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By *Whom*, all things; for *Whom*, all things.

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RATIONALITY, ACTIVITY AND FAITH.

PSYCHOLOGICAL analysis of the sentiment of Rationality in the human mind may lead us to discover, through a successful untwining of the various motives which prompt men to philosophic activity, some facts which may help us to decide between the conflicting claims to authority of the different systems to which that activity gives birth. In an article upon "The Sentiment of Rationality," published in *Mind*, I have considered philosophies in their purely theoretic aspect, and tried to show that logic alone in dealing with the universe cannot attain to any conception from which the last vestiges of irrationality shall be exorcised. Ever there is something which at the last moment brings the theoretic movement to a stand-still. For, psychologically considered (and the reader must recollect that this is a purely psychological inquiry), rationality means nothing but the consciousness of the perfectly free, fluent, unimpeded movement of thought. Facile rotation, easy transition are its only laws. Perplexity, doubt, mystery only occur when these are violated.

The object of the previous essay may then be described as the exhibition of the failure of the purely logical function in philosophizing. The purpose of the present article is different. Starting from the assumption that if thought is not to stand forever pointing at the universe in a maze of helpless wonder, its movement must be diverted from the issueless channel of purely theoretic contemplation, I try in the following pages to determine what that definition of the universe must be which shall awaken active impulses capable of effecting this diversion. A conception of the world which will give back to the mind the free motion which has been checked, blocked, and inhibited in

the purely contemplative path, will *pro tanto* make the world seem rational again.

Now of two conceptions equally fit (or unfit) to satisfy the logical demand, one may awaken the active impulses or satisfy other æsthetic demands far better than the other. This one will be accounted the more rational conception, and will deservedly prevail.

There is nothing improbable in the supposition that an analysis of Being may yield a number of primordial formulæ, all equally self-consistent and consistent with the facts. We know how often in physical science different formulæ explain the phenomena equally well. The one-fluid and the two-fluid theories of electricity alike express the concrete details, and alike lend themselves to mathematical treatment. Why may it not be the same with universal fact? Why may there not be entirely different points of view for surveying the world, within each of which all data harmonize and which the observer may therefore either choose as mutually exclusive or simply cumulate upon each other? A Beethoven string quartet is truly, as some one has said, a scraping of horses' tails on cats' bowels, and may be exhaustively described in such terms; but the consistency and homogeneity of this description in no way preclude the simultaneous applicability of an entirely different description. Just so a thorough-going interpretation of the world in terms of mechanical sequence is compatible with its being interpreted teleologically. Teleology presupposes, in fact, mechanical sequence.

Suppose, then, several systems excogitated, equally self-consistent, equally satisfying, therefore, to our purely logical needs. They must again be passed in review, and approved or rejected by the æsthetic constitution of our *practical* nature. Such terms as God, Thought, and the like, tho they may logically leave our wonder quite as unappeased as do terms like Matter, Fate, etc., are nevertheless much more generally acceptable as bases of universal explanation. What are the practical needs which lead to such results? We shall see that they are three in number: (1) *expectancy* must be determined; (2) *powers*, active and emotional, must be called forth; and (3) the faculty of faith or unconstrained belief must not be violated. Any view of the

universe which assuages these demands (and is at the same time as clear, simple, and self-consistent as logic permits) will seem rational in the maximum degree. The mind can go no farther for its truth.

II. Philosophers long ago observed the remarkable fact that mere familiarity with things is able to produce a feeling of their rationality. The empiricist school has been so much struck by this circumstance as to have laid it down that the feeling of rationality and the feeling of familiarity are one and the same thing, and that no other kind of rationality than this exists. The daily contemplation of phenomena juxtaposed in a certain order begets an acceptance of them, as peaceful and absolute as the repose engendered by theoretic insight into their coherence. To explain a thing is to pass easily back to its antecedents; to know it is easily to foresee its consequents. Custom, which lets us do both, is thus the source of whatever rationality the thing may gain in our thought.

In the broad sense in which rationality was defined at the outset of this essay, it is perfectly apparent that custom must be one of its factors. We said that any perfectly fluent and easy thought was devoid of the sentiment of irrationality. Inasmuch then as custom acquaints us with all the relations of a thing, it teaches us to pass fluently from that thing to others, and *pro tanto* tinges it with the rational character.

Now there is one particular relation of greater practical importance than all the rest: I mean the relation of a thing to its future consequences. So long as an object is unusual, our expectations are baffled; they are fully determined as soon as it becomes familiar. I therefore propose this as the first practical requisite which a philosophic conception must satisfy: It must, in a general way at least, *banish uncertainty from the future*. The permanent presence of the sense of futurity in the mind has been strangely ignored by most writers. J. S. Mill alone, in postulating expectation as an ultimate mental factor, has begun to do it justice.¹ The fact is that our consciousness at a given moment is never free from the ingredient of expectancy. Every one knows how when a painful thing has to be undergone in the

¹ Prof. Huxley's name may now be added to Mill's. See his clear little work on Hume.

near future, the vague feeling that it is impending penetrates all our thought with uneasiness and subtly vitiates our mood, even when it does not control our attention; it keeps us from being at rest at home in the given present. The same is true when a great happiness awaits us. But when the future is neutral and perfectly certain, "we do not mind it," as we say, but give an undisturbed attention to the actual. Let now this haunting sense of futurity be thrown off its bearings or left without an object, and immediately uneasiness takes possession of the mind. But in every novel or unclassified experience this is just what occurs; we do not know what will come next; and novelty *per se* becomes a mental irritant, while custom *per se* is a mental sedative, merely because the one baffles whilst the other settles our expectations.

Every reader must feel the truth of this. What is meant by coming "to feel at home" in a new place, or with new people? It is simply that, at first, when we take up our quarters in a new room, we do not know what draughts may blow in upon our back, what doors may open, what forms may enter, what interesting objects may be found in cupboards and corners. When after a few days we have learned the range of all these possibilities, the feeling of strangeness disappears. And so it does with people when we have got past the point of expecting any essentially new manifestations from their character.

The utility of this emotional effect of expectation is perfectly obvious; "natural selection," in fact, was bound to bring it about sooner or later. It is of the utmost practical importance to an animal that he should have prevision of the qualities of the objects that surround him, and especially that he should not come to rest in presence of circumstances that might be fraught either with peril or advantage—go to sleep, for example, on the brink of precipices, in the dens of enemies, or view with indifference some new-appearing object that might, if chased, prove an important addition to the larder. Novelty *ought* to irritate him. All curiosity has thus a practical genesis. We need only look at the physiognomy of a dog or a horse when a new object comes into his view, his mingled fascination and fear—to see that the element of conscious insecurity or perplexed expectation lies at the root of his emotion. A dog's curiosity about

the movements of his master or a strange object only extends as far as the point of deciding what is going to happen next. That settled, curiosity is quenched. The dog quoted by Darwin whose behavior in presence of a newspaper moved by the wind seemed to testify to a sense "of the supernatural" was merely exhibiting the irritation of an uncertain future. A newspaper which could move spontaneously was in itself so unexpected that the poor brute could not tell what new wonders the next moment might bring forth.

To turn back now to philosophy. An ultimate datum, even though it be *logically* unrationalized, will, if its quality is such as to define expectancy, be peacefully accepted by the mind; whilst if it leave the least opportunity for ambiguity in the future, it will to that extent cause mental uneasiness if not distress. Now in the ultimate explanations of the universe which the craving for rationality has elicited from the human mind, the demands of expectancy to be satisfied have always played a fundamental part. The term set up by philosophers as primordial has been one which banishes the incalculable. *Substance*, for example, means that which is immutable by time, which will be as it has been, because its being is essential and eternal. And altho we may not be able to prophesy in detail the future phenomena to which the substance shall give rise, we may set our minds at rest in a general way, when we have called the substance God, Perfection, Love, or Reason, by the reflection that whatever is in store for us, it can never at bottom be inconsistent with the character of this term. So that our attitude even towards the unexpected is in a general sense defined. Take again the notion of immortality, which for common people seems to be the touchstone of every philosophic or religious creed: what is this but a way of saying that the determination of expectancy is the essential factor of rationality? *Comprendre c'est prévoir*. The wrath of science against miracles, of certain philosophers against the doctrine of free will, has precisely the same root: dislike to admit any ultimate factor in things which may rout our prevision or upset the stability of our outlook.

Anti-substantialist writers strangely overlook this function in the doctrine of substance: "If there be such a *substratum*," says Mill, "suppose it at this instant miraculously annihilated,

and let the sensations continue to occur in the same order, and how would the *substratum* be missed? By what signs should we be able to discover that its existence had terminated? Should we not have as much reason to believe that it still existed as we now have? And if we should not then be warranted in believing it, how can we be so now?"¹ Truly enough, if we have already securely bagged our facts in a certain order, we can dispense with any further warrant for that order. But with regard to the facts yet to come the case is far different. It does not follow that if substance may be dropped from our conception of the irrecoverably past, it need be an equally empty complication to our notions of the future. Even if it were strictly true that the increased stability which the notion of permanent underlying substance seems to confer upon the order of phenomena is purely illusory, inasmuch as, for aught we know to the contrary, the substance may develop at any moment a wholly new set of attributes, still it would remain true that the mere logical form of judgment referring things to a substance is (whether rightly or wrongly) accompanied by a feeling of rest and future confidence. And this will always be a reason why, in spite of the acutest nihilistic criticism, men will have a liking for any philosophy which can seem to explain things *per substantiam*.

A very natural reaction against the theosophizing conceit and hide-bound confidence in the upshot of things, which vulgarly optimistic minds display, has formed one factor of the scepticism of empiricists, who never cease to remind us of the reservoir of possibilities alien to our habitual experience which the Kosmos may contain, and which, for any warrant we have to the contrary, may turn it inside out to-morrow. Agnostic substantialism like that of Mr. Spencer, whose Unknowable is not merely the unfathomable but the Absolute-Irrational, on which, if consistently represented in thought, it is of course impossible to count, performs the same function of rebuking a certain stagnancy and smugness in the manner in which the ordinary Philistine feels his security. But considered as anything else than as reactions against an opposite excess, these philosophies of uncertainty cannot be acceptable. The general mind

¹ Logic, 8th Edit., vol. i. p. 63.

will fail to come to rest in their presence, and will seek for solutions of a more reassuring kind.

We may then, I think, with perfect confidence lay down as a first point gained in our inquiry, that a prime factor in the philosophic craving is the desire to have expectancy defined; and that no philosophy will definitively triumph which in an emphatic manner denies the possibility of gratifying this need.

III. We pass with this to the next great division of our topic. It is not sufficient for our satisfaction merely to know the future as determined, for it may be determined in either of many ways, agreeable or disagreeable. For a philosophy to succeed on a universal scale it must define the future *congruously with our spontaneous powers*. A philosophy may be unimpeachable in other respects, but either of two defects will be fatal to its universal acceptance. First, its ultimate principle must not be one that essentially baffles and disappoints our dearest desires and most cherished powers. A pessimistic principle like Schopenhauers's incurably vicious Will-substance, or Hartmann's wicked jack-of-all-trades, the Unconscious, will perpetually call forth essays at other philosophies. Incompatibility of the future with their desires and active tendencies is, in fact, to most men a source of more fixed disquietude than uncertainty itself. Witness the attempts to overcome the "problem of evil," the "mystery of pain." There is no "problem of good."

But a second and worse defect in a philosophy than that of contradicting our active propensities is to give them no Object whatever to press against. A philosophy whose principle is so incommensurate with our most intimate powers as to deny them all relevancy in universal affairs, as to annihilate their motives at one blow, will be even more unpopular than pessimism. Better face the enemy than the eternal Void! This is why materialism will always fail of universal adoption, however well it may fuse things into an atomistic unity, however clearly it may prophesy the future eternity. For materialism denies reality to the objects of almost all the impulses which we most cherish. The real *meaning* of the impulses, it says, is something which has no emotional interest for us whatever. Now what is called extradition is quite as characteristic of our emo-

tions as of our senses. Both point to an Object as the cause of the present feeling. What an intensely objective reference lies in fear! In like manner an enraptured man, a dreary-feeling man are not simply aware of their subjective states; if they were, the force of their feelings would all evaporate. Both believe there is outward cause *why* they should feel as they do: either "it is a glad world! how good life is!" or "what a loathsome tedium is existence!" Any philosophy which annihilates the validity of the reference by explaining away its objects or translating them into terms of no emotional pertinency, leaves the mind with little to care or act for. This is the opposite condition from that of nightmare, but when acutely brought home to consciousness it produces a kindred horror. In nightmare we have motives to act but no power, here we have powers but no motives. A nameless *Unheimlichkeit* comes over us at the thought of there being nothing eternal in our final purposes, in the objects of those loves and aspirations which are our deepest energies. The monstrously lopsided equation of the universe and its knower, which we postulate as the ideal of cognition is perfectly paralleled by the no less lopsided equation of the universe and the *doer*. We demand in it a *character* for which our emotions and active propensities shall be a match. Small as we are, minute as is the point by which the cosmos impinges upon each one of us, each one desires to feel that his reaction at that point is congruous with the demands of the vast whole, that he balances the latter, so to speak, and is able to do what it expects of him. But as his abilities to "do" lie wholly in the line of his natural propensities; as he enjoys reacting with such emotions as fortitude, hope, rapture, admiration, earnestness, and the like, and as he very unwillingly reacts with fear, disgust, despair, or doubt, a philosophy which should—only legitimate emotions of the latter sort would be sure to leave the mind a prey to discontent and craving.

It is far too little recognized how entirely the intellect is built up of practical interests. The theory of Evolution is beginning to do very good service by its reduction of all mentality to the type of reflex action. Cognition, in this view, is but a fleeting moment, a cross-section at a certain point of what in its totality is a motor phenomenon. In the lower forms of life

no one will pretend that cognition is anything more than a guide to appropriate action. The germinal question concerning things brought for the first time before consciousness is not the theoretic "What is that?" but the practical "Who goes there?" or rather, as Horwicz¹ has admirably put it, "What is to be done?"—"Was fang' ich an?" In all our discussions about the intelligence of lower animals the only test we use is that of their *acting* as if for a purpose. Cognition, in short, is incomplete until discharged in act. And altho it is true that the later mental development, which attains its maximum through the hypertrophied cerebrum of man, gives birth to a vast amount of theoretic activity over and above that which is immediately ministerial to practice, yet the earlier claim is only postponed, not effaced, and the active nature asserts its rights to the end.²

When the cosmos in its totality is the object offered to consciousness, the relation is in no whit altered. React on it we must in some congenial way. It was a deep instinct in Schopenhauer which led him to reinforce his pessimistic argumentation by a running volley of invective against the practical man and his requirements. No hope for pessimism unless he is slain!

Helmholtz's immortal works on the eye and ear are to a great extent little more than a commentary on the law that practical utility wholly determines what parts of our sensations we shall be aware of, and what parts we shall ignore. We notice or discriminate an ingredient of sense only so far as we depend upon it to modify our actions. We *comprehend* a thing when we synthesize it by identity with another thing. But the other great department of our understanding, *acquaintance* (the two departments being recognized in all languages by the antithesis of such words as *wissen* and *kennen*; *scire* and *noscere*, etc.) what is that also but a synthesis—a synthesis of a passive perception with a certain tendency to reaction? We are acquainted with a thing as soon as we have learned how to behave towards it, or how to meet the behavior which we expect from it. Up to that point it is still "strange" to us. A striking passage from Helmholtz may be quoted to corroborate this view:

¹ Psychologische Analysen, 2. Theil, 1. Hälfte, p. 82.

² See the excellent statement by Spencer. Psychology, § 162.

"I hold, therefore, that to speak of our ideas of things as having any other than a practical validity is absolutely meaningless. Such ideas can be nothing other than symbols, naturally given signs for things which we learn to use for the regulation of our movements and actions. Only when we have learned to read these symbols aright are we able, with their help, so to direct our actions that they shall have the desired result—*i.e.*, that the expected new sensations shall arise. That no other kind of comparison between ideas of things and things themselves exists in point of fact, all schools agree; but we insist that any other mode of comparison is *un-thinkable* and meaningless. This latter is the vital point which one must see in order to escape from the labyrinth of conflicting opinions. To ask whether the representation which I have of a table, its figure, solidity, color, weight, etc., is apart from the practical use I may make of it, true and corresponding with reality, or false and resting on an illusion, is just as sensible as to ask whether a certain sound is red, yellow, or blue."¹

Altho Helmholtz is speaking directly only of the *truth* of our thoughts, he would probably *a fortiori* use the same words in discussing their rationality.

If there be any truth at all in this view, it follows that however vaguely a philosopher may define the ultimate universal datum, he cannot be said to leave it unknown to us so long as he in the slightest degree pretends that our emotional or active attitude towards it should be of one sort rather than another. He who says "life is real, life is earnest," however much he may speak of the fundamental mysteriousness of things gives a distinct definition to that mysteriousness by ascribing to it the right to claim from us the particular mood called seriousness, which means the willingness to live with energy, tho energy bring pain. The same is true of him who says that all is vanity. Indefinable as the predicate vanity may be *in se*, it is clearly enough something which permits anæsthesia, mere escape from suffering, to be our rule of life. There can be no more ludicrous incongruity than for a disciple of Spencer to proclaim with one breath that the substance of things is unknowable, and with the next that the thought of it should inspire us with admiration of its glory, reverence, and a willingness to add our coöperative push in the direction towards which its manifestations seem to be drifting. The unknowable may be unfathomed, but if it

¹ Physiologische Optik, p. 443.

make such distinct demands upon our activity we surely are not ignorant of its essential quality.

If we survey the field of history and ask what feature all great periods of revival, of expansion of the human mind, display in common, we shall find, I think, simply this: that each and all of them have said to the human being, "The inmost nature of the reality is congenial to *powers* which you possess." In what did the emancipating message of primitive Christianity consist but in the announcement that God recognizes those weak and tender impulses which paganism had so rudely overlooked? Take repentance: the man who can do nothing rightly can at least repent of his failures. But for paganism this faculty of repentance was a pure supernumerary, a straggler too late for the fair. Christianity took it and made it the one power within us which appealed straight to the heart of God. And after the night of the middle ages had so long branded with obloquy even the generous impulses of the flesh, and defined the Reality to be such that only slavish natures could commune with it, in what did the "*sursum corda!*" of the Platonizing renaissance lie but in the proclamation that the archetype of verity in things laid claim on the widest activity of our whole æsthetic being? What were Luther's mission and Wesley's but appeals to powers which even the meanest of men might carry with them, faith and self-despair, but which were personal, requiring no priestly intermediation, and which brought their owner face to face with God? What caused the wildfire influence of Rousseau but the assurance he gave that man's nature was in harmony with the nature of things, if only the paralyzing corruptions of custom would stand from between? How did Kant and Fichte, Goethe and Schiller inspire their time with cheer, except by saying, "Use all your powers; that is the only obedience the universe exacts"? And Carlyle with his gospel of Work, of Fact, of Veracity, how does he move us except by saying that the universe imposes no tasks upon us but such as the most humble can perform? Emerson's creed that everything that ever was or will be is here in the enveloping Now; that man has but to obey himself—"He who will rest in what he *is*, is a part of Destiny"—is in like manner nothing but an exorcism of all scepticism as to the pertinency of one's natural faculties.

In a word, "Son of Man, *stand upon thy feet* and I will speak unto thee!" is the only revelation of truth to which the solving epochs have helped the disciple. But that has been enough to satisfy the greater part of his rational need. *In se* and *per se* the Universal Essence has hardly been more defined by any of these formulas than by the agnostic x ; but the mere assurance that my powers, such as they are, are not irrelevant to it, but pertinent, that it speaks to them and will in some way recognize their reply, that I can be a match for it if I will, and not a footless waif, suffices to make it rational to my feeling in the sense given above. Nothing could be more absurd than to hope for the definitive triumph of any philosophy which should refuse to legitimate, and to legitimate in an emphatic manner, the more powerful of our emotional and practical tendencies. Fatalism, whose solving word in all crises of behavior is "all striving is vain," will never reign supreme, for the impulse to take life strivingly is indestructible in the race. Moral creeds which speak to that impulse will be widely successful in spite of inconsistency, vagueness, and shadowy determination of expectancy. Man needs a rule for his will, and will invent one if one be not given him.

But now observe a most important consequence. Men's active impulses are so differently mixed that a philosophy fit in this respect for Bismarck will almost certainly be unfit for a valetudinarian poet. In other words, altho one can lay down in advance the rule that a philosophy which utterly denies all fundamental ground for seriousness, for effort, for hope, which says the nature of things is radically alien to human nature, can never succeed; one cannot in advance say what particular dose of hope, or of gnosticism of the nature of things, the definitively successful philosophy shall contain. In short, it is almost certain that personal temperament will here make itself felt, and that altho all men will insist on being "spoken to" by the universe in some way, few will insist on being spoken to in just the same way. We have here, in short, the sphere of what Matthew Arnold likes to call *Aberglaube*, legitimate, inexpugnable, yet doomed to eternal variations and disputes.

Take Idealism and Materialism as examples of what I mean, and suppose for a moment that both give a conception of equal

theoretic clearness and consistency, and that both determine our expectations equally well. Idealism will be chosen by a man of one emotional constitution, Materialism by another. At this very day all sentimental natures, fond of conciliation and intimacy, tend to an idealistic faith. Why? Because Idealism gives to the nature of things such kinship with our personal selves. Our own thoughts are what we are most at home with, what we are least afraid of. To say then that the Universe essentially is Thought is to say that I myself, potentially at least, am all. There is no radically alien corner, but an all-pervading *intimacy*. Now in certain sensitively egoistic minds this conception of reality is sure to put on a narrow, close, sick-room air. Everything sentimental and priggish will be consecrated by it. That element in reality which every strong man of common-sense willingly feels there because it calls forth powers that he owns—the rough, harsh, sea-wave, north-wind element, the denier of persons, the democratizer—is banished because it jars too much on the desire for communion. Now it is the very enjoyment of this element which throws many men upon the materialistic or agnostic hypothesis, as a polemic reaction against the contrary extreme. They sicken at a life wholly constituted of intimacy. There is an overpowering desire at moments to escape personality, to revel in the action of forces that have no respect for our ego, to let the tides flow even if they flow over us. The strife of these two kinds of mental temper will, I think, always be seen in philosophy. Some men will keep insisting on the reason, the atonement, that lies in the heart of things and that we can act *with*; others on the opacity of brute fact that we must react *against*.

IV. Now there is one element of our active nature which the Christian religion has emphatically recognized, but which philosophers as a rule have with great insincerity tried to huddle out of sight in their pretension to found systems of absolute certainty. I mean the element of Faith. Faith means belief in something concerning which doubt is still theoretically possible; and as the test of belief is willingness to act, one may say that faith is the readiness to act in a cause the prosperous issue of which is not certified to us in advance. It is in fact the same moral quality which we call courage in practical affairs. And

there will be a very widespread tendency in men of vigorous nature to enjoy a certain amount of uncertainty in their philosophic creed, just as risk lends a zest to worldly activity. Absolutely certified philosophies seeking the *inconcussum* are fruits of mental natures in which the passion for identity (which we saw to be but one factor of the rational appetite) plays an abnormally exclusive part. In the average man, on the contrary, the power to *trust*, to risk a little beyond the literal evidence, is an essential function. Any mode of conceiving the universe which makes an appeal to this generous power, and makes the man seem as if he were individually helping to create the actuality of the truth whose metaphysical reality he is willing to assume, will be sure to be responded to by large numbers.

The necessity of Faith as an ingredient in our mental attitude is strongly insisted on by the scientific philosophers of the present day. But by a singularly arbitrary caprice they say that it is only legitimate when used in the interests of one particular proposition, the proposition, namely, that the course of nature is uniform. That nature will follow to-morrow the same laws that she follows to-day is, they all admit, a truth which no man can *know*; but in the interests of cognition as well as of action we must postulate or assume it. As Helmholtz says: "Hier gilt nur der eine Rath: vertraue und handle!" And Prof. Bain urges: "Our only error is in proposing to give any reason or justification of the postulate or to treat it as otherwise than begged at the very outset."

With regard to all other possible truths, however, a number of our most influential contemporaries think that an attitude of faith is not only illogical but shameful. Faith in a religious dogma for which there is no outward proof, but which we are tempted to postulate for our emotional interests, just as we postulate the uniformity of nature for our intellectual interests, is branded by Prof. Huxley as "the lowest depth of immorality." Citations of this kind from leaders of the modern *Aufklärung* might be multiplied almost indefinitely. Take Prof. Clifford's article on the "Ethics of Belief." He calls it "guilt" and "sin" to believe even the truth without "scientific evidence." But what is the use of being a genius, unless *with the same scientific evidence* as other men, one can reach more truth than they?

Why does Clifford fearlessly proclaim his belief in the Conscious-Automaton theory, although the "proofs" before him are the same which make Mr. Lewes reject it? Why does he believe in primordial units of "mind stuff" on evidence which would seem quite worthless to Professor Bain? Simply because, like every human being of the slightest mental originality, he is peculiarly sensitive to evidence that bears in some one direction. It is utterly hopeless to try to exorcise such sensitiveness by calling it the disturbing subjective factor, and branding it as the root of all evil. "Subjective" be it called! And "disturbing" to those whom it foils! But if it helps those who, as Cicero says, *vim naturæ magis sentiunt*, it is good and not evil. Pretend what we may, the whole man within us is at work when we form our philosophical opinions. Intellect, will, taste, and passion cooperate just as they do in practical affairs, and lucky it is if the passion be not something as petty as a love of personal conquest over the philosopher across the way. The absurd abstraction of an intellect verbally formulating all its evidence and carefully estimating the probability thereof by a vulgar fraction by the size of whose denominator and numerator alone it is swayed, is ideally as inept as it is actually impossible. It is almost incredible that men who are themselves working philosophers should pretend that any philosophy can be, or ever has been, constructed without the help of personal preference, belief, or divination. How have they succeeded in so stultifying their sense for the living facts of human nature as not to perceive that every philosopher, or man of science either, whose initiative counts for anything in the evolution of thought, has taken his stand on a sort of dumb conviction that the truth must lie in one direction rather than another, and a sort of preliminary assurance that *his* notion can be made to work; and has borne his best fruit in trying to *make* it work? These mental instincts in different men are the spontaneous variations upon which the intellectual struggle for existence is based. The fittest conceptions survive, and with them the names of their champions shining to all futurity.

The coil is about us, struggle as we may. The only escape from faith is mental nullity. What we all enjoy most in a Huxley or a Clifford is not the professor with his learning, but

the human personality which is ready to go in for what it feels to be right, in spite of all appearances. The entire man has but one interest, to be right. That for him is the art of all arts, and all means are fair which help him to it. Naked he is flung into the world, and between him and nature there are no rules of civilized warfare. The rules of the scientific game, burdens of proof, presumptions, *experimenta crucis*, complete inductions, and the like, are only binding on those who enter that game. As a matter of fact we all more or less do enter it, because it helps us to our end. But if the means presume to frustrate the end and call us cheats for being right in advance of their slow aid, by guesswork or by hook or crook, what shall we say of them? Were all of Professor Clifford's works, except the "Ethics of Belief," forgotten, he might well figure in future treatises on psychology in place of the rather threadbare instance of the miser who has been led by the association of ideas to prefer his gold to all the goods he might buy with it.

In short, if I am born with such a superior general reaction to evidence that I can guess right and act accordingly, and gain all that comes of right action, while my less gifted neighbor (paralyzed by his scruples and waiting for more evidence which he dares not anticipate, much as he longs to) still stands shivering on the brink, by what law shall I be forbidden to reap the advantages of my superior native sensitiveness? Of course I yield to my belief, in such a case as this, or distrust it, alike at my peril, just as I do in any of the great practical decisions of life. If my inborn faculties are good, I am a prophet; if poor, I am a failure; nature spews me out of her mouth and there is an end of me. In the total game of life we stake our persons all the while, and if in its theoretic part our persons will help us to a conclusion, surely we should also stake them there, however inarticulate they may be.

V. But in being so very articulate myself in proving what to all readers with a sense for reality will seem a platitude, am I not wasting words? We cannot live or think at all without some degree of faith. Faith is synonymous with working hypothesis. The only difference is that while some hypotheses can be refuted in five minutes, others may defy ages. A chemist who conjectures that a certain wall-paper contains arsenic and

has faith enough to lead him to take the trouble to put some of it into a hydrogen bottle, finds out by the results of his action whether he was right or wrong. But theories like that of Darwin, or that of the kinetic constitution of matter, may exhaust the labors of generations in their corroboration, each tester of their truth proceeding in this simple way, that he acts as if it were true, and expects the result to disappoint him if his assumption is false. The longer disappointment is delayed the stronger grows his faith in his theory.

Now in such questions as God, immortality, absolute morality, and free will, no non-papal believer at the present day pretends his faith to be of an essentially different complexion: he can always doubt his creed. But his intimate persuasion is that the odds in its favor are strong enough to warrant him in acting all along on the assumption of its truth. His corroboration or repudiation by the nature of things may, be deferred until the day of judgment. The uttermost he now means is something like this: "I *expect* then to triumph with tenfold glory; but if it should turn out, as indeed it may, that I have spent my days in a fool's paradise, why, better have been the dupe of *such* a dreamland than the cunning reader of a world like that which then beyond all doubt unmasks itself to view."

In short, we *go in* against materialism very much as we should *go in*, had we a chance, against the second French empire or the Church of Rome, or any other system of things towards which our repugnance is vast enough to determine energetic action, but too vague to issue in distinct argumentation. Our reasons are ludicrously incommensurate with the volume of our feeling. On the latter we none the less unhesitatingly act. Now I wish to show what to my knowledge has never been clearly pointed out, that belief (as measured by action) not only does and must continually outstrip scientific evidence, but that there is a certain class of truths of whose reality belief is a factor as well as a confessor; and that as regards this class of truths faith is not only licit and pertinent, but essential and indispensable. The truths cannot become true till our faith has made them so.

Suppose, for example, that I am climbing in the Alps and have had the ill-luck to work myself into a position from

which the only escape is by a terrible leap. Being without similar experience, I have no evidence of my ability to perform it successfully, but hope and confidence in myself make me sure I shall not miss my aim, and nerve my feet to execute what without those subjective emotions would perhaps have been impossible. But suppose, on the contrary, the subjective emotion of fear and mistrust preponderate, or suppose that, having just read the "Ethics of Belief," I feel that it would be sinful to act upon an assumption unverified by previous experience; why, then I shall hesitate so long that at last, exhausted and trembling, launching myself in a moment of despair, I miss my foothold and roll into the abyss. In this case, and it is one of an immense class, the part of wisdom is clearly to believe what one desires, for the belief is one of the indispensable preliminary conditions of the realization of its object. There are then cases where faith creates its own verification. Believe, and you shall be right, for you shall save yourself. Doubt, and you shall again be right, for you shall perish. The only difference is that to believe is greatly to your advantage.

The future movements of the stars or the facts of past history are determined now once for all, whether I like them or not. They are given irrespective of my wishes, and in all that concerns truths like these subjective preference should have no part. It can only obscure the judgment. But in every fact into which there enters an element of personal contribution on my part, as soon as this personal contribution demands a certain degree of subjective energy which, in its turn, calls for a certain amount of faith in the result, so that, after all, the actuality of the future fact is conditioned by the actuality of my present faith in it, how trebly asinine would it be for me to deny myself the use of the subjective method, the method of belief based on desire!

Now in every proposition whose bearing is universal, and such are all the propositions of philosophy, the acts of the subject and their consequences throughout eternity should be included in the formula. If M represent the entire world *minus* the reaction of the thinker upon it, and if $M + x$ represent the absolutely total matter of philosophic propositions, x standing for the thinker's reaction and its results, what would be a uni-

versal truth if the term x were one complexion, might become egregious error if x altered its character. Let it not be said that x is too infinitesimal a component to change the character of the immense whole in which it lies imbedded. Everything depends on the point of view of the philosophic proposition in question. If we have to define the universe from the point of view of sensibility, the critical material for our judgment lies in the animal kingdom, insignificant as it is quantitatively considered. The moral definition of the world may depend on phenomena more restricted still in range. In short, many a long phrase may have its sense reversed by the addition of three letters, *n o t*; many a monstrous mass have its unstable equilibrium discharged one way or the other by a feather weight which falls upon it.

Let us make this clear by a few examples. The philosophy of Evolution offers us to-day a new empirical criterion to serve as an ethical test between right and wrong. Previous empirical criteria, it says, being subjective, have left us still floundering in variations of opinion and the *status belli*. Here is an objective criterion which is fixed: That is to be called good which is destined to prevail or survive. But we immediately see that this standard can only remain *objective* by leaving myself and my conduct out. If what prevails and survives does so by my help, and cannot do so without that help, if something else will prevail in case I alter my conduct, how can I possibly now, conscious of alternative courses of action open before me, either of which I may suppose capable of altering the path of events, decide which course to take, by asking what path events will follow? If they follow my direction, evidently my direction cannot wait on them. The only possible manner in which an evolutionist can use his standard is the obsequious method of forecasting the course society would take *but for him*, and then putting an extinguisher on all personal idiosyncrasies of desire and interest, and with bated breath and tiptoe tread following as straight as may be at the tail, and bringing up the rear of everything. Some pious creatures may find their pleasure in this, but not only does it violate our general wish to lead and not to follow (a wish which is surely not immoral if we only lead aright), but if it be treated as every ethical principle must

be treated, namely, as a rule good for all men alike, its general observance would lead to its practical refutation by bringing about a general deadlock. Each good man hanging back and waiting for orders from the rest, absolute stagnation would ensue. Happy then if a few unrighteous ones contribute an initiative which sets things moving again !

All this is no caricature. That the course of destiny may be altered by individuals no wise evolutionist ought to doubt.¹ Everything for him has small beginnings, has a *bud* which may be "nipped," and nipped by a feeble force. Human races and tendencies follow the law and have also small beginnings. The *best*, according to Evolution, is that which has the biggest endings. Now, if a present race of men, enlightened in the evolutionary philosophy, and able to forecast the future, were to discern in a small tribe arising near them the potentiality of future supremacy, were able to see that not only their own race but all races would eventually be wiped out of existence by the new-comers if the expansion of these were left unmolested, these present sages would have two courses open to them, either perfectly in harmony with the evolutionary test. Strangle the new race *now*, and ours survives ; help the new race, and *it* survives. In both cases the action is *right* as measured by the evolutionary standard—it is action for the winning side.

How, for instance, should an evolutionist member of Con-

¹ Mr. Spencer, it is true, in his "Study of Sociology," and his disciple, Mr. Grant Allen, in an article on "Nation Making," in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1878, hold that no individual initiative has any effect in determining the course of human destiny. This relapse into oriental fatalism is, of course, no necessary corollary of the Evolution Philosophy, which by every principle of clear thinking should rather hold that the destiny of mankind, whether fatally or not, is wrought out *through* the strictly determinate inventions and discoveries, acts and beliefs, examples and influences, of strictly determinate individuals, than in spite of them by a vaguely hypostatized power which, whether you call it "physical geography" with Allen, or "ancestral conditions" with Spencer, remains in their pages as essentially unanalyzed and unscientific as in Emerson's verses :

"The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned ;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within."

If we must have mysticism, save us from the materialistic sort! Transcendental mysticism has sweetness, if not light. The other has neither.

gress use the standard of "what will prevail" to help him to vote on the question of excluding the Chinese from California? The reason given for excluding them is that if we let them come their race will ruin ours in the struggle for existence. But that would seem to be a proof that they are the best race, and a reason for helping them. This hasty judgment may, however, be corrected by saying that the competition which measures real superiority must not be confined to peace, but include the régime of force. Not till they prevent us *vi et armis* from repelling them into China can they be deemed best. What is good must triumph, not only in open market but in open war. Now if the Chinese were themselves evolutionists, and, recognizing success as the only ultimate law, resolved immediately to hurl their hundreds of millions against our tens, and exact a treaty which should open the markets again to their confessed peaceful supremacy, might not a cosmopolitan and unprejudiced follower of Darwin well hesitate which side to espouse, for might not either prevail? And might not the throwing of his weight and that of a few hundreds intelligent like him into one side or other of the balance really turn the scale?¹

Thus the evolutionist foundation of ethics is purely *objective* only to the herd of nullities whose votes count for zero in the march of events. But for the others, examples and leaders of opinion, potentates, and in general those to whose actions position or genius gives a far-reaching human import, and to the rest of us, each in his measure—whenever we espouse a cause we contribute to the determination of the evolutionary standard of right. The truly wise disciple of this school will then admit Faith as an ultimate ethical factor. Any philosophy which makes such questions as *What is the ideal type of humanity? What shall be reckoned virtues? What conduct is good?* depend on the question *What is going to succeed?* must needs

¹ The text was written before Mr. Spencer's "Data of Ethics" appeared. That work, if I have not misread it, exhibits an almost Quakerish respect for peace, and regards the warlike struggle for existence as an *überwundener Standpunkt*, no longer to be practically adopted by modern evolutionists. This can be regarded as nothing more or less than an individual's subjective preference. If half the human race yield to Mr. Spencer's influence, the final balance of power between races, the finally prevalent ideas of character, will be very different from those which will result if his words fall on deaf ears.

fall back on personal belief as one of the ultimate conditions of the truth. For again and again success depends on energy of act, energy again depends on faith that we shall not fail, and that faith in turn on the faith that we are right—which faith thus verifies itself.

Take as another example the question of Optimism or Pessimism which makes so much noise just now in Germany. Every human being must some time decide for himself whether life is worth living. Suppose that in looking at the world and seeing how full it is of misery, of old age, of wickedness and pain, and how unsafe is his own future, he yields to the pessimistic conclusion, cultivates disgust and dread, ceases striving, and finally commits suicide. He thus adds to the mass M of mundane phenomena, independent of his subjectivity, the subjective complement x , which makes of the whole an utterly black picture illumined by no gleam of good. Pessimism completed, verified by his moral reaction, and the deed in which this ends, is true beyond a doubt. $M + x$ expresses a state of things totally bad. The man's belief supplied all that was lacking to make it so, and now that it is made so the belief was right.

But now suppose that with the same evil facts M , the man's reaction x is exactly reversed. Suppose that instead of giving way to the evil he braves it and finds a sterner, more wonderful joy than any passive pleasure can yield in triumphing over pain and defying fear. Suppose he does this successfully, and however thickly evils crowd upon him proves his dauntless subjectivity to be more than their match. Will not every one confess that the bad character of the M is here the *conditio sine qua non* of the good character of the x ? Will not every one instantly declare a world fitted only for fair-weather human beings susceptible of every passive enjoyment, but without independence, courage, or fortitude, to be from a moral point of view incommensurably inferior to a world framed to elicit from the man every form of triumphant endurance and conquering moral energy? As James Hinton says:

"Little inconveniences, exertions, pains; these are the only things in which we rightly feel our life at all. If these be not there, existence becomes worthless, or worse; success in putting them all away is fatal. So it is men engage in athletic sports, spend their holidays in climbing up moun-

tains, find nothing so enjoyable as that which taxes their endurance and their energy. This is the way we are made, I say. It may or may not be a mystery or a paradox; it is a fact. Now this enjoyment in endurance is just according to the intensity of life; the more physical vigor and balance, the more endurance can be made an element of satisfaction. A sick man cannot stand it. The line of enjoyable suffering is not a fixed one; it fluctuates with the perfectness of the life. That our pains are, as they are, unendurable, awful, overwhelming, crushing, not to be borne save in misery and dumb impatience, which utter exhaustion alone makes patient—that our pains are thus unendurable, means not that they are too great, but that *we are sick*. We have not got our proper life. So you perceive pain is no more necessarily an evil, but an essential element of the highest good.”¹

But the highest good can only be achieved by our getting our proper life, and that can only come about by help of a moral energy born of the faith that in some way or other we shall succeed in getting it if we try pertinaciously enough. This world *is* good, we must say, since it is what we make it, and we shall make it good. How can we exclude from the *cognition* of a truth a faith which is involved in the *creation* of the truth? M has its character indeterminate, susceptible of forming part of a thorough-going Pessimism on the one hand, or of a moral (as distinguished from a sensual) Optimism on the other. All depends on the character of the personal contribution, *x*. Wherever the facts to be formulated contain such a contribution we may logically, legitimately, and inexpugnably believe what we desire. The belief creates its verification. The thought becomes literally father to the fact, as the wish was father to the thought.

Observe that in all this not a word has been said of free will. It all applies as well to a predetermined as to an indeterminate universe. If $M + x$ is fixed in advance, the belief which leads to *x* and the desire which prompts the belief are also fixed. But fixed or not, these subjective states form a phenomenal condition necessarily preceding the facts, necessarily constitutive, therefore, of the truth $M + x$ which we seek. If, however, free acts be possible, a faith in their possibility, by augmenting the moral energy which gives them birth, will increase their frequency in a given individual.

¹ Life of James Hinton, pp. 172, 173. See also the excellent chapter on “Faith and Sight” in the “Mystery of Matter,” by J. Allanson Picton. Hinton’s “Mystery of Pain” will undoubtedly always remain the classical utterance on this subject.

VI. Let us now turn to the radical question of life, the question whether this be at bottom a moral or an unmoral universe, and see whether the method of faith may legitimately have a place there. It is really the question of Materialism. Is the world a simple brute actuality, an existence *de facto*, about which the deepest thing that can be said is that it happens to be thus and not otherwise, tho it might just as well absolutely have been otherwise; or is it, on the other hand, a world whose intimate nature and ultimate reason is moral?

The alternative implies that the judgment *should be* or *should not be*, the judgment of *better* or *worse*, of *ought*, is as intimately and objectively pertinent to phenomena as the simple judgment *is* or *is not*. The materialistic theorists say that judgments having the former form are ultimately derived from judgments having the latter form. Moral truths are tributary to matters of fact. It is better that I should have my tooth out. Why? Because of the fact that I shall then be free from pain. But the absolute moralists reply, "Why is that fact better?" Because of the fact that I can then finish my work. "But why is the fact of finishing work better?" Because my deepest passion and interest lies in my work, and so on. The materialists say that the words "good" and "bad" have no sense out of relation to subjective passions and interests. Change these, and the goods and evils are reversed. Abolish them, and exeunt good and evil from the field of being. If the desires are there, certain other things should be; but we cannot say of the desires themselves either that they should or should not be. When a materialist says it is better for him to suffer great inconvenience than to break a promise, he only means that his social interests have become so knit up with keeping faith that, those interests once being granted, it *is* better for him to keep the promise in spite of everything. But the interests themselves are neither right nor wrong, except possibly with reference to some ulterior order of interests which themselves again would be simple brute data without intrinsic character, either good or bad. The *is* lies deepest; the *should* is its corollary. The *is* explains, the *should* asks explanation; the *is* is absolute, the *should* dependent.

For the absolute moralists, on the contrary, we can never

explain a given *should* except by reference to a still deeper *should*. The moral judgment is irreducible, and independent of all judgments of fact. It applies to the subjective interests as well as to the phenomena which they measure. Not only is it best for my social interests to keep my promise, but best for me to have those interests, and best for the cosmos to have this me. Like the old woman in the story who described the world as resting on a rock, and then explained that rock to be supported by another rock, and finally when pushed with questions said it was "rocks all the way down," he who believes this to be a radically moral universe must hold the moral order to rest either on an absolute and ultimate *should* or on a series of *shoulds* "all the way down."

The practical difference between this sort of moralist and one who makes moral judgments tributary to facts is enormous. The materialist when his moral feelings are at war with the facts about him is always free to seek harmony by toning down the sensitiveness of the feelings. Being mere data, neither good nor evil in themselves, he may pervert them or lull them to sleep by any means at his command. Truckling, compromise, time-serving, capitulations of conscience, are conventionally opprobrious names for what, if successfully carried out, would be on the materialist's principle by far the easiest and most praiseworthy mode of bringing about that harmony between inner and outer relations which is all he means by good. The absolute moralist, on the other hand, when his interests clash with the world is not free to gain harmony by sacrificing the ideal interests. According to him these latter should be as they are and not otherwise. Resistance then, poverty, martyrdom if need be, tragedy in a word, such are the solemn feasts of his inward faith. Not that the contradiction between the moralist and materialist occurs every day. In commonplace matters all moral schools agree. It is only in the lonely emergencies of life that our moral creed is tested. Then routine maxims fail and we fall back on our Gods. It cannot then be said that the question Is this a moral world? is a meaningless and unverifiable question because it deals with something non-phenomenal. Any question is full of meaning to which, as here, contrary answers lead to contrary behavior. And it seems as if in

answering such a question as this we might proceed exactly as does the physical philosopher in testing an hypothesis. He deduces from the hypothesis an experimental action, x : this he adds to the facts M already existing. It fits them if the hypothesis be true; if not, there is discord. The results of the action corroborate or refute the idea from which it flowed. So here: the verification of the theory which you may hold as to the moral character of the world can only consist in this, that if you proceed to act upon your theory it will be reversed by nothing that later turns up as your action's fruit; it will harmonize so well with the entire drift of experience that the latter, as it were, adopts it, or at most gives it an ampler interpretation without obliging you in any way to change the essence of its formulation. If this *be* a moral universe, all acts that I make on that assumption, all expectations that I ground on it, will tend more and more completely to interdigitate with the phenomena already existing to match them. $M + x$ will be in accord, and the more I live, and the more the fruits of my activity come to light, the more satisfactory the consensus will grow. Whilst if it be not a moral universe and I rashly assume that it is, the course of experience will throw ever-new impediments in the way of my belief and become more and more difficult to express in its language. Epicycle upon epicycle of subsidiary hypotheses will have to be invoked to give to the discrepant terms a temporary appearance of squaring with each other, but at last even this resource will fail.

On the other hand, if the universe be *not* moral, what is the verification? It is that by letting our moral interests sit lightly on us, disbelieving that there is any duty about *them* (since duty obtains only as *between* them and other phenomena), and so throwing them over if we find it hard to get them phenomenally satisfied—it is that by refusing to take up a tragic attitude the facts of life are in the long-run most satisfactorily dealt with. The last word of wisdom here is, "At bottom all is vanity." Even tho in certain limited series there may be a great appearance of seriousness, he who in the main treats things with a degree of good-natured scepticism and radical levity will find that the practical fruits of his epicurean hypothesis verify it more and more, and not only save him from pain but do honor to his sa-

gacity. Whilst, on the other hand, he who contrary to reality stiffens himself in the notion that certain things absolutely should be, and rejects the truth that at bottom it makes no difference what is—only something must be—he will find himself evermore thwarted and perplexed and bemuddled by the facts of the world, and his tragic disappointment will, as experience accumulates, seem to drift farther and farther away from that final atonement, reconciliation, or *Versöhnung* which certain partial tragedies often get.

Anæsthesia is the watch-word of the materialist philosopher brought to bay and put to his trumps. *Energy* is that of the moralist. Act on my creed, cries the latter, and the results of your action will prove the creed true and that the nature of things is earnest infinitely. Act on mine, says the epicurean, and the results will prove that seriousness is but a superficial glaze upon a world of fundamentally trivial import. You and your acts, and the nature of things will be alike enveloped in a single formula, a universal *vanitas vanitatum*.

For the sake of simplicity I have written as if the verification might occur in the life of a single philosopher; which is manifestly untrue, since the moralist and materialist theories still face each other and the facts of the world give partial countenance to both. Rather should we expect that, in a question of this scope, the experience of the entire human race must make the verification, and that all the evidence will not be "in" till the final integration of things, when the last man has had his say and contributed his share to the still unfinished x . Then the proof will be complete; then it will appear without doubt whether the moral x has filled up the gap which alone kept the M of the world from forming an even and harmonious unity, or whether the materialistic x has given the finishing touches which were alone needed to make the M appear outwardly as vain as it inwardly was.

But if this be so, is it not clear that the facts M , taken *per se*, are inadequate to justify a conclusion either way in advance of my action? My action is the complement which, by proving, congruous or not, reveals the latent nature of the mass to which it is applied. The world may in fact be likened unto a lock, whose inward nature, moral or unmoral, will never reveal itself

to our simply expectant gaze. The positivists, forbidding us to make any assumptions regarding it, condemn us to eternal ignorance, for the "evidence" which they wait for, can never come so long as we are passive. But nature has put into our hands two keys, by which we may test the lock. If we try the moral key *and it fits*, it is a moral lock. If we try the unmoral key and *it fits*, it is an unmoral lock. I cannot possibly conceive of any other sort of "evidence" or "proof" than this. It is quite true that the co-operation of generations is needed to educe it. But in these matters the solidarity (so called) of the human race is a patent fact. The essential thing to notice is that our active preference is a legitimate part of the game—that it is our plain *business* as men to try one of the keys, and the one in which we most confide. If then the proof *exist* not till I have acted, and I must needs in acting, run the risk of being wrong, how can the Popular Science professors be right in objurgating in me as infamous a "credulity" which the strict logic of the situation requires? If this really be a moral universe, if by my acts I be a factor of its destinies, if to believe where I may doubt be itself a moral act analogous to voting for a side not yet sure to win, by what right shall they close in upon me and steadily negate the deepest conceivable function of my being by their preposterous command that I shall stir neither hand nor foot, but remain balancing myself in eternal and insoluble doubt? Why, doubt itself is a decision of the widest practical reach; if only because we may miss by doubting what goods we might be gaining by espousing the winning side. But more than that! it is often practically impossible to distinguish doubt from dogmatic negation. If I refuse to stop a murder because I am in doubt whether it be not justifiable homicide, I am virtually abetting the crime. If I refuse to bale out a boat because I am in doubt whether my efforts will keep her afloat, I am really helping to sink her. If in the mountain precipice I doubt my right to risk a leap, I actively connive at my destruction. He who commands himself not to be credulous of God, of duty, of freedom, of immortality, may again and again be indistinguishable from him who dogmatically denies them. Scepticism in moral matters is an active ally of immorality. Who is not for is against. The universe will have no neutrals in these questions. In theory as

in practice, dodge or hedge, or talk as we like about a wise-scepticism, we are really doing volunteer military service for one side or the other.

Yet obvious as this necessity practically is, thousands of innocent magazine readers lie paralyzed and terrified in the network of shallow negations which the leaders of opinion have thrown over their souls. All they need to be free and hearty again in the exercise of their birthright is that these fastidious vetoes should be swept away. All that the human heart wants is its *chance*. It will willingly forego certainty in universal matters if only it can be allowed to feel that in them it has that same inalienable right to run risks, which no one dreams of refusing to it in the pettiest practical affairs. And if I, in these last pages, like the mouse in the fable, have gnawed a few of the strings of the sophistical net that has been binding down its lion strength, I shall be more than rewarded for my pains.

To sum up: No philosophy will permanently be deemed rational by all men which (in addition to meeting logical demands) does not to some degree pretend to determine expectancy and in a still greater degree make a direct appeal to all those powers of our nature which we hold in highest esteem. Faith, being one of these powers, will always remain a factor not to be banished from philosophic constructions, the more so since in many ways it brings forth its own verification. In these points, then, it is hopeless to look for literal agreement amongst mankind.

The ultimate philosophy we may therefore conclude must not be too strait-laced in form, must not in all its parts divide heresy from orthodoxy by too sharp a line. Such a martinet-like punctiliousness will infallibly provoke rebellion. There must be left over and above the propositions to be subscribed *ubique, semper, et ab omnibus*, another realm into which the stifled soul may escape from pedantic scruples and indulge its own faith at its own risks. All that can here be authoritatively done will be to mark out distinctly the questions which fall within faith's sphere. These once defined as logically indeterminate will no longer be subjects for much ratiocinative discussion.

WILLIAM JAMES.