

PHILOSOPHY AND THE UNIVERSE

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CONSIDERING that Philosophy has adequate means for getting at every phase and function, fact and relation of the Universe is like the perennial promise of my venerable mathematical professor who used to say that when he wrote his textbook of algebra he would show that there were no surd irreducibles, that the only irrationality or deficiency in the matter was that of our own methods of inquiry and analysis. Hence I will not here claim to either affirm or deny that there are probably any surd unknowables in the Universe, even tho our knowledge and powers of faculty are at present very meagre and impotent. Rather it would seem equally probable after the mathematical analogy that under proper procedure of observation and interpretation the Universe presents nothing irreducible or unknowable, that the mere fact of any particular thing's existence and presentation signifies knowability and integration in *some form* of sentiency or intelligent experience. If reality and truth as the rational integrity of the Universe are at all presentable in terms of sentiency and intelligent experience then any item of similar nature will under proper conditions be conceivable and knowable.

Thus there always seems to be a certain fitness in choosing phrases which give a conceptually knowable relation between the two words Philosophy and Universe. This is the idea and intention clearly defining my choice of title for this article. It is meant to be a significant token of conscious esteem for the propriety of intellectual honesty, aspiration, justice, openmindedness, clear vision and the indefatigable pursuit of such wisdom and dignity as befits the beautifully good and true. Man's estate is fashioned from the pattern of things above his petty self and is subject to such laws of

Nature, Mind and Spirit as relate thereto. Accordingly, and with as little reversion of terms and meanings as possible, I have taken three main viewpoints into consideration in my interpretation of this fitness, aiming to discover the grounds of their relation and show that a certain progression of significance may be attached to the three great functions of Philosophy, viz. the Historical, the Critical, and the Creative (or Genetic).

I. THE HISTORICAL FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY.

It may seem bromidic to say that Philosophy was of historical service to mankind long before it had any critical value or genetic significance, but we often find ourselves required to take retrospective inventory of our powers before we really know whether we are debtors or creditors of the world. The skillful application of Philosophy to the problems of life and cosmos is one of the highest sublimations of genius, and genius performs functions more often thru spontaneous decision than thru hereditary inclination. Otherwise there would be no progress and no history.

The historical function of Philosophy then has been invariably featured as faithfully attending the more or less melioristic progress of our intellectual outlook on the Universe. Despite the occasional retrograde sampling of ennui and pejorism its constant redeeming value has been its convalescent power to clarify and validate what few elements or expressions of truth lay hidden in the obscurities of adolescent experience and speculation. It supplied among other things a definite point of view from which to survey and map out the course of human civilization as it has so far made progressive achievements in Science, Education, Religion, Ethics and Art. Without the foraging and heroic courage of Philosophy in times of intellectual famine the humanities would long ago have perished and slipped into oblivion. Historical schemes which aim to grasp and support the whole panorama of life, giving it a systematic continuity or at least a pragmatic sanction, are one and all eristic of the absolute and hope to be arbiters of the final code. The whole gamut of our intellectual lucubrations including the classical protagonists of venerable controversy—rationalism and empiricism, materialism and idealism, naturalism and humanism, monism and pluralism, determinism and opportunist casuistry, romanticism and academic lore—is full of accidentals, sharps and flats not always harmonically placed and which therefore grate the finer tastes and discriminations of the elect.

The strict logician is still a defective thinker if he rules out the

romantic element of emotion and dream from his ivory tower of mathematical truth. The materialist is often worldly and blind to the brighter visions of the ideal moral order. The naturalist cannot argue defensibly that we are parts of Nature in origin and destiny when the majority of our functions are incorrigibly finite and humanistic. The determinists, like the romantic poets of better times, are too well versed in their own aggressive creed to countenance any note of novelty or decadence in their symphony. The modern rule seems to be that of superficial reflection, selfish utility, and unscrupulous opportunism. It is a sad reminder of how utterly unphilosophical is folly and extravagance, corruption and greed, for it is a delinquent scheme of life constantly faced by failure and harassed by intellectual bankruptcy. The periods of decadence now and then hyphenating our otherwise continuous upward progress are inexorable streams of force playing against the test walls of our historical stronghold, and bare traditions of glory or intellectual achievement cannot fully cover the cracks of weakness so prophetic of an early dissolution. We are not only becoming inveterate triflers but irresponsible speculators as well, and the fact that we lose face oftener by dint of moral defect than by intellectual overreach does not minimize our actual responsibilities in foreview of a philosophical outlook on the Universe, even tho the interpretation of this outlook can vary with every different viewpoint and resurgent power of faculty.

One of the poorest hypotheses of our modern but largely pseudo-elite *seicle des hochets* is that which masquerades under the misnomer, mechanisticism. This is an out and out confessional of the automorphic pathetic fallacy and thrives only by the fortunes of a climated nativity in a vulgarian and mechanically devout age. No wonder it is so popular as a pseudo-philosophy in a world so given over to industrial exploit, mechanical invention and general machine-morality. Contemporary salons of civilization, even, are demanding that the specific effect of all our thoughts or notions, aims or actions be orally demonstrated before any of the causes, desires or ambitions be acknowledged as appropriate or even worth consideration. Our peculiar defect is the moral and intellectual decadence springing from our loss of spontaneity, vision, romanticism, et al. We are grown so mechanical, inane, sterile and pedantic (as witness our music, art, literature, home-life; our very hedonism, extravagance and superficial satisfactions) that the *naivete* of the Universe has been lost in the clever shuffle. We have

lost naturalness in the maze of our modern artificiality; we have grown corrupt in our own machinations against others. The result is that it is now popular to look upon life and the Universe as a vast machine which grinds away at the clumsy compressor-function of producing material forms instead of spiritual energies—an archaic affair which any shrewd sophist shirks and ridicules.

The educational programs of modern humanism and the philosophical prologs of its devotees both fail to account for their own failure to release man's restless spirit from the bondage of a misconstrued past, a past whose wealth of experience equals and often outvalues that of our own, whose authority consisted mainly of spontaneity and naturalness, rather than precariously depending upon the mimetic stereotypy of books and crumbling monuments. These programs and prologs are sufficiently devout with all the fine heritage of historical culture and the valuable adjuncts of tradition, racial temperament, artistic interest and the inspiration of the humanities. But they lack some few elements of the natural discipline only lately found to depend upon creative ideals and the critical values of a non-humanistic viewpoint in science and metaphysics.

Philosophy seeks to vindicate the past, not by recourse to the present, but by comparisons between the finite interests of historical man and the infinite life of an intelligent and melioristic Universe. Philosophy cannot rest with being merely historical and academic, not passively scientific and critical even; rather must it, in order to hold its own against all errors and illusions, be inquisitive and enthusiastic, creative and conscientious, taking count of every favor and protest in the mood of equanimity and just decision. A genuine philosopher will relish the situation which shows him why he should blame his own stupidity rather than God or the Devil for his follies and failures in the natural world. But lo, if he is a humanist all manner of evasion and shifting of responsibility will mark every crucial instant where he comes in contact with eristic opposition. He does not seem yet to have discovered that Philosophy was never intended to be a supplement to the reality or intelligence of the Universe. It is no different than anything else having a self-evident existence; it is a product, a part, an active factor in the life and growth, the aspiration and perfection of the Cosmos.

We all know how uncertain were the grounds on which Swedenborg advanced his inordinate claims of angelic conversations, planetary communication and exclusive personal copyright on

theopathic experience. They are especially discountenanced nowadays from the several scientific discoveries that have been made in psychology, astronomy, metempsychics and spirit-tests. It is always a weak link in anyone's chain of speculations to let the swivel bear the brunt of the load, and Swedenborg's ambition to verify the Scriptures lay directly over his power of valid thought. Hence it is indeed a ridiculous spectacle to see men so otherwise meek and sensible using their own pride, ambitious ignorance and petty delusions as analogies for proving this or that function, quality or structure to be of and in the Universe. True enough, all these items are just so many existences in the totality of things, but they are not principles, they are not code for philosophical procedure.

It is well to have some measurable quantity or quality for use as a unit of comparative estimate in all our processes of inquiry and understanding. But this does not authorize us to bring in all our pet delusions and personal biases to make condiment for such *réchauffé* interpretations. There must be achievement but not submission to mechanism; there must be inspiration but not the artificial stimulus of hallucination; there must be rationality but never the dogmatism of the intellectual dictator. There is a perennial beauty about the Universe which finds its flower in naturalness and upward evolution; not a static ratio of matter and spirit long ago ordained to give us moral either-ors, but a cosmic symbol of purposive intelligence whose subtle anagoge gives our labors and our hopes significance. It is no worry of ours that the Universe is so composed that reason and the good life do not always emerge spontaneously, but it is or should be our most serious concern to forestall the introduction of our own erratic judgments into the chronicle of reality. Any philosophy like Vedantism which regards the gift of human intelligence as merely the destructive apparatus for defending the pessimism of cosmic illusion is as much in error as the process it derogates. It is no more a valid metaphysic than our own modern mechanicalism which demands utility and tangible accuracy of results as sanctions on all education and morality. Little progress, therefore, can be read from those eras of history whose flourishing philosophies were either negative of the Universe or negligent of man's spiritual significance. Neither can any appreciable philosophical progress be made on terms of the humanist's pathetic fallacy and its inevitably anthropomorphic world-conception. On the other hand the one great lesson to be derived from the history of Philosophy is that a meekened mood of self-restraint and an

individually acknowledged submission to Nature's prescribed rules of life are the inner achievements truly initial to any subsequent advancement of wisdom and brotherhood in the external world.

It is such inner achievements as these which counsel us to the belief that there are really existent many functions and values more permanent and fruitful than the ephemeral joys and uses of human life. Many such phases of faith are presented in history: among them may be mentioned the uncaused and nameless Reason of Lao Tzu, the eternal monism of Parmenides, the ideal forms of Plato, the Nirvana happiness of Buddha, the Yoga identification of soul or mind with Nature or Reality, St. Augustine's City of God, the subtle universals of Aquinas, the mathematical analogies of Spinoza, Descartes and Leibnitz, the rational schematisms of Kant, Hegel and Fichte, and the syncretic reconstructions of our great contemporaries Eucken, Hoffding, James, Baldwin, Schiller and Bosanquet. The fact is we have never seriously given the finite and mortal affairs of life the philosophical sanction with which we speak of the Universe, its reality, laws, evolution, persistent facts and non-human purposes.

Still there is a certain metaphysical importance that may be attached to the changing phenomena of Nature and, as with the acrobatic *'liquidation d'intellectualisme'* of Bergson, a romantic sort of dignity allowed to the art of philosophical make-up. We should always remember that at first Eschenmayer devoted some of his best energy to the examination and approval of the necessity of non-philosophy (even of ignorance and anti-wisdom, folly and evil); that as long as he was philosopher the arc of truth required just such a balancing complement, but after becoming non-philosopher his activities were of such design as to argue that his arc of truth had become merely the accessory of a weak and superstitious demonism. Leo Errera has very shrewdly commented that the arc of truth is completed only by the honest and accurate *search for truth* which, if not now integral or at least possible of an imminent the cosmic curve, a thing of infinite variation and hypostasis. Dr. integration, is justly to be regarded as the indefinite asymptote of Paul Carus in his masterly treatment of "The Philosophy of Relativity" observes that our precision machines testify to the ingenuity of man's genius in its attempt to eliminate personal equations as far as possible. If there is such a thing as eternal and universal truth it will become known only after we have become able to think independently of humanistic and utilitarian sanctions, when we have

sternly eliminated the rhyomistic passions and illusory suggestions of that corruptor of all philosophies, the ejective self.

There is nothing more fallible perhaps than the often base but always weak automorphism of human judgment, the myopia of seeing nothing but reflections of self and finite interest in everything which that self observes or that interest seeks. Too many of us are like the engineer on Bunyan's Celestial Railway who always dumped his passengers off at the River of Death saying "We go no further." Too many of us carry our thoughts and investigations as far as the river of our solipsisms and then stop abruptly with the engineer's answer either gruffly announced or with hardly less gracefulness implied in our subsequent conduct. The one intellectual vice of all time has been the solipsism and personal equation of practically every item of human speculation and empirical interest. In a more racial practice it is the too ready embrace of any and all things which happen to coincide with the current opinions of the time, and this to the general exclusion of all else, often without so much as a hearing. It is a dangerous motto anytime to boldly announce that "it is I and only I who know the secret door." The personal conquest of this haughty mood is the beginning of all true ambitions toward Philosophy, for it is the first departure toward the open door and infinite generosity of the Universe.

Since the advent of Einstein and the relativists it has become fashionable to distinguish terms more closely, one, for instance, being that singular qualification of the word Universe by prefixing the possessive pronoun "our," meaning such a part or phase of the Universe as we are capable of taking into conscious grasp and conception. The stellar universe is insignificant compared with a whole series of possible universes of another constituency than that which we are accustomed (or by limitation of natural faculty, forced) to observe. One illustration of how an exotic and unorthodox universe may be demonstrated as possible is presented by Prof. Charles Nordmann in his recent book *Einstein et l'Univers* (Paris, 1921) where the two rival theories of infinitude and finite cycles of cosmic order are ably brought together for reconciliation. The so-called "our" universe, in the view of the relativist, may be boundless without being infinite; even an incurved space such as that of Riemann, Gauss or Einstein is no more infinite than that of Euclid, for it is discreet and finite like a sphere or the back of a saddle. And furthermore our knowledge of the actual nature of light and the ether, especially their functions in interstellar spaces, is not

sufficiently accurate and exhaustive to warrant us the ascription of solipsism to "our" universe. Other universes indeed may well be equally existent with our own, but by some cause as yet unknown to us inaccessible and isolated. But we should not assume authority to announce that they shall remain unknown and irreducible to terms of sensible equation. As Prof. Nordmann says, perhaps many of our own stellar attractions are phantom doubles of long extinct stars whose light they are but now seeming to reflect from the opposite pole or visual focus of "our" universe.

First having searched thru the whole visible creation for knowledge we next researched the data of both subjective and objective existence for facts indicative of the basis, use and wisdom of that knowledge. My present intention then is to bring about a certain self-analysis of the cosmological viewpoint, to effect a historical focus on the true purpose and extent of this research. The ancients wasted no time in denying, doubting or occasionally assuming that certain kinds of knowledge were possible, but went ahead **with their studies and inquiries** in such a way that modern thinkers may well copy their attitudes. This is said in exclusion of those negative and non-constructive viewpoints such as Sophism, Pyrrhonism, Cyrenaicism and their modern revivals in Hume's sceptical sensationalism, Spencer's agnosticism, and Pater's naive hedonism. We have had no leisure wherein to idle over some petty postiche's eristic refutations, nor to seek an illusory solace by attending lectures at *l'Ecole d'Entiaæ Impracticque*, for we were too energetic, too incorrigibly inquisitive, too set on realization.

I have always thought it strange that a universe like the one we know should or could permit the existence of ignorance and folly. It is so otherwise determined to teach us the utter futility and extravagance of such things. Yet I have as often found consolation in reminding myself that it does not permit the *continuance* for long of such illusory existents. For this purpose was disease and death invented—to cut off the fool before he wrought any serious havoc in the world. The Universe is no school for scandal; no infamy or debauchery is counselled there, and we are not by any external persuasion grown corrupt. It is our own passion and power of restraint which are at fault if we are forever impelled by some imperious delusion to exorcize the Good. Still it is often our pet illusions which are the vital lies which stimulate our exertions and goad us on to some desired achievement. It is not a philosophical fortification to be supported by another's similar misconcep-

tion or device of folly; we would be no more intelligent if the whole world corroborated our errors and unwisdom, for the fault would simply be emphasized, not refined into the value of anything meritorious.

II. THE CRITICAL FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY.

In his very clear critique of pragmatism Prof. B. H. Bode suggests that causality is sterile and not even potential if divorced from effectual realization. There can be no preexistent future so long as we have an alterable present and a variously efficient past; things in series cannot take up arbitrary positions without the dissolution of the old and the creation of a new series. "No intelligence, however great, could so comprehend a cross-section of cosmic history as to read in it all the details of the future. A given cause is not a cause until its effect has appeared. To call it a potential cause is merely to give it a name. In order to know the nature of anything it must be construed with reference to the result in which it terminates. It is in the result that the character of the cause finds its fruition or fulfilment. The result, moreover, does not simply endow its antecedent with the *name* of cause, but it brings to full reality the cause itself. There is thus a real identity between cause and effect. The character of transition, of coming to be, is precisely what we lose when cause and effect are arbitrarily kept asunder. The cause is only a condition of the effect."

With this proposition of cause and effect as existent only in transitional identity we find that we have to be more careful of our epistemology, our methods of inquiry and validation. It arouses us to treat our knowledge of the Universe as philosophically meagre but not negligible, as hardly consisting of more than a few paltry principles of law and unity, purpose and efficacy of relational influence. Our experience of things, even when taken as immediate and discreet in point of time and exclusive contact, is peculiarly repical of the actual nature and constitution of those things; the function of empirical knowledge being merely a direct and intentional transformation of the relation already existing between the subject and the object of the experience. The actual character of experience then is reflective rather than refractive of the light which illumines the casual function and ecabatic relation of mind and thing. The philosopher's experience may be more accurate and dignified but no more immediate and particular than that of the practical-minded common man; the latter often being more direct in the protean functions of the knowing process.

Expanding this principle of empirical causality to the critical function of Philosophy as it attempts to understand or interpret the Universe, we find that the constituency of every situation may be plural and temporal without adversely affecting the efficiency of our faculties to follow the normal procedure of inquiry and understanding. Physical and mental (or even the so-called spiritual) responses to the stimuli of passive experience are not appreciably different, except in point of some purposive interest or discipline perhaps, from the responses to actively pursued research and *aperçus intimes*. Things exist both before and after the experiencer has had his contact and his response, so why should we grow devout over idealistic claims that they exist knowably only while the thinker is having his fling at giving them a title of intellectual content. The knowing process is assuredly temporal and eventual but not necessarily titular and ephemerally intellectual.

A conscious continuum and some sort of a selective power over one's behavior are presupposed in the critical standpoint, it being customary to have coherence of knowledge and discrimination of judgment before adequate scope and capacity are possible, and quite necessary to have ephectic skill and logical analysis in advance of any openminded or inclusive world-conception. It is not so much a question of the degree of sentiency to which our experiencing process may be raised, but a question of how accurate and efficient is the critical relation between the human organism (subjective knower) and the Universe (objective knowable). Here then is a nice balance of interest and inquiry: to know whether there is any incompatibility really existent between two such elements of reality, even tho they do appear so divergent in the functions and vicissitudes of their daily relation. Seneca says that Nature continually provides for the exigencies of everything, so why should there be any fatal maladjustment or failure of faculty in our natural predisposition to intelligently understand the Cosmos, in the everlasting conflict between inner patterns of order and the order whose reality is apparently only external, mechanical and ready-made?

Bare objects are not philosophable because such a barrenness smacks of the absolute and the genuine absolute precludes any empirical or noetic relation. Empirical preclusion means that we are not conscious of an object's existence, but in a situation where a series lacks one or two determinable terms the possibility and approximate nature of their existence may be assumed on analogy

of serial ratios and relationships. A reality does not always have to lie *beyond* our power when we do not experience it; it may escape us merely because the *direction* of our functions is erratic or prejudiced. This is why we require methods of validation and verification, for the truth-relation has no meaning apart from the reality-relation existing between knower and known. Delusions may have certain elements of moral truth giving them power over us without having the least foundation in factual reality. Methectic proofs of what is true for one more or less emotional individual are for another not adequate proofs of the reality of what excites his hysteria. This is why dream-analysts are often such inaccurate psychologists.

Intellectualism cuts its own throat when it repudiates the immediacy of true experience. The conceptual apparatus is unnecessarily clumsy and cannot pretend agility only on the quondam claim that (for us) reality has no actually experiencable flux, that the external world exists only spasmodically in an indirect relation to human thoughts, activities and purposes. We are not philosophers when we cut out clever sections from a block universe as if every one of our functions were tools of rigid application instead of infra-casual activities, but rather when we take an unstudied part in all the life and meliorism that our total experience of the Universe affords. Reality is intimate and effective, not academic and aloof; it is durable and romantic, not decadent and effete. And if it has any sanction for our methods of approach it is certainly revealed in the fruits of a valid epistemology.

Philosophy, as a purely aspirational function of discretion and constructive insight, never hazards its goods on a pragmatic utility; it is too genuinely disinterested for that. It will not accumulate unnecessary formulae or apparatus, for these but further encumber an already difficult situation. It takes the Universe directly as it finds it, and by replical functions of type-grouping, phrase-integrating, and sublimation of principle it brings rational and tangible content into what is otherwise an empirical flow of durational existence and eventual activity. The adept in Philosophy is always looking for heurisms of objectivity, for guiding significances which will give connected meaning to his experiences, no matter whether they concern his private purse or passion so long as there is sense and uniformity in what they indicate.

Because a purposeful synthesis pervades the Universe development and evolution are considered intelligent and melioristic.

There is no absolute stagnation, no stoppage of the vast alembic processes of transmutation and aspirational effort. Philosophy, in the subtle function of dealing with whatever is possible, knowable and heuristic of valid symbols, must always go beyond the phenomenal, behind the apparent, under the superficial, and higher than the merely utile or empirical values of what is largely a specious physical sentiency. It is in constant caution of being too narrow, too ineffable, and is forever conscious that there are certain elements of otherness just ready to break into the arena of intellectual combat and sensory deliverance.

A great change has been made in the philosophical attitude recently. It results from one of the most valuable contributions of that branch of mathematical inquiry known as logistics, and whose popular application seeks into the nature and implications of Non-Euclidean Geometry, the fourth dimension, hyper-space, etc. The mathematics of the pseudo-sphere has disproven the universality of Euclidean Geometry and the principle of relativity, whether Einsteinian or mechanistic, has driven the old rationalisms from the field. We are coming into a romanticism of certitude in place of the oldtime obscurantism of platitude. In fact the ready-made "gentile traditions" of our predecessors are now being put to such rigid tests that it is becoming more and more seldom that anything survives as an applicative generality of the absolute. The spirit or manner of serious modern inquiry has a social way about it that makes possible its acceptance by many minds at once. Nothing is too sacred or too recondite for its investigation and analysis; it recognizes no sacrilege or profanity in the methods of its search, for the fact of its inquisitive aspiration is contradictory and prohibitory of any degrading indulgence. Yet there is the constant probability (nay, certainty) that all our knowledge and the means of its acquisition are too meagre, incomplete, and hence thus far unreliable as a ground for claiming finality of synthetic viewpoint.

Any fool can see that we are forever convicting ourselves of our own ignorance and bigotry. We arise by generous inquiry and fall by dogmatic assertion. The compulsion to a confession of this fatal law of mind was the secret power of the Socratic philosophy; the struggle to recognize that part of us which does the confessing, and by so doing must be of a superior and more permanent intelligence, was the primary aim of Platonism; but the Aristotelian research into all the *relations* of mind and thing was the direct ancestor of the modern attitude of openminded inquiry and verification.

Yet the revolutionary contribution of modern thought is, not to entertain the mere recognition of relationship between inner mind and external objects, but to classify, study, aid, and make efficient all the activities and exertions by which this relationship is maintained. Thus is there a greater and more durable significance added to the popular meaning of such modern phrases as "creative imagination," "constructive intuition," "powers of genius," "scientific research," et al.

Philosophy has ceased to be the sit-down-and-group-things-together sort of conciliatory synthesis; this has become our common-sense, our everyday wisdom. The old ambition to put a friendly lid on the controversy between religion and science has passed into the hope of someday knowing just how significant is the progressive variation of function running thru that intellectual series of Hegelian mental states called ignorance, common-sense, and Philosophy. For the honest sage these three are mutually hostile or at least opposed in aim and function, and in certain strenuous moments the first two will make common cause against the third. It is however a vain antagonism, for in its choicest sense, meaning truly the unselfish *love of wisdom*, Philosophy is the life of inclusiveness and intelligence, not that of mere pride and base utility. So who will ever dare to hope that some larger discernment of human nature will show that a philosopher and a fool are interchangeable, or that either of them would make a successful business-man or banker? Such a combination is far more difficult than any so far attempted; and yet, let us not disappoint the courage of our relativity with too great an attachment to any one qualitative absolute. The chromatic circle of Sir Isaac Newton was meant to symbolize a far greater truth than the simple principle of complimentary colors. Spinning this circle around, the resulting effect on the eye is the same as that which is caused by white light. Likewise, perhaps if we should spin our trisected circle of mental qualities (or attitudes) there would be no appreciable difference of effect on an honest sage between that of folly and that of philosophy. Without consideration of the utile and moral values what is the difference to the Universe whether one is an ignoramus or a devout philosopher? On what defensible metaphysical grounds can we even say that the insane are ruled out from communion with reality any more than the agnoiant are from truth?

When I speak of "our" universe I mean the mind's grasp and

demonstration to itself of all experienceable existences,—a situation where the extent of mental perception and the imminence of reality are considered coequal. It is highly permissible and human enough to find occasion for thinking this way, is it not? If so, then on a psychological consideration of the means we adopt whereby to discern and know the secrets of Nature we may recognize that the purpose of Philosophy is to show that there is a possible and even very divergent difference between “our” universe and that wide and inexhaustible series of metaphysical phases of order and extra-cosmic law called *the Universe*. Even today, all the few facts and “explanations” of the phenomena of the celestial vault come from that not-always-mathematical science, astronomy. Heretofore, cosmology has been but a mere cataloguing of celestial miracles and matter with an interspersed description of a few of its appurtenances such as ether-tests, space-variation and nebular reflection; even the admirable adjunct spectroscopy is serviceable only as a more or less accurate analysis of the photometric relations of celestial matter.

To evade the inevitable prolapsis of a too partial physical research Prof. Osborn Reynolds has initiated the “cosmic grain” as an immaterial unit of energetic potential which, in an unaccountable and asymmetrical relation to its fellow grains, causes a convenient dilatancy of space and we call the visual effect matter. Astronomic traditions have given us standard measurements of Time and Space, reducing them to units expressed in phrases such as the light-year, angular microns, and parsecs of variation in periodical changes of parallax. Even these slight tokens of obese measurement seem insignificant when prefixed by numbers running up to several integral and decimal places. A universe of a radius expressed as a billion light-years may well be considered a mere Nordmannesque bubble in some vaster heterogeneous Universe where the whole Milky Way registered only .000001 parsec at the assumed central point of paralactic reference. It is the outstanding fact of all accurate and fruitful research that mathematical possibility is the philosophical door thru which we needs must pass in order to see the future hypothetical recognition that the Universe is of vaster proportions and functions than astronomy, scholasticism, humanistic refinement or any materialistic science will ever disclose.

The analogies of biological evolution would have us believe that brute perfected becomes man, man perfected becomes God,

God perfected (above mere life-binding sufficiency) becomes a Super-Divinity of Nature-binding and cosmic-conscious intelligence. So why should we not likewise consider that the cosmos, "our" universe, shall gradually expand and, subjectively rather than objectively, evolve into an ultra-universe or at least an infra-Universe just as surely as the protoplasmic cell becomes a man instead of a stone or piece of metal ore. We have outgrown that era of material interpretations of the cosmos which so loudly proclaimed the conservation of energy and the stability of *coelus et mundo*. No more do we look on that vast expanse of wide-spaced matter and think that we so easily behold the Divine Handiwork. We have even doubted that the starry vault of heaven could be a fit and worthy scene of our immortality, since science must now reject as untenable much of what was once held true and certain. It is questionable how and where we can expect our affective and memory nature to survive, seeing that structures decay and functions cease at death.

What if we could conceive of mind-dust, the degree of its attenuation, or whether its individual spheres were intermingled at their peripheries? It would not be the fact or measurement of it that gave value to that conception, but rather the mysterious ability of others to reconceive which seems to be casually inherent in the first grasp of any new discovery. This reconceiving power is what the world needs when any great seer, sage or prophet comes announcing his message and his mission. And we are not only in need of the power to reconceive the good, but also sadly deficient in the power of honest thought. The only truly spiritual sublimation of physical development is a result of exercising those talents and powers we already have, in view of adding new genius and grace to bear the responsibilities of life. Seeking the sublime with a docile mind is the beginning of all intelligent soul-development. Old Doc Eliphalet Nott, in his early school-days, made for himself the memorable discovery that "the acquisition of power is of more value than the acquisition of knowledge," and the efficient application of this discovery thruout the later years of his life was the secret of his worthy influence as president over Union College. But the main point of bearing in these observations is that the fact, or even the strangeness of the possibility of intelligent evolution, must derive its propriety and efficacy of application from a grander scheme of things, a parent evolution which bears forth the lesser offspring. This relative condition has previously been

set down as that existing between "our" universe and *the* Universe, but even this last is not an irreducible absolute.

Therefore, while our reason's chief weapon, analogy, is the one we needs must use in all extra-physical research and ultra-Natural speculation, we must practice, not only logical thinking, but also analogic and paradialectic thinking. Even the Aristotelian logic, we remember, required a closer Stoic dialectic to justify its nominalism and validate its realistic application. If there is no similarity in the working out of governments and civilizations, solar systems and evolutions; if there is no basic analogy between psychic aspirations and physical desires, between spiritual awakenings and the budding out of verdant Nature, then reason is useless, thought is futile, we are finite triflers, and the Universe as a multi-phased cycle of numerous Realities is non-existent, a mere illusion of the human imagination. Such an alternative absolutely goes against the grain of our being; the soul's aspirations refute such a condition, and even the mind's perennial speculations presuppose the unreality of such a negation as this would imply. We simply cannot see lack of existence where everything *is* existence and stay in that mental condition which we call rational. And yet the superposition (superstition) of one upon the other has been the dream of the ages, of priests, fakirs, alchemists, abiogenesists, et al. The persuasion and the difficulty come rather from the premise of infinity, and when a finite power like human logic plays on an infinite mass like *the* Universe very little motional effect can be observed, if any. Reason alone then may be inexhaustible but not infinite, and hence cannot be our only adequate plumb-line in ascertaining the rectitude of reality.

Truth for us is more of an endogenic calculus of inward contingency than it is the recording of an inceptive external absolute. But *a* truth or *any* truth, as the immediate entital fact delivered to a conscious intelligence and also, as we might abstractly see it, conceived realistically to be a replica of its external object, rule or relation, should be self-evident as soon as it is perceived. There should be no problem of truth, altho there are many reasons for having problems of knowledge and reality. But on introduction of the human element into our judgments no wonder our conduct entails problems galore of true and false, good and evil, holy and profane, real and illusory, progressive and decadent, artistic and utilitarian. Hence is our alethiology too empirical and humanistic to partake freely of a more significant cosmic relativity. It is

enough that our epistemology has had such a struggle against intellectualism and rational dogmatics without also ravaging it with our automorphic lust for utility and pragmatic sanction.

Immediate experience and its somewhat forced pragmatic sanctions for catching truth on the wing may serve well as accessories to the utility values of our all-too-humanistic life, but should not be regarded as the only heurisms, and not even as valid postulates, of the philosophically real. Pragmatism, humanism, rationalism and mechanisticism all share alike the fallacy of empirical efficiency which presupposes that all the functional relations of time and space are homogeneous. The continuous duration and possibility of motion which characterizes all free agencies and things gives them homogeneous *structural* relations, but there is no implied or ultimate guarantee that this given character shall be carried over to their functions in a knowable cosmic series. Such a series is knowable only on condition that its time and space areas have homogeneous structural relations and are therefore subject to the mathematical equations applicable thereto.

Is a formulation of relativity possible, or is that formulation merely a series of intellectual contents set forth in superior relation to some less coherent system of concepts? Is the incongruity of surd equations irreducible for any other reason than because we have no adequate philosophy of the variable and irrational aspects of reality? Perhaps there is no such thing as absolute relativity; because that is a contradiction of terms, and further, because a universal principle is a causal principle only when there is an effect produced by its active presence. The universally active is causal in nature and function while the universally objective is effectual or responsive only because its functions are relative and dependent upon stimulation by the causal. Many of our speculative measures fail of meeting the requirements of a stern but not necessarily rigid philosophical viewpoint because we are so incorrigibly set in the fallacy of hypostatizing our instruments of thought and conduct (Prof. Kallen) into indices of the real and true. This fallacy is the perennial flower of our pseudo-subjectivism and, no matter how romantic and full of specious relish, ultimately encumbers and confounds whatever skill and insight our speculations may boast.

No wonder then that the so-called realism of practically every schematism in philosophy and religion is just such a hypostasis and predication of our subjective moods. We metonymize our own

ideas and force (or weakness) of character into what is afterward projected as an anagoge or proudly even a *type* of the plan and process, the destined functions of events in the external world. It may be useful in this world to be pragmatic in everything we think and do, but it is certainly treacherous ground on which to erect a philosophy and try to reify our criterion above the natural and specific situation which demands such dignity and decision.

III. THE CREATIVE OR GENETIC FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY

Fichte's philosophy of identity where objective form and subjective idea coincide is the ideal if not the most practical ground for epistemology, and his view of human nature as something always *striving for better conditions of life* was and is the naturalistic if not the romantic ground for the interpretation of all our religious data. Very few of the functions of our conscious moments but have major elements of this or that desire, purpose, hope or aspiration—some aim thru which to realize an ideal and melioristic situation. The ultimate object of our efforts being the fundamental ideal of unity, the identity or reification of idea into external form. This is the normal mature complementary function which follows the adolescent function of idealizing the external forms of reality so as to know and adapt them to our uses.

According to this viewpoint there would seem to be real external existents for counterparts to every idea or conception we have. It is the conceptual argument in the old Cartesian and Scottish realism. Kant was the first to call a halt on the many far-fetched assumptions and specious parallogisms of this romantic dualism. The tender minds who have followed him, from Hegel and Schelling, Cousin and Mamiani down to Fischer and Caird, Boutroux and Croce, have been constantly under that influence of rational content which makes problems of everything within reach of human interest and analysis. It served as common ground on which Huxley proclaimed the moral indifference of Nature, Martineau her omnipresent concern to help us learn and grow, Renouvier to hold that all the cosmic relations are equations of experienceable function, and James to show his preference for the radical utility of truth. But some one or another of the philosophical disciplines seem always to be lacking. The several readers do not emphasize the same parts of the cosmic context, altho each of them rationalizes his interpretation as if his particular choice of aspect was typical and exclusive. It is significant as well as a strange turn of Nature's irony that we must go back to Fichte to find a self-

conscious metaphysic which does not resourcefully keep a secret exit ready for any controversial emergency.

Philosophy is not an ivory tower from which to observe reality and truth caught struggling against the elements of a more or less tragic human experience. It affords no honest ground from which to violently seize its speculative prey from the thicket of empirical deliverance. Rather does it discount and repudiate the invalid humanism of our automorphic judgments, the rancorous rhyomism of our mercenary satisfactions, and the indefensible symbolism of our commercial arts and mischiefs. It is indeed a narrow and feeble viewpoint which cannot include the scope of its own slight significance. If there were not now and then some larger field of inquiry and philosophical embrace we would surely be in sorry plight, for we would soon be swamped in the bog of sophistry and speculative mediocrity. Educational progress demands nobility and insight above the merely practical, the bare mechanical functions of life.

The contemporary exigency between science and the physical universe has arisen because of the mechanistic attitude so devoutly popular among most of our twentieth century *travailleurs intellectuels*. It is not exactly an intellectual crisis, but yet a situation which necessitates the highest validation of the several sciences in view of a liquid or solvent theory of truth and reality. The philosophical exposition of the Spencerian concept of evolution has had its staunchest support from the camps of the biologists and astronomers, the geologists and lately the organic chemists; and the laws it has discovered have been found applicable to if not already operative in all things from man and society to chemical transmutation, electronic rejuvenation of infra-atomic forces, and the astrophysics of the physical universe. Worlds and universes have general terms and processes of genesis the same as the sciences and philosophical systems which seek to know and interpret them. Whether universes are built up thru nebular condensation or meteoric accretion and nuclear bombardment the hypotheses are still only mechanical and materialistic, having no spiritual scope in which to embrace the origin of law, life, mind, and the various sciences and philosophies which are complex functions of the latter.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)