, necessarily, and inseparably connected, and thereby raises both concepts to the level of scientific philosophy.

But still something is wanting to a complete comprehension of the Real Machine. What is the nature of this universal, necessary, and inseparable connection between the Machine and the Organism? Pressing onward to find an answer to this question, we are led to a discovery of supreme importance: namely, that *the constitutions of the Machine and of the Organism involve each the other, and therefore are intelligible each through the other alone.*

§46. In the light of this principle, the Real Machine appears in a strikingly new aspect. When it is said in common speech, "The man cuts the grass," "The man shoots the bird," or "The man writes the letter," the expression is not literally true; for it is the scythe that cuts, the gun that shoots, the pen that writes. But there is a profound truth in the common phrases. For the man and the scythe, the man and the

gun, the man and the pen, constitute together, in each case, a larger organic whole; and it is really this larger organic whole, this SELF-EXTENDED ORGANISM, which does the act. The scythe, the gun, and the pen are, in truth, only so many artificial prolongations and special modifications of the *hand*; and by these, as causal means, the man himself is enabled to perform acts otherwise impossible. That is to say, the scythe, the gun, or the pen,—in general, the Real Machine,—is only an ARTIFICIAL AND SEPARABLE ORGAN FOR SELF-EXTENSION OF THE ORGANISM. When not used, it is only a functionless lump of matter; when used, it derives from the Organism a transient and artificial life as a temporary Organ; its only life lies in its use, and lasts only so long as it is used.

§47. Still more striking, in the light of the same principle, is the new aspect in which the Organism itself appears. Every single organ in the Organism appears in a new aspect as itself a NATURAL MACHINE, since it invariably functions

as a causal means between the entire Organism and some definite Organic End. But, instead of originating in any constructive process of which the Organism as a whole is conscious, the single organ originates in that unconscious process of self-evolution by which the Organism as a whole comes into being through the inwardly constructive forces of Nature. Hence the Organism itself, as a unitary complex of organs which mediates causally between itself and all its own Organic Ends, necessarily appears in a new aspect as, in truth, a SELF-MAKING AND SELF-WORKING NATURAL MACHINE.

§48. Thus we find ourselves led irresistibly, by a chain of conclusive scientific reasoning, to this complete and final philosophical definition of the Real Machine:—

*A Real Machine is a material Whole of collocated material Parts, constructed by an Organism as a Causal Means to some definite Organic End of its own, and so constituted throughout as to effect this End by either*

*transferring or transforming Motion. Every Real Machine is either artificial or natural, the Artificial Real Machine being an Artificial Organ of the Natural Organism, and the Natural Real Machine being the Natural Organism itself; and every Real Organism, is a Self-Making and Self-Working Real Machine.*

It remains, in our next paper, to consider what will be the result of applying the concept of the Machine, as successively elaborated by physics, by anthropology and by scientific philosophy, to the formation of a Scientific World-Conception or Theory of Being.

## VIII.

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§49. The science of arithmetic conceives the one and the many as mere relations of quantity in Abstract Number, and disregards altogether the Real Things without which no relations of number can be real. The science of geometry conceives the point, the line, the surface, and the solid as mere relations of quantity in Abstract Form, and disregards altogether the Real Substance without which no relations of form can be real. In general, the sciences of pure mathematics form no concepts except those of Abstract Quantity, Number, and Form, out of which no scientific world-conception could possibly be constructed except that of a purely ABSTRACT UNIVERSE;

for they rigorously suppress or exclude all concepts of Real Substance as essentially non-mathematical.

The sciences of chemistry and physics, however, while adopting and using the mathematical concepts of Abstract Quantity, Number, and Form, introduce new concepts of their own in those of Real Matter as Mass or Molecule, Real Motion, and Real Force or Energy. Chemistry deals with the molecular motions and forces of matter, physics with its molar motions and forces; both sciences, however, agree in rejecting from their concepts all recognition of the relation of *End and Means*, and including in them recognition of the relation of physical *Cause and Effect* alone. Hence the physical or chemico-physical concept of Real Substance is that of the ABSTRACT MACHINE alone, not of the REAL MACHINE in its wholeness at all (see §§40–48).

These skeleton concepts of mathematics, mechanics, physics, and chemistry are perfectly

true as far as they go, and no one can think mathematically or physically except by taking and using them as they are. Not the slightest doubt or slur is here meant to be cast upon the right to employ strictly mathematical concepts alone in mathematics, or strictly physical concepts alone in physics; the progress of science would be rendered difficult, perhaps impossible, without that division of labor which can be effected only by the legitimate use of abstractions. But no possible use of abstractions which separate what is really inseparable can lead to a scientific theory of Real Being as a whole. When it comes to that, scientific concepts drawn from reality in all the fulness and integrity of actual human experience can alone avail to frame a really scientific world-conception, a truly philosophic Idea of Nature; and philosophy, or universal science, is just as much entitled, nay, just as much necessitated as any special science to frame concepts of its own,

provided that in framing them it scrupulously follows the scientific method.

§50. Now the physical concept of the Abstract Machine, like the mathematical concept of Abstract Quantity, can, if applied to the formation of a world-theory, yield only the concept of an ABSTRACT UNIVERSE; it can never yield more than certain elements, fragmentary and few, of the concept of the REAL UNIVERSE. Refusing as it does all consideration of the relation of End and Means, and recognizing only the relation of Cause and Effect, the science of physics has no principle save the principle of causality upon which it can claim to ground a cosmical theory. It must conceive all events whatever as exclusively physical events, as nothing but motions in masses of matter; and it must explain all sequence in these motions as governed exclusively by physical causation. No other concept than this of a purely Abstract Universe, in which nothing can ever manifest itself except the monotonous reign of iron

physical necessity, can possibly be extracted from the Abstract Machine of physics. But let us see whether this abortive concept of universal physical necessity alone can maintain itself under a close and keen scrutiny.

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§51. If, for instance, all the motions of matter which occur throughout Space at any given instant of Time could be comprehended as one infinitely complex motion, pure physics would conceive this one complex motion as the physical resultant or effect of a similar complex motion in the instant next preceding; and all motions in the history of the cosmos would thus be reduced to a single concatenated series reaching back into a limitless past,—an infinite regress in which each term would be at once an effect to its antecedent and a cause to its consequent. In this case (which is simply an attempt to conceive the Abstract Machine as the Abstract Universe), what rational notion could be formed of the causal nexus itself, as uniting antecedent and consequent?

The Abstract Machine is abstracted from the Real Machine, tacitly even by physics; but an Abstract Universe would necessarily be in itself all in all, and there could be, therefore, no Real Universe, more inclusive than itself, from which to abstract it. If physical causality, then, were the sole real principle of the universe, what must be the nature of the causal relation itself?

§52. M. Deschanel (*Elementary Treatise on Natural Philosophy*, Everett's revised sixth edition, New York, 1883) defines Force as follows: "Force may be defined as that which tends to produce motion in a body at rest, or to produce change of motion in a body which is moving...We obtain the idea of force *through our own conscious exercise of muscular force*, and we can approximately estimate the amount of a force (if not too great or too small) *by the effort which we have to make to resist it; as when we try the weight of a body by lifting it.*"

M. Naville (*Modern Physics*, Downton's translation, Edinburgh, 1884, p. 35) similarly says: "The idea of force has its origin *in the action which we exert upon our organs, and by our organs upon foreign bodies. If we take away [abstract] the sense of an initial and free power,* there remains the idea of a simple motive power. This power, *separated [abstracted] from its immediate consciousness,* is no longer conceivable than in the manifestation of its effects; and therefore force, as it is considered in physics, has no other determination possible than the motion which it produces..." "The doctrine of the inertia of matter is the centre of all the conceptions of modern physics... Inertia excludes from matter all power of its own, other than that which relates to the occupation of place and to motion; it therefore reduces the conception of bodies to mechanical elements" (*Ibid.* p. 42). Countless passages of like tenor might be cited. The italics in these passages are ours.

CONSCIOUS EFFORT, then, is the only experiential origin and ground of our concept or rational notion of *Force in Nature*, as efficient cause, effectuating energy, or dynamical antecedent of the consequent "effect"—the *ex-factum*, "that which is out-made (from within the cause itself)." Now this something within the "efficient" or "out-making" cause which is "out-made" in the "effect" is, in every case of conscious effort, *a preconceived end*. We are utterly incapable of making any conscious effort except in order to do something, to accomplish some preconceived end; we, as conscious causes or forces in Nature, necessarily *unite in ourselves both preconceived end and executive energy*, as the absolutely essential elements of every effort; and we know nothing of our own executive energy except as we exercise it in putting forth or executing the preconceived end. In all effort, the two elements of end and energy are indissolubly united. So far as it can be understood through conscious effort,

therefore. Force in Nature is the executive energy which puts forth some preconceived end into outward fact: THE REAL CAUSE OUT-MAKES THE PRECONCEIVED END IN THE REAL EFFECT, AND THE REAL EFFECT IS THE OUT-MADE PRECONCEIVED END OF THE REAL CAUSE. Hence the two concepts of EFFICIENT CAUSALITY AND FINALITY are inextricably interlinked and united in that of REAL CONSCIOUS EFFORT, as two inseparable elements of one rational notion; and, since the concept of Motive Force, or Dynamic Cause, is confessedly derived, even in physics, from Real Conscious Effort alone, as its only origin and ground in human experience, *it cannot be formed at all as a rational notion, if either of these inseparable elements is arbitrarily suppressed.*

§53. From these results it follows that the concept of an Abstract Universe founded upon that of the Abstract Machine is, if taken absolutely, not only irrational, but impossible; for it destroys itself. As we have just seen.

Causality and Finality are intelligible only through each other, and neither by itself alone is intelligible at all; hence an infinite regress of causes and effects from which all relation of ends and means should be rigorously excluded would be rigorously unthinkable, because empty and nonsensical. Looked at externally, such a series would show no causal nexus whatever, no principle of rational connection among the terms; nothing would be observable but mere sequence or time-succession. It is only when looked at from within that a principle of rational connection and unity is discoverable in the *indissoluble union of causality and finality*. In the case of an infinite regress of causes and effects with no ends and means, the only possible experiential concept of Motive Force, Kinetic Energy, or Dynamical Cause would be irretrievably broken up, and would therefore disappear; the relation of cause and effect would itself vanish together with that of end and means; nothing

would be left but the relation of antecedent and consequent—mere sequence or time-succession. All communication of motion from body to body would, as Descartes discovered, become essentially incomprehensible. In trying to isolate the *Principle of Motion as Cause and Effect without End and Means*, physics would extinguish Causality by suppressing Finality and Efficiency at once; its own principle of the ABSTRACT CAUSE would slip through its fingers altogether, and it would retain nothing but the principle of SUCCESSION IN TIME. Hence the Abstract Universe of physics would lose all principle of rational unity whatever, and crumble away into the impalpable dust of an infinitude of Atoms, whose motions would manifest no other coherence than that of a mere irrational TIME-SERIES.

§54. A sufficient proof of this conclusion is the confirmation of it given by the history of human thought; for, whenever the attempt has been made to conceive the course of Nature causally,

but not teleologically, the inevitable result has been, as in the case of Descartes, Hume, Comte, John Stuart Mill, and countless others, to deny efficient causality altogether, and to resolve the causal nexus into the relation of mere invariable antecedence and consequence. But the result of this perfectly logical procedure is a denial of all real unity in Nature: the infinite series of motions in matter becomes a mere time-series, without any rational or comprehensible connection among the terms, and Nature itself breaks up into a chaos of atoms, an infinitude of material units, moving externally according to no discoverable or intelligible law. This is the suicide of all cosmical science, including physics itself. The One is lost irrecoverably in the infinitely Many; and the only possible Theory of Being which remains is that of chaotic and irrational PLURALISM.

§55. In fine, physics alone can never become philosophy. The Abstract Machine (the Real Machine from which it is abstracted being

tacitly recognized in the background, though not directly employed, by physics itself) is a legitimate scientific concept, indispensable in purely physical problems. But the concept of an Abstract Universe as an Absolute Unit, *with no recognition whatever of a Real Universe from which to abstract it*,—an Abstract Universe with no unifying principle but that of an Abstract Cause, *which, being just as empty of causal efficiency as it is of causal finality, excludes all real communication of motion*,— this concept is at once a scientific absurdity and a philosophical monstrosity, and cannot possibly maintain itself in reason. Since a mere time-series is in no sense a causal conception, the causal nexus must be conceived as including End and Means, or it cannot be conceived at all. We repeat, physics alone can never become philosophy; for to start with the *Abstract Machine*, and to proceed with no other principle than the principle of the *Abstract Cause*, is to end with an *Abstract Universe* in ABSOLUTE PLURALISM

as the Theory of Being. But Absolute Pluralism is overt repudiation of that *absolute unity in multiplicity* which is the essential aim of all philosophy.

§56. What Theory of Being, then, can be logically and philosophically developed out of the Real Machine of anthropology? Briefly, nothing but ABSOLUTE DUALISM. If anthropology aspires to become philosophy, it can climb no higher than THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOMORPHISM.

Human art cannot originate the materials it works with, but finds them originally given in external Nature. The man is here, the machine is there; even when in active use, the machine acquires no higher spatial unity with the man than that of mere collocation or juxtaposition. For all that anthropology alone can see, the two are absolutely two, not one; it is only from the loftier standpoint of scientific philosophy that a profound underlying oneness of the two comes to light (see §§46–48). To anthropology,

the machine and its maker or user are fundamentally and unconditionally two, external to each other; and the anthropological concept of the Real Machine is, therefore, an essentially dualistic one.

Now this human dualism of MACHINE AND MAKER, if applied to the formation of a world-theory, can lead only to dualism on a larger scale—to the irredeemably anthropomorphic conception of God and the Universe as essentially external to each other and fundamentally independent of each other. For instance, Descartes, the great Dualist founder of so-called modern philosophy, “beholds the entire universe as a single immense machine, whose wheels and springs were arranged at the beginning, in the simplest manner, by an Eternal Hand” (M. Thomas, *Eloge de Descartes*, crowned by the French Academy in 1765, and prefixed to Cousin’s *Œuvres de Descartes*, I. 34). It avails nothing to introduce the principle of “fiat creation,” or absolute origination of a

universe out of nothing by a mere command; for this principle violates every law of Being and of Thought alike, reconciles no discord, possesses no element of intelligibility, and is absolutely valueless in philosophy. The introduction of it into philosophy (for instance, in the “natural theology” of Butler, Paley, and so many others) has only availed to discredit the principle of teleology itself, and to postpone the development of a truly scientific conception of teleology in Nature.

The anthropological concept of the Real Machine is perfectly valid in anthropology itself; but, when it is applied to philosophy and developed into the cosmological doctrine of ABSOLUTE DUALISM, its fundamental limitations and defects are brought to light in its failure to fulfil the essential philosophical ideal—to discover the principle of *absolute unity in multiplicity*. Dualism is only Pluralism written small—Pluralism reduced to its lowest terms; what tells against the latter tells also, though in

a less degree, against the former. Philosophy cannot attain its goal in anthropology; anthropology alone, like physics alone, can never become philosophy.

§57. Now, precisely as the Abstract Machine of physics can become nothing but ABSOLUTE PLURALISM in philosophy, and as the Real Machine of anthropology can become nothing but ABSOLUTE DUALISM in philosophy, so the Real Machine of scientific philosophy can become nothing but ABSOLUTE MONISM.

That the real universe is in some sense *one*, is beyond dispute; the absolute unity of the universe, or, as it is more usually and more loosely phrased, the “uniformity and universality of natural laws,” is the necessary presupposition of all scientific investigation. Further, that this one real universe is in some sense a *machine*, has long been a scientific truism. But in what sense? Is it an ARTIFICIAL MACHINE or a NATURAL MACHINE? Anthropological Dualism, applying too literally the analogies of

human art, conceives it as an Artificial Machine, and explains it as the “handiwork,” not of a natural, but of a supernatural “Maker,” a “Great Artificer.” But scientific philosophy has shown (see §§43–48) that every Artificial Machine is really an ARTIFICIAL AND SEPARABLE ORGAN OF A NATURAL ORGANISM; and it is self-evident that there can be no Natural Organism outside of Nature itself. Hence the universe cannot be an Artificial Machine at all: it can only be a Natural Machine. But the only known Natural Machine is the SELF-MAKING AND SELF-WORKING MACHINE—that is, the REAL ORGANISM. Consequently, if the Universe is a Real Machine at all (and all science proves that it is so), there is no logical escape from the conclusion that it is at the same time a REAL ORGANISM.

§58. The case thus far may be briefly summed up as follows: Nature, or the Universe, being by scientific proof and unanimous confession a REAL MACHINE in some sense, the only logical escape from the conclusion that

it is the *artificial handiwork* of a supernatural and anthropomorphic ARTIFICER, separate from Nature in space and disparate from Nature in kind or essence, lies in the counter-conclusion that it is the *natural result* of its own self-evolving, self-directing, and self-sustaining IMMANENT ENERGY. There are but three alternatives: (1) the CHAOTIC ABSTRACT UNIVERSE of physics and Absolute Pluralism; (2) the ARTIFICIAL REAL UNIVERSE of anthropology and Absolute Dualism; and (3) the NATURAL REAL UNIVERSE of scientific philosophy and Absolute Monism. Out of these three alternatives (the only possible ones from the standpoint of scientific realism), the third alone is congruous with all human experience, and alone exhibits the legitimate development of the principle of COSMICAL EVOLUTION. The very concept of "evolution" is essentially organic; it is derived from the organism alone, applies to the organism alone, and is utterly meaningless, unless THE INFINITE UNIVERSE IS

SCIENTIFICALLY KNOWN AS A REAL ORGANISM-IN-ITSELF. The self-contradictory conjunction of Evolution and Agnosticism in the so-called “philosophy” of the nineteenth century is a mere freak of the hour; for in Agnosticism there is neither acute reasoning nor intrinsic reasonableness—nothing but exploded metaphysics, melancholy misunderstanding, crippling prejudice, confusion of thought, or blank unthinkingness. The philosophy of the future, founded upon the scientific method, must be organic through and through, and build upon the *known organic constitution of the noumenal universe* as the assured result of science itself.

It remains to show that, precisely as the Universe cannot be a REAL MACHINE without being at the same time a REAL ORGANISM, so it cannot be a REAL ORGANISM without being at the same time a REAL PERSON. This will be the subject of the following and concluding paper.

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## IX.

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§59. Until the foregoing reasoning has been refuted root and branch, it may without presumption be taken as rationally established that the Infinite Universe is at once a Real Machine and a Real Organism. It remains to show that THE INFINITE UNIVERSE IS AT ONCE A REAL MACHINE, A REAL ORGANISM, AND A REAL PERSON.

§60. These three categorical types of Real Being, or three primordial kinds which naturally and necessarily reveal the Supreme Kind of Kinds (see §§31–33), are not related to each other as co-ordinate and mutually exclusive species, but rather as successively rising grades of complexity in immanent

relational constitution—a conception perfectly familiar in natural science, as illustrated, for example, in Agassiz' *Methods of Study in Natural History* (16th ed. p. 91): “This gradation in [embryological] growth corresponds to the gradation of rank in adult animals, as established upon comparative complexity of structure.” In the order of terrestrial evolution, the Machine first appeared as mere matter in motion, then the Organism as plants and animals, and lastly the Person as man; and this order of succession in time corresponds with the gradation of rank in complexity of constitution and with the serial evolution of forms in the scale of being. There is no arbitrary or complete transition: the Organism remains still a Machine, and the Person remains still both Machine and Organism.

§61. In the constitution of the Person, therefore, as we know it in ourselves, we find the constitutions of the lower grades or types included and united in a thoroughly

harmonious working system. The distinctive feature of the Machine is the mechanical principle of CAUSALITY, as governing the propagation of motion through a material whole of collocated material parts, external one to another; the distinctive feature of the Organism is the principle of FINALITY, as governing the motion and application of organ to function in a constant mediation between the Organism and its organic ends; the distinctive feature of the Person is the principle of conscious self-determination or self-conscious MORALITY, as governing the free formation of ends and means in relation to other selves, and reflexively judging both these ends and their execution through motion in relation to universal rights and duties in a state of society. These three distinctive features of the Machine, the Organism, and the Person are indissolubly united in every human Person as such; the three principles of Causality, Finality, and Morality are all rooted and regnant in the personal

constitution, never interfering or colliding with each other in their respective spheres of operation, but harmonizing perfectly in all personal life. If these three principles thus harmonize perfectly in the constitution and life of Man, why may they not, *mutatis mutandis*, harmonize perfectly in the constitution and life of Nature? If Nature is already known to possess the mechanical and the organic constitutions, why may it not possess the personal constitution as well? Nay, if the Thing and the Kind naturally and necessarily reveal each other's essential constitution (see §§31–33), and if the Machine and the Organism, as Things, are already proved to reveal the essential constitution of Nature, as their Highest Kind, why is there not a rational necessity that the Person, also, as a higher Thing, shall still more reveal it? Why is it not self-evident that Nature, as ETERNAL ARCHETYPE, necessarily reveals itself in the Machine, the Organism, and the Person, as its primordial ECTYPES in Space and

Time? Why is it not self-evident that the Person, which sums up the three in one, is the ECTYPE of ECTYPES,—in a word, that HUMAN NATURE IS THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD?

§62. These are, at the very least, reasonable questions; and they deserve a very reasonable and respectful answer. Incredible, and even unintelligible, as it may seem at first sight that this boundless system of Nature, this illimitable Universe of Real Being, should be essentially and at bottom ONE INFINITE PERSON, reflection speedily dissipates the swarm of hasty misapprehensions. Images start up of particular machines, organisms, persons; the disparity between these and Nature as a whole is overwhelmingly obvious. Then comes rational meditation, gradually sifting out the essential from the non-essential; and the underlying identity of constitution, the natural revelation of the Kind in the Thing, begins at last to force itself into rational recognition with irresistible power. To conceive the Universe

as a Machine is not to imagine it under the form of an enormous steam-engine, but rather to comprehend that the omnipresent causal energy of Nature, producing all motions of matter, whether of masses or of molecules, as dynamical effects, works invariably under the law of Mechanical Causality. To conceive the Universe as an Organism is not to picture it as a gigantic animal, but rather to comprehend that the omnipresent causal-organic energy of Nature, directing all motions of matter, as causal means, to the realization of Nature's eternal end of EVOLUTION, works invariably under the law of Organic Finality. So, too, to conceive the Universe as a Person is not to portray it as a colossal man, but rather to comprehend that the omnipresent causal-organic-personal energy of Nature, being conscious of itself and its own eternal end of SELF-EVOLUTION THROUGH SELF-INVOLUTION, and executing this end through the successive and gradual creation of FINITE MACHINES, FINITE ORGANISMS, AND FINITE

SELVES WITHIN ITS OWN INFINITE SELF, works invariably under the law of Ideal Morality. It is impracticable here to unfold these thoughts in full; they are now barely hinted at, in order to clear the way for a thoughtful and unprejudiced consideration of the thesis that the Universe is, and must be, a Real Person.

§63. The Finite Artificial Machine, or artificial organ constructed by a natural organism, is external in space both to the constructor, or user, and to the effect which it is constructed to produce; it mediates between the two as a causal means outside of both, as, for instance, the chisel between the sculptor and the statue, or the printing-press between the printer and the book, or the army between the conqueror and his conquest. It is owing to this constitutional externality in space that physics can so easily conceive the Abstract Machine—can so easily, in abstract thought, make a pseudo-separation between the two elements of cause and effect, on the one hand, and of end and means, on

the other; for both the preconceived end in the mind of the maker and the realized end in the material world are equally external to the Machine as a mediator between the two, and what separates them, yet links them together, is the mediating chain of physical causes and effects in the motions of the Machine itself. Hence physics can readily disregard both preconceived and realized ends, and confine itself exclusively to mere motion and its laws; and hence, too, the legitimacy and utility of the Abstract Machine as a physical concept, which serves to simplify, and thereby helps to solve, purely mechanical problems.

But, in the case of the Universe as an Infinite Natural Machine, no such externality in space obtains, and no such abstraction of the causal from the final relation is possible at all, unless the Abstract Universe is recognized as necessarily implying the Real Universe from which to abstract it. The Real Universe, as a Real Natural Machine, must be absolutely all-inclusive; both

causal and final relations, inseparable in the complete constitution of every Real Machine, must be strictly and wholly within the all-inclusive Universe; there can be here neither external maker nor external effect—both maker and effect must be internal only. In other words, if the Infinite Universe is a Real Machine at all, it must be, not merely a Real Machine, but also a Self-Making and Self-Working Real Machine—that is, a Real Organism: THE INFINITE UNIVERSE CANNOT BE A REAL MACHINE WITHOUT BEING A REAL ORGANISM, TOO. If the principles and premises of scientific realism are sound, the argument here is more than probable—it is demonstrative.

§64. Now precisely as stringent a rational necessity inheres in the next step of the argument: namely, that the Infinite Universe cannot be a Real Organism without being a Real Person, too.

The Finite Natural Organism, or Real Machine constructed by Nature, is both *Cause and Effect*

*of Itself and End and Means to Itself*: it is the *Self-Making and Self-Working Machine* (§47). This is no new conception; it was foreshadowed in Aristotle's well-known doctrine of the soul as an "entelecheia," and fully developed in Kant's profound analysis of the Organism as a "Naturzweck"—a natural whole in which whole and parts are reciprocally Cause and Effect, End and Means (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, §§65, 66). But Kant overlooked another essential characteristic of the Organism which is even more profoundly significant and instructive. He failed to analyze its Total Organic End as two-fold: (1) as INDWELLING OR IMMANENT END, and (2) as OUTGOING OR EXIENT END. The Immanent End of the Organism is SELF-EVOLUTION, partly recognized in the common proverb that "self-preservation is the first law of Nature": this Kant saw. But the Exient End is SELF-DEVOTION—devotion of self to the preservation and evolution of the higher self or species, to which the individual Organism is

related as the organ or organic cell is related to the Organism itself: this Kant did not see. Nevertheless, this principle of the Exient End (clearly illustrated in the reproductive system) unites the individual Organism to its kind as a larger and inclusive Organism, unites this in turn, as a new individual, to a higher kind, and so on indefinitely. Thus the Exient End appears as a teleological principle of unity and intelligibility throughout the whole of Nature. The Immanent End gives to the Organism no "Others," but merely its "Self"; the Exient End gives to it "External Others," or a higher self in a NOT-SELF, as a separate, but normally necessary, complement to its own being. These two equally essential elements of the Total Organic End are equally wrought into the very warp and woof of the organic constitution itself.

But, in the case of the Universe as the Infinite Natural Organism, the Total Organic End ceases to be dualistically separable as literally Immanent and Exient, inasmuch as the Infinite

can have *no* "External Others." The principle of Immanency and Exiency, notwithstanding, remains in the strictly monistic distinction between *Self as One Whole* (principle of Self-Evolution) and *Self as Many Parts or Internal Others* (principle of Self-Devotion); just as the Finite Natural Organism exists as One Organism of Many Organs or Cells, in which each alike, organism and cell, not only lives its own true life unsubverted and unfringed by that of the other, but also devotes its own real life to that of the other. Hence, in the Infinite, Self and Not-Self are numerically identical. But Numerical Identity of Self and Not-Self, Subject and Object, constitutes the UNITY OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE PERSON. Consequently, THE INFINITE UNIVERSE CANNOT BE A REAL ORGANISM WITHOUT BEING A REAL PERSON, TOO.

Thus we are led to discover the LAW OF THE CORRELATION AND ULTIMATE IDENTITY OF ALL REAL TYPES IN THE PERSON.

§65. The same momentous conclusion, forced upon us above by studying the constitutions of the Machine and the Organism as *concrete realities*, is no less forced upon us by studying the laws of Causality and Finality as their *real principles*.

The idea of all Force or Might in Nature being confessedly derived, even in physics, from human experience of Conscious Effort, these inevitable consequences follow from §§51–55:—

I. The EFFICIENT OR OUT-MAKING CAUSE necessarily contains within itself the PRECONCEIVED END; the EFFECT OR OUT-MADE RESULT necessarily contains within itself the REALIZED END; and the CAUSAL BOND is itself the ENERGETIC REALIZING END IN EFFORT.

II. Therefore, the principle of EFFICIENT OR MECHANICAL CAUSALITY necessarily contains within itself the principle of ORGANIC FINALITY.

Similarly, the idea of all Right in Nature being derived from human experience of Conscience,

these inevitable consequences follow from §64:—

I. The IMMANENT ORGANIC END is Self-Evolution, or ETHICAL EGOISM; the EXIENT ORGANIC END is Self-Devotion, or ETHICAL ALTRUISM; and the TOTAL ORGANIC END is HARMONY OF ETHICAL EGOISM AND ETHICAL ALTRUISM IN CHARACTER.

II. The lower Finite Organism realizes its Character, of which Nature is conscious, in ETHICAL UNCONSCIOUSNESS; the higher Finite Organism realizes its Character in ETHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF LIMITED FREEDOM; the Infinite Organism of Nature realizes its Character in ETHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF ILLIMITABLE FREEDOM.

III. Therefore, the principle of ORGANIC FINALITY necessarily contains within itself the principle of FREEDOM, SELF-DETERMINATION, OR IDEAL MORALITY.

§66. This magnificent result, that *Causality involves Finality and Finality involves Morality*,—in other words, that the three supreme and constitutive principles of the Real Universe are at bottom one, from the heliocentric point of view, in the one principle of ABSOLUTE PERSONALITY,—is analogous to the vast modern generalizations (1) that all forms of Matter are at bottom one in IDENTITY OF SUBSTANCE, (2) that all manifestations of Force are at bottom one in IDENTITY OF ENERGY, and (3) that all stages of cosmical change are at bottom one in IDENTITY OF EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. To these it adds (1) that all immanent relational constitutions, whether of machine, organism, or person, are at bottom one, in the personal constitution, in IDENTITY OF ESSENCE, and (2) that all natural laws are at bottom one in IDENTITY OF PRINCIPLE. It therefore constitutes the crowning discovery of the Scientific Method, necessary to complete the demonstration of Absolute Monism, in the LAW OF THE CORRELATION AND

ULTIMATE IDENTITY OF ALL REAL PRINCIPLES IN PERSONALITY. Who could overestimate the value or importance of such a result? The ultimately inevitable scientific identification of all physical, biological, and psychological forces, as universally correlated and mutually convertible forms of one eternal and omnipresent Force, means, in the light of this transcendently sublime law, not the degradation of all forces to the level of blind mechanical necessity, but the elevation of all forces to the height of intelligent spiritual freedom. This is the natural and unforced evolution of Science itself, through the philosophized Scientific Method, into the PHILOSOPHY OF FREE RELIGION.

§67. In this way it is made clear, to any one who has capacity to comprehend and patience to master the argument, that the Infinite Universe cannot be a Real Machine without being a Real Organism, and cannot be a Real Organism without being a Real Person; and that this philosophical last conclusion is just

as certain as the scientific first premise that the Universe is indeed a Machine. This, then, in briefest form, is the SCIENTIFIC WORLD-CONCEPTION, as Absolute Monism or Scientific Theism:—

*MECHANICAL CAUSALITY, or the Law of Motion, ORGANIC FINALITY, or the Law of Life, and IDEAL MORALITY, or the Law of Holiness, Justice, and Love,—the three eternal and all-pervasive Real Principles by which the whole known Universe exists,—are at bottom ONE in the Real Principle of Omnipresent Self-Conscious Energy or ABSOLUTE PERSONALITY, and constitute the UNITY OF THE UNIVERSE IN THE ESSENTIAL BEING AND LIFE OF GOD, AS AT ONCE INFINITE MACHINE, INFINITE ORGANISM, AND INFINITE PERSON.*

§68. Whatever higher truth lies unrevealed in the boundless mystery of the Unknown, this *Truth of the Known* stands fast as the eternal foundation of the Real Universe. If any one should contemn the idea of the ALL-PERSON, thus conceived, how meanly, alas, must he

think of moral personality itself—how blindly must he despise the dignity, the majesty, the sublimity of his own nature as MAN!

§69. REAL PERSONALITY, finite and relative in Man, infinite and absolute in Nature, is thus the last word of Science and Philosophy—the first word of Ethics and Religion; for Man's moral nature is necessarily rooted and included in his personal nature, and his personal nature is necessarily rooted and included in that of the ALL which it dimly, yet supremely, reveals. There is no other central unifying principle, whether in thought or in action, whether in the life of the individual or in the life of society, by which the Real may be known or the Ideal may be embodied. There is no other central unifying principle by which Man may develop or reform either himself or society, or by which the all-divinizing Enthusiasm of Humanity may be kindled in his soul, or by which the world may be redeemed from its mountain-load of injustice, suffering, and sin. Think highly, think

reverently, think devotedly, brother-men, of that MORAL IDEAL which is the very core, law, and life of your own personality, and which could be to you no law of august, all-commanding obligation, of transcendent and eternal authority, were it not identical with the innermost LAW OF NATURE by which the planets roll, the sun shines, the Universe itself exists. For that divine passion for the FINITE IDEAL which makes the hero, the reformer, the prophet, the saint, is but a spark of that eternal and ethereal fire which burns at the very heart of Being, and keeps God himself true to his own INFINITE IDEAL.

§70. That thus the ultimate ground of all Art, Science, Philosophy, Ethics, and Religion, in strict accordance with the Scientific Method, is proved to lie in the immanent relational constitution of the Supreme Genus-in-Itself, or Real Universe, as Absolute Divine Person,—that this innermost nature of the known Cosmos as All-Person is most profoundly revealed in

the distinctively personal, ethical, or spiritual nature of Man,—that “Man’s Place in Nature” is that of a free and loyal SERVANT OF THE DIVINE IDEAL, and that all his duties, hopes, joys, loves, aspirations, activities, destinies, depend upon his discovering intelligently and fulfilling freely the exact function in Nature and in Human Society which this unalterable Divine relationship assigns to him,—these things will explain themselves to the quick-witted, and cannot be amplified or emphasized now.

§71. The time has come to close this series of papers, which is merely a partial prospectus of what may be hoped to find hereafter a more appropriate place and a far better form. Its aim has been to show the way out of Agnosticism into the sunlight of the predestined Philosophy of Science. The labor of writing these too closely packed articles will be well repaid, if here and there some thoughtful spirit has caught even a glimpse of the sublime vistas of truth waiting to be revealed to mankind by the philosophic

use of the Scientific Method. Said Ralph Waldo Emerson, America's greatest prophet: "There is a statement of religion possible which makes all skepticism absurd." Is there not such a statement lying latent and implicit in the PHILOSOPHY OF FREE RELIGION?

# Appendix

## Dr. Abbot's "Way Out of Agnosticism."<sup>2</sup>

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### I.

IN the brief compass of a little more than eighty pages of text, and after a few pages of well-written introduction, Dr. Abbot has here attempted "to show that, in order to refute agnosticism and establish enlightened theism, nothing is now necessary but to philosophize that very scientific method which agnosticism barbarously misunderstands and misuses." Readers of the same writer's well-known "Scientific Theism" will find in the present volume a fashion of argument with which they are already in general acquainted. They will admire,

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2. Royce, Josiah. "Dr. Abbot's 'Way Out of Agnosticism.'" *International Journal of Ethics* 1, no. 1 (October 1890): 98–113.

meanwhile, the courage by virtue of which the author chooses to meet his adversaries, armed not with the numerous pages in which philosophers usually love to array themselves, but, as it were, with so few pages that they might almost seem by comparison, like David's five smooth stones from a brook. In an age of many words, students who are not without wordy sins on their consciences must therefore indeed envy Dr. Abbot his light equipment and his courageous willingness to enter upon so serious a task with so little external assistance. There is one kind of external assistance which our author, to be sure, does not disdain; his text fairly bristles with italics and small capitals, a device which possibly serves to set off what the author is pleased to consider the extremely "modern" character of his work, through the contrast with so antiquated and unfortunate a typography.

If we leave the manner of the book for the time and pass to the matter, we shall find, first of

all, as a noteworthy feature, the author's sense of his personal originality as to method, and, in part, even as to result. In so far as the result is a monistic theism, Dr. Abbot, of course, can be under no illusions as to the widely-spread agreement among many ancient and modern thinkers concerning the substantial truth of this doctrine. In so far, however, as the statement of this doctrine involves technical formulas of a philosophical sort, Dr. Abbot is confident of the newness of many of his propositions; and, with more courage than sense of humor, he is even pleased to name what he thinks to be his philosophical discovery concerning "Universals," the "American Theory of Universals," as opposed to the "Greek" theory, which he finds "undeveloped," and the "German" theory, to which he attributes a "malign influence." The "Greek" theory is essentially Aristotle's. By the "German" theory is meant conceptualism. As to Dr. Abbot's originality, we receive also yet other and numerous assurances. "By a wholly new

line of reasoning," drawn from the sources of "science and philosophy," the work of this book is to be accomplished. So the opening "Note" informs us. And, again: "The first great task of philosophy is to lay deep and solid foundations for the expansion of human knowledge in a bold, new, and true theory of universals. For so-called modern philosophy rests complacently in a theory of universals which is thoroughly mediæval or antiquated" (§4). At the conclusion of the book we learn that we have been shown "the way out of agnosticism into the sunlight of the predestined Philosophy of Science." This "way," it is plain, might, according to its author's view, be called with some propriety the "American" way; and, in sum, Dr. Abbot's sense of the originality of his philosophical thought is such as to seem, in this age when the historical continuity of human thought is so constantly in our minds, fairly childlike in its confidence and in its simplicity. How well founded it is, we can

only estimate after we have looked a little more closely at the doctrine.

## II.

“The necessary beginning-point of all philosophy, which deserves to be called scientific,” is in this volume as in the author’s previous one, the principle, here stated on p. 6, that “the universal results of the special sciences, including the method common to them all, are the only possible data of philosophy or universal science.” “Universal Human Knowledge,” however, as thus defined, is embodied in “Universal Literature,” in so far as this is a record of the positive results of human thought (§2). Universal literature depends upon language as its means of expression, and language is impossible without universal terms, in which, “in the last analysis,” all human knowledge is “contained” (§4). “The results of science must be permanently stored in this form, and can only be found in this form.” How

necessary, then, the comprehension of the nature and objective relations of "Universal Terms." The true theory of these terms, now, is that they express universal meanings or "Concepts," and that any one of these stands for "the universal *what-is-meant*" (§6–7),—i.e. for "the genus."

To understand the nature of knowledge, then, we must know what is the truth behind this word "genus." All science, Dr. Abbot teaches, presupposes that, in so far as we possess verified acquaintance with nature at all, we do know *real*—not abstract or ideal, but *actual*—genera in nature. "Nothing is known by itself alone; it is known through its kind. The essential constitution of every genus is *that of many things in one kind, one kind in many things*; the unity and multiplicity are known inseparably together. Hence the genus is in no sense an abstraction, but the concrete totality of many realities in one reality" (§7). Hence, again, the genus has an "essentially

organic constitution;" and "science itself may be defined as knowledge of the genus, that is, knowledge of the universe as the highest kind which includes all other kinds." It is, meanwhile, some genus in the foregoing sense which is known through any scientific concept or word; and the word or the concept reveals "never the independent, isolated, or unrelated thing, nor yet the common essence of many unrelated things as a mere abstraction, but always the concrete kind of many interrelated things as one self-related reality" (§12). A fair example of a genus (§20) is the "family" in human society; for a family in every case is "essentially and necessarily composed of several individual members" (§20), whose relations "in their totality make up the family constitution, and are precisely as real as the individuals related, inhering in the family *as such* and *as a whole*, and subsisting neither in any one individual member, nor in any outside observer." "Nay, more: no individual as such can exist except as

a member of some family precisely as real as himself." Meanwhile, "all individuals compose the genus family. All families compose the genus society. All societies compose the genus mankind. All individuals=all families=all societies=all mankind." Again (§20), "in this union and interrelation of many in one and one in many, in this immanent relational constitution by which many individuals exist and are indissolubly united in one kind, lies the very essence of the family," which thereby exemplifies the genus as it is found everywhere in the "world-order." Another example of a genus is "mankind" (§31). "Mankind" may be, for the sake of precision, distinguished as a "concrete universal kind or genus, including all concrete individuals," from "Man" as the "Concrete Individual," and from "Humanity" as the "Abstract Class Essence," including only the universal nature which is common to all men as a class, and excluding all that is peculiar to each individual. "Humanity," in this sense,—viz.,

as “human nature,”—is then not the real genus, and has no “independent reality.” “It is real, but only as existing in all real men,” while the genus or “kind” is as real as the individuals, and in case of mankind “has its generic peculiarities, such as heredity, bisexuality, gregariousness, and all other attributes which can exist only through the social correlation of many individuals in one kind.” Other examples of the genus are “book,” “house,” “tree” (§25), and the “three categorical types of Real Being,” which the author discusses in his closing sections,—viz., “Machine,” “Organism,” and “Person.”

The genus is therefore, of course, distinct from the individual as such. It is also distinct from the “abstract class essence.” The relations of the three are, however, that (omitting Dr. Abbot’s small capitals, in which the words next following are printed by him) “the Individual Concrete Thing and the Universal Concrete Kind reveal each other through the Abstract Class Essence which is common to both.”

I have used Dr. Abbot's words in stating the foregoing notions about "Universals," because he plainly makes much of these forms of expression himself, and has a right to his words in so far as they are his own. As to the use to which he puts this "new, bold, and true" theory, this "American theory of Universals," I have space only for an inadequate suggestion, "The Universe," namely (§35), as the "supreme Kind of Kinds," is the "real genus in itself," and we learn about *this* genus, as a whole, "by studying the constitution of its own finite parts. Each known part reveals one character of the whole." "The real essence of the individual thing, and the real essence of the universal kind more or less repeat, exemplify, and manifest each other" (§37). Hence we can and must judge of the character of the highest genus by virtue of an examination of the genera known to us. The principle of the reciprocal relation of thing and kind, extended to the universe, authorizes us to generalize from actual to possible experience.

Upon this authorization all science depends; and we must be sure that “the essential constitution of the universe more or less repeats, reflects, and reveals itself in miniature in the constitution of the innumerable concrete kinds of which it is itself the absolute unity” (§34). “Real knowledge of any of these kinds is, just so far, real knowledge of the Universe as the supreme Kind of Kinds.”

If this suggests the procedure of “scientific philosophy” in general, the detail of the procedure is more fully suggested when we observe that in the universe of science these are, according to Dr. Abbot, the three types of Being: the “Machine” (under which name Dr. Abbot includes all embodiments of natural processes *quâ* mechanical), the “Organism,” and the “Person.” These, then, properly studied, will, as subordinate genera, reveal or manifest something of the nature of the highest genus itself,—*i.e.*, the Universe as Infinite Being. Otherwise the American theory of universals

is vain, and we are yet in our sins. For while ordinary agnostics, when they observe "machines" or "organisms" or "persons," remain still with foolish heart darkened as to the nature of the "Supreme Kind of Kinds," those who have escaped into the sunlight of the predestined philosophy of science know that, as the American theory teaches, and as the malign "German" theory does not teach, the higher kind and the lower kind reciprocally "manifest each other," so that in knowing persons, and the rest, we already know something of the universe. But still further, a closer examination of the concept of a "Machine," reveals to Dr. Abbot that a machine without an Organism, which constructs the machine "as a causal means to some definite organic end of its own," is an "abstraction," and can have no true reality. The reasoning by which Dr. Abbot reaches this result is, of course, supposed by him to be in principle founded upon his doctrine of the reciprocal manifestation of thing and kind

and so on the "American" theory. In fact and in detail, however, the argument as stated will appear to any reader, who is not altogether in love with Dr. Abbot's formulas, nor yet terrified by the italics and the small capitals, as naught but our familiar friend the design argument, in forms which were in use some time before the discovery of America. By the aid of the science of "anthropology," to which Dr. Abbot, as "scientific philosopher," appeals in §42, he learns that men use axes as tools, and accordingly he gives as "anthropological definition" of machine, "a causal means between man and some definite human end." A reference to honeycombs, spider-webs, and the like, suggests the further generalization that "the essence of the Real Machine is to mediate causally between an Organism and its End," and one is thus led to a conception of a machine as a "material whole constructed by an Organism as a causal means to some definite organic end of its own" (§44),—a concept

which, just because it “contains all the essential elements of the physical and anthropological concepts, but is more comprehensive than either,” thereby shows that the concepts of the Machine and the Organism (*i.e.*, of natural processes as mechanical, and of organic processes as teleological) are “universally, necessarily, and inseparably connected.” This monstrous *non sequitur* is supplemented by a “discovery of supreme importance” (§45),—*viz.*, that “the constitutions of the Machine and of the Organism involve each the other, and therefore are intelligible each through the other alone.” The only further suggestion of a proof for this discovery is given in the illustrations on page 53, which show that, as guns and scythes, and the like, are used by men to “extend their organisms,” the “Real Machine is only an Artificial and Separable Organ for Self-Extension of the Organism. When not used it is only a functionless lump of matter.”

I am far from discussing here the truth of Dr. Abbot's conclusions apart from his method of reaching them. I am only reporting the nature of his "way out," just as a way. In §49 this "way" leads through an argument, presumably in Dr. Abbot's judgment, "wholly new" when applied to philosophy, although he quotes text-books which have already formulated it in special science. This argument assures us that the "causal nexus," in mechanical nature would remain utterly mysterious unless we supposed it to be in essence one with our own "conscious effort." This gives us another indication of the inextricable linking of the two concepts of "efficient causality and finality." With the remainder of the discussion, which leads Dr. Abbot along well-trodden roads to the monistic theism of his closing pages, where (as Julian Schmidt once neatly said of certain passages in Fichte) *Er in's Erbauliche uebergeht*, I will not just here deal, except by way of remarking that the capitals and the italics become none the less

numerous as the topics under consideration become more exalted.

### III.

It is due to Dr. Abbot's position and past services as a writer and a leader of liberal investigation, in this country, to give at least as full an account as the foregoing of his latest work, and I should be glad if I had time for fuller quotations. It is due also to "the extravagant pretensions which he frequently makes of late as to the originality and profundity of his still unpublished system of philosophy, to give the reader some hint of what so far appears to be the nature of our author's contributions to philosophical reflection. But now, as to the estimate of the book, I must, however, insist that no amount of agreement with Dr. Abbot's monistic and essentially idealistic conclusion—no such agreement, I repeat, as I myself feel with this outcome, and no sympathy, such as we shall all sincerely feel, with his desire to serve

our careworn and doubting age—can blind or ought to blind any intelligent reader to the essentially vicious and injurious nature of Dr. Abbot's fashion of argument. Of novelty, good or bad, the book contains, indeed, despite its vast pretensions, hardly a sign. The agnostic, meanwhile, who should actually be led "out" by Dr. Abbot, would be of necessity a person of so unreflective a mind, so ignorant of the history of thought, so badly afraid of italics, so little grounded in his agnosticism, that, whatever humanity might dictate as to the value of any pious effort to benefit his soul, there may be grave doubts whether his philosophically self-critical powers were worth the trouble of saving. And I say this not because I have the least desire to be disrespectful to Dr. Abbot, whose sincerity and earnestness are throughout admirable, but because the book, as it stands, forces such a judgment upon one, and that for the following simple reasons:

For the first, it is useless for any thinker in our day to undertake to philosophize, without both the time and the coolness of judgment needed to form some clear consciousness as to his own historical relations; and Dr. Abbot is hopelessly unhistorical in his consciousness. His "American Theory of Universals" is so far from being either his own or a product of America that in this book he continually has to use, in expounding it, one of the most characteristic and familiar of Hegel's technical terms, namely, "concrete," in that sense to which it is applied to the objective and universal "genus" itself. Dr. Abbot's appropriation of Hegel's peculiar terminology comes ill indeed from one who talks of the "malign influence" of the "German" theory of universals, and who interprets this theory as teaching that, in case of his own illustration of the "family," "the observer and the family are one, and the observer is that one." As applied to Hegel's theory of universals, which is certainly not to be called precisely

an "American" theory, Dr. Abbot's description of the consequences of the "German" theory would be an intolerable slander. And this I say not to defend Hegel, for whose elaborate theory of universals I hold in no wise a brief, but simply in the cause of literary property-rights. When we plough with another man's heifer, however unconscious we are of our appropriation, however sincerely we seem to remember that we alone raised her from her earliest calfhood, it is yet in vain, after all, that we put our brand on her, or call her "American." Hegel himself never made any secret of his own historical dependence, but at all events it was Hegel who, as the outcome of his study of the history of thought, said, in speaking of the relation of the universal and the individual, *Der Begriff* (substantially one with Dr. Abbot's genus in so far as the latter is "one kind in many things and many things in one kind") *ist das schlechthin Konkrete.*" And Hegel's *Begriff*, I repeat, is *not* Dr. Abbot's merely subjective

“concept,” which the “German theory” shall put wholly “in the observer.” On the contrary, as § 167 of the “Encyclopädie” has it, “To say that a judgment shall be merely subjective in sense, as if *I* attributed a predicate to a subject, contradicts the very form of expression of the judgment, which is objective: ‘The rose *is* red,’ ‘Gold *is* a metal.’ *It is not I who merely attribute something to them.*” Nor is this a chance word of Hegel’s. His whole system depends on the assertion that there is an objective Begriff, a universal kind, manifested in the individuals, and at the same time, as universal a truth, as real, as they are, and making the individuals possible. For this reason—viz., *because* of this objectivity and reality of the Begriff—Hegel calls it “concrete,” makes it organic, precisely as Dr. Abbot does, so far, at least, as concerns this initial definition, and then tries to demonstrate, in his own fashion, that this concrete and objective universal is a person. Now Hegel’s whole theory may be false; but what is certain

is that Dr. Abbot, who has all his life been working in an atmosphere where Hegelian ideas were more or less infectious, has derived his whole theory of universals, so far as he has yet revealed it with any coherency, from Hegelian sources, and even now cannot suggest any better terminology than Hegel's for an important portion of the doctrine. Yet in the volume before us we find all this pretentious speech of an "American" theory, and discover our author wholly unaware that he is sinning against the most obvious demands of literary property-rights.

Discussions about priority are indeed often of peculiar uselessness in philosophy, just because of our inevitable bondage to the history of thought, and to the common notions of our age. I should therefore owe the reader a hearty apology for the suggestion of the present discussion, were it not for the light that it throws upon Dr. Abbot's whole method of work. If we are unable to discover, after the

most sincere and pious scrutiny, our own most obvious debts, is it not a little hopeless for us to undertake to straighten the world's accounts, and to lead all the agnostics of our generation out of their reflective embarrassments?

If the book is thus based upon an historical misjudgment, the main doctrines, regarded as Dr. Abbot's, are, in the second place, not a little confused in statement. So far, I have said, as Dr. Abbot actually defines his genus, his "concrete kind of many interrelated things as one self-related reality," his genus is nothing but Hegel's *objektiver Begriff*. Meanwhile, however, Dr. Abbot, as "scientific philosopher," disdains to give any argument for this doctrine of the genus but the bare *Versicherung*, as Hegel would have said, that *so it is, since so science assumes*. Beyond this assurance here, as in his previous book, Dr. Abbot, who has an especially keen hatred for sceptically critical reflection upon fundamental truths, has nothing to suggest to his agnostics, by way of leading them "out," save

a certain lofty and stern abuse of their dreary scepticism, an abuse which has a well-known and somewhat clerical sound, and which may be left to one side here along with the rest *des Erbaulichen* of which the book, as I before said, contains a little. The edifying is indeed one of the most necessary and useful things of life; but it has as such no place in a philosophical argument about fundamental problems. We ought not to be enticed to accept a philosophical theory by the suggestion that it is "new and bold." We ought not to be warned away from a critical scrutiny of the bases of science by hearing that, "If popular agnosticism only had philosophy enough to understand the logic of its own denials, it would be a mad plunge into bottomless, shoreless, skyless ignorance,—the suicide of reason itself in a delirium of cowardice." This sort of thing, one may remind Dr. Abbot, is very much what the parson said of old to us in the country village: *nur mit ein bischen andern Worten*, and with

the further difference that the parson of old used, if I remember rightly, to warn us that just such evil consequences would follow from any doubt as to Jonah's precise relations with the whale. Agnostics of any experience are used to such speeches, and we shall in vain get them "out" after that fashion.

But if one looks a little further at Dr. Abbot's development of the doctrine of the genus, one finds indeed at least this about it which, if not precisely either novel or "American," is at all events not wholly due to Hegel. I refer to a certain unexplained confusion in his mind as to what his *genus* shall be or imply. A given "family" in human society, as would seem from his chosen example, is a genus as against its individual members. Meanwhile, "book" and "house" are just as truly genera. All these genera have an "organic" constitution, and are "units" of existence (§8). They exemplify the "concrete kind of many interrelated things as one self-related reality." Each of them, namely, has "an

inherent system of relations or immanent relational constitution," and Dr. Abbot is never weary of pointing out that relations are as real and objective as are the related things. "Immanent in the very nature of being, this principle of the objectivity or reality of generic relations, is the absolute condition of the possibility of a World-Order" (§20). The "relational constitution" of each genus is discovered by "classification" (§7), and this, as scientific and methodical procedure, depends upon "observation," which first discovers real genera, "hypothesis," which tentatively extends generalizations, and "experimental verification," which tests hypothesis (§27). Through the "immanent relational constitution" thus discovered, we find that "many individuals exist and are indissolubly united in one kind" (§20); and this "indissoluble" unity of the individuals in the kind is again apparently the same as Dr. Abbot's "organic" unity of the generic constitution of things.

Now, it needs no special ingenuity to suggest that this doctrine about the organic and "indissoluble" unity of things in their kind, has very different values when applied to the "family" of Dr. Abbot's illustration, and when applied to such a "genus" as, say, corkscrew, or rat-trap, or rainbow, or pebble, or atom, or tiger, or constellation. All these last are unquestionably "genera" of some sort. And I should fully agree with Dr. Abbot that the relations among things which these various generic names imply are as real and objective as the things related. This objective "relational constitution" of things is to my mind a very certain truth, although I should not, like Dr. Abbot, refuse to inquire as to the philosophical basis of this truth before making it the basis of the rest of my philosophy. But granting that truth, it is the barest confusion to dump thus all the genera into one place, as it were, and talk of the "indissoluble" unity of many things in one kind as if it were characteristic of every

genus. "Indissoluble" and "organic" relations subsist, after a fashion, between the members of a given family, because, should any members die or go away, just this family must cease to exist in its old form as a genus, and must, if it persists at all, become an altered genus. No *such* organic relations characterize, however, the rat-traps and the pebbles. Even the genus tiger is unaltered by the death of thousands of tigers. The pebbles resemble one another, and this resemblance is indeed an objective fact in nature, dependent upon no observer (save God). But to call the pebbles, and the rat-traps, and the corkscrews, and the tigers, and the rainbows, genera, each one of which is a "concrete kind" of many interrelated pebbles, or rat-traps, or corkscrews, or tigers, or rainbows, as one "self-related reality," and to illustrate this "organic relational constitution" by the further case of a family with its interrelated parents and children, brothers and sisters,—all this is but to confuse, surely not to clarify.

Hegel, whose doctrine of the organic unity of thing and kind Dr. Abbot has unconsciously appropriated, was himself far too sly a bird to be caught by the chaff of such confusion. His *Begriff* is objective and organic, and it owns the whole universe; but the various corkscrews and the individual tigers and rainbows are still not by any implication suggested as "necessarily united." On the contrary, Hegel's ingenious system of graded categories, with its successive forms of Being,—viz., *Sein*, *Dasein*, *Existenz*, and *Wirklichkeit*,—gave a formula which enabled him to declare *das Wirkliche* through and through organic, while leaving room for all sorts of imperfect realizations of unity in the lower realms of *Dasein* and *Existenz*. I would not desire to recommend Hegel's devices to Dr. Abbot, for they might produce worse effects upon his agnostics than even his present account of things. I only wish to suggest that the actually true doctrine of the organic unity of the world requires of us more adroitness in its

statement that is involved in simply declaring every possible genus an organic unity, and avoiding distinctions. The pebbles have "unity" because they resemble one another; the atoms because, in addition, they have, or may have, physical and chemical relations; the corkscrews or the rat-traps because of their community both of structure and of purposes. The "family," however, shows us a wholly different sort of organic or "indissoluble" relation among its members; while the constellation in the heavens is again a sort of "genus" in relation to the stars that compose it; but its unity, while indeed founded upon the "immanent relational constitution" of the world in space, has a yet widely different "organic" character from that suggested by the other "genera" mentioned. I use, indeed, examples which are my own; but Dr. Abbot has only himself to blame if, stating the "immanent relational constitution" of all genera in this direct and naive way, without any distinctions, he forces upon a reader such

reflections. In brief, as the foregoing reference to Hegel suggests, Dr. Abbot's doctrine is in so far "American" as it is Hegel with the subtlety of that crafty old fox left out. Hegel managed to make the *Begriff* organic, and yet leave room for the confused genera of ordinary observation. Dr. Abbot marks all genera with the same stripe, sees "indissoluble unity" in every case of objectively significant classification, and so makes indeed short work of "agnosticism," but unfortunately of the clearness of his whole thinking also.

For, of course, the whole use of this "American theory of universals" is to prove, by means of the reciprocal relation of thing and kind, that the universe as a whole has such unity as certain of its parts—to wit, "organisms" and "persons"—are already empirically known to possess. This is the whole question at issue between Dr. Abbot and his agnostics. No other line of investigation shall be "scientific" or "modern," except a study of empirical nature

in the light of the "American theory." And this theory is, "Every genus is an organic unity of interrelated individuals in one self-related kind." Hence the kind of kinds, containing as it does persons and organisms, is at once in a fair way to appear as a person with an organism. Dr. Abbot's agnostics have, however, a right to ask how the organic unity of the universe, as the highest genus, differs from the organic unity of the rat-traps in the genus "rat-trap," or of the rainbows in the genus "rainbow," or of the tigers in the jungle, or of the stars in the constellation? Why is the human "family" a better case of the immanent relational constitution of the objective world than is the genus "corkscrew"? Upon the answer to such questions all must turn for these unhappy agnostic readers.

And Dr. Abbot indeed "more or less" feels, I apprehend, how the bare and undeveloped assertion, that science knows organic and unified genera, is not enough to make clear the peculiar unity which he attributes to the

One Person. Hence the detailed discussion of machine, organism, and person, as scientific genera, in the concluding sections of the book. A more hopelessly “mediæval” discussion it would be hard to find. The design argument in all its dogmatic and animistic play with analogies is here repeated as if it were something wholly new. A “machine” needs a maker and a user. *Proof*: men make axes. Science discovers physical nature to be a machine. *Ergo*: science discovers the world of physical nature to need a maker and a user. This maker and user cannot be a part of nature, but must be the whole of it. Hence the world is one organism. A further proof of the same bold and new doctrine is found in the fact that (as M. Deschanel observes, in the revised sixth edition, by Everett, of his “Elementary Treatise on Natural Philosophy”) “we obtain the idea of force through our own conscious exercise of muscular force” (§52 of Abbot). Several other persons have said the same thing. Hence (§58) “the universe is a real

organism." As for the rest of the argument, it is short and easy. The universe as a whole has nothing outside of it. Hence, for the real organism which is the infinite, "self and not-self are numerically identical. But numerical identity of self and not-self, subject and object, constitutes the unity of self-consciousness in the person. Consequently the infinite universe cannot be a real organism without being a real person too."

And so, finally, after this somewhat detailed study of Dr. Abbot's little book, I feel constrained to repeat my judgment as above. Results in philosophy are one thing; a careful way of thinking is another. Babies and sucklings often get very magnificent results. It is not the office of philosophy to outdo the babies and sucklings at their own business of receiving revelations. It is the office of philosophy to undertake a serious scrutiny of the presuppositions of human belief. Hence the importance of the careful way of thinking in philosophy. But

Dr. Abbot's way is not careful, is not novel, and, when thus set forth to the people as new and bold and American, it is likely to do precisely as much harm to careful inquiry as it gets influence over immature or imperfectly trained minds. I venture therefore to speak plainly, by way of a professional warning to the liberal-minded public concerning Dr. Abbot's philosophical pretensions. And my warning takes the form of saying that if people are to think in this confused way, unconsciously borrowing from a great speculator like Hegel, and then depriving the borrowed conception of the peculiar subtlety of statement that made it useful in its place,—and if we readers are for our part to accept such scholasticism as is found in Dr. Abbot's concluding sections as at all resembling philosophy,—then it were far better for the world that no reflective thinking whatever should be done. If we can't improve on what God has already put into the mouth of the babes and sucklings, let us at all events make

some other use of our wisdom and prudence than in setting forth the "American theory" of what has been in large part hidden from us.

I speak plainly. Moreover, I give this work a treatment whose minuteness is wholly out of proportion to the value of the book criticised. Were I writing for expert students of philosophy, this paper would have been much briefer. But I write for the general reader, as well as for the expert. And, I repeat, nothing less than the foregoing fulness and plainness of speech is due to Dr. Abbot's rank as a public teacher, and to his well-earned reputation as a man who wants to advance the cause of sound religion. That cause, by his practical labors, as editor and counsellor, by his personal devotion to high ideals, by his heroic sacrifices in the service of duty, he has long indeed advanced; and I trust that he will very long continue to do so. But if we will philosophize in public, we must be content to be judged by formal criteria of a very impersonal sort. If not every

one that saith Lord! Lord! is a good servant of the Lord, surely it is equally true that not every one who preaches a lofty creed and lives up to it can give even an American theory of why he holds it. And, in judging of the actual work of philosophical writers, we must lay friendly esteem aside in so far as it is necessary to do so for the cause of the "greater friend." In brief, in estimating these matters of the accuracy and fruitfulness of our reflective thought, we must show no mercy,—as we ask none.

JOSIAH ROYCE.

## Professor Royce's Libel: A Public Appeal.<sup>3</sup>

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TO THE PRESIDENT AND FELLOWS AND BOARD OF OVERSEERS OF  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY:

**G**ENTLEMEN,—BELIEVING it to be a necessary part of good citizenship to defend one's reputation against unjustifiable attacks, and believing you to have been unwarrantably, but not remotely, implicated in an unjustifiable attack upon my own reputation by Assistant Professor Josiah Royce, since his attack is made publicly, explicitly, and emphatically on the authority of his "professional" position as one of your agents and appointees, I respectfully

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3. Abbot, Ph. D. Francis Ellingwood. *Professor Royce's Libel: A Public Appeal for Redress to the Corporation and Overseers of Harvard University*. Boston, MA: Geo. H. Ellis, 1891.

apply to you for redress of the wrong, leaving it wholly to your own wisdom and sense of justice to decide what form such redress should take. If Dr. Royce had not, by clear and undeniable implication, appealed to your high sanction to sustain him in his attack,—if he had not undeniably sought to create a widespread but false public impression that, in making this attack, he spoke, and had a right to speak, with all the prestige and authority of Harvard University itself,—I should not have deemed it either necessary or becoming to appeal to you in self-defence, or, indeed, to take any public notice whatever of an attack otherwise unworthy of it. But under the circumstances I am confident that you will at once recognize the inevitableness and unquestionable propriety of my appeal from the employee to the employer, from the agent to the principal; and it would be disrespectful to you to doubt for a moment that, disapproving of an attack made impliedly and yet unwarrantably in your name,

you will express your disapprobation in some just and appropriate manner. My action in thus laying the matter publicly before you can inflict no possible injury upon our honored and revered Alma Mater: injury to her is not even conceivable, except on the wildly improbable supposition of your being indifferent to a scandalous abuse of his position by one of your assistant professors, who, with no imaginable motive other than mere professional jealousy or rivalry of authorship, has gone to the unheard-of length of "professionally warning the public" against a peaceable and inoffensive private scholar, whose published arguments he has twice tried, but twice signally failed, to meet in an intellectual way. If the public at large should have reason to believe that conduct so scandalous as this in a Harvard professor will not be condemned by you, as incompatible with the dignity and the decencies of his office and with the rights of private citizens in general, Harvard University would indeed suffer, and

ought to suffer; but it is wholly within your power to prevent the growth of so injurious a belief. I beg leave, therefore, to submit to you the following statement, and to solicit for it the patient and impartial consideration which the gravity of the case requires.

I.

The first number of a new quarterly periodical, the "International Journal of Ethics," published at Philadelphia in October, 1890, contained an ostensible review by Dr. Royce of my last book, "The Way out of Agnosticism." I advisedly use the word "ostensible," because the main purport and intention of the article were not at all to criticise a philosophy, but to sully the reputation of the philosopher, deprive him of public confidence, ridicule and misrepresent his labors, hold him up by name to public obloquy and contempt, destroy or lessen the circulation of his books, and, in general, to blacken and break down his literary reputation by any and

every means, even to the extent of aspersing his personal reputation, although there had never been the slightest personal collision. Its bitter and invidious spirit was not in the least disguised by a few exaggerated compliments adroitly inserted here and there: these merely furnish the foil needed to give greater potency and efficiency to the personal insinuations, and, like Mark Antony's compliments to Cæsar's assassins, subserved quite too many politic purposes to be accepted as sincere. Only a native of Bœotia could be imposed upon by them, when the actual character of the book in question was carefully misrepresented, and when the self-evident trend, tenor, and aim of the ostensible review were to excite public prejudice against the author on grounds wholly irrespective of the truth or untruth of his expressed opinions.

Of course, the very largest liberty must be and should be conceded to legitimate criticism. From this, as is well known, I never

shrank in the least; on the contrary, I court it, and desire nothing better for my books, provided only that the criticism be pertinent, intelligent, and fair. But misrepresentation for the purpose of detraction is not criticism at all; and (notwithstanding numerous quotations perverted by unfair and misleading glosses, including two misquotations quite too useful to be accidental) this ostensible review is, from beginning to end, nothing but misrepresentation for the purpose of detraction. Passing over numerous minor instances, permit me to invite your attention to three gross instances of such misrepresentation.

## II.

The book under review had taken the utmost pains (pages 16-39, especially page 39) to distinguish "realism" from "idealism," and to argue for the former in opposition to the latter, on the ground of the absolute incompatibility of the latter with the scientific method of

investigation. It had taken the utmost pains to make the contrast broad and deep, and to point out its far-reaching consequences by explicitly opposing (1) scientific realism to philosophical idealism in general, and in particular (2) constructive realism to constructive idealism, (3) critical realism to critical idealism, (4) ethical realism to ethical idealism, and (5) religious realism to religious idealism. Any fair or honorable critic would recognize this contrast and opposition between realism and idealism as the very foundation of the work he was criticising, and would at least state it candidly, as the foundation of his own favorable or unfavorable comments. How did Dr. Royce treat it? He not only absolutely ignored it, not only said nothing whatever about it, but actually took pains to put the reader on a false scent at the start, by assuring him (without the least discussion of this all-important point) that my philosophical conclusions are "essentially idealistic"!

So gross a misrepresentation as this might be charitably attributed to critical incapacity of some sort, if it did not so very conveniently pave the way for the second gross misrepresentation which was to follow: namely, that the theory actually propounded in my book had been, in fact, "*appropriated*" and "*borrowed*" from an idealist! The immense utility of misrepresenting my system at the start as "essentially idealistic" lay in the fact that, by adopting this stratagem, Dr. Royce could escape altogether the formidable necessity of *first arguing the main question of idealism versus realism*. Secretly conscious of his own inability to handle that question, to refute my "Soliloquy of the Self-Consistent Idealist," or to overthrow my demonstration that consistent idealism leads logically to hopeless absurdity at last, Dr. Royce found it infinitely easier to deceive his uninformed readers by a bold assertion that I myself am an idealist at bottom. This assertion, swallowed without suspicion of

its absolute untruth, would render it plausible and quite credible to assert, next, that I had actually “appropriated” my philosophy from a greater idealist than myself.

For the only substantial criticism of the book made by Dr. Royce is that I “borrowed” my whole theory of universals from Hegel—“unconsciously,” he has the caution to say; but that qualification does not in the least mitigate the mischievous intention and effect of his accusation as a glaring falsification of fact and artful misdescription of my work. It would be inopportune and discourteous to weary you with philosophical discussions. I exposed the amazing absurdity of Dr. Royce’s accusation of plagiarism in the reply to his article which, as appears below, Dr. Royce himself anxiously suppressed, and which I should now submit to you, if he had not at last taken fright and served upon me a legal protest against its circulation. But, to any well-educated man, such an accusation as this refutes itself. It would

be just as reasonable, just as plausible, to accuse Darwin of having borrowed his theory of natural selection from Agassiz, or Daniel Webster of having borrowed his theory of the inseparable Union from John C. Calhoun, or ex-President Cleveland of having borrowed his message on tariff reform from the Home Market Club, as to accuse me of having borrowed my theory of universals from Hegel. Hegel's theory of universals is divided from mine by the whole vast chasm between realism and idealism. The two theories contradict each other absolutely, uncompromisingly, irreconcilably: Hegel's is a theory of "absolute idealism" or "pure thought" (*reines Denken*), that is, of *thought absolutely independent of experience*, while mine is a theory of "scientific realism," that is, of *thought absolutely dependent upon experience*. It is quite immaterial here which theory is the true one; the only point involved at present is that the two theories flatly contradict each other, and that it is self-evidently impossible

that either *could* be “borrowed,” consciously or unconsciously, from the other. If Dr. Royce had ever done any hard thinking on the theory of universals, or if he had the slightest comprehension of the problems it involves, he would never have been so rash as to charge me with “borrowing” my theory from Hegel, and thus to commit himself irrevocably to a defence of the absurd; but eagerness to accuse another has betrayed him into a position whence it is impossible for him to escape with honor. Solely by misdescribing my philosophy as “essentially idealistic” when it openly and constantly and emphatically avows itself to be essentially realistic, could Dr. Royce give the faintest color of plausibility to his monstrous and supremely ridiculous accusation of plagiarism; solely by presuming upon the public ignorance both of Hegel and of my own work could he dare to publish such an accusation to the world. These gross misrepresentations, however, he did not hesitate to make, since they were necessary in

order to pave the way to a third and still grosser misrepresentation on which he apparently had set his heart: namely, that, after borrowing the whole substance of my philosophy from Hegel, I have been guilty of making "vast and extravagant pretensions" as to my own "novelty," "originality," and "profundity," not only with regard to my published books, but also with regard to my "still unpublished system of philosophy." His words are these:—

"Of novelty, good or bad, the book contains, indeed, despite its vast pretensions, hardly a sign."

"It is due also to the extravagant pretensions which he frequently makes of late as to the originality and profundity of his still unpublished system of philosophy, to give the reader some hint of what so far appears to be the nature of our author's contributions to philosophical reflection."

Precisely what have been these alleged "pretensions"? Dr. Royce cites only three instances.

I. He first garbles a sentence in the prefatory Note to "The Way out of Agnosticism," by quoting only one phrase from it. The sentence in full is this: "By a wholly new line of reasoning, drawn exclusively from those sources [science and philosophy], this book aims to show that, in order to refute agnosticism and establish enlightened theism, nothing is now necessary but to philosophize that very scientific method which agnosticism barbarously misunderstands and misuses." There is no "pretension" whatever in these words, except that the general "line of reasoning" set forth in the book is, *as a whole*, different from that of other books. If not, why publish it? Or, without the same cause, why publish any book? I see no reason to recall or to modify this perfectly true statement; Dr. Royce, at least, has shown none. The "novelty" of the book lies in its very attempt to evolve philosophy as a whole out of the scientific method itself, as "observation, hypothesis, and experimental verification," by developing the

theory of universals which is implicit in that purely experiential method; and Dr. Royce does not even try to prove that Hegel, or anybody else, has ever made just such an attempt as that. Unless there can be shown somewhere a *parallel attempt*, the statement is as undeniably true as it is certainly unpretentious.

II. Next, Dr. Royce extracts these sentences from the body of the book (I supply in brackets words which he omitted): "The first great task of philosophy is to lay deep and solid foundations for the expansion [and ideal perfection] of human knowledge in a bold, new, and true theory of universals. For so-called modern philosophy rests complacently in a theory of universals which is thoroughly mediæval or antiquated." What personal pretension, even of the mildest sort, can be conceived to lurk in these innocent words? I did not say that I have succeeded in performing that "task"; I repeat now what I have often said and what I meant then; namely, that modern

science has unawares performed it already, that I have faithfully tried to formulate and further apply what science has done, and that I respectfully submit the result (so far as already published), not to such critics as Dr. Royce, but to able, learned, and magnanimous students of philosophy everywhere.

III. Lastly, though employing quotation marks so as to evade a charge of formal misquotation, he perverts and effectually misquotes a sentence of the book in a way which makes it appear exactly what it is not,—“pretentious.” I had said at the end of my own book (page 75): “*Its aim has been to show the way out of agnosticism into the sunlight of the predestined philosophy of science.*” This expression is perfectly in harmony with the prefatory Note, which says that “*this book aims to show that, in order to refute agnosticism and establish enlightened theism, nothing is now necessary but to philosophize that very scientific method which agnosticism barbarously misunderstands*

and misuses," and which immediately adds: "*Of the success of the perhaps unwise attempt to show this in so small a compass, the educated public must be the judge.*" Most certainly, there is no "pretension" in this modest and carefully guarded avowal of the simple aim of my book. But Dr. Royce twists this modest avowal into a barefaced boast, and injuriously misquotes me to his own readers thus: "At the conclusion of the book, we learn that we *have been shown* 'the way out of agnosticism into the sunlight of the predestined philosophy of science.'" Gentlemen, I request you to compare thoughtfully the expressions which I have here italicized, and then decide for yourselves whether this injurious misquotation is purely accidental, or, in view of Dr. Royce's purpose of proving me guilty of "vast pretensions," quite too useful to be purely accidental.

IV. But Dr. Royce does not content himself with quoting or misquoting what I have published, for the self-evident reason that what

I have published is not sufficiently "pretentious" for his purpose. Disinterested anxiety for the public welfare, and tender sorrow over the "harm to careful inquiry" which my book is doing by "getting influence over immature or imperfectly trained minds," constrain him to accuse me of "frequently making of late extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity" of my "still unpublished system of philosophy."

Precisely what have been these "extravagant pretensions"? Simply these:—

In the preface to "Scientific Theism," I said of that book: "It is a mere *résumé* of a small portion of a comprehensive philosophical system, so far as I have been able to work it out under most distracting, discouraging, and unpropitious circumstances of many years; and for this reason I must beg some indulgence for the unavoidable incompleteness of my work."

Enumerating some reasons why I hesitated to begin the series of papers afterwards

published as "The Way out of Agnosticism," I said, in the first of these papers: "First and foremost, perhaps, is the fact that, although the ground-plan of this theory is already thoroughly matured, the literary execution of it is as yet scarcely even begun, and from want of opportunity may never be completed; and it seems almost absurd to present the abridgment of a work which does not yet exist to be abridged."

Finally, in an address printed in the "Unitarian Review" for December, 1889, I said: "Without advancing any personal claim whatever, permit me to take advantage of your indulgent kindness, and to make here the first public confession of certain painfully matured results of thirty years' thinking, which, in the momentous and arduous enterprise of developing a scientific theology out of the scientific method itself, appear to be principles of cosmical import....Perhaps I can make them intelligible, as a contribution to that 'Unitary Science' which the great Agassiz

foresaw and foretold." In a postscript to this address I added: "For fuller support of the position taken above, I am constrained to refer...to a large treatise, now in process of preparation, which aims to rethink philosophy as a whole in the light of modern science and under the form of a natural development of the scientific method itself."

What remotest allusion to my own "originality" is contained in these passages, or what remotest allusion to my own "profundity"? What "pretension" of any sort is here made, whether "extravagant" or moderate? Yet this is the only actual evidence, *and the whole of it*, on which Dr. Royce dares to accuse me of "frequently making of late extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity of my still unpublished system of philosophy"! The pure absurdity of such an accusation reveals itself in the very statement of it. Dr. Royce is referring here, be it understood, not to my published books, but to my "unpublished

system of philosophy." *How does he know anything about it?* I certainly have never shown him my unpublished manuscript, and beyond those published allusions to it he possesses absolutely no means whatever of knowing anything about its contents. Nothing, surely, except full and exact knowledge, derived from careful and patient personal examination of that manuscript, could possibly be a ground of just judgment of its character. How, then, in absolute ignorance of its character and contents, could any fair man hazard any public verdict upon it? Yet Dr. Royce not only accuses me of making "pretensions" about it which I never made, but dares to characterize them as "extravagant," when, *for all he knows*, they might (if made) fall far short of the truth. Whether in this case the evidence supports the accusation, and whether the conscience which permits the making of such an accusation on such evidence is itself such a conscience as you expect to find

in your appointees,—these, gentlemen, are questions for you yourselves to decide.

### III.

These three connected and logically affiliated *misstatements of fact*—namely, (1) that my philosophy is “essentially idealistic;” (2) that it has been “appropriated” and “unconsciously borrowed” from the idealist Hegel, and (3) that I have frequently made “extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity” of this merely “borrowed” and “appropriated” philosophy—constitute in their totality a regular system of gross and studied misrepresentation, as methodical and coherent as it is unscrupulous. It is not “fair criticism;” it is not “criticism” at all; and I do not hesitate to characterize it deliberately as a disgrace both to Harvard University and to American scholarship.

Yet, gross and studied and systematic as this misrepresentation is, I should have passed it

over in silence, precisely as I did pass over a similar attack by Dr. Royce on my earlier book in "Science" for April 9, 1886, were it not that, perhaps emboldened by former impunity, he now makes his misrepresentations culminate in the perpetration of a literary outrage, to which, I am persuaded, no parallel can be found in the history of polite literature. It is clear that forbearance must have somewhere its limit. The commands of self-respect and of civic conscience, the duty which every citizen owes to his fellow-citizens not to permit the fundamental rights of all to be unlimitedly violated in his own person, must at last set a bound to forbearance itself, and compel to self-defence. These are the reasons which, after patient exhaustion of every milder means of redress, have moved me to this public appeal.

Dr. Royce's misstatements of fact, so elaborately fashioned and so ingeniously mortised together, were merely his foundation for a deliberate and formal "professional

warning to the liberal-minded public" against my alleged "philosophical pretensions." The device of attributing to me extravagant but groundless "pretensions" to "originality" and "profundity"—since he is unable to cite a single passage in which I ever used such expressions of myself—was probably suggested to him by the "Press Notices of 'Scientific Theism,'" printed as a publishers' advertisement of my former book at the end of the book which lay before him. These "Press Notices," as usual, contain numerous extracts from eulogistic reviews, in which, curiously enough, these very words, "original" and "profound," or their equivalents, occur with sufficient frequency to explain Dr. Royce's choleric unhappiness. For instance, Dr. James Freeman Clarke wrote in the "Unitarian Review": "If every position taken by Dr. Abbot cannot be maintained, his book remains an original contribution to philosophy of a high order and of great value"; M. Renouvier, in "La Critique Philosophique,"

classed the book among “de remarquables efforts de construction métaphysique et morale dus à des penseurs indépendants et profonds”; and M. Carrau, in explaining why he added to his critical history of “Religious Philosophy in England” a chapter of twenty pages on my own system, actually introduced both of the words which, when thus applied, jar so painfully on Dr. Royce’s nerves: “La pensée de M. Abbot m’a paru assez profonde et assez originale pour mériter d’être reproduite littéralement.” (La Philosophie Religieuse en Angleterre. Par Ludovic Carrau, Directeur des Conférences de philosophie à la Faculté des lettres de Paris. Paris, 1888.) These extracts, be it remembered, were all printed at the end of the book which Dr. Royce was reviewing. Now he had an undoubted right to think and to say that such encomiums as these on my work were silly, extravagant, preposterous, and totally undeserved; but *to take them out of the mouth of others and put them into mine was wilful and*

*deliberate calumny*. Systematic and calumnious misrepresentation is the sole foundation of the “professional warning” in which Dr. Royce’s ostensible review culminates, and which is too extraordinary not to be quoted here in full:—

“And so, finally, after this somewhat detailed study of Dr. Abbot’s little book, I feel constrained to repeat my judgment as above. Results in philosophy are one thing; a careful way of thinking is another. Babes and sucklings often get very magnificent results. It is not the office of philosophy to outdo the babes and sucklings at their own business of receiving revelations. It is the office of philosophy to undertake a serious scrutiny of the presuppositions of human belief. Hence the importance of the careful way of thinking in philosophy. But Dr. Abbot’s way is not careful, is not novel, and, when thus set forth to the people as new and bold and American, it is likely to do precisely as much harm to careful inquiry as it gets influence over immature or imperfectly trained minds. I venture, therefore, to speak plainly, by way of a professional warning to the liberal-minded public concerning Dr. Abbot’s philosophical pretensions. And my

warning takes the form of saying that, if people are to think in this confused way, unconsciously borrowing from a great speculator like Hegel, and then depriving the borrowed conception of the peculiar subtlety of statement that made it useful in its place,—and if we readers are for our part to accept such scholasticism as is found in Dr. Abbot's concluding sections as at all resembling philosophy,—then it were far better for the world that no reflective thinking whatever should be done. If we can't improve on what God has already put into the mouth of the babes and sucklings, let us at all events make some other use of our wisdom and prudence than in setting forth the American theory of what has been in large part hidden from us."

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Gentlemen, I deny sweepingly the whole groundwork of cunning and amazing misrepresentation on which this unparalleled tirade is founded.

I. I deny that my philosophy is "essentially idealistic," or that any "careful" or conscientious scholar could possibly affirm it to be such.

II. I deny that I “borrowed” my realistic theory of universals from the idealist, Hegel, whether consciously or unconsciously. The charge is unspeakably silly. Realism and idealism contradict each other more absolutely than protectionism and free-trade.

III. I deny that I ever made the “philosophical pretensions” which Dr. Royce calumniously imputes to me. But, if I had made pretensions as high as the Himalayas, I deny his authority to post me publicly—to act as policeman in the republic of letters and to collar me on that account. A college professor who thus mistakes his academic gown for the policeman’s uniform, and dares to use his private walking-stick for the policeman’s bludgeon, is likely to find himself suddenly prostrated by a return blow, arrested for assault and battery, and unceremoniously hustled off into a cell, by the officer whose function he has injudiciously aped without waiting for the tiresome but

quite indispensable little preliminary of first securing a regular commission.

IV. Most of all, I deny Dr. Royce's self-assumed right to club every philosopher whose reasoning he can neither refute nor understand. I deny, in general, that any Harvard professor has the right to fulminate a "professional warning" *against anybody*; and, in particular, that you, gentlemen, ever voted or intended to invest Dr. Royce with that right. He himself now publicly puts forth a worse than "extravagant pretension" when he arrogates to himself this right of literary outrage. He was not appointed professor by you for any such unseemly purpose. To arrogate to himself a senseless "professional" superiority over all non-"professional" authors, to the insufferable extent of publicly posting and placarding them for a mere difference of opinion, is, from a moral point of view, scandalously to abuse his academical position, to compromise the dignity of Harvard University, to draw down universal

contempt upon the "profession" which he prostitutes to the uses of mere professional jealousy or literary rivalry, and to degrade the honorable office of professor in the eyes of all who understand that a weak argument is not strengthened, and a false accusation is not justified, by throwing "professional warnings" as a make-weight into the scales of reason. I affirm emphatically that no professor has a moral right to treat anybody with this undisguised "insolence of office," or to use any weapon but reason in order to put down what he conceives to be errors in philosophy. In the present case, I deny that Dr. Royce has any better or stronger claim than myself to speak "professionally" on philosophical questions. The very book against which he presumes to warn the public "professionally" is founded upon lectures which I myself "professionally" delivered, not only from Dr. Royce's own desk and to Dr. Royce's own college class, but as a substitute for Dr. Royce himself, at the request

and by the appointment of his own superiors, the Corporation and Overseers of his own University; and the singular impropriety (to use no stronger word) of his "professional warning" will be apparent to every one in the light of that fact.

#### IV.

So far I have treated Dr. Royce's attack solely from the literary and ethical points of view. The legal point of view must now be considered.

Plagiarism, conscious or unconscious, is a very grave and serious charge to bring against an author, and one which may entail upon him, not only great damage to his literary reputation, but also social disgrace and pecuniary loss. If proved, or even if widely believed without proof, it cannot but ruin his literary career and destroy the marketable value of his books; and it matters little, so far as these practical results are concerned, whether the plagiarism attributed to him is conscious or unconscious.

In an able editorial article on "Law and Theft," published in the New York "Nation" of Feb. 12, 1891, it is forcibly said: "Authors or writers who do this [borrowing other men's ideas] a good deal, undoubtedly incur discredit by it with their fellows and the general public. It greatly damages a writer's fame to be rightfully accused of want of originality, or of imitation, or of getting materials at second hand. But no one has ever proposed to punish or restrain this sort of misappropriation by law. No one has ever contended for the infliction on the purloiners of other men's ideas of any penalty but ridicule or disgrace." Whoever *wrongfully* accuses an author of plagiarism, then, holds him up *undeservedly* to "discredit, ridicule, or disgrace," and "slanders his title" to the product of his own brain. This is contrary to the law. Yet this is precisely what Dr. Royce has done in accusing me *falsely*, and as a "*certain*" *matter of fact*, of borrowing my theory of universals from Hegel. His accusation is made with as

many sneers and as much insult as could well be compressed into the space:—

“Dr. Abbot is hopelessly unhistorical in his consciousness. His ‘American theory of universals’ is so far from being either his own or a product of America that in this book he continually has to use, in expounding it, one of the most characteristic and familiar of Hegel’s technical terms, namely, ‘concrete,’ in that sense in which it is applied to the objective and universal ‘genus.’ Dr. Abbot’s appropriation of Hegel’s peculiar terminology comes ill indeed from one who talks,” etc. “This I say not to defend Hegel, for whose elaborate theory of universals I hold in no wise a brief, but simply in the cause of literary property-rights. When we plough with another man’s heifer, however unconscious we are of our appropriation, however sincerely we seem to remember that we alone raised her from her earliest calfhood, it is yet in vain, after all, that we put our brand on her, or call her ‘American!’...Now Hegel’s whole theory may be false; but what is certain is that Dr. Abbot, who has all his life been working in an atmosphere where Hegelian ideas were more or less infectious, has derived his whole theory of

universals, so far as he has yet revealed it with any coherency, from Hegelian sources, and even now cannot suggest any better terminology than Hegel's for an important portion of the doctrine. Yet in the volume before us we find all this pretentious speech of an 'American' theory, and discover our author wholly unaware that he is sinning against the most obvious demands of literary property-rights."

Passing over the self-evident point that whoever is "*unaware* that he is sinning" cannot be "*sinning*" at all, since "*sinning*" consists in *being aware* of the wrong we do,—and, consequently, that Dr. Royce comes here as near as he dares to a direct insinuation that my plagiarism is conscious, and not "*unconscious*,"—let me call your attention to the more important point, that Dr. Royce affirms my conscious or unconscious theft from Hegel as a matter of "*certain*" *fact*, not merely as a matter of *probable inference*. Yet the only evidence he has to offer in support of this "*certainty*" is (1) that I use the word "*concrete*" in the same sense as

Hegel, and (2) that I have worked all my life in a Hegelian "atmosphere." These two points cover all the grounds of his accusation. Permit me very briefly to examine them.

(1) The word "concrete" is not in the least a technical term copyrighted by Hegel, nor is it his trademark. It is one of the commonest of words, and free to all. But what sort of a reasoner is he who infers the identity of two whole complex theories from their coincidence in the use of only a single word? Even this poor and solitary little premise slips out of Dr. Royce's clutch, for Hegel's use of the word is *contradictory to mine*! Hegel has to put upon the word "concrete" a very unusual, strained, and artificial sense, in order to cover up the weakest point of his idealistic system. He explains it, however, frankly, clearly, and unambiguously: "The Concept or Notion (*Begriff*) may be always called 'abstract,' if the term 'concrete' must be limited to the mere concrete of sensation and immediate perception; the Notion as such

cannot be grasped by the hands, and, when we deal with it, eyes and ears are out of the question. Yet, as was said before, the Notion is the only true concrete." (*Encyklopädie, Werke*, VI. 316.) Again: "Just as little is the sensuous-concrete of Intuition a rational-concrete of the Idea." (*Ibid.*, *Werke*, VI. 404.) A score of similar passages can easily be cited. That is to say, Hegel avowedly excludes from his *idealistic* theory of universals the "concrete" of sensation, perception, intuition, or *real experience*, and admits into it only the "concrete" of *pure or non-empirical thought*; while I avowedly exclude from my *realistic* theory of universals the "concrete" of *pure thought*, and admit into it only the "concrete" of *real experience*. Hegel's "concrete" cannot be seen, heard, or touched; while to me nothing which cannot be seen, heard, or touched is "concrete" at all. A mere common school education is quite sufficient for comprehension of the contradictoriness of these two uses of the word. Yet, in order

to find a malicious charge of plagiarism, Dr. Royce has the hardihood to assure the uninformed general public that Hegel and I use the word "concrete" in one and the same sense!

(2) The assertion that I have lived all my life in a Hegelian "atmosphere" I can only meet with a short, sharp, and indignant denial. I know of no such "atmosphere" in all America; if it anywhere exists, I certainly never lived, moved, or worked in it. The statement is a gratuitous, impertinent, and *totally false allegation of fact*, wholly outside of my book and its contents, and is used in this connection solely to feather an arrow shot at my reputation; it is a pure invention, a manufactured assertion which is absolutely without foundation, and, when thus artfully thrown out with apparent artlessness (*ars celare artem*) as itself foundation for a false and malicious charge of plagiarism, it becomes fabrication of evidence for the purpose of defamation. The less said about such an offence

as that, the better for Dr. Royce, and I spare him the comment it deserves.

Now, while it might be "fair criticism" to *infer* my plagiarism from Hegel, if there were only some reasonable or even merely plausible evidence to support the inference (which I have just proved not to be the case), it is incontestable that to *affirm* this plagiarism, as a "certain" matter of fact, without any reasonable evidence at all, is not that "fair criticism" which the law justly allows, but, on the contrary, a totally unjustifiable libel. In accusing me personally of plagiarism on no reasonable grounds whatever, as I have just unanswerably proved him to have done, and in making the "certainty" of the plagiarism depend upon an allegation of fact wholly independent of the book which he professed to be criticising (namely, the false allegation that I have worked all my life in a Hegelian "atmosphere"), Dr. Royce has beyond all controversy transgressed

the legally defined limits of "fair criticism," and become a libeller.

But this is by no means all. If the bat-like accusation of an "unconscious", yet "sinning" (or sinful) plagiarism hovers ambiguously between attacking my literary reputation and attacking my moral character, there is no such ambiguity hanging about the accusation of "extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity of my still unpublished system of philosophy." A decent modesty, a self-respectful reserve, a manly humility in presence of the unattainable ideal of either moral or intellectual perfection, a speechless reverence in the presence of either infinite goodness or infinite truth,—these are virtues which belong to the very warp and woof of all noble, elevated, and justly estimable character; and wherever their absence is conspicuously shown, there is just ground for moral condemnation and the contempt of mankind. Dr. Royce has not scrupled to accuse me of making, not only "pretensions," but even

“extravagant pretensions,” which are absolutely incompatible with the possession of these beautiful and essential virtues, and thereby to hold me up to universal contempt and derision. He has done this, by the very terms of his accusation, absolutely and confessedly *without cause*; for the system of philosophy which is “unpublished” to others is no less “unpublished” to him, and an accusation thus made confessedly without any knowledge of its truth is, on the very face of it, an accusation which is as malicious as it is groundless. To make such a self-proved and self-condemned accusation as this is, I submit, to be guilty of libel with no ordinary degree of culpability.

But the libel of which I have greatest cause to complain is not confined to exceptional or isolated expressions. These might charitably be explained as mere momentary ebullitions of pettishness or spleen, and pardonable as merely faults of temper in a criticism which was in the main conscientious and fair. But the

libel of which I complain most of all is one that constitutes the entire ground and framework of the article *as a whole*. Every part of it is methodically spun and interwoven with every other part, in such a way as to make it one seamless tissue of libel from beginning to end. This I say in full consciousness of the interspersed occasional compliments, since these have only the effect of disguising the libellous intent of the whole from a simple-minded or careless reader, and since they subserve the purpose of furnishing to the writer a plausible and ready-made defence of his libel against a foreseen protest. Compliments to eke out a libel are merely insults in masquerade. The libellous plan of the article as a whole is shown in the *regular system* of gross and studied misrepresentation, of logically connected and nicely dovetailed misstatements of facts, which I exposed at the outset. Every intelligent reader of my two books is perfectly aware that they are both devoted to an exposition

of the fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between philosophical idealism and scientific realism, and to a defence of the latter against the former, as the only possible method by which a spiritual theism can be intellectually, and therefore successfully, defended in this age of science. Only one who has read and digested the two books can fully appreciate the enormity and the unscrupulousness of the initial misrepresentation, slipped in, as it were, quite casually, and without any argument, in the apparently incidental and matter-of-course statement that my "conclusion" is "essentially idealistic." It is *not* "idealistic" at all, but as radically realistic as the premises themselves; and no professor of philosophy could ever have called it "idealistic" by a mere slip of the tongue or pen. The intelligent origin of this misrepresentation is clearly enough suggested in the use to which it is at once put: namely, to render plausible the otherwise ridiculous charge that my theory of universals was

“borrowed” from an idealist. Next, the same origin is more than suggested by the use to which these two misrepresentations together are put: namely, to show that any claim of “novelty” for a merely “borrowed” philosophy is a “vast” and “extravagant pretension.” Lastly, the same origin is inductively and conclusively proved, when these three inter-linked misrepresentations, as a whole, are made the general foundation for a brutal “professional warning” to the public at large against my “philosophical pretensions” in general. Not one of these fundamental positions of Dr. Royce’s article is a fact,—least of all, an “admitted fact”; on the contrary, each of them is energetically and indignantly denied. But the libel of which I complain above all is the *regular system* of gross and studied misrepresentation by which the most essential facts are first misstated and falsified, and then used to the injury of my literary and personal reputation.

It may, I trust, be permitted to me here to show clearly what the law is, as applicable to the case in hand, by a few pertinent citations.

“The critic must confine himself to criticism, and not make it the veil for personal censure, nor allow himself to run into reckless and unfair attacks, merely from the love of exercising his power of denunciation. Criticism and comment on well-known and admitted facts are very different things from the assertion of unsubstantiated facts. A fair and *bona fide* comment on a matter of public interest is an excuse of what would otherwise be a defamatory publication. The statement of this rule assumes the matters of fact commented on to be somehow ascertained. It does not mean that a man may invent facts, and comment on the facts so invented in what would be a fair and *bona fide* manner, on the supposition that the facts were true. If the facts as a comment upon which the publication is sought to be excused do not exist, the foundation fails....

The distinction cannot be too clearly borne in mind between comment or criticism and allegations of fact....To state matters which are libellous is not comment or criticism." (*Newell on Defamation, Slander, and Libel*, p. 568.) Applying this to the case in hand: the "admitted facts" are these: (1) my philosophy is realistic from beginning to end; (2) I have not worked all my life, nor any part of my life, in a Hegelian "atmosphere"; (3) I did not borrow my theory of universals from Hegel; (4) I have made no vast or extravagant pretensions whatever as to my own philosophy. But Dr. Royce invents and states the exact opposite of all these facts, and then bases on these purely invented facts most undeserved "personal censure" and most "reckless and unfair attacks." Therefore, his article is a libel in its whole groundwork and essential spirit.

"If a person, under pretence of criticising a literary work, defames the private character of the author, and, instead of writing in the spirit

and for the purpose of fair and candid discussion, travels into collateral matter, and introduces facts not stated in the work, accompanied with injurious comment upon them, such person is a libeller, and liable to an action." (*Broom's Legal Maxims*, p. 320.) Applying this to the case in hand: Dr. Royce "defames" my "private character," when he accuses me of "frequently" indulging in "extravagant pretensions"; he "travels into collateral matter," when he alludes at all to my unpublished manuscript; he "introduces facts not stated in the work, accompanied with injurious comment upon them," when he alludes to this unpublished manuscript for the sole purpose of saying (untruthfully) that I "frequently make, of late, extravagant pretensions as to its originality and profundity," and again when he says that I have worked all my life in a Hegelian "atmosphere," for the sole purpose of founding upon this false statement a false charge of plagiarism.

In the "Griffith Gaunt" case, Judge Clerke said in his charge to the jury: "The interests of literature and science require that the productions of authors shall be subject to fair criticism,—that even some animadversion may be permitted, unless it appears that the critic, under the pretext of reviewing his book, takes an opportunity of attacking the character of the author, and of holding him up as an object of ridicule, hatred, or contempt. In other words, the critic may say what he pleases of the literary merits or demerits of the published production of an author; but, with respect to his personal rights relating to his reputation, the critic has no more privilege than any other person not assuming the business of criticism." (*Abbott's Practice Reports*, New Series, VI. 18.) Applying this to the case in hand: Dr. Royce, "under the pretext of reviewing" my "book, takes an opportunity of attacking the author, and of holding him up as an object of ridicule and contempt," if ridicule

and contempt are the deservedly universal punishment of the plagiarist and the braggart. To so unprecedented a length has he carried this attack, as deliberately and formally, in the name of his "profession," and therefore, by necessary implication, in the name of Harvard University itself, to "warn the liberal-minded public" against me, *precisely as one warns the general public against an impostor soliciting alms under false pretences!* This is a flagrant violation of my "personal rights relating to my reputation"; and, therefore, according to the above judicial ruling of an American court, Dr. Royce is guilty of wanton and unprovoked libel against one who never injured him in the slightest degree.

In the case of *Strauss versus Francis*, Chief Justice Cockburn said: "The question is as to the article as a whole....The verdict must be upon the article as a whole, and whether, as a whole, it is to be deemed malicious and libellous." (*Foster and Finlason's Reports*, IV. 1107.) Applying this to

the case in hand: Dr. Royce's ostensible review presents its darkest, most odious, and most libellous aspect to him who most thoroughly, penetratingly, and comprehensively studies out the inner structure of its argument *as a whole*, and who most intelligently compares it with the book which it falsely professes to criticise fairly. Allow me to quote here a passage from page 39 of "the Way out of Agnosticism" in order simply to show you how uncompromisingly this passage, which sums up the entire results of the first half of the book and luminously forecasts the entire conclusion of the whole, plants my system on the side of Realism:—

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"The scientific, modern, or American theory of universals, which results necessarily from analysis of the scientific method, is Scientific Realism, as opposed to Philosophical Idealism; and it determines the subdivision of scientific philosophy into its three great departments, the theories of Being, of Knowing, and of Doing. The scientific theory of Being results from analysis of the Genus-in-itself, and

constitutes ontology or Constructive Realism, as opposed to all forms of Constructive Idealism. The scientific theory of Knowledge results from analysis of the Concept, and constitutes psychology or Critical Realism, as opposed to all forms of transcendental or Critical Idealism. The scientific theory of Conduct results from analysis of the Word, and constitutes anthroponomy (including ethics, politics, and art in its widest sense), sociology, or Ethical Realism, as opposed to all forms of Ethical Idealism. The scientific theory of the universe, as the absolute union of Being, Knowing, and Doing in the One and All, results from comprehension of these three theories in complete organic unity, and constitutes organic philosophy, scientific theology, or Religious Realism, as opposed to all forms of Religious Idealism."

I submit this long extract to you, gentlemen, not to bore you with metaphysical speculations, but simply to enable you, as educated men who understand the meaning of plain and straightforward English on any subject, to follow the twistings and turnings of an extraordinarily sinuous and disingenuous intellect, and

intelligently to decide a question which needs here to be settled clearly in your own minds: could any competent professor of philosophy, undertaking to give, as a fair critic, a truthful account to the public of the contents of my book, read that passage, and then, omitting all reference to the contrast there and everywhere made between realism and idealism, honestly tell that public, without any further information at all on the subject, that the "conclusion" of my philosophy is "essentially idealistic"?

Yet that is the conscienceless misrepresentation with which Dr. Royce prepares the way for all that is to follow, deceives the reader at the very outset, predisposes him to believe the preposterous charge that I "appropriated" my main theory from the great idealist Hegel, arouses his indignation or mirth, as the case may be, at my alleged strutting about in borrowed plumes, and so leads him at last to applaud the righteous castigation of the "professional warning," by which the peacock-

feathers are made to fly in all directions and I myself am scourged back among my brother-jackdaws, the impostors, charlatans, and quacks of myriad kinds. This is the purport and the spirit of Dr. Royce's ostensible review, "*as a whole*." Is it the "fair criticism" which the law allows? Or is it the "libel" which the law condemns? Is it the fair and critical judgment which your silence shall sanction, as Harvard's official verdict on my work? Or is it the libellous and vulgar abuse which your speech shall rebuke, as shaming Harvard more than me by bringing the ethics and manners of the literary Bedouin into the professor's chair?

## V.

But, gentlemen, the gravest aspect of Dr. Royce's ostensible review remains still to be considered. Is libel—vulgar, violent, and brutal libel—the means by which Harvard University, represented by one of her professors of philosophy who openly claims to address the

general public in the name of his office and of her, proposes to realize the lofty ideal of her President, and make herself the "philosophical pioneer" for each new generation in the pursuit of truth? Is this the welcome which she accords to serious, dignified, and not unscholarly works, giving the results, however partially and imperfectly wrought out, of patient and independent reflection for more than thirty years on the highest problems of human life and thought? Is this the best sympathy and encouragement she has to offer to her own sons when they take up in earnest the task of helping her to realize her own ideal? Is this the attitude in which she confronts the great questions of the age, and the spirit which she aims to foster in her young men? I do not believe it; but you alone, gentlemen, can give the authoritative answer to such queries.

When civil service reformers plead the urgent necessity of political reform, they are irrelevantly charged by the adherents

of the spoils system with being "hypocrites and pharisees." Precisely so, when I plead the urgent necessity of philosophical reform, I am irrelevantly charged by Dr. Royce, in effect, with being a false pretender, a plagiarist, and an impostor. The charge is just as true in one case as in the other. But, be the charge true or untrue, the attention of keen and candid minds is not to be diverted by this perfectly transparent device from the main point of reform.

What is this needed philosophical reform?

Briefly, *to substitute the scientific method for the idealistic method in philosophy*, as the only possible means, in this critical and sceptical age, of making ethics and religion so reasonable as to command the continued allegiance of reasonable minds. Unphilosophized science conceives the universe as nothing but a Machine-World; and in this conception there is no room for any Ethical Ideal. Unscientific philosophy conceives the universe as nothing

but a Thought-World; and in this conception there is no room for any Mechanical Real. On the possibility of developing a scientific philosophy out of the scientific method itself must depend at last the only possibility, for reasonable men, of believing equally in the real principles of mechanical science and in the ideal principles of ethical science. To-day the greatest obstacle to such a reasonable belief is the "philosophical idealism" which directly contradicts it; and the greatest reform needed in modern thought, above all in the theory of ethics, is the substitution of the scientific method for the idealistic method in philosophy itself.

The cause of philosophical reform, indeed, cannot be long delayed by any Philistinism in those who, by their professional position, ought to be its most ardent friends. The method of science is destined to revolutionize philosophy—to modernize it by founding it anew upon a thoroughly realistic and scientific

theory of universals. The net result of all the physical sciences thus far, the one fixed result to which all their other results steadily point with increasingly evident convergence, is that *the already known constitution of the real universe is that of the Machine*. This universal fixed result, and not mere individual self-consciousness, is the necessary and only beginning-point of a constructive philosophy of Nature; for, where the special sciences end, there universal philosophy must begin. It is the task of philosophy to-day to show that the unquestionably mechanical constitution of the universe, instead of being the ultimate boundary of scientific investigation, is merely the starting-point in a new series of investigations, no less scientific than those of physical science, but far more profound; and to show that the mechanical constitution itself, when deeply studied and comprehended, necessarily involves the organic and the personal constitutions. In this way, and I

believe in no other way, can it be proved to the satisfaction of the modern intelligence that the Mechanical Real itself, at bottom, includes the Ethical Ideal—that the Moral Law, the Divine Ideal itself, is the innermost Fact of Nature. I have made, and make now, not the slightest personal “pretension”; but, finding in all my reading no outline of any such argument as this, and believing it to be fruitful of the very noblest results, I have done my best to point out its possibilities to other earnest searchers after truth. Not until this new field has been faithfully examined and explored and proved to be sterile, shall I cease to recommend it to the attention of all who would fain see *reason* to believe that the Ethical Ideal is no Unreality, but rather the innermost Reality of the real universe itself. I speak only to those who have souls to hear and to respond; let the rest listen to Dr. Royce, and be dupes of his “professional warning.” But the cause of philosophical reform will not be stayed by him or by them: the

world's heart is hungry for higher truth than idealism can discover, and will be grateful in the end to any philosophy which shall show what mighty moral conviction, what unspeakable spiritual invigoration, must needs grow out of comprehension of the despised Real.

These thoughts are not remote abstractions, up in the air, out of reach, of no practical value or application; they touch the very life and soul of Harvard University. For want of such thoughts, many of the brightest and most intellectual of her students, graduates from the philosophical courses, go out year after year disbelieving totally in the possibility of arriving at any fundamental "truth" whatever, even in ethics. Several years ago, the then President of the Harvard "Philosophical Club" said in my hearing that he "saw no ground of moral obligation anywhere in the universe"; and this declaration was apparently assented to by every one of the fifteen or twenty members present. This very last summer, a recent graduate told

me that he left college bewildered, depressed, and “disheartened,” because he saw nowhere any ground of rational “conviction” about anything; and that it was “just the same with all the other fellows”—that is, all his companions in the study of philosophy. It is time, high time, that this state of things should be searchingly investigated in the interest of Harvard University itself, the facts determined, their causes ascertained. While such a state of things prevails, Harvard conspicuously fails to be a “philosophical pioneer” except in a distinctly retrograde direction—conspicuously fails to discharge the highest service which she owes to the world: namely, to send out her young graduates well armed beforehand for the battle of life with clear, strong, and lofty *moral convictions*. Whatever other causes may exist for the failure, one cause at least is certain—the self-proved and amazing inability of one of her professors of philosophy to give an honest or intelligent reception to a thoughtful, closely

reasoned, and earnest plea for philosophical reform in this very direction, or to criticise it with anything better than irrelevant and unparliamentary personalities, studied and systematic misrepresentation both of the plea and of the pleader, and a demoralizing example of libel, so bitter and so extreme as to furnish abundant ground for prosecution.

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## VI.

Here, gentlemen, you may very properly inquire: "Why do you not, then, prosecute Dr. Royce in the courts, instead of bringing the case before us?"

Briefly, because I have not yet exhausted those milder means of obtaining redress which it befits a peaceable and non-litigious citizen to employ before resorting to legal measures. You would have had just cause to complain of me, if I had precipitately prosecuted one of your professors for a "professional" attack without giving you previously an opportunity

to discipline him in your own way, and in dignified recognition of your own ultimate responsibility. A prosecution may not, I trust will not, prove necessary; for I have neither malice nor vindictiveness to gratify, but only a resolute purpose to defend my reputation effectually against a malicious libel, and not to permit the libeller to set up a plausible claim that, by silence and passive submission, I "tacitly confess the justice of an official condemnation by Harvard University of my 'philosophical pretensions.'" Except for that one phrase, "professional warning," in Dr. Royce's attack, this appeal would never have been written, or the least notice taken of his intrinsically puerile "criticisms." When Mr. Herbert Spencer, whom I have more than once publicly criticised, can yet magnanimously write to me of this very book, "I do not see any probability that it will change my beliefs, yet I rejoice that the subject should be so well discussed,"—and Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, "I am very conscious of the

force with which you handle the subject,"—and ex-President Noah Porter, "I thank you very sincerely for sending me a copy of your last book; I had already read it nearly twice, and found much in it very admirable and timely,"—I could very well afford to pass over Dr. Royce's ineffectual "criticisms" with indifference. But when he insinuates to the uninformed public that these same "criticisms" have the weighty sanction of Harvard University, it is quite another matter. That calls upon me to defend myself against so atrocious a calumny.

But even self-defence has its proprieties, and to these I scrupulously submit. The first step was to send a reply to the periodical which published the attack. This was sent. At first, Dr. Royce effusively agreed to its publication, and wrote a rejoinder to be published simultaneously with it. Later, in alarm, he procured its rejection, and, through legal counsel, served a formal notice upon me not to publish or to circulate it at all. The second step was to demand from

Dr. Royce a specific retraction and apology; this he contemptuously refused. The third step was to appeal from the recalcitrant employee to the responsible employer, and to lay the case respectfully before the supreme representatives of Harvard University itself. This I now do, and it is entirely unnecessary to look any farther. But, in order to lay the case before you fully, it is incumbent upon me to state the details of these proceedings with some minuteness, and I now proceed to unfold the extraordinary tale.

## VII.

Dr. Royce wound up his ostensible review with these words of bravado and of challenge: "*We must show no mercy,—as we ask none.*" This fierce flourish of trumpets I understood to be, at least, a fearless public pledge of a fair hearing in the "Journal of Ethics" of which he was one of the editors. Moreover, I conceived that a magazine expressly devoted to ethics

would be ashamed not to practise the ethics which it preached—ashamed not to grant to the accused a freedom scrupulously made equal to that which it had already granted to the accuser. Lastly, I was averse to litigation, and desired to use no coarser weapon, even against a calumniator and libeller, than the sharp edge of reason itself.

Accordingly, I sought redress in the first instance from the "International Journal of Ethics." On January 21, I mailed to Mr. S. Burns Weston, the office editor, an article in reply to Dr. Royce's ostensible review, together with a letter in which I wrote: "I do not at all complain of your publishing Dr. Royce's original article, although it was a most malicious and slanderous one, and undertook (not to put too fine a point upon it) to post me publicly as a quack. If you do not deny my indefeasible right to be heard in self-defence in the same columns, I shall feel that I have no cause whatever to regard you or your committee as a party to the outrage,

and shall entertain no feelings towards you or towards them other than such as are perfectly friendly. Let even slander and malice be heard, if truth shall be as free to reply." Pressing engagements had prevented me from writing the article in season for the January number of the "Journal of Ethics," but it was in ample season for the April number.

I sent it at last because I had full confidence in the soundness of what Thomas Jefferson said so well: "Truth and reason can maintain themselves without the aid of coercion, if left free to defend themselves. But then they must defend themselves. Eternal lies and sophisms on one side, and silence on the other, are too unequal."

The "International Journal of Ethics" is under the control of an "editorial committee" of eight, Dr. Felix Adler at the head and Dr. Royce at the end; the other six members live in Europe and have no share in the home management. Mr. Weston is not a member of the committee,

has little editorial authority, and, in case of disagreement between the two American members, would, as he himself expressly and frankly informed me in answer to a direct question, obey implicitly the directions of Dr. Adler. To Dr. Adler, therefore, belongs the general and ultimate editorial responsibility, whether legal or moral, since, according to Mr. Western's just quoted declaration, Dr. Adler alone has actual power either to procure or to prevent publication; while to Dr. Royce is assigned merely the special department of "theoretical ethics." Hence Dr. Adler and Dr. Royce were jointly responsible for the original libel, the latter for writing it, the former for publishing it; but Dr. Adler alone was editorially responsible for publishing or refusing to publish my reply to it. It was to Dr. Adler alone, as responsible editor-in-chief of the "Journal of Ethics," that I looked for publication of my defence, as the best possible reparation for the wrong done in publishing the libellous attack;

and I looked to him with confidence for this partial and inadequate reparation, believing that, as head of the "ethical culture movement," he would be anxious to conduct the "Journal of Ethics" in accordance with the highest principles of justice, honor, and fair play.

To my astonishment and indignation, however, my manuscript, instead of being considered and finally passed upon by Dr. Adler, was forwarded by him or by his direction to Dr. Royce! The latter, getting wind of it, had "insisted" that it belonged to his department of "theoretical ethics," and "claimed the right" to *edit it with a rejoinder in the same issue*. Nothing could be conceived more unfair or more absurd. A libel had been published by Dr. Adler, and Dr. Adler sent the defence against this libel to be edited by the libeller himself! Protest was in vain. Dr Adler denied his own moral responsibility, washed his hands of the whole affair, and even refused to enlighten himself as to his own duty (notwithstanding my

urgent request that he should do so) by taking counsel of some wise and able lawyer of his own acquaintance. Instead of doing this, he affected to consider my self-defence against a libel as merely a reply to an ordinary "book-criticism," made a few inquiries as to the "usual practice of journals" with reference to book-criticisms alone, turned my article over to Dr. Royce as one on "theoretical ethics," and permitted him to attach to it a rejoinder which reiterated the original libel with additions and improvements, but in which he took pains to say of my reply: "I may add that even now it does not occur to me to feel personally wounded, nor yet uneasy at Dr. Abbot's present warmth." These words have a peculiar interest with reference to his later legal notice against all publication or circulation of this very reply: his assumed or genuine pachydermatousness soon gave way to fearful apprehension of its effect upon the public mind.

In no sense whatever was my reply an article on "theoretical ethics." To what part of the "theory of ethics" belongs Dr. Royce's false personal accusation of "extravagant pretensions"? To what part of the "theory of ethics" belongs Dr. Royce's false personal accusation of "sinning against the most obvious demands of literary property-rights"? To what part of the "theory of ethics" belongs Dr. Royce's "professional warning" against pretensions which were never made? His false accusations and their false grounds were the main theme of my article, and they had nothing to do with "theoretical ethics," Dr Adler and Dr. Royce to the contrary notwithstanding. Dr. Royce had no shadow of right to set up so preposterous a claim, and Dr. Adler had no shadow of right to yield to it, as he weakly did, thereby violating his own undeniable obligation, as editor-in-chief, to do his utmost to repair the wrong which he himself had done in publishing a libel. My article was avowedly nothing but a defence against this

libel, and, as such, was necessarily addressed to the responsible editor of the "Journal of Ethics," not to the sub-editor of one of its special departments—most assuredly not to the libeller himself. The only fair and just course was to publish this defence alone by itself, precisely as the libel had been published alone by itself, and afterwards to allow Dr. Royce to follow it, if he pleased, with a rejoinder in the succeeding number. I made not the slightest objection to one rejoinder or a dozen rejoinders from him, provided the responsible editor held the balance true, accorded as fair a hearing to the accused as he had accorded to the accuser, and granted to each in turn an opportunity to plead his cause without interruption by the other. I asked no more than what Dr. Royce had already received—an opportunity to enjoy the undivided and undistracted attention of the audience for a limited time. He had had the ear of the public for six months. Could I not have it for three?

But I regret to say that considerations of equal justice seemed to have no weight whatever with Dr. Adler. Dr. Royce, despite his public pledge, was "asking for mercy," after all, and got from Dr. Adler all he asked for; I asked Dr. Adler for equity alone, and could not get even that. The sole concession made was that I might follow Dr. Royce's rejoinder with a second reply in the same number, thus closing the case with a last word for the defence.

To this last proposal, in order not to refuse a meagre measure of justice, I consented under protest. But the proof-sheets of Dr. Royce's rejoinder, to which I was to reply, did not reach me till March 18, and were accompanied with a notice from the "Journal of Ethics" that my reply must be mailed "within ten hours after receiving Royce's proof." This notice I answered as follows:—

"The proof of Royce's rejoinder, with your notes of the 16th and 17th, arrived this morning at 9 A.M. As I have had to

be at my teaching till 3 P.M., it was obviously impossible to mail a reply by 7 P.M. Hence I telegraphed to you at once: *'I protest against the gross injustice of postponing my article, or of publishing this new attack without the last word you promised me. It is impossible to write this now [i. e., within the ten hours stipulated]. If you have any love of justice, publish my article now, and postpone the rejoinders to next issue.'* Nothing stands in the way of this, the only fair course, except Royce's insistence on his right to deprive me of the equality of treatment which I supposed he himself guaranteed in his—*'as we ask none.'* To hold back my reply to his libel for three months longer, merely because he is afraid to let it go forth without an attempt to break its force in the same number, would be disgracefully unjust in him and in the 'Journal! His rejoinder is simply a fresh libel; there is nothing in it to which I cannot easily and effectually reply. But what *right* is there in refusing to me the opportunity of answering one libel at a time? Or in compelling me to be silent nine months [from October to July], in order to save him from being silent three months [from April to July]? It will be a bitter comment on the sincerity of the 'ethical culture movement' to make so unethical a judgment in so grave a case as this."

But the April number of the "Journal of Ethics," nevertheless, was published without my article. The latter was all in type, and the proof-sheets had been corrected; nothing prevented its publication in April except (1) Dr. Royce's insistence that my reply to his first libel should *not be published at all without his second libel*, and (2) Dr. Adler's weak submission to this unjust and pusillanimous demand of his associate.

The whole matter was thus most inequitably postponed to the July number, primarily at Dr. Royce's instigation. But I now found that I was to be refused the freedom necessary to self-defence against the second libel—the same freedom already yielded in replying to the first. Now to answer a libel effectively requires the freedom, not of the parliament, but of the courts. A mere literary discussion admits of parliamentary freedom alone, and properly excludes all reflections upon personal character. But Dr. Royce had most

unparliamentarily turned his ostensible review into a libel, and, contrary to all canons of literary discussion, had indulged himself in reflections upon my personal character as malicious as they were false. Now the only possible disproof of a libel is the proof that it *is* a libel,—that it is either untruthful, or malicious, or both; and, since a libel is both a civil injury and a criminal offence, the proof of its libellous character cannot be established without reflecting upon the personal character of the libeller. Hence Dr. Royce himself, by writing a libel, had self-evidently raised the question of his own personal character, and bound himself beforehand, by his own act, to submit with what grace he could to the necessary consequences of that act; and to seek to shield himself from these consequences, which he should have foreseen clearly and nerved himself to bear bravely, was only to incur the ridicule invited by a timorous man who first strikes another and then runs away. Dr. Adler, moreover, as

the responsible editor of the "Journal of Ethics," had laid himself, by publishing Dr. Royce's libel, under the clear moral obligation of according to the accused the same freedom of the courts which he had already accorded to the accuser; and to seek to escape this moral obligation was to incur the censure invited by any one who assumes the editorial function without properly informing himself of the duties which it imposes with reference to third parties. Both the one and the other had estopped themselves from denying to the accused in self-defence the same freedom of the courts which they had granted to themselves as accusers in attack.

Notwithstanding these plain facts, Dr. Royce and Dr. Adler united in denying to me the necessary freedom of self-defence against the attack which they had united in making.

At first, Dr. Royce undertook to dictate to me beforehand the nature of my reply to his rejoinder, and sought to restrict it to the parliamentary freedom of a purely literary

discussion. Ignoring the fact that he had himself rendered a purely literary discussion impossible by his own reflections upon personal character, he endeavored now to restrict my defence to a purely literary discussion of what, with amusing deficiency in the sense of humor, he considered to be his "criticisms"; whereas these pointless and ignorant criticisms had no importance whatever except as leading up to his "professional warning." The only object of a reply to his rejoinder was to expose its true character as a second libel, and thereby make plain to the dullest mind the outrage of his "professional warning." Evidently fearing this, and being anxious to prevent the exposure, he sent to me through Mr. Weston, who called upon me for the purpose on April 15, the following unspeakable document, apparently without a suspicion that it pricked the bubble of his previous iridescent pledge to "ask no mercy":—

## MEMORANDUM OF APR. 13, 1891.

1. Dr. Abbot's article must be in Mr. Weston's hands in MS. by June 1, for issue in the July No., if possible.
2. This article must not exceed, in actual number of words, Prof. Royce's last rejoinder.
3. Prof. Royce is not to reply to the above article of Dr. Abbot before or simultaneously with its publication in the "Journal of Ethics"; and the controversy is thus to be closed in the "Journal" by Dr. Abbot.
4. Dr. Abbot's article is to be strictly a rejoinder, is not to raise essentially new issues, is not to assault any further his opponent's personal character, is to be parliamentary in form, and free from personally abusive language. Otherwise it is perfectly free as to plainness of speech.
5. Prof. Royce is to see this article at once, and before it goes to the printer.
6. Should Prof. Royce, after seeing the paper, object to the article as "*not in conformity with*

*the conditions of No. 4 (above);* then, but only then, the article is to be submitted, before publication, to the judgment of some impartial friend or friends of both the disputants, such friend or friends to be chosen as promptly as possible, and by agreement, and to arbitrate the question, "*Whether Dr. Abbot's final rejoinder is in conformity with the conditions of this present memorandum?*" The arbitrator or arbitrators may be any person or persons agreeable [*sic*] to the wishes of both the disputants, as determined in case the mentioned objection of Prof. Royce should be made, but not otherwise.

7. Should Prof. Royce *not* object to the article, or should he not formally object *on the grounds mentioned*, then the article of Dr. Abbot is to close the controversy in the "Journal of Ethics."

8. Should Dr. Abbot *not* accept the conditions of the present memorandum, he is at liberty to withdraw his paper, or else to let both the

papers now in type appear as they are, at his pleasure.

[Signed]

J. R.

It is difficult to conceive the state of mind in which so extraordinary a document as this could have originated. My answer to Dr. Royce's officious interference was a short and dry rejection *in toto*. Dr. Royce was not the responsible editor of the "Journal of Ethics," and had no power to dictate any conditions of publication whatever. That a libeller should actually presume to dictate to the libelled the terms of his defence, to demand that this defence should be submitted to himself in advance of publication for approval or disapproval, and, in case of disapproval, to invoke a board of referees for the sole purpose of enforcing his own arbitrary and preposterous "conditions,"—this was too exquisitely absurd. But there was method in the madness. The

central aim of the "Memorandum" is clear on its face: namely, *to refuse the forensic freedom necessary to self-defence against a libel, and to concede only the parliamentary freedom proper to a purely literary discussion.* Since, however, the only object of my writing at all was to expose his rejoinder as a second libel, and since the central aim of the "Memorandum" was to defeat this very object, nothing could be plainer than this: that Dr. Royce, having been guilty of two unprovoked and malicious libels, now sought to prevent the exposure of his guilt by suppressing the necessary freedom of self-defence. For, I repeat, the only possible defence against a libel is to prove that it *is* a libel, and this cannot be done without reflecting upon the "personal character" of the libeller. It was no fault of mine that he had himself rendered a "parliamentary" discussion impossible; it was no fault of mine that he had made his own "personal character" the real point at issue; it was no fault of mine that he

now betrayed his secret alarm, uttered a cry for "mercy," and convicted himself out of his own mouth, in his extraordinary and indescribable "Memorandum." That "Memorandum" tells the whole story.

On the failure of Dr. Royce's very injudicious attempt at dictation, Dr. Adler found himself compelled to assume the editorial power and responsibility, which he ought to have assumed and exercised in the first instance by refusing publication to Dr. Royce's original libel. But, yielding to Dr. Royce's influence, he took the same position, and still tried to shield the libeller from the just and lawful consequences of his libel. No principle is more firmly established in the public conscience, as interpreted by the common law, than that the fact of an attack by A involves the right of self-defence by B. Whoever, therefore, has permitted an attack which he might have prevented is bound to permit the self-defence, also; and Dr. Adler, having granted to Dr. Royce the freedom of

libelling me, was bound to grant to me the equal freedom of defending myself against the libel. But this equal freedom Dr. Adler denied. After some fruitless correspondence, I wrote to him on May 4 as follows: "I require the freedom, not of 'parliament,' but of the courts—freedom to present my 'facts,' and no less to draw my 'inferences'—freedom to array my evidence, and no less to make my pleading. By publishing his new libel, you estop yourself from denying me this freedom. If you do deny it, I withdraw altogether and seek justice and redress elsewhere. I ask only what is self-evidently fair: (1) equal space with Dr. Royce, (2) equal freedom with Dr. Royce, (3) no further rejoinders by Dr. Royce, and (4) no editorial mention of the matter at all from the 'Journal' itself." To this letter Dr. Adler merely telegraphed his final reply on May 6 in these brief terms: "Regret your insistence on freedom of courts—parliamentary freedom open to you." This ended the matter, so far as

the "Journal of Ethics" was concerned, in Dr. Adler's explicit denial of a full and fair hearing in its columns to a party calumniated and libelled by one of his own contributors and a member of his own "editorial committee."

Negotiations, it is true, for the publication of my reply in the July number were a little later re-opened by Dr. Adler, on receiving advice from a legal friend of his own that to publish it would be his wisest course; but he himself broke them off on a trivial pretext, after receiving contrary advice from Dr. Royce's counsel, together with a copy of the legal protest sent to me personally. Thus Dr. Royce himself, recalling his original consent, procured the final rejection by the "Journal of Ethics" of my reply to his own attack. On June 19, I was notified that the July number had been made up without it.

But already, on June 9, I had received from Mr. J. B. Warner, acting as Dr. Royce's counsel, this formal protest against any other use

whatever of my reply: "On Dr. Royce's behalf, I must warn you that he protests against the publication or any circulation of it, in its present shape, and must point out to you that it may, if circulated, entail a serious legal responsibility." To this strangely impolitic and utterly futile attempt to intimidate me in the defence of my own reputation, I chose to offer not the slightest resistance. The protest only facilitated that defence. How could a libeller more conspicuously put himself in the wrong, or more effectually ruin his own evil cause in all eyes, than by *trying to gag the man he had injured*? First, to prevent publication in the "Journal of Ethics" of the very reply he had publicly and defiantly challenged, and then to suppress all circulation of a few privately printed copies of it by means of legal threats: if Dr. Royce could afford to commit such blunders, why should I shield him from himself? "Whom the gods destroy, they first make mad."

Before proceeding to any more energetic measures, however, in order to vindicate my reputation, I was anxious to offer to Dr. Royce an opportunity of doing me justice in a manner which should be consistent with full vindication, yet should involve the least possible publicity and the least possible mortification to himself. Accordingly, on June 20, I wrote to Mr. Warner thus: "I beg leave to enclose a Card, which, if returned to me within a week from to-day, unchanged, dated, and signed by Dr. Royce, and if actually published in the October number of the 'Journal,' will render unnecessary further measures of self-vindication as now contemplated. I send this because you assured me that Dr. Royce disclaims all malice in the publication of the original article I complain of, and because I am willing to test the sincerity of his disclaimer before resorting to other measures for my self-protection. I expect you, who came to me in the character of a pacificator, and who expressed a creditable desire, in which I fully

join, for the settlement of this trouble in some way which shall occasion no scandal to Harvard College, to exert your utmost influence with Dr. Royce to persuade him to perform this act of manifest justice to me. A frank retraction and apology, when unjust charges have been made as now, is not dishonorable and ought not to be humiliating; and I shall consider Dr. Royce's action in this matter as showing the sincerity or insincerity of his disclaimer of all malice in his original article." The enclosed paper above mentioned was this:—

#### A CARD.

CAMBRIDGE, June —, 1891.

I. I admit that I have no knowledge whatever of any "extravagant pretensions" made by Dr. Abbot "as to the originality and profundity of his still unpublished system of philosophy."

II. I admit that Dr. Abbot did not, consciously or unconsciously, "borrow his theory of

universals from Hegel," or "sin against the most obvious demands of literary property-rights."

III. I unconditionally retract my "professional warning to the liberal-minded public against Dr. Abbot's philosophical pretensions," acknowledge that it was groundless and unjustifiable, and apologize to Dr. Abbot for having published it in the "International Journal of Ethics."

IV. I authorize the publication of this retraction and apology in the next number of the "International Journal of Ethics" without note or comment.

In his answer of June 24, Mr. Warner informed me that Dr. Royce had gone to Denver, and wrote: "As for the Card which you propose, I will leave Dr. Royce to make his own answer after he has seen it. I will say, however, for my own part, that, while he has always been ready to disclaim any desire to injure you personally, I think that his opinions concerning

your philosophical system and its origin are unchanged, and he is not likely to retract them. I must say, too, that you have put your Card in a form in which you could not have expected Dr. Royce to sign it, and I do not regard it as any step, on your part, toward a pacific settlement, nor think your demand a reasonable one to make of a self-respecting man."

The next day, June 25, I wrote to Mr. Warner: "I ought distinctly to deny that my rejected article is 'a libellous paper.' Its statements are true; its motive is not malice, but a self-evident purpose to defend myself against Dr. Royce's libel; and, even if it should be concluded to come under any legal definition of 'libel,' I maintain that it is self-evidently a 'justifiable libel.' If I pay any heed to your notice, it is merely because your notice strengthens my case.—You do not mention when Dr. Royce will return from Denver; but, because my purpose in enclosing to you that Card is in good faith a pacific one, I will wait a reasonable time

for his return beyond the date I mentioned. You will not judge the character of that Card accurately, and you cannot give sound or salutary advice to your client, if you ignore the libellous character of his original article. I do not see how 'a self-respecting man' could ever have written such a paper; but, if he did it inadvertently and not maliciously, he would certainly do one of two things: (1) either submit courageously, unflinchingly, and without legal protest, to the reply it challenged and evoked, or (2) manfully retract charges demonstrated, as these have been, to be false. Have you really a different idea of 'self-respect'? Certainly not, for you are an honorable gentleman. Be this as it may, I warn you not to persist in considering that Card as other than a pacific step on my part, if you desire to counsel your client to his own good, or to prove yourself a real friend to Harvard College. I say this in good faith."

To this, on July 2, Mr. Warner replied: "Dr. Royce has returned, and I have submitted to

him the Card which you have prepared. As I anticipated, Dr. Royce says that he cannot sign it, nor can I advise him to do so. It goes far beyond any disavowal of malice or personal hostility, and it amounts to a retraction of the opinions which he actually holds about your philosophical system, and that retraction you surely cannot expect him to make. Dr. Royce has again expressed to me his regret that the form of his article should have wounded you, and he is entirely ready to disavow any intention of wounding you."

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On July 11, I wrote in answer: "Most certainly I do not expect, or wish, that Dr. Royce should disavow any philosophical 'opinions' he may hold. What I complain of is a *misstatement of fact*, demonstrated to be such, which I believe to have had its origin in a spirit of malicious detraction, and to be now persevered in from no other cause. In my reply to his article, which he himself challenged and then pusillanimously suppressed, he has had abundant means of

information. If he now refuses to correct a misstatement which grossly injures me, after he has been informed of the truth, the refusal admits of but one interpretation, and throws a satirical light on the merely private 'regret' he professes. Inasmuch, however, as you have objected (quite unnecessarily, as I think) to the 'form' of the Card I sent you, and inasmuch as I intend to leave no room for doubt as to Dr. Royce's real animus in this affair, I propose now that he send me such a retraction and apology as you yourself shall deem adequate, fitting, and due. In your letter of June 9, you admitted that Dr. Royce had 'transgressed the limits of courteous discussion' and that you 'do not defend in all respects the tone of the review.' It is plain enough that you, Dr. Royce's own counsel, perceive at least something improper, something that ought to be retracted and apologized for. You are, then, I submit, bound to do what you can to right the wrong, which is not at all done by Dr. Royce's profuse, *but private*,

disclaimers. He professes to bear no malice. Very well, then: let him make reparation for the wrong he has committed. He owes it to himself, if he considers himself a gentleman, certainly to his position in Harvard College, to send me some paper, specifying what he himself regrets in his own article, with authority to publish this paper in the 'Journal of Ethics.' The Card I sent sufficiently indicates what I think is due to me; if Dr. Royce, in other language, covers the same ground, it will be accepted as satisfactory. That is the very least that a gentleman would do under the circumstances. You cannot object to this proposal on account of its 'form'; if either you or he objects to it at all, it must be on account of its substance. Certainly you cannot affect to consider it as other than 'pacific.' I shall await your answer to it as to the only 'pacific step on my part' which remains possible to me."

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In reply to this letter, on July 24, Mr. Warner wrote: "I forwarded your letter of July 11 to Dr. Royce, and he has written a reply to me which

I think it best to enclose as he wrote it." In this enclosed letter, dated July 14, Dr. Royce first reaffirmed, in substance, the truth of his false and ridiculous accusation of plagiarism from Hegel, and then wrote as follows: "Now as to my feeling concerning what was regrettable in my article. I repeat once more—regrettable, in my eyes, was the manner of the article in so far as it actually gave unnecessary pain to Dr. Abbot. And I regard any pain as unnecessary that may have been due, *not* to my objectively justified opinion of Dr. Abbot's work (an opinion which I cannot alter in the least), but to any severity of expression that may not have been absolutely needful to give form to this opinion itself. Dr. Abbot's reply has shown him to be not merely alive to the strong difference of opinion that separates us, but personally offended by an attack that was intended to be indeed severe, but directed wholly to matters of professional, but not of personal concern. This attitude of Dr.

Abbot's I regret, and, in so far as I am to blame for it, I am willing to express my regret publicly."

This letter of Dr. Royce is, in effect, a deliberate and unqualified re-affirmation of every fact as alleged, and every inference as drawn, in his original libel—a deliberate and contemptuous re-affirmation of the whole system of elaborate misrepresentation which constitutes it one tissue of libel from beginning to end. Nothing whatever in the substance of his article is retracted or regretted; nothing is "regrettable" even in its form, except vaguely, hypothetically, and conditionally; the only thing Dr. Royce "regrets," as a fact, is that his "objectively justified" and "intentionally severe attack" should have given needless "personal offence" and "unnecessary pain" to its object! This deliberate and contemptuous refusal to recall, to modify, or to apologize for any of the false accusations he has made against me is, I submit, demonstration of the malice which originally prompted them, and now moves him

to maintain them; nothing further is needed to make their malicious character perfectly plain, and to prove the insincerity of his disclaimers of malice. But Dr. Royce seriously mistakes the nature of the effect produced by his "attack," when he affects to consider it as the quite needless excitation of excessive sensitiveness. If a gentleman in a crowd discovers his nearest neighbor engaged in filching his pocket-book, and at once hands the culprit over to the police, it would hardly be graphic to describe his frame of mind as needless "personal offence" or "unnecessary pain"; and the expressions are no more graphic as to my own frame of mind, when I discover Dr. Royce endeavoring to filch from me my reputation in the name of Harvard University. It is not always safe to reckon on the absence, in parties confessedly "attacked," of all capacity for *moral indignation*, or all capacity for moral self-defence.

In reply to Mr. Warner, August 4, I wrote as follows: "Permit me further to say, with regard

to Dr. Royce's letter, that I can only interpret it as a distinct refusal to retract his accusation that I have made 'extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity of my still unpublished system of philosophy'—a distinct refusal to retract his accusation that I have 'borrowed my theory of universals from Hegel'—a distinct refusal to retract his 'professional warning' based upon these accusations. These were the chief points of my Card, and I note the refusal implied by Dr. Royce's evasive letter. But I decline to accept his plea of 'conscientiousness' in maintaining the accusation as to Hegel. I might as well plead 'conscientiousness' in maintaining an accusation that Dr. Royce assassinated Abraham Lincoln, in face of the evidence that John Wilkes Booth was the assassin."

Here the correspondence closed. My apology for inflicting it upon you, gentlemen, must be the necessity of showing to you that, as I was plainly bound to do, I first exhausted

every means of private redress before laying the matter before you publicly. Not till I had failed to obtain a fair hearing in the same periodical which published Dr. Royce's libel, and not till I had failed to obtain from Dr. Royce himself a retraction of this libel, did I find myself reduced to the alternatives of either acquiescing in your own unwarrantably insinuated condemnation, or else of clearing my assailed reputation through direct and open appeal to you. I am no lover of strife, and least of all do I now seek revenge. I seek only such a vindication of my good name from unmerited calumny as you, in your own good judgment and in your own chosen way, are now, I most respectfully submit, bound in justice to give.

### VIII.

To you, therefore, gentlemen of the Corporation and Board of Overseers of Harvard University, I make with all due deference this public appeal for redress of a wrong done to

me by one of your appointees—a wrong done, not in his private capacity as an individual (for which, of course, you would not be justly held responsible), but publicly and explicitly and emphatically in the name of his “profession,” that is, of his position as a professor in Harvard College. This position is an official one, due to your appointment; and his scandalous abuse of it renders him amenable to discipline by you to whom he owes it. Therefore, I now formally appeal to you for redress of these specific wrongs, committed by Assistant Professor Josiah Royce in flagrant violation of my rights as a citizen and as a man:—

I. He has published against me, in the “International Journal of Ethics,” a libel which is as wanton and unprovoked as it is malicious and false, and for which no motive is even conceivable except mere professional jealousy or rivalry in authorship.

II. He has sought to give credibility and respectability to this false and libellous

publication by invoking the authority, not of reason or truth, but of his mere “professional” position as professor in Harvard University, thereby artfully suggesting and insinuating to the uninformed public that Harvard University sustains him in his attack; whereas, in conferring upon me the degree of doctor of philosophy and in committing to me formerly the conduct of an advanced course of philosophical instruction, Harvard University has given emphatic testimony to the contrary.

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III. Repudiating his bold promise to “ask no mercy,” he has sought, with incredible cowardice and meanness, to deprive me of all opportunity of being heard in self-defence, *first*, by excluding from the “International Journal of Ethics” my perfectly reasonable reply to what he himself confesses to have been an “intentionally severe attack,” and, *secondly*, by threatening me through his counsel with legal prosecution, if I publish it anywhere else or circulate it at all.

IV. Lastly, when, after all this, in order to spare him the mortification and disgrace of a public exposure, and in order to prevent Harvard University from incurring any possible discredit on account of his personal misconduct, I proposed to him a pacific settlement of the whole affair through a simple retraction of his calumnious accusations, and that, too, in words of his own choosing, he made no answer but a stubborn and contumelious re-affirmation of the original libel.

I submit that these acts of wrong constitute conduct unbecoming a gentleman, a man of honor, or a professor in Harvard University, and justly entitle me to redress at your hands. This appeal has not been made hastily or without a patient and long-protracted effort to secure justice in other ways. Dr. Royce has succeeded hitherto, during many months, in defeating that effort; but now the appeal lies to those whom he cannot control, and now he must abide your judgment. Asking neither less nor more than

justice, and believing that you will recognize  
justice as Harvard's highest law,

I have the honor to remain, gentlemen, in  
devoted loyalty to our Alma Mater,

Your obedient servant,

FRANCIS E. ABBOT.

CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 1, 1891.

## Abbot Against Royce.<sup>4</sup> I

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

Sir: Dr. Francis Ellingwood Abbot makes substantially the following charges against Prof. Josiah Royce:

(1.) That Prof. Royce libelled Dr. Abbot, and that maliciously.

(2.) That Prof. Royce used unfair means to stifle Dr. Abbot's reply.

I propose to consider impartially what the verdict of students of philosophy ought to be regarding these public accusations against one of the most eminent of their number.

The charge of libel has two specifications, viz.:

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4. Peirce, C. S. "Abbot Against Royce." *The Nation* 53, no. 1376 (November 12, 1891): 372.

(1.) That Prof. Royce warned the general public against Dr. Abbot as a blatant and ignorant pretender in philosophy.

(2.) That Prof. Royce accused Dr. Abbot of plagiarizing Hegel at second hand.

From the point of view of propriety of conduct in a student of philosophy, the only adequate excuse for the first of these acts would be that the fact proclaimed was so unmistakable that there could be no two opinions about it on the part of men qualified by mature study to pass judgment on the merits of philosophical writers. In case the act were not so justified, the offence would be enormously aggravated if it were dictated by malice. The first question, then, is: Did Prof. Royce, as a matter of fact, so warn the public against Dr. Abbot? He certainly did, unequivocally and with full consciousness of what he was about; that is the unmistakable import of his whole article in the *International Journal of Ethics* October, 1890. The next question is whether

it is so plainly true that Dr. Abbot is a blatant and ignorant pretender in philosophy that it is impossible competent men should think otherwise? So far is that from being the case that philosophers of the highest standing, such men as Kirchheiss in Germany, Renouvier in France, and Seth in England, have drawn attention to the remarkable merit of his work. I am not personally intimate with Dr. Abbot, and am far from being a partisan of his doctrines, but as an humble student of philosophy, endeavoring to form my estimations with the eye of truth, I recognize in him a profound student and a highly original philosopher, some of whose results are substantive additions to the treasury of thought; and I believe that the prevalent opinion among competent men would be that Prof Royce's warning is an unwarranted aspersion. Next, what excuse was there for such conduct, what motive prompted it? Prof. Royce and Dr. Abbot have their rival way, out of agnosticism. Both start from the same premises

to come in the main (at least, so Royce says) to the same conclusion. Shall we say, then, that a passer-by cannot loiter near Dr. Abbot's shop, attracted by the placard, "THE WAY AND THE TRUTH," without Prof. Royce's rushing out and shouting from across the street that he can offer the same article at a lower figure! No; for how far a spirit of rivalry may have influenced him no man can know, Prof Royce least of all.

Passing to the second specification, we ask: Did Prof. Royce accuse Dr. Abbot of plagiarizing Hegel? No; he only accused him of giving a maimed version of Hegel's theory of universals, naïvely supposing it to be a product of his own brain. That was no libel in the sense now considered. But, says Dr. Abbot, I have stated so clearly the antithesis between Hegel's view and mine that Prof. Royce cannot be sincere in saying they are identical. No matter; the more absurd the accusation, the less injurious; the less the truth, the less the libel. On this count Dr. Abbot is entirely in the wrong.

Passing to the second charge, we ask whether Prof. Royce used unfair means to stifle Dr. Abbot's reply? The ex-parte evidence indicates that he did contrive that Abbot's reply should be first postponed (as postponed it was over two numbers of the quarterly), and at last, as the third quarter was drawing to a close, should be excluded; in which performances Dr. Adler, the editor-in-chief, does not appear as very strong in the practical department of ethics. Afterwards Prof. Royce, through a lawyer, threatened Dr. Abbot with legal proceedings if he published his proposed reply at all.

All this would be abominable to the last degree in the case of a philosophical discussion. But then it must not be forgotten that the contention had never had that character. Prof. Royce's article was written with the avowed purpose, clearly and openly conveyed, though not by direct declaration, of ruining Dr. Abbot's reputation; and what little discussion there was was merely to subserve that purpose, not

to ascertain or prove any truth of philosophy. Thus, it was a brutal, life-and-death fight from the first. Prof. Royce clearly perceived this, for he ends the article *by saying that he shows no mercy and asks none!*

That's ethics. And his subsequent proceedings make it, in my judgment, as plain as such a thing can be, that his cruel purpose never left his heart. Dr. Abbot, on the other hand, stood like a baited bull, bewildered at such seemingly motiveless hostilities.

It is quite impossible not to suppose that Prof. Royce conceived it was his duty thus to destroy Dr. Abbot's reputation, and with that the happiness of his life. A critic's stern and sacred duty, and all that! Besides, it must be remembered that he is a student of ethics; and it is not to be imagined that a person can study ethics all his life long without acquiring conceptions of right and wrong that the rest of the world cannot understand.

C. S. PEIRCE.

## Abbot Against Royce.<sup>5</sup> II

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

Sir: Mr. Peirce's letter on this subject in your last week's issue unfortunately brings it before the larger public; and, since Mr. Peirce professes to be a neutral judge, it may leave on your readers an impression unfair to Prof. Royce if nothing more gets said. May I take a little of your space to record my opinion of the merits of the case?

First, the facts. Professor Royce, one of the editors of the *International Journal of Ethics*, wrote, in its first number, a review, seventeen pages long, of Dr. Abbot's 'Way

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5. James, William. "Abbot Against Royce." *The Nation* 53, no. 1377 (November 19, 1891): 389–390.

Out or Agnosticism.' This review was altogether technical in character, but hostile in content, impugning both the value and the originality of Dr. Abbot's philosophy. Reviews of philosophical books in technical journals are apt to be destructive—that is what philosophers expect of each other; and in this review there was nothing unusually intolerable, as reviews go, till the page before the last, in which (set in some sentences of a rhetoric characteristic of Prof. Royce) the following passage occurred:

"But Dr. Abbot's way is not careful, is not novel, and, when thus set forth to the people as new and bold and American, it is likely to do precisely as much harm to careful inquiry as it gets influence over immature or imperfectly trained minds. I venture therefore to speak plainly, by way of a professional warning to the liberal-minded public concerning Dr. Abbot's philosophical pretensions. And my warning takes the form of saying that if people are to think in this confused way, unconsciously borrowing from a great speculator like Hegel, and then depriving the borrowed conception of

the peculiar subtlety of statement that made it useful in its place,—and if we readers are for our part to accept such scholasticism as is found in Dr. Abbot's concluding sections as at all resembling philosophy,—then it were far better for the world that no reflective thinking whatever should be done. If we can't improve on what God has already put into the mouth of the babes and sucklings, let us at all events make some other use of our wisdom and prudence than in setting forth the 'American theory' of what has been in large part hidden from us.

This passage is Dr. Abbot's chief ground of complaint. It contains the expression "professional warning," which certainly has a conceited sound. Dr. Abbot assumes that by "professional" Prof. R. meant professorial, and that he claimed the authority of Harvard University for the warning conveyed. This is the basis of his application to the President and Fellows of Harvard to punish in some way their employee.

That an author should feel sore at being so handled by a critic is inevitable. That he should wish to reply is natural. Dr. Abbot replied. Mr. Peirce says that the editors first postponed, then excluded this reply, and finally threatened legal proceedings if it were published apart. A falser impression of the facts cannot be imagined than this statement gives. The editors were liberal as few editors are. An editor's first duty, if controversy must be, is to restrict it to one number so that it may not disgust the readers by trailing its slow length along. Dr. Royce and his colleagues, accordingly, in accepting Dr. Abbot's reply (although it was some thirty pages long and bitterly personal), insisted that a rejoinder from Prof. R. should appear after it *in the same number*. Dr. Abbot agreed to the rejoinder, but stoutly protested that it should not appear *in that number*. On condition, however, that the rejoinder should have appended to it a retort from him which should close the controversy, Dr. Abbot agreed

that one number might contain both his own and his reviewer's words. These negotiations and the documents they demanded could not be finished in time for the then pending number of the review, which consequently appeared without the controversy in it. Mr. Abbot charges the editors with wilful delay; one as familiar as Mr. Peirce with the conditions of getting a "number" out might easily imagine less far-fetched reasons.

The July number was then in order, and the editors, who had not yet got Abbot's retort, now claimed that it should "not exceed Royce's rejoinder in length," that it should "not raise new issues," and that, since the twenty-eight-page reply was full of personal aspersions, these last words from Abbot "should not assault Royce's personal character, and should be parliamentary in form, and free from personally abusive language." To this proposal Dr. Abbot's reply was, to quote the words of

his memorial to the President and Fellows, "a short and dry rejection *in toto*."

Then came rumors of a lawsuit and a pamphlet on the part of Dr. Abbot. Is it wonderful that Dr. Royce should now consult a lawyer as to how the growing tide of unpleasantness might best be minimized? The lawyer warned Dr. Abbot that to publish a pamphlet might make him legally liable, this being of course an ordinary routine precaution against future legal trouble of any sort. Mr. Peirce, following Dr. Abbot's *ex-parte* statement, treats it as part of a plan to "stifle" the latter's reply. Now Dr. Abbot (though in general correct in his record of the fact.) has omitted the important fact that in the very letter in which the lawyer conveyed the warning as to liability, he also made an offer to Dr. Abbot from Prof. Royce to print his long reply in the next *Journal*, with no editorial comment in that number, provided Dr. A. would prune it of degrading personalities, leaving the argument untouched. The *quid pro quo* seems fair enough;

yet the sacrifice demanded was intolerable to Dr. Abbot, and he published his memorial to the Harvard Corporation instead.

A more grotesque accusation of unfair editorial treatment than that made by Dr. Abbot and echoed by Mr. Peirce was consequently never made.

Now as to Mr. Peirce's talk about Prof. Royce's "cruel purpose" of "ruining Dr. Abbot's reputation." When did a critic ever deny the value of a book *without* the purpose of ruining the author's reputation—his reputation, namely, for competency in that field? That Prof. Royce had any animosity to Dr. Abbot's reputation in *other* relations of life is too silly a charge even for denial. And what Mr. Peirce means by the affair being a "brutal life-and-death combat from the first," I confess is too dark a thing for me to understand. Had I written a book with such ambitious aims as Dr. Abbot's, I should expect my differently-thinking compeers to handle me without gloves, and should

despise them if I suspected that the fear of wounding my feelings stayed their hand. Were Prof. Royce's review one of *my* book, I should probably be considerably stirred-up by his low opinion of me, and should feel the genial latitude of his style, when expressing the same, to be peculiarly exasperating. At the same time I should recognize the inevitableness of such differences of understanding, and should feel that I had no avowable *grievance*, since, unlike those critics who dismiss a volume of poems or a novel with a sneer for which no grounds are given, Prof. Royce had given his own reasons for all that he had said. My only remedy would lie in beating down my critic's philosophy and strengthening my own. Mr. Abbot's remedy of heaping personal outrages upon Prof. Royce and his motives, admits of no excuse but a pathological one. It is truly deplorable that the quarrel should spread beyond the academic world. But since Mr. Peirce has served it up for your readers in what they also may imagine to

be an "impartial" statement, it seems but fair that one with a less *ex-parte* knowledge of the facts should also be heard.

WILLIAM JAMES.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY, November 15, 1891.

## The Suppression of Dr. Abbot's Reply.<sup>6</sup>

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

Sir: Since Mr, Peirce has thought fit to bring this subject before your readers, and to comment on Prof. Royce's conduct, as charged by Dr. Abbot, in stifling Dr. Abbot's reply by a threat of legal proceedings, I feel compelled to ask you to publish the evidence on that point in full.

Dr. Abbot bases his charge upon a letter written by me, as Prof. Royce's counsel. In a pamphlet addressed to the governing boards of Harvard College (but widely circulated and put on public sale), Dr. Abbot characterizes

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6. Warner, Joseph B. "The Suppression of Dr. Abbot's Reply." *The Nation* 53, no. 1378 (November 26, 1891): 408.

that letter as an attempt, on Prof. Royce's part, "to gag the man he had injured," and formally sums up his accusation by asserting that Prof. Royce "has sought, with incredible cowardice and meanness, to deprive me of all opportunity of being heard in self-defence."

I now give the letter (of which Dr. Abbot publishes only the few lines of formal protest), and also Dr. Abbot's reply. I should premise that I knew nothing of the controversy until Prof. Royce sought my advice in consequence of threats of a law-suit from Dr. Abbot. At that time Dr. Abbot's reply had been set up in type by the *Journal of International Ethics* with the expectation of publishing that as it stood, together with a rejoinder by Prof. Royce, and a final retort which Dr. Abbot was to write, all in the July number. This plan had broken off, as stated by Dr. Abbot in his pamphlet, because Dr. Abbot could not agree with Dr. Adler as to the tone in which he should write his final reply; Dr. Adler requiring a parliamentary tone,

while Dr. Abbot demanded a freedom which be called "the freedom of the courts." It is Dr. Abbot's main reply, already in type, which is referred to in my letter. Dr. Adler and Prof. Royce are both editors of the *Journal*.

BOSTON, June 9, 1891.

*Dr. Francis E. Abbot, Cambridge, Mass.:*

MY DEAR DR. ABBOT: Your article entitled "Dr. Royce's Professional Warning" has been submitted to me as a part of the case upon which my professional advice is sought, and I must call your attention to some passages in it which I trust you will think it well, upon deliberation, to revise.

I will say at the outset that, considering the severity of Dr. Royce's article, I think, for my own part, that you are justified in replying with spirit, and that you should perhaps be allowed more warmth than the ordinary discussion of such subjects calls for. Of that Dr. Royce, I know, would not complain, but in the heat of your

reply you have in some places used language which I think you will hardly wish, upon cooler judgment, to allow to remain to lower the tone of your argument.

Conceding, for the moment, that you are right in thinking that Dr. Royce has transgressed the limits of courteous controversy, I must say that your article, in some places, goes far beyond anything that he has said.

On Dr. Royce's behalf, I must warn you that he protests against the publication, or any circulation of it, in its present shape, and must point out to you that it may, if circulated, entail a serious legal responsibility.

In it you charge Dr. Royce with being guilty of "a slanderous attack" and of "libel," and with having called you an "impostor"; you seek to belittle and injure him in his profession and business as a teacher in Harvard College; you imply that he is guilty of wilful misrepresentation; you seek to bring him to contempt by a degrading comparison; you

charge him with untruth, with having made a wanton and injurious attack upon your personal reputation, having abused his academical position, compromised the dignity of Harvard College, degraded the office of professor, publicly traduced and libelled a fellow-citizen; and finally you pronounce him professionally incompetent.

Such language, even though used in controverting an irritating review of your book, so far exceeds the proper limits that in my judgment you cannot indulge in it without danger of legal liability.

Permit me, too, as a cool spectator of the controversy to say that this language greatly weakens and lowers a very forcible argument, and must have the effect of distracting attention from the points you wish to make, and stamping the whole discussion as a strangely undignified attack for such a combatant. And aside from the effect of such an article upon yourself, let me call to your attention the scandal which is

brought upon Harvard College by such a public wrangle between two of her her instructors.

I have not read carefully the whole of Dr. Royce's article, but I have read the part, which must be most offensive to you; and while I do not defend, in all respects, the tone of the review, I think that you have greatly exaggerated and misinterpreted it. As I said to you on Sunday evening, Dr. Royce has disclaimed, in the strongest way, any intention to wound you, or to reflect in any way upon your personal character; and after this, is it not a perversion to insist upon putting the worst and most personal construction on all that he says, omitting the qualifications which go far to soften his hostile expressions?

As I remember his article, he nowhere calls you an impostor, as you repeatedly charge; and in speaking of you as "sinning against the demands of literary property rights," you omit the word "unaware," which wholly changes the sense.

That the *Journal of Ethics* should publish the article as it now stands is not to be thought of. It could not do so with self-respect. The editors are, however, very willing to publish the body of your reply as you have written it, if you will leave out those passages which are merely personal.

I send with this a copy of your article, with the objectionable passages marked. You will, I think, admit that your argument is untouched, and that enough of anger and indignation are left to save the paper from any appearance of tameness. If these passages are omitted, or so changed as to be free from objection, the *Journal* will publish it in the July number, and without any other comment than a statement that a reply is reserved for the October issue.

I trust that you will adopt my suggestions and make the changes, which I believe will strengthen the article in the minds of those whom you most wish to persuade. You will not overlook the great advantage it will be to you

to have your reply appear in the same journal which originally published the review, and I trust that you will be willing, for that reason if no other, to conform to the very obvious requirements which the *Journal* must impose.

I hope you believe me when I say that I should not advise the *Journal* to refuse the article in its present shape, as I do, unless I were fully persuaded that you are offered the fullest opportunity of reply which fair play can demand. Very sincerely yours,

J. B. WARNER.

P. S.—Please let me know your decision as soon as possible, as the *Journal* must be made up. Will you kindly return my copy of your article? J. B. W.

LARCH STREET, CAMBRIDGE, Mass.,

June 9, 1891.

*J. B. Warner, Esq., Exchange Building, Boston:*

MY DEAR MR. WARNER: I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your obliging letter of

this date, with thanks, and to return at once the enclosed printed paper, as you request.

With great personal regard. I remain

Very sincerely yours,

FRANCIS E. ABBOT.

Dr. Abbot declined to make any change in his reply and it has never been published.

JOSEPH B. WARNER.

BOSTON, November 20, 1891.

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## Mr. Warner's "Evidence in Full" Completed.<sup>7</sup>

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TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In your last week's issue, Mr. J. B. Warner professes to give the "evidence in full" respecting Prof, Royce's suppression of my reply to his (the latter's) avowed "attack." The long letter he publishes as "evidence" on this point is evidence of nothing but the lawyer's attempt to put forward his own baseless assumptions in his client's behalf as if they were assured facts. The adroit assumption in this case is, that the "language" of my suppressed reply was improper, and justified exclusion of the reply from the *Journal of Ethics*. This assumption

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7. Abbot, Francis E. "Mr. Warner's 'Evidence in Full' Completed." *The Nation* 53, no. 1379 (December 3, 1891): 426.

I deny with vigor; and, what is more telling than any denial of mine, Dr. Adler and Dr. Royce, as editors of the *Journal*, denied it themselves, when at first they both accepted the reply for publication, had it put in type, and sent me proofs both of the reply and of Dr. Royce's rejoinder to it. The subsequent rejection of my reply, under Mr. Warner's advice, cannot undo the effect of their previous sanction of it as *perfectly fit for publication*.

But the "evidence in full" on this point cannot be given without showing, by actual quotation, what really was the "language" to which Mr. Warner so unreasonably objected. I have no right to ask you to devote much space to such quotation; but, relying on your well-known fairness, I must ask leave to cite, as a fair specimen of the "language" objected to, the opening of the suppressed reply. The passages here italicised were marked by Dr. Royce himself as the grounds upon which he and his lawyer based their threat of prosecution and

their suppression of the reply itself. It will be perfectly clear to any fair-minded man that they were aiming to force me either to concede that Dr. Royce's original article was a legitimate criticism, or else to lose all opportunity of being heard in self-defence.

That his article was a libel, and not a fair criticism at all, has been proved in my pamphlet beyond all possibility of a successful reply; and the reader, bearing this in mind, will judge for himself whether the "language" as such, or whether the effort to defend myself against the libel, was the real ground of Mr. Warner's threatening letter. The following passage from the suppressed reply is a fair sample of its "language" throughout:

"The mere fact that, in the *International Journal of Ethics* for last October, there appeared a hostile review of my book entitled 'The Way Out of Agnosticism,' by Dr. Josiah Royce, assistant professor of philosophy in Harvard College, would not induce me to break my uniform custom of

silence in such cases, were it not that Dr. Royce *oversteps the limits of legitimate literary criticism, throws out personal accusations of a slanderous nature, and resorts to empty and undignified official denunciation* in order to flank indirectly a philosophical position which he has not ventured openly to assail. *His mode of attack is a marked case of 'reversion' to controversial methods which, common enough some centuries ago, are happily going out of use to-day. Dr. Royce presumes to accuse me, falsely and injuriously, of 'frequently making, of late, extravagant pretensions as to the originality and profundity of [my] still unpublished system of philosophy; and of 'sinning against the most obvious demands of literary property rights'; and he even goes so far as to issue a solemn 'professional warning,' formally addressed to 'the liberal-minded public,' against myself as a philosophical thinker and author. Such tactics as these are unknown among reputable literary men. They are justified by no higher ethical principle than that which dictated the old pettifogger's advice to the young one: 'If you have no case, abuse the counsel on the other side.'*

"This paper, therefore, is written as a reply, not to a critique, but to a libel. If I notice below what Dr. Royce puts forward

as 'criticisms,' it is not because they deserve to be noticed as such, but solely because they are made to serve as the ostensible warrant and support of *his libellous 'professional warning.'* *And the only reason why I make my defence in these columns is that believing the 'liberal minded public' to be a just judge, I have greater confidence in the court of reason than I have in the courts of law.*

"When civil-service reformers plead the urgent necessity of political reform, they are irrelevantly charged by the adherents of the spoils system with being 'hypocrites and pharisees.' Precisely so, when I plead the urgent necessity of philosophical reform, *I am irrelevantly charged by Dr. Royce, in effect, with being a false pretender, a plagiarist, and an impostor.* The charge is just as true in one case as in the other. But, be the charge true or untrue, the attention of keen and candid minds is not to be diverted by this perfectly transparent device from the main point of reform. In both cases, interests more important than any personal reputation are at stake; and loyalty to interests more important than my own reputation requires me *now to expose Dr. Royce's endeavor to divert attention by irrelevant, useless, and utterly*

*unprovoked vituperation from the main point of philosophical reform."*

Will any fair man say that the "language" here used is other than temperate, dignified, and parliamentary? I protest against Mr. Warner's attempt to misrepresent the character of my "language," as improper in any degree. A libelled citizen has a right to defend himself against the libel; and, when Dr. Royce blew his bugle-blast of defiance, "We must show no mercy, as we ask none," he deprived himself of all excuse, in the eyes of men who prize the good old English principle of fair play, for seeking refuge behind a menace of prosecution. And here I must express my surprise at Mr. Warner's statement that "Prof. Royce sought my advice in consequence of threat, of a law-suit from Dr. Abbot." I never threatened Dr. Royce with a law-suit at all.

FRANCIS E. ABBOT.

CAMBRIDGE, November 28, 1891

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