WHAT EXISTENCE MEANS

ELYSTAN THOMAS

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A THEORY OF LIFE'S SELF-FOUNDATION, TRANSITION, AND DESTINY

BY

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FORENOTE

RIGHTFULLY, Man is an agent with but one important task. That task is a search to which the following pages aim at making some contribution.

It is to be feared that in human codes the appointed quest has not been generally regarded as a duty. Very little of the sum of even serious thought has been other than desultory and waste. A characteristic of reason is the cultivation of a sort of balance which is apt to result in an entire absence of product; whereas Philosophy should certainly not be less fertile than its many worthless competitors for the world's attention. This book has been written with the strong feeling that every treatise on the mystery of Being should serve as an incitement to undeviating and continuous advance in the effort completely to comprehend and utilize truth.

The reader will be invited first to consider some facts concerning the fundamental nature of Life: its inevitability, its consequent self-basis, its infinities. The dominion of Nescience is soon approached, and the obvious need of using conjecture comes under

notice. The range of grades of probability and possibility offers great selective scope to the reason, for arriving at provisional conclusions. After examination of the conditions governing efforts to establish Truth, a theory of the nature and career of Being is offered. Therein Spirit is held to constitute the sole entity of Life, originally unconscious and uniformly active, but subsequently divided and so rendered mutable. The disturbance was due to accidental contact, in the vital current, of two points possessing special relational aptitude.

The following may be deemed the chief propositions introduced in development of the theory. The accidental genesis of a factor of mutation gave definition to spirit, and so initiated figmental matter, and at the same time commenced the enfranchisement of consciousness and other vital principles. The principles are partially-developed forms of Will, the sole element of Life. The reactions of divided matter and the emergent principles produced effects which compounded the constituents and aggregations of worlds. Eventually the same influences brought organic life into being. Organisms introduced reproduction and death. Maintenance of organic life involves a competitive struggle occasioning immense resort to murder—a fact which decisively negatives the idea of

a good cosmic design. Life expresses itself in a conflict of multitudinous mechanical acts and semi-independent impulses, which together serve as a system. Obviously error is widely generated. Error is not a principle, but only an ephemeral product of designless evolution. The changes which evolution accomplished included introduction of brain and the elaborated brain-functions for standardizing and memorizing ideas. Man was constituted as part of the act of origination of the idea-standardizing power. Thereafter in due course arose the capacity to create general design and understand duty. Thus man was enabled to comprehend his agential nature. The new functions necessarily carried unique possibilities of their misuse by the will. The human being has employed his mentality, sometimes progressively, sometimes erroneously. His most mischievous illusion is that of supposing a state of preponderating happiness to be available under current conditions. Actually there is an exact balancing of pleasure and pain. On the other hand, Man possesses illimitable powers of discovery and a vigorous sense of ideals. He will increasingly devote himself to truth-quest. A liberating idea will occur, and thereupon will follow a transfiguration of the universe. The new state will institute an infinite reign of gratification.

Five brief chapters are devoted to an attempt to foretell some of the features of the Elysian conditions. These may include resuscitation of mortals, but only as regards their realized idealism.

The book cannot claim to be more than a sketch-theory, liable to some revision in matter. The substance is, however, not the product of haste ; for it has been shaping during forty years, throughout which the gist has served the author as a working creed.

E. T.

March, 1928.

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Chapter I

LIFE THE INEVITABLE

Life exists, and therefore has no beginning or end. Its constitution and its basic laws are autonomous. Nothingness was ever an impossibility.

Life exists at this current time. The assertion cannot be controverted. Sufficient proof that life exists is furnished by the act of inditing the words of the assertion and thus evidencing the power to write, which involves vitality. The purport of the words referred to is also obviously confirmed by each perusal they receive. It is true that ground may be discoverable for philosophic doubt as to whether the performances of writing and reading are not merely a dream or other delusion. Such uncertainty would constitute no objection to the statement that vital experiences, in some form or other, are extant; for, if the idea that life exists were a dream, the dream itself and the very process of mentally converting an act into a delusion, or a delusion into an act, would themselves be operations of life.

The actuality of life—that is, the existence of existence—is established as a verity. And the logical and incontestable implications of the acknowledgment are considerable.

Nothing, and only nothing, can be the consequence of nothing; or, rather, there could and can be no consequence of nothing. Therefore, life, which exists, did not proceed from nothing, but must either have always existed or have originated from an extraneous creative power or from a series of creative

powers. And, if the hypothesis be correct that life was derived from a foreign source or series of sources, such source or the first of such series of sources must itself have existed from all past eternity. A state of being of some radical power or other, in some condition or other, has filled retrospective infinity. Any contrary idea is untenable. Life as experienced by man may be self-constituted, or may have resulted from one or more other entities; and, if from plural entities, these may have been in a sequence or in a collateral range. In any case, there can be no doubt that life of some sort is or was self-existent or automatic, that it was not a result of creation, and that it was without beginning. Also, that in itself or its transformations or products it is and will be endless and indestructible. For there is a further certainty that what exists, however subject it may be to transformation, cannot undergo annihilation. Moreover, it is clear that the beginningless Being is either identical with or connected with the endless. Probe the possibilities of alternatives, and not a single reasonable counter-suggestion will be found.

That there is an experience of current living involves, then, the existence of infinity of life. A state of total negation of entity, supposed in regard to any one time, would be inconsistent with the positive existence of entity at any succeeding period. Otherwise the possibility of something arising from absolute nothingness would be allowable, instead of definitely absurd.

It is evident that some kind of entity has always existed, or, in other words, has had no beginning, but is absolutely self-constituted and autonomous. If that existing but uncreated entity owes its being to majestic might or to magic, such powers would necessarily be internal.

Is there, then, any reason why one form of vital entity should be considered as more likely than

another to have possessed the power of self-constitution?

The human mind is commonly fonder of invention than of understanding, fonder of royal roads than of natural paths, fonder of specious assumptions than of reason. Under suggestion the mind is apt at first to imagine some supernatural wonder-working entity as being the probable self-constituted power. There is no evidence of actual existence of any marvellous entity of the sort; but life as at present experienced has nevertheless been supposed to derive from such an external entity.

Far from assisting a rational scrutiny as to how Life exists and what it is, the idea of extraneous causative force only complicates the subject. The notion of an external authorship involves its own problems, which add new difficulties. It causes a highly gratuitous complexity, for it introduces a pluralism into any theory of the source of Life. Its supposition evidently imports difference in element between maker and what is made; unless the new life created is held to be merely a continuance of earlier properties and not a separate production, in which case solution of the problem of origination is in no sense advanced. As, then, the idea of a formative power distinct from the life found in the universe must presumably include assumption of difference in elemental nature between one and the other, the extra problems which adoption of the tenet cumbrously interposes for explanation include the capacity of the maker to construct another kind of element than its own, and a suitable reason as to why it was worth while for any agency, presumably intentionally, to devise a new entity possessed of the special characteristics of cosmic life.

A self-constituted basis of existence is not easier to imagine for an external creator than for the principle of life directly experienced by humankind. As,

therefore, the theory of a maker only brings in extra problems and still fails to contribute to the desired elucidations, the onus of proof lying upon its advocates is exceptionally heavy. They must produce evidence that, although there was necessarily self-constitution of some source of power or other, Nature, whose operations are still so far from being completely diagnosed, possesses properties or disabilities which are definitely and absolutely inconsistent with responsibility for self-basis. Or, at the least, they must show that there is pre-eminent likeliness in the composite idea of a creator being self-constituted and then constructing the current Cosmos of alien element. But it will be found that they are unable to sustain either of these arguments.

The inevitableness of the fact that some one form of life was internally self-constituted makes clear the feasibility of a universal entity having possessed the autonomous power. There is but one such known entity—namely, the Life of which human existence forms part. That the life in question gives evidence of no phenomenally magical functions is no valid argument against possession of the power of self-construction. The inner workings of Nature are at present hidden. And since supposition is necessarily summoned upon the whole subject, and it is essential for any sound operative theory of life to make provisional decision as to what was the foundation of existence, the only rational course is to assume the self-constitution of the life with which man is actually acquainted; further, to suppose that this life, for the purpose of self-constitution, possessed suitable power of a kind at present hidden from man; and, still further, to adopt the attitude that man may eventually be able to trace such secret power.

Ordinary life exists on a self-constituted basis without commencement; and, in an eventually sublimated form, it will everlastingly continue on its own founda-

tion. Corroboration of that statement is found in the fact of necessary self-basis of certain incidental abstractions which condition the whole of the vital element in every one of its workings. As inevitably as the inditing of suitable sequent words produces sentences, so there is a general self-founded law that any sort of action shall be followed by a definite effect. This law of consequences conforming to causes is absolutely independent of extraneous agency, and obviously is and always was operated by its own power. The law possesses a complete code called Logic, which itself includes the strikingly complex scheme of Mathematics. Moreover, under the law in question, every subordinate group of Being mechanically sets up standards dictating action proper to its own particular nature. The observance of and compliance with this natural legislation imports a distinct and automatic principle of justice or morality, which is even more impressive than the fundamental laws of Logic. Any failure to follow the morally prescribed conditions or duties constitutes error of a class called Injustice or Impropriety, with its implied need for correction of the Wrong. Every right mind will accept as an axiom the assertion that there would be absurdity in regarding Causation, Logic, Mathematics, Justice, and Morality as unable to exist without an external originating or controlling power, or as unable to influence life without such power.

It is a self-constituted fact that two and two amount to four, and that two and two things of any sort amount to four things of the sort. If two and two could be made to reckon as five, then indeed a supernatural agency might perhaps be assumed to have existence and operation. Nothing will convince the healthy reason that there is necessity for such an external agency in order that two and two shall amount to four.

Next to be considered is the question whether there

was possibility of an alternative to Life's own occurrence. It is highly improbable that a vacuum in lieu of life—or, in other words, a complete negation of living—could have chanced to be. Certainly imagination can conceive that there might be some abstraction to correspond with the term Nothing. But conception of vague and unlikely contingencies is no evidence of real past, present, or future existence of the circumstances conceived. Conviction that an idea represents fact can be rightly achieved only by experience or by reason. Reason denies the possibility of an actuality of Nothingness, but reserves some nominal exceptions. Nothingness exists as a theoretical complement to Something which, having filled its requisitioned time and space, has left no room for aught else in that time and space; yet, and in consequence, has nominally accommodated this nothingness as an addition. Thus, as to an hour: when sixty minutes have elapsed there is said to be nothing left—that is, there remains a factitious complement consisting of nothing. The nothing is obviously countered by the circumstance that there is no time for anything more within the implied limits; and the nothingness can have no actuality, and can cause no interruption to positive life. In connection with any given time and place also, it is always possible to think of something that is entirely absent therefrom; and then there is said to be a nothingness of it within the assigned bounds. But the place and time are always filled, in nature, by some thing or other, which leaves no room for a state of nothingness. The classes of negation mentioned indicate the utmost that nothingness can signify in the all-comprehending range of Infinity, every fraction of space and time in which are filled with the positive.

With regard to contents of space it is to be observed that vast tracts of the universe are alleged to be empty of matter; but such void space is nevertheless a positive entity which could no more have arisen out of

nothing than could anything that is possessed of definite form. Notwithstanding that parts of space may be absolutely vacuous, they must be a product of life. Space implies room or place, and place implies space. And just as unsubstantial Time can be regarded as a positive entity independently of its material contents, so substance-void space can be regarded as a positive entity independently of material contents. Further, spirit-life fills infinite space, and the exhaustion of physical properties would still leave, in lieu of matter, a spirituality of a quiescent character which is discussed later in the present survey.

Life exists, and must consequently always have existed ; but, waiving obvious evidence of that fact and limiting the field of argument to pure theory, the mind is absolutely unable to entertain the idea of any alternative to or negation of the necessity of Life's existence.

Chapter II

THE INFINITIES

The Infinities are certainties, although mind's ideas on them are vague and contradictory.

The characteristic of the Infinities is declared in their name, signifying Beginninglessness and Endlessness. These terms, so uncompromising in their meaning, are, however, precisely those whose implication is least known and needs most to be elucidated. And when it is discovered, there will result complete illumination of the subject of Existence.

About the Infinities a certain number of facts are clear.

Infinity exists in several relations. In Time it occurs as the infinitesimal, at any point; and it is also extended in one straight line, backward from Now for the Past, and forward from Now for the Future. In Space, Infinity occurs as the infinitesimal, at any point; and it is also extended outwardly, backward and forward, and upward and downward, at every angle, from any point.

Infinitesimal infinity fills any given finiteness with unlimitedly multiple constituents; and for the complete covering of expansive Infinity, that finiteness has itself to be infinitely multiplied. Conversely, when expansive Infinity has by a mental conception commenced to be divided infinitely, the process may be stayed in order to rest at any given finiteness before it continues further to divide into infinitesimal Infinities. Thus one sort of Infinity is an infinite multiple of the other; and the latter is an infinite

quotient of the former. And any example of finiteness has these three relations to Infinity: firstly, the example consists of an infinite number of infinitesimal infinities; secondly, it is a negligible fraction of an infinite integer; thirdly, it may be regarded as a group of infinitesimal infinities bounded by the fact that the possible infinite multiplication of these its infinitesimal infinities falls arbitrarily short of completion.

In one and the same thought, Mind entertains the mutually paradoxical ideas that all entity must possess bounds or ends, and that there can be no bounds or ends to Time, Space, and their collective contents. But the presence of limits always implies existence of something beyond; and in the case of Time, Space, and their Contents, the externals could be no other than infinite extensions of the very entities bounded, or of some analagous elements. This truism destroys the validity of the idea of limitation of Time, Space, and Contents, and indicates that the notion of ultimate confines is engendered by imperfect ratiocination attributable to human failure hitherto to acquire some indispensable comprehending faculty, or failure to master some adequate system of thought. The dilemma is due to intellectual or scientific immaturity, and partly perhaps to the mental bias of limited beings in favour of what is finite, like their own individual constitutions.

If entity of Time, Space, and their Contents respectively could be supposed to have final bounds, the inference that there is no beyond to those bounds would necessarily follow; for any respective extralimital entity could not be other than a continuance of Time, Space, and Contents themselves; and, that being so, either the idea of bounds to them must be abandoned or the idea of any sort of beyond to the bounds is untenable. Reason can admit neither that suppositional limits to Time, Space, and their collective Contents could exist with nothing beyond them,

nor that any admitted extensions of those entities are subject to eventual limits.

The simplest of all products of the imagination is that of a straight line unterminated in either direction from any given point upon it. This is the easiest of ideas to project, but also one of the most tantalizing for explication, or even for any sort of inclusive mental depiction. The first full intellectual visualization of such a line might, and may, incidentally solve every enigma of Life. Each imaginary straight line, not arbitrarily made finite, is endless in both of its extensions which diverge from each other. Contemplation of the doubly infinite line, as far as it can yet be comprehended, offers no kind of solution as to the nature of boundlessness, while at the same time the most casual thought clearly demonstrates that final bounds to the line are out of the question.

Another exemplification of the present inscrutability of the infinite, and one which is almost as simple and even more impressive than that of the endless straight line, consists in squaring the number ten, squaring the product, squaring that, and so ever on until the total is found to be quite impracticable for writing down, and later grows beyond any powers of the imagination, while the work is still new and capable of illimitable continuance. By the fortieth squaring in the series it will be found that the product exceeds a number beginning with one and followed by a million times a million ciphers. If these noughts were written down at an average of a hundred to a square inch, the writing of the product in question would occupy well over two square miles. At about the sixty-seventh squaring the world's total area of land and water would be found insufficient to contain the ciphers of the product then reached. Thence it may be easily conjectured that the whole space of the solar system would soon be filled by the paper on which the succeeding products were written.

And it is indisputable that the process could theoretically be continued from this quite early stage absolutely without end.

Clearly, the idea of boundaries to entity of Time, Space, and their collective Contents entails impossibilities, whereas the hypothesis of Infinity does not. Infinity presents an unsolved problem, the difficulty of which refers only to the nature of the entity and not to existence thereof, the latter being a certainty. The sole datum needed for acquiring a conception of the meaning of infinite extension is some elusory factor. Persistent failure to solve the puzzle is due to insufficient development of knowledge, and perhaps of reasoning power. In a similar way, any natural phenomenon might appear to project itself as a supernatural, incomprehensible spectre if the perceptive faculty in the receiver were deficient and therefore erroneous. This intellectual position as to Infinity is in marked contrast to that relating to the assured impossibility of existence of final bounds to entity of Time, Space, and their collective Contents. Existence of Infinity is an axiom as positively convincing as any fact can be to the deliberate mind. The difference between the two propositions, respectively for and against the existence of Infinity, is that the one is known to be true, though the nature of its implications is not at present comprehended, whereas the other is known to be untrue.

Whether or not time and space and their infinity are only intellectual existences—that is, mere spiritualities—their absolute extancy is equally well assured. In either case Consciousness maintains them as entities, and at the least they constitute mental facts. They are not of a suppositional character, but are essential to any credible exposition of Truth. To the seeker for verity and for right judgment of duty the nature of time and space and infinity is, therefore, inescapable subject-matter for elucidation.

Space and Time possess, however, only a conditional entity and no actually separable existence. Space is an abstraction representing the room occupied by Spirit and its partial metamorphosis called Matter, just as Time is an abstraction representing the duration of all activity. The principle of Life is the one actual master-entity. Space refers to an infinity of stationary place of Life—place automatically existent as a necessary consequence of the existence of Life itself. Time refers to an infinity of accommodation for continuous action of Life, accommodation automatically existent as a necessary consequence of the existence of Life itself.

The numerous finite associations of the mind are apt to engender divergent views of the nature of Infinity, according to the several spheres of empire of the latter. Probably the most difficult application of Infinity for the mind to imagine is the one relating to anterior time, although logic might find this easy to assimilate compared with other forms of the illimitable. Much mental effort is, in fact, required in even provisional adoption of the inevitable belief that there was no beginning to the Calendar of Life—no first date. The boundlessness of space ranks next, in the presentation of enormous demands on intellectual receptivity, although Reason renders absolute support to the idea of this form of Infinity. The evident capability of interminableness, in either direction, of an imaginary straight line has already been instanced. The concept of infinite positive contents within Time and Space is a further cause of intense perplexity. On the other hand, infinity of the future in Time seems a natural fact to the imagination: there is no reservation in accepting that notion, although at present the feature of endlessness in the continuance baffles explanation.

But when the whole subject is brought into one view there is, in rationality of acceptableness, little or

no distinction between the several classes of Infinity. If the idea of endless futurity may be readily received, as is the case, Reason dictates that there should be certainly not less facile credence for the beginningless nature of Time. In this connection be it noted that to suppose an inventor of Time would be ridiculously gratuitous; nor can existence of this abstraction submit to a destroyer. Just as the imaginary straight line has illimitable extension in either direction, so has Time. Parallel argument applies to the projections of Space, another automatic condition of Being.

It may be incidentally remarked that Life's self-constituted character is strongly illuminated by the foregoing association with authorless time and space.

The general body of existence divested of Infinity is inconceivable to the mind. For Being must fill the capacities called Time and Space, and, as these are distributed boundlessly, a similar expansiveness must also apply to Life. Any circumscribing of Being would imply the existence of some element beyond the boundary; and this element would itself necessarily come within the definition of Being.

The statement should be stressed that Time and Space are infinite, and are inalienable associates of Life. As they are infinite, the deduction follows that general Being or Life is also infinite.

Infinity is entirely occupied by and is exactly co-extensive with Being.

Chapter III

CONJECTURE'S CHARTER

Incertitude as to past causation gives validity to conjecture without limits other than those of probability.

The foregoing outline-demonstration as to the nature of the radical conditions of life enables the institution of a considerable system of consequential science. Right utilization of the data, however, depends upon the capacity of the minds which are endeavouring to put the knowledge to profit.

There is a lack of records of past causation ; and, as events have been determined largely by mixed influences, much incertitude necessarily exists respecting any explanation of the current attributes of the universe. It is true that throughout Infinity absolute reason, or pure logic, has existed as a code-abstraction ever ready to be utilized. But before it can be applied for understanding any fact it needs verified interpretation, which at present is only partially forthcoming. There is a lamentable dearth of true history and of the valid substitute—namely, authenticated deduction.

Pure reasoning is a series of correct inferences from thorough experience. In common usage, however, Reason means practical logic—merely an explanation of the necessary relationship of a set of effects to their immediate causes, whether or not the origins of the latter be properly understood. In this relational sense it is already feasible to construct a rationale of a large body of the processes of the current universe. But reason that finally and wholly explains right or truth requires fundamental knowledge.

Other than self-constitution of Being there have been no phenomena without preceding causes. No action of any kind in the course of existence has ever taken place without the transmission of power through some sort of causation absolutely accordant with practical reason.

Discovery of more than a small part of basic truth has hitherto evaded all investigators. The factors which valid reason may deem admissible as past causes in any theory of existence must, therefore, be diligently sought among conjectures presenting the least body of difficulties to the mind. The only alternative to this undoubtedly unsatisfactory course is a resort to casual factitious assumption. This truism may be commended to all protagonists of creeds and philosophies.

Any given occurrence of events has been produced by logical process, however irrational may have been the agencies ; and the origins ought to be traceable retrospectively by the instrument of logic. Unfortunately, countless alternative supposititious retrospective tracks present themselves ; but only one of the conjectural paths into the past truly leads to the earlier causes of any given sequence of events, and this one is very commonly not the most evident.

The measure of scepticism which attends any hypothetical reasoning, rendering the latter so unlike conclusions drawn from causes actually seen at work, is due to the almost inevitable invasion of inference by elements of error. The vitiation by agency of error relates both to bases of theories and to developmental processes. Obviously, reasoning can be rendered infallible only by removal of the intrusions of unwitting misapprehension.

Certainly in current conditions no constructive theory can escape possibilities of doubt. But if distrust were allowed to prevail until certainty might be secured—if, in other words, provisional calculations

of duty were not to be admitted—there would result a total neglect of practical truth-seeking and of conscientious work.

Sound reason is not content to remain impotently suspended by doubt respecting the natures of the basis and the right utilization of Being. The mind realizes the radical importance of order and purpose. It perceives the current need of a solution on basic matters, and concludes that tentative decisions must be made and provisionally adopted, since better are not yet attainable.

No operative social or individual system of significant aim can be devised without use of experimental theory as to the fundamental nature of existence and as to the main cosmic ramifications.

Every mind capable of deliberation is responsible for the reasoned scheme of purpose of the personal career of its owner. If the powers of any such mind are not matured, the responsibility is correspondingly less onerous; but no real vicarious relief is available.

The reason why possession of deliberative mind involves individual responsibility for formation of purpose is that the practice of ratiocination enfranchises and instructs will, which is the principle charged with the power and duty of adjudication of conduct. Every will is inevitably and properly an originating fountain of purpose. Volitional function necessarily extends completely over the main concerns of life. The will's internal inspirations come from the individual mentality, and are therefore peculiar to the personality. For each mind, whether considered as to what it receives and revises in assimilating or as to what it invents, varies from every other mind. And each mind and will together must necessarily be authoritative to themselves for the time being, seeing that they have discriminative control of all that is known to them. Probably in the majority of persons the right and duty of individual responsibility are, as to truly

important matters, renounced by an act or acts of abdication to the minds of others. Is it necessary to add that the relinquishments in question in no sense absolve the individuals for neglect of judicial faculties?

For each mentality to construct the life-plan as perfectly as possible is a duty to self and to society. To this end the whole intellectual field should be explored—seriously, constantly, impartially, and, above all, practically. New doors of knowledge are continually being found and entered. Certain men have inscribed some of the mind's yet unopened portals, not with appropriate caution as to difficulty of ingress, but with absolute prohibition of the attempt. There is, however, no ascertained authority qualified to restrict the entrances to knowledge in such a manner. The investigator will almost inevitably fail to open several of the doors, not because they cannot be opened, but because he personally will not have developed the necessary skill. Future inquirers may expect better success in the attempt. Notwithstanding temporary failures in research, the mind is still responsible to itself, and must contrive its own system of life with the most suitable material discovered as the result of unremitting personal effort. The conditions of this work are difficult, and the duty is serious. Fellow-minds, especially through the medium of literature, furnish valuable assistance; but this must be accepted in a truly critical spirit, for the ultimate responsibility is the individual's own. There is no validly authoritative deputyship for undertaking the determination of duty, even in the case of a child; although, for obvious practical reasons, control of persons in nonage is properly assumed by their seniors.

The direct materials for devising theories of life are relatively few; but there is a wealth of good circumstantial evidence derived from the phenomena and conditions of the universe. Much of this testi-

mony is useful more particularly for help in rejection of absurdities from constructive reasoning. Knowledge of Truth is developed largely by mere expulsion of fallacies from existing theories under rational tests.

The most plausible deductions that can be drawn from vital phenomena are to be accepted, although some of the features persist in being inexplicable, and although some notions may have eventually to be rejected. The mind must welcome so much of any given experience as patently exhibits something of the meaning of surrounding factors, and perchance reflects light on other matters within the consciousness. Ignorance of causes must not prevent acknowledgment of well-defined and common characteristics of matters under observation. Fortunately, however, most experiences possess some signs as to their probable antecedents, and therefore establish a certain degree of knowledge of past facts.

Impressions from externals received in the sensorium aid the mind in formulating for itself some of the laws of logic and causation—laws that are free of practical doubt, and that are not only essentials to any system of knowledge, but are capable of great use in systematic theory-building.

Great as the perplexity of mind on many cardinal factors may be, there is imperative need for prompt practical interpretations on behalf of reason and its dictates of duty. A perspective view of the principal personally-tested findings concerning Life should be present to the mind during the formation of its directive tenets. That is a duty which is urgent as a preliminary to all responsible action. But constant revision of the standards is also necessary.

There is, it must be continuously remembered, an absence of unimpeachably authoritative instruction in fundamental truths. In view of that fact, Reason requires adoption of the least complex accessible

hypotheses regarding them ; provided that the arguments be reasonable in themselves, consistent with the body of accepted science, and not less adequate for their purpose than rival conjectures that are comparatively complicated and artificial.

It is not a sufficient satisfaction of the human sense of rectitude to restrict practical schemes to what can be referred to clearly demonstrable fact. Really good diagnosis of truths is at present available only to an extremely limited extent. It is evident that science has only partially probed the vital processes of the remote past and the most important permanent verities. Exponents of science, moreover, do not speak with one consistent voice. Obviously, schemes of duty ought to be founded on indisputable essential truth. But in the main this desiderated basis is at present only the subject of surmise. Reason must therefore make recourse to Probability, whose range of degrees furnishes scope for highly skilful selection. For want of infallible guidance the most feasible conjectures as to the general nature of Life must serve as the proper foundation of personal regulations respecting human conduct.

Rational guessing on cosmic secrets is, indeed, of unique importance, seeing that the mind knows of no sound alternative method for serious consideration of what is worth doing with the few years of existence available to a human being. Among the miserable resorts in lieu of personal investigations of probabilities is the prevalent habit of almost unquestioning credence in the particular tenets or traditions of some one group of men ; in other words, casual acceptance of views which, being always more or less opposed to those of every other group in the world, represent only minorities of believers.

Without possibility of gainsaying, it is extremely unfortunate that in existing circumstances a just person's scheme of conduct in life cannot be based

upon certitudes, or, failing them, at least upon impressions gathered entirely within the range of common experience. The continual invention of new religions and philosophies attests that the funds of currently available direct evidence have to be supplemented for the construction of creed. Conjecture is absolutely necessary for the purpose. Consequently the best course for the mind to take in the building of theory is to search constantly for maximum probability, and to apply the latter as a test to the various propositions that suggest themselves respecting the fundamentals of life. All lines of supposition on the subject of basis of the universe have hitherto seemed desperately tenuous in parts of their respective developments. The mind must be kept in constant readiness to entertain valid promptings for the amendment or strengthening of its master-plan of belief and work.

These facts need to be insistently borne in mind. Cosmic life, even in its external aspects, is extremely tangled, and unravelment of the secrets in its unseen recesses may well involve extraordinary explanations. But even the provisional conclusions must ever comply strictly with logic.

Chapter IV

REASON'S POTENCY

Mind extends its conquests, and will suffice for elimination of all nescience.

Wisdom is prepared for unexpected solutions, corresponding to the strangeness of its encircling problems. The decisions on which theories are to be formed must, however, accord with the rational demand for maximum probability, although the material may have required seeking from afar. Above all, there must be freedom from fantastic evasions. An involved version of truths is not necessarily incompatible with reasonableness. Probability is not limited to what is susceptible to simplicity of argument, although straightforwardness is a quality which should generally be sought.

It is essential that the truth-seeker should, while avoiding a suffocating mysticism, not be turned aside by the atmosphere of peculiar uncertainty and of exalted transcendence in which he will need to work. He must expect the necessity of adopting explanations that, *primâ facie*, have appeared altogether unusual and fantastic. He must be prepared to see many conventional glosses falling away with a rapidity greater than that which attended their facile adoption. He must be ready for replacements of accepted notions by what superficially seem bizarre substitutes. Inevitably the guise of tentative truth looks strange to persons who have unquestioningly adopted existing conventions that themselves agree so little with Reason. But not for a moment may the inquirer

surrender the exercise of rational tests, although conditions compel suspension of absolute proofs as to many essentials, even to the end of the individual's life.

In the fair statement of any creed, circumstances that seem arbitrary and singular will discourage the mind and suggest relinquishment of attempts at conclusions. Such capitulations should be regarded as resorts of despair, and should be absolutely contemned. They leave no sound alternative positions for the intelligence that has surrendered. For current exigencies of the conduct of life, mind is compelled either to formulate a regular comprehensive creed based upon its own investigations, or to commit itself to one of the external streams of ideas that are promiscuously passing. An independent position should be taken, and out of such material as presents itself a working scheme should be constructed; and if, after deliberation, the judgment is satisfied, the details must be elaborated, revised, and bettered by degrees later. The weak links in good theories will be improved by new discoveries which will present themselves to each intellect.

The duly vigilant and operative mind is continuously engaged in reducing the obscurities that it encounters, and in increasing the rational elucidation of all phenomena. In the dual process, no solution that is inconsistent with already personally assayed and accepted criteria will be admitted—unless, indeed, the new notion appears to be of sufficient validity to disestablish the old standards and all their supports.

Mind has no intuitive theory as to the nature of Being; nor has authenticated external enlightenment upon the matter been forthcoming; nor has scientific investigation yet probed the subject radically, or, indeed, with more than fragmentary results.

On the other hand, mind experiences no intuitive or rational reservation as to the scope of its function of thought; nor has it received authoritative external

monition that its powers are limited and not eventually infinite. The range of human thought may be regarded as unlimited; and logic decrees that endeavours should be made to render knowledge all-comprehensive.

If mind had already completed all the possible inductions and deductions upon nature from accessible facts; if proof could be produced that minds of the past and present have exhausted circumstantial methods of ascertaining fundamental truth; if there could be serious allegation that no scope for logical discovery of vital fact remains for the mind of the future wherewith to investigate all that so patently continues unexplained; if each of those propositions were demonstrated to be true, the time might have arrived to abandon reason and to resort to supernaturalism for a suppositional basis of life.

Who would attempt a general disparagement of the total fund of knowledge hitherto attained by the sum of mentality; and, again, what even shadowy indication of barriers to further achievements exists that any man should assert the existence of a seal upon such and such facts which is beyond the efforts of Mind to break during the course of the world's future development? The acquisitions of mankind's cumulative reasoning have not been completed. And, indeed, judging by the rapidity with which novel inventions and new master-theories join the general train of man's mental conceptions, judging also by the extreme divergences from each other of latter-day philosophies, by far the greater part of the field available to knowledge is still virgin ground. Historically, five hundred years is a short extent of time. Consider what nonsensical ideas predominated among the most advanced people five hundred years ago; observe how near the present measure of civilization is to systems of views now considered utterly impossible.

Reason, therefore, is justified in regarding itself as

a growingly successful power, and is encouraged to speculate upon probabilities so as to authorize provisional conclusions that, among other things, obviate introduction of imaginary supernatural elements.

Here it may be observed that a nebulous supernaturalism, and, indeed, all mystery and superstition, possess a degree of allurement that is denied to the presentment of truth. One of their exceptional attractions is due to the importation of surprise and of supposed facile achievement, always attributed to a presumed magic. Another striking effect consists of the phenomena of awe that inevitably attend on mystery. Further exceptional influences of supernaturalism are connected with the conjuration of terrifying forces, and with supposition of majestic machinery. From the last-named factor arises the idea of a superiority in potency alleged to exist outside nature. The further suggestion, that these mystic powers are inaccessible to Man, in its turn redoubles the singular effect of fear. Undoubtedly, the influence of occultism and thaumaturgy, like that of all manifestations of portentous and abnormal nature itself, has, whether for good ends or bad, been capable of immense control over the general and deplorable credulousness of the human mind.

A rational theory necessarily foregoes such adventitious aids. It employs the intimacy of direct and familiar relationship between every separate unit or organism of life and the all-being. There is some loss of impressiveness in this community of status. One set-off, however, is to be found ; for man's sense of logic, when fully aroused, appreciates the equity of equal association of all life's ingredients and developmental factors.

There is no justification for importing suppositional supernatural machinery into provisional theory of the nature of the first cause. No authentic and clear experience is forthcoming of circumstances inconsistent

with the idea of self-constituted momentum and autonomous force within life itself.

Ignorance as to past actions does not justify introduction of unauthenticated miraculous agency into theories of causation. Arbitrary assertion that there has been such interposition can never be accepted by unbiased reason. If magic be temporarily entertained in the argument, full consideration will show that the difficulty of explaining the existence of the supposed miracle-maker itself puts in a favourable light the possibilities of solving in natural ways the problem that is to be elucidated.

The mystic, the seemingly marvellous, the curious in observed phenomena, are illusions due to insufficient development of thinking power or to latency of consciousness or to backwardness of science. The strangeness is attributable to nothing in the real nature of the phenomena, but consists of either ignorances or perversions or exaggerations of truth by defective consciousness. Reason, ever securing new conquests, may rightly expect gradually to convert men from marvel-cults into appreciation of truth.

If it were customary for the normal mind to experience a barrenness of individual resources and to appear entirely dependent upon extraneous inspiration or upon an innate mechanical knowledge of universal truths for means to carry on its work, that fact would constitute an argument in favour of the idea that life is controlled by a supernatural power. The healthy mind harbours no such diffidence, and its self-reliance affords evidence that it carries self-inspiration. Any suggestion that it derives its power from supernatural sources is a proposition requiring positive proof, which is in no wise forthcoming. The circumstance that the intellectual faculties are temporarily exercised amid the confusing conflict of rival suggestions, including many from seductive emotional and physical sources, demonstrates emphatically the self-controlling power

of the mind. If entire dependence on externals were one of the mental conditions, all feeling of self-integrity would be regarded by each individual reason itself as arrogance. Encountering great obstacles, as it does, mind may sometimes grow indolent, or it may even in the uncertainty of circumstances become terrified with the sense of responsibility, and thus be led to abdicate its duties of radical thinking, and, by arbitrary personal inclination, come to adopt the fancied behests of supposed supernatural agencies. Such individual surrenders cannot prejudice the integrity of the mental power which dwells in the whole mass of humanity. A well-kept mind maintains the belief that all vital secrets can be eventually solved by the internally-actuated ordinary rational procedure within an intellect like itself, though more developed and more advantageously situated. There are manifold temporary obstacles. The requisite intellectual talent is not necessarily absent at the present time, but rational operations will be incomplete until science and concentrated effort are available in greater measure than has yet obtained. The current practical limitation of the intellectual resources should be recognized, for there exists an unjustified degree of assurance on one or other side concerning many commonly ventilated theories. Nevertheless, every normal mind knows that its reserve forces are immeasurably great and are applicable in infinite ways, according to opportuneness of natural circumstances. Individual intellects are constantly inventing schemes, experiencing new enlightenment from their own and from other intellects, pressing collective knowledge into personal, specialized channels, and arriving at useful decisions by the inspiration of their wills and principles in a fashion almost startling to themselves.

Just as the mind sometimes lapses into partial forgetfulness—a whole scheme of thought being temporarily lost because of the mislaying of one or two

slight clues—so on other occasions reason is conscious of incipient theories that are nullified by the tantalizing partial failure of ideas. The mind is sensible that it possesses a yet-undeveloped store of thought-potentiality which is inaccessible with the present inferior facilities for discovery. No good reasoner will admit that any kind or degree of knowledge or principle is debarred from being within the range of his own powers of cultivation.

The mind confidently supposes that future kindred minds will triumphantly develop the full potentialities of Reason. Herein is evidence, from the individuality to itself, that Life is self-sufficient for procuring culmination of all the vital principles.

The present state of nescience on the chief fundamentals of nature, like ignorance on any other deliberated subject, prejudices complete acceptance of the efforts of reason on one hand; and on another unquestionably militates against gratuitous assurance; but it does not place ignorant assumption on an equality with Reason, or concede any rights whatever to unsupported fabrication. In the presence of doubt concerning the right solution of essential problems, the position of unregulated speculation, as compared with tentative reason based on the best available degree of partial experience, is that, as authority for any purpose, the one is quite invalid, while the other possesses the provisional stamp of truth.

Chapter V

THE DOMINANT THEMES

The nature and self-basis of Life and the Infinities are the chief subjects for investigation.

Every phenomenon in the universe has an orderly cause referring to basic life. The latter, being all-comprehensive, obviously monopolized original causation, and thence all subsequent originations. The operative connection between cause and effect is, by the way, not to be confused with a process of deliberate design, but must be regarded as an automatic mechanical action.

Although the nature of self-basis of the primal element is not yet diagnosed, the verity of the automatism is not thereby impugned. Self-constitution of the source of vitality must be presumed, because there can be no rational alternative. Explanation of what seems an inscrutable self-existence is only deferred, and will be achieved in the future of Mind.

Such tenets possess evident cogency to the deliberative reason. Ignorance of the nature of the fundamental Cause must temporarily be tolerated, while due measures are taken for the quest.

Results are themselves largely capable of indicating the necessary characteristics and circumstances of their immediate causes, and thus they serve as clues for tracing origins. Scientific examination of effects in relation to causes, notably of current phenomena, is, indeed, the principal sound method of ascertaining knowledge of those past events which are not among the few provided with well-attested history.

Of the concomitants of life, mind perceives with vividness a limited range of present reality, and with tolerable clearness a considerable region environing current phenomena. But the mental vision is yet bounded by clouds obscuring the foundations of life and most of the antecedents of present experience, and the ubiquitous extensions that are to come. Reason indicates that the tremendous surrounding darkness due to nescience conceals nothing that could be incompatible with what is already and truly known or experienced, and that the unknown must be wholly consistent with whatever occurrences are now proceeding. The justification for this rational belief is the fact that Nature, so far as it has been disclosed, is evidently connected and interdependent throughout, and that new discoveries confirm the general liaison, although they may incidentally reveal greater complexity than previously appeared. Conversely, there is no authenticated sign of preternatural influence in the universe.

To construct a rightly credible nucleus-theory relating to the nature and ramifications of Being there needs, then, but the clearest available reasoning on envisaged fact.

The principal media for a valid tentative exposition of general truth are, indeed, found among phenomena experienced with contactual directness by the senses of each person making or adopting such exposition.

The vital subjects whose nature Reason adjudges to be the prime matter for investigation—as the ground of all just theories—have been shown to comprise these: the essence of Life, its self-basis, and its conditions of infinity, time, and space. Each of the factors named is absolutely necessary to the others, and perfectly harmonious with them. Together they may be described as the several features of a Oneness. The unity forms a complete, though simple, system

which is existent without having been created and is self-responsible, autonomous, inevitable, and quite independent of a designer whether from within or without itself. Not one of the great fundamental, interlinked features of the sole Entity could have failed to exist. Together, they comprehend all the basis, content, and government of the universe. And at no time in past eternity could Life conceivably have been of less general scope than it demonstrates itself to be in present actuality, however much its status may have been subject to variation. Existing, it could not but have existed, and could not but have possessed the exact potentialities that are currently at work.

Some considerations respecting Life's essence form the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter VI

LIFE'S ESSENCE

Spirit is the sole entity of Being.

For investigating the principal properties of the basic element and its eternal conditions, reason soon finds itself compelled to employ assessments of maximum probability. The operations incidental to acquiring some degree of knowledge of the constitution of the life-principle have, however, certain definite materials ready to hand.

Mind has cognition of its own existence; the experience is direct and unquestionable. Herein is assurance of one veritable entity.

The belief that there is but a single original entity of Being seems obligatory. As already stated, Being is self-constituted. And plurality of self-constituted Element is patently improbable. One entity, being self-constituted, naturally took to itself exclusive hold and possession of all possible potentialities and planes of existence and action, and thus prevented the presence of a second self-constituted entity. It is, indeed, quite unlikely that there could be so extraordinary a coincidence as that of existence of a second entity possessed of the basic faculty of self-constitution. And consequently all phenomena must find themselves native or relevant to the one vital basis.

Self-evidently, Mind is Being. Further, mind's nature is capable of containing all vital phenomena. In this capacity Mind has no conceivable rivals. Together with its will-stimulus it is probably the whole of Being. Vivid thought or imagination can

engross all actualities, and it probably embodies everything in existence.

Life itself, as currently known, is extremely multiform. New and repeated metamorphosis also is one of its most prominent features. Forms of life are not only various relatively to each other, but they individually undergo great developments in growth, and also by physical process they are changeable into quite altered constitutions.

Mind can compass and comprehend all this versatility of life. Mind covers and includes matter and all its transformations.

All the actuation of matter other than that contrived by the mental function called Consciousness is instigated and determined by inflexible natural rules. The obedient ductility of matter to variegated but unalterable physical law is absolute. Reason opposes the idea that Matter could independently develop anything in the nature of novelty or free action.

Imagination, mind, or spirit, on the other hand, has infinite power of individual initiation. It invents with wonderful versatility. Just as the literary author creates fictitious characters, just as the artist composes fanciful pictures in his mind, just as both do these things in arbitrary fashion and without external dictation, so, it may be easily credited, an early operation of sub-consciousness imagined simple matter as an incidental formula of spirit, and this pristine conception, by virtue of its uniqueness and its definiteness, became exclusively and precisely established throughout the universe.

In their analysis, matter and physical motion must be carefully differentiated from the spiritual principles operating within matter through the instrumentality of Consciousness. Consciousness enables even the most inferior animals to exercise a certain range of free choice in their movements; but the actuation here is spiritual in the full sense, not physical. The

physical has no freedom, and could not create the spiritual; the spiritual has originative faculty, which, being once actuated, was able to create the physical phenomena.

Fertile spirit, or mind, was potentially capable of conceiving or extemporizing Matter in an intellectual medium; but matter as ordinarily understood could never have been in any sense capable of conceiving or extemporizing a fertile spirit.

There is current and most obvious evidence that Mind actuates both itself and its creature, Matter. Matter, on the other hand, is inert unless it is animated to activity by spirit or by physical law derived from spirit. And although there may be nothing adducible at present positively to disprove that Matter itself engenders spirit, the mind revolts at the idea, and, on rules of probability, decides against claims of that sort made in behalf of matter. On the other hand, the reason knows of no phenomenon or entity of matter or spirit that cannot with every appearance of probability be wholly assimilated among mental ideas, and that cannot, in other words, be conceived as actually composed of Imagination.

Further, the intellect feels that Matter is not radically essential to the mind's existence. There is verisimilitude in the notion that the mind, if skilfully reorganized, could continue in being as a system consisting only of its own spirit—that is, as an entity in complete isolation from brain or other bodily substance.

Matter helps mind chiefly by the mechanism of brain, itself the contrivance of mental process. There is a bare conceivableness that mind or soul is a property of matter, and that the latter may be the one and entire element of Life, with an attribute of spirituality which is at present in various stages of development or concentration. But the nature of spirit would, if it were merely a property of matter, import

a palpable and clumsy duality of constitution of such matter which would ill consort with the fact of singleness of life's foundation. Spirit, the by-product, would be infinitely grander than the main essence, and this hypothetical fact would imply a conjunction of unnatural character.

There is nothing difficult in the contrary notion that, on accidental instigation, spirituality was able to invent within itself a simple kind of matter, and that after some development this matter began to serve as a ministering formula to its author's operations. Matter is admittedly not a brilliant product of creative mind; but spirit had to work in the blindness of temporary ignorance. So far, material phenomena have not been worthy of the intellectual potentialities. The conception of all matter as a series of more or less crystallized mental images is immeasurably easier to entertain than that of mind as a product of matter. The elasticity and will of mind, working without correspondingly great physical metamorphoses in the brain, are in constant evidence; but in the nature of plain matter there is no sign of elasticity or originative quality other than what is due to mental direction or to mechanical developing processes apparently caused by spirit occupying the material envelope. Mind is continually and spontaneously active; the movement of matter depends upon operations of non-material entities.

Spirit, soul, mind, imagination, are so many aspects of one fundamental reality which, among other properties, has the potentiality to conceive any sort of image. And as to the images actually formed while the field of operation was still fresh, imagination was also able to endow them with assumed corporeal parts in temporarily rigid constitution.

If matter were regarded as the base of life, the spirit therein would have to be supposed a material attribute. But this spiritual property would mani-

festly be something extra and foreign. As an authentic base should consist of a single element, matter is disqualified from acceptance as the primal state of Being.

The relationship between mind and matter may, by a homely though imperfect analogy, be likened to that of a man and his house, assumed to be the only man and only house that have ever existed. The house does not automatically possess the man nor invent or evolve him. The man is first on the scene, and it is he that invents and evolves the house. It would be transparently absurd to exchange the places of the man and the house in this illustration, making man the matter and house the mind. If such transposition were permissible the terms "man," "house," "matter," and "mind" would lose all their usual significance, and matter would be found exercising the imaginative power to invent imagination itself!

Mind and its conceptions are non-material. The intellect stands as its own practical evidence that its constitution does not contain body, corporeal dimensions, or the like. Spirit is the life-element, the only element; and therefore all agencies in the universe are included within it, and are likewise non-material.

To any individual who reads and forms any kind of idea on this present printed sentence, the fact is clear and positive that he has the capacity to entertain a thought. This is obviously a verified experience. The statement that the present comprehension of an idea implies existence of intelligence embodies an absolute truth. A parallel truism is that the saying of given words in the same way a second time is a faithful repetition of words. The capacity to receive or to form a notion cannot but involve some sort of living function of thought. Assurance of the mind's power of success in appropriate concatenation of thoughts is not yet fully available; but what has just been stated above

is one indubitable exception. The reasoning which demonstrates existence of thought-power is established by complete provableness. The present existence of a state of being which possesses the partly exercised and partly unexercised capacity to form ideas is a certitude. It is this entity that will be referred to, in the present survey, as Life, Spirit, Soul, or Mind—the fundamental element of existence. No notion of facts can be true unless it adapts itself to the supremacy of the entity that has potentiality to hold or contain ideas —namely, the sole Being here called Life, Spirit, Soul, or Mind; and no series of such notions can be true unless they contain nothing discordant not only with that Being's universality, but with the nature of each other. There is convincing probability that the unity of life must be entirely due to all the vital forces being comprised within one spiritual element. Any other entity alleged to originate, support, or supervise the entity now in point, or to co-exist independently of it, will need proof by weighty evidence; and that testimony is not forthcoming. Preternatural influences are not needed to explain the control of life as actually experienced, and on no known ground are they at all likely to exist.

Reason is induced, therefore, to adopt the tenet that the entity here called Life, Spirit, Soul, or Mind, covering Space and Time, is all-inclusive of existence. Pending definite demonstration by positive evidence, the theory is necessarily provisional; but it is based on sound probability. Under existing conditions, liability to scepticism applies, with the next-stated exceptions, to any rational deduction whatsoever. The only absolutely certain knowledge in man's present possession is that there is an idea-forming entity; and to this may be appended the practically verified axiom that such entity has interminable logical powers. The wide sway of Doubt must recognize those great exceptions; and, concerning

whatever is problematical, let the opportunity be taken here again to urge with utmost emphasis that the strongly probable inferences on any subject are not to be stultified by philosophical reservation as to possible error.

It is obvious that Time is not an entity of material composition. There is also no difficulty in perceiving that all past and future events, which are the bulk of the contents of time, possess nothing more than spirituality at the present moment, and that all corporeality is compassed by current time. As to the momentary present, the images which it contains admittedly possess the appearance of physical solidity, and concerning them rational deduction must and does assume the task of demonstrating that there is a universal absence of real body—body considered otherwise than as a phase of spirit.

Space, again, is solely an immateriality, possessing idea-holding capacity. Space is positive, and is not a fiction; but it is only a spiritual vehicle, and for spirituality. Space may be regarded as a symbol for the infinite magnitude of Spirit Cosmos. Even if creation of real matter as a new element be allowed to have been in any way possible, there could, in fact, be no place for depositing the substance.

The group of phenomena known as the physical universe is nothing but a spiritual entity possessing material semblance; definite, however, and, when once formed, mutable only by definite laws.

Thus, by process of adjudging and ejecting improbabilities—which include suppositions of agents extraneous to common life itself—something is provisionally discovered as to the nature of the vital element.

Further, ordinary experience intimates that cosmic life has a highly active character. Being has not yet succeeded in demonstrating its own essential nature, but its principal operations are extremely assertive and positive.

Foremost among proper rational exercises is the supremely important search to ascertain the nature of the rudiments of Being. Right judgment is dissatisfied with any theory that evades the quest for such knowledge.

The proper groundwork of all just action consists in a full acquaintance with the essence of Life. This knowledge is necessary for ensuring wholly salutary direction in conduct. Unfortunately, the requisite science is not yet accessible. Many instalments have been attained tentatively; but there is an unknown amount of hitherto sealed truth yet to be disclosed, and it is of utmost importance that the human mind should be applied to discovery of the comprehensive facts.

Reason must perform the task with the best possible regard to logical considerations and conditions, such as have already been adduced. If these be observed, the improbability that Being can consist of more than one radical element will be one of the matters demonstrated. The co-existence of more than one essence in the universal Ens would imply a coincidence of self-foundations of separate powers. The idea of such a plurality seems utterly fantastic. The existence of more than one independent, self-constituted, autonomous, infinite basis of Being would be complex in a manner contradictory to man's experience of natural phenomena which, although they are manifold, possess common relationship and interdependence. The plurality is unlikely also for the reason that it would seem to be unnecessary, and that it would involve a magical consensus of control of the universe by differently constituted entities in place of the natural consistency pertaining to unity of fundamental essence.

To suppose the existence of more than one original, self-based Being or Ens would occasion gratuitous perplexities. How, for instance, in the sharp rivalry

of separate basic-forces would mutual accommodation have been achieved? The coincidence of more than one independently constituted Nature, possessed alike of astounding scope and potentiality and extending over the same infinite field, seems inherently improbable. The self-responsibility of Life's one known entity for its own infinite existence provides sufficiency of enigma, and gratuitous additions are anomalous encumbrances to truth-seekers.

The idea of plurality of original entities, each self-constituted without commencement or external resources, is one which makes too great a demand upon reasonable credence. There are many current evidences of universal interdependence of the whole membership of Life. On the other hand, there is plentiful record and experience of stress and clash in vital proceedings. But there is no indication in Nature of total immiscibility of ingredients, such as would probably be frequently encountered in the operations of radically independent entities of Life. These are facts strongly corroborating the idea of basic unity of all vital essence.

It is true that certain concepts can be adduced in support of the idea of separate rudimentary entities being co-existent. Thus it might be urged that throughout experience there is maintenance of two separate factors—namely, an active authority and a passive medium ; the first being, say, Spirit, and the second Matter. But it is improbable that a passive Being would possess power of self-basis. A kind of Being that is devoid of power to act by itself on surroundings is more likely to have been created by one comprehensive, animating Ens than to have been self-constituted.

Again, it might be alleged that the independence of two or more co-existent powers does not necessarily prevent their complete co-operation, or, alternatively, that the actual great anarchy in motives and actions

in the universe may be due to plurality of basic entities. But universal phenomena, even those introducing repulsions, when well considered, seem more likely to be caused by diffuse activities arising from one original basis than by the combinations or collisions of two or more quite independent but inter-operating influences. The latter would almost certainly be attended by vast accidental cessations of any sort of co-ordination. That there could exist the power of practical co-operation required for the co-existence and close interaction of several or even two radically independent primary entities cannot be urged with any degree of convincing force.

Considering the unaccommodating tendencies of some of the cruder and more ancient diverse forms of life, it is altogether improbable that two or more original independent basic entities so constituted could ever have managed a workable adjustment of their respective rivalries. Natural, forcible arrangements of affairs among unconscious units in the incidence of life seem to be results of the fact that all things refer for origin to one rudimentary Ens. Where exasperated Will does not intervene, the power of self-settlement in events following frictional accident is very noticeable.

Be it repeated that, in default of strong evidence for a theory of plurality of vital independent rudiments, Being or Life is to be deemed one self-based principle or entity. And it may be presumed with confidence that Spirit or Soul, represented by Mind or Imagination, is the one comprehensive principle; in other words, the whole of Being.

Chapter VII

GENESIS OF CHANGE

Life was unconscious. It was uniformly active. Accident ended the uniformity.

One strong probability relating to any and all current phenomena is that they consist of ideation within universal Mind. It is now to be observed, however, that throughout the original phase of the Life entity there was absolute dormancy of the capacity of forming ideas. The spirituality of existence was unconscious.

One or two considerations may be offered as to the presumption of original universal Unconsciousness.

The history of knowledge shows a tendency of the collective fund of Consciousness to expand and accumulate, and not to contract. Parallel with this growth of knowledge is a proportional diminution in the volume of nescience. The two circumstances together suggest a former state of comparatively little activity of the Consciousness principle.

The chief evidence of original total absence of Consciousness exercise, however, is the fact that Evolution had to begin with the simplest possible materials, and to elaborate them by sheer practical and accidental experiment.

On the other hand, Original Being probably always exerted a universal flux of active vitality. Unless such a movement be supposed, it is impossible to see how any later form of animation commenced. The activity was absolutely uniform.

The manner in which this universal movement became subjected to changes was through the agency

of an accident. There is clear current evidence of multifold accident—that is, of unpurposed causation in the universe. Further, there is an unnecessary profusion, clashing, and conflict of constituent units in life, and this disorderly state is not likely to have been devised deliberately, even in the crudest phase of an initial conscious will-power.

Again, original authorship of life by a maleficent will, if it is necessary to take such a strange hypothetical influence into consideration, would probably have created a universe on a far less prosaic and decidedly more dramatically wicked conception.

Everything in nature points to a former state of entire ignorance and unconsciousness, and to a succeeding accidental causation of constructive progress.

It is only by slow internal growth, following a fortuitous initiation of change, that Life has developed its present play of functions.

Spirit originally existed without the presence of Matter or of awakened Consciousness.

From infinity of time until a critical accident occurred in manner to be mentioned, Life, Spirit, Soul, or Being was occupied by an exclusive exercise of vivid activity in a state that, although spiritual, left Consciousness in total abeyance. Mind, then as now, was the whole of Being, but it experienced no sensation. Even after the induction of Consciousness, Being was destined to wait until a far distant period for the self-testing form of intelligence, and further ages elapsed before Man could grasp the fact that Intellect is all-comprehensive. Soul or Being, in its first state, lived as a unity, because it had no incentive to divisions, or means therefor, and because it was of one category throughout. It possessed no knowledge or sensation of itself.

Eventually Spirit happened upon a kind of self-division which toilsomely developed into a vast collection of forms, many of them gradually coming to acquire sensitive organs.

At a point in its long period of monotonous motion, Life or Being suddenly acted as an originator—that is, as the generative force to continuous sequences of distinctive causes and effects. These have all operated within itself, for it is all-comprehensive.

Surrender of the right and duty of investigation into origins has been brought about among multitudes of men by an unfortunate misapprehension. A mystic and unknowable summary authorship has been presumed to have occurred, and this presumption is paradoxically based on the present existence of an elaborate system of adjustments, which, in truth, have actually been achieved by Life's own gradual process. Nature has developed a complex economy which has become so conventionalized that it possesses many appearances of having been formed by design and by one decree. The illusion of a magical master-influence in physical operations suggests, among other mischievous ideas, that Man, instead of being the present pioneer in developments, has nothing but an extremely subordinate task in the mundane system.

The systematic, though crude, constitution and arrangement of the universe are, in great part, due to the necessity of balance in vital force having brought about what look like prodigies. But the frequent semblance of suitability, or fitness, or propriety in the present cosmic conditions is mainly deceptive, and is really only the effect of a false mental acquiescence. The truth is withheld because of obtuseness due to ignorance, and to the soporific effects of custom. By their very existence, Life's tortuous creations pathetically and unceasingly make a mute appeal to Man for examination of radical facts and means of progressive amelioration.

Until the development of rational mind, within a comparatively recent period, there has been an absence of deliberate design in the mundane operations. The lack of more than a casual and extremely restricted

and partitioned sort of subconscious aim in subhuman nature is amply demonstrated by an unbiased survey.

It may justly be assumed that, until a yet unknown point in time, no Consciousness or developmental progress had ever been experienced. There is strong reason to suppose that the original state of existence was devoid of complexity. In that state the composite activity of principles and their auxiliaries, which is necessary for attaining any sensation—that is, any means of arousing interest—could not have been produced.

The fact that a state of ignorance still covers most of the Cosmos—and was formerly more widespread—suggests that there was originally either an absence or a blankness of sensorium, and that in past infinity there was probably an absolute monotony of career. Conversely, the observed growth of enlightenment prognosticates a state of vivid variety of pursuits in the endless hereafter. Both the original monotony and the future variety here respectively alluded to are characterized by facility of incidence capable of infinite extension of duration. On the other hand, a process of improvement in status seems necessarily to require beginning and end, and therefore limited duration. Organism which is in a state of development from simple to complex can scarcely have been undergoing that process from a beginningless past, and cannot be conceived as experiencing an endless continuance of the advancement. Reason rejects the idea of practicability of eternal development of organism, or, in other words, of growth without starting or finishing point. The infinite proceeds infinitely, but the progression that consists of organic accrescence must, it would seem, have opening and concluding points. The configuration of the universe in and around Man is of the limited, gradually developmental order. Hence he seeks to discover the location of a point at which the changes commenced and another at which

they will end. His reason assumes that before such commencement there was, and after such end there will be, eternal consistency of Being's constitution. Before the processes of evolution commenced, Life consisted of one unchanging current; hence, in the search for truth, it is necessary to explore the probabilities respecting the tangential divergence which served as a beginning to progress.

The single, simple cause of commencement of change probably consisted of a chance separation or knotting of the uniformly moving vital current. The theory of accidental formation of a nodule in the spiritual stream accounts for initiation of the whole career of constructive progress.

Accidental division of united and undifferentiated life into partly independent parts, in its turn, resulted in emergence of the separate evolutionary principles. These principles are subject to a common lien, because they all belong to basic Spirit; but they possess distinctive functions which produce interplay and consequent transforming reactions.

It has also to be remembered that everything in differentiated Life is to a very considerable extent moulded and controlled by automatic mathematical and mechanical laws.

Institution of the separative process in the vital current led to a clash of individualities, each urged by its own bent. This competition, again, explains the stimulus to evolution of faculties. And, more significantly still, it demonstrates why crude nature, having acquired strong faculties, is characterized by warfare above all other features. The universally distributed antagonism between active individualities in Nature is absolutely inconsistent with any intelligent or benevolent general design.

The exercise of activity in pre-evolutionary Life probably consisted of circulation urged mechanically by inherent impulse to movement, and this process

was quite without volition. Objectless but inevitable motion kept the whole of vital impulse in employment. If, in the original state of existence, there had been any interposition of Desire or Will, or even of unintentional general constructiveness, it is probable that developmental progress would forthwith have been instituted for gradual consummation of a great object in a direct scheme possessed of ever-increasing science. Progress thus inspired would have been devoid of the majority of the terrifying blunders that have actually occurred in the career of Life. For erratic results naturally followed from the fortuitous and conflicting changes caused by the rival activities that, amid ignorant conditions, eventually happened.

Remotest primitive Life was absolutely dominated by that one of its principles which possessed most assertive power—namely, Impulse. This tremendous force includes all the strength and warmth of Life. In its perfervidness it prevented the emergence of any other of the influences that, associated with itself, constitute the great republic of Principles. The Principles are parts or properties of one vitality which, in calm equilibrium, would maintain itself as a simple unity. They are therefore relational to such Unity and to each other. They are elicited or suppressed according to the presence or absence of stimulating or disturbing factors acting upon the general vitality or principle of Life.

In the pristine times not a particle of the zest and glory of Life was able to emerge, and only the energy and warmth of the vital element were exerted, both of them in an unappreciated state. It is not, however, to be supposed that the primal conditions were positively bad, in any sense. The lack of consciousness would by itself prevent any feeling of pain or tedium. Existence possessed no kind of sensation. There was, moreover, no working factor capable of causing suffering, even if there had been current

sentiency. The mighty Impulse-spirit in its earliest condition automatically forced itself into a circuit of motion, solely to fulfil its inherent nature. Just as the Life element extends all over infinite Time and Space, and is forever of one unchangeable total quantity, so Movement was distributed through and through Life in a mighty volume which is forever maintained in its original total power.

The distribution of the vital element and its movement was originally of absolutely even character. The circuit of motion caused no antagonisms, for there was no disturbance of unity. The current was of great velocity, but the exercise is not to be regarded as one of conflict among the vital constituents. If Life had circled in that state for ever, the career would have been perfectly tolerable, although it was but a realization of only one potentiality, and that one quite mechanical. Such an eternal continuity of Life under the absolute control of crude Impulse, and free of rebellious spirit, might have been quite practicable. For the vast flux was unrestrained as well as united, and it possessed no senses and no kind of consciousness of desire. Horror or other feeling had not yet been experienced in any form.

Chapter VIII

CONCEPTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND MATTER

The accident created a spirit nodule which caused local disturbance and initiated Consciousness and Matter.

As already observed, the first movement for change ot Being's primary condition was the result of a fortuitous separation of the entity into parts. No other version of the actual operations resulting in alteration of the original state of Life suggests itself, consistently with the known phenomena of the universe.

The circling Impulse continued in its never-resting, impetuous course until a fateful instant, which proved to be the beginning of a prolix series of entangled events. For, processes springing from Eternity and, without master design, working for ulterior Eternity were prodigal in duration and multiplicity. The momentary contact of two slight phases of the Life stream initiated a tedious process of struggle which is to be ended only by a delectable transformation of the universal Spirit—a metamorphosis which will endure throughout future infinity. The small but immensely pregnant initial occurrence caused a slight complexity in action of the current, and thence a scission, or separation, or attenuation, or alternatively a concentration, at one point of the spirit-element. In either case the result would be development of a spirit nodule, made by absorption of surrounding vitality. Such an event had always been possible ; it imported nothing extravagant. It came from fortuitous disturbance in the motion of the spiritual element—a disturbance due

to some particular, rare, and at present undiscovered circumstance in the necessary variations of relative positions of the several parts of the current during its convolutions. The accident necessarily involved a creative act.

Doubtless there existed other phases in the motion which might eventually have come into contact so as to produce the same effect. The original state of impulse, before emergence of the principle of self-mastery, was naturally an impelled but not directed perpetual flowing, in inflected courses, of one vast spiritual stream. Impulse filled vital space; hence the movement was in coiled, rounded lines. There was no possibility of a vacuum. Restless spirit constantly occupied the whole of stationary space, and this fact compelled rotation of the former. The adjacent courses of the current were capable of influencing each other's careers under given conditions. The concentric curves which were described varied in size, one necessarily being partly surrounded by another. But movement of all at one uniform speed caused the inner curves to outpace the outer in their several activities in any given convolution. For an inner curve in that convolution has less distance to travel than an outer. Constantly changing contacts were thus occasioned. The parts of the current possessed little power of individual resistance; and at any conjectural collision, clash, or conjunction accidentally and unusually produced there would be pressure on one part and some yielding on another.

In all probability the initial changes effected by the accident included the creation of an electrical element. The character of the first life-variation and of its multifarious consequences was exclusively quantitative and vibrational. Disturbance of balance in the vital stream occasioned irritancy and agitation, with a series of incidental circuits of new motion and rectifying operations. But these activities, instead of

removing the interruption in the general life-stream, reacted on their environment with ever-widening local disturbance.

By way of comment on accidental nature of the initial act of developmental progress, be it noted that during their everyday transactions men frequently experience strange, novel operations of chance. This juncture called Chance is not a causeless phenomenon. In complex life it consists of fortuitous collision of two or more independently working sets of effects of varying causes. The impact often occasions strikingly unexpected occurrences. Some of the present-day effects of Chance resemble far-fetched miracles.

The facts of, firstly, the actuation of progress having been dependent upon a particular disturbance in the natural motion of the stream of Life ; of, secondly, operation of the results of that occurrence having produced the nodule ; and of, thirdly, original inevitableness of the disturbance happening at some time or other, are matters which must severally be kept open for examination by every candid mind. They are probably connected very closely with the problem of nature of the Infinities, whose solution also has to be postponed. At present there is no possibility of forming a mental picture of the original current of Life in its borderless or infinite state ; but evidently the vital movement must have been curved, owing to confinement to one monopolistic although unbounded space. In the circumstances the great provisional need is to demonstrate the feasibility of a primary fertile accident. No other opening of conjecture as to the origin of progress possesses good prospect of rational acceptance. Such an accident seems an essentiality as a commencement to the chain of varied proceedings in past life, and should therefore be regarded as provisionally valid.

Thanks to the originative and versatile potentialities of Spirit, the primary nodule, created in the manner

above outlined, became the medium of the first faint incidence of the principle of Consciousness.

By the simple resources of compression of spiritual constituents and their consequent differentiation from the surrounding stream, a nuclear impressionability was produced. Consequent upon the new susceptibility Consciousness was first evinced, and it started as a tenuous kind of instinctive assertiveness. The new development, in its turn, created some rudimentary faculty of self-definition and subjectiveness. Thence came the first dim inception of Form—that is, of specific representation of life. Form and other media to which consciousness gave rise are identical with the imaginary entity called Matter. For, the element of Matter was never other than a ramification of Spirit or Impulse moulded into definite, separate appearances of form and other analogous distinctive qualities.

A slight assertion of the Ego principle also emerged under the conditions caused by introduction of the first kind of form ; and this principle produced some instinct of self-integrity or wholeness in each group of matter, and thus served as an agent for the further promotion of subconsciousness in general.

One result of the eventual universal separation of spirit was to cause the semblance of entire transformation of that element into a different consistency within the vehicle of imaginary Matter, itself part of Spirit.

Form and other media of definition serve Spirit just as figures and signs aid mathematics, or as letters, words, and sentences minister to thought. In each of these sets of associations a medium of formulation is established which is seized and utilized for developmental operations.

Once set in motion, the process of partitioning Life acted diffusively, and gradually expanded over the whole, or immense part, of the vital current.

The subject of the total space allocated to Matter is

obscure. Original vital entity is pure, infinite spirit possessing spiritual spatial infinity. When Life formed Matter as an imaginary entity, imaginary space, place, or location for the material was necessarily occupied. Such space was none other than that which had always been filled by Spirit-life, and was obviously endless in capacity and would seem to the plain judgment to have lent its infinity for occupation by Matter. Yet, in creating substance which possesses limited characteristics, Spirit may have been led by circumstances to limit the collective bulk, and correspondingly to restrict the space in which that bulk should be located. If such be the case, the whole Spirit would, so far as it was implicated with Matter, have compressed itself into finite dimensions; and, seeing that the material is a creation of imagination, there seems then not much difficulty in presuming space for that material to be limited according to the need of the act of imagination. The potentiality of matter to fill infinity of space would then be purely theoretical.

If it should be the case that Matter and Space for its accommodation are indeed limited in general bulk, the problems relating to Infinity would be considerably lightened. Beginninglessness of the time throughout which Life must have endured, and endlessness of the period throughout which Life must continue, and Infinity of spiritual Space would remain to be explained. They are inevitable. But there is no imperative necessity for a special infinity of Matter; and no small relief to the intellect would be obtained by finding sound arguments for discarding the idea of endless substance.

If Matter be regarded as contained within a restricted part of the space of its originating Spirit, it is probable that only a limited part of Spirit-life was incorporated in Matter, and that the infinite remainder serves as the environment of finite matter. What, in that case,

would be the condition of the Life-spirit surrounding the physical universe? The extraneous Spirit would probably have yielded up its force to the Spirit which resides in Matter; for all Life's activity would have entered into the new physical condition. Thus the spiritual element environing the Cosmos would be entirely passive and quiescent.

Chapter IX

FIRST PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Matter became established, conflictive, and multiplex.

The knotting, coagulation, dislocation, or separation of Spirit spread with ever-widening effect in the environment of the first disturbance, causing a general breaking up of the constituents of the united current of Life. The fragments were, however, carried along by original momentum in the old course of the stream. Further, gravitation collected the particles into accidentally-varied small agglomerations. Peculiarities of forms were consequently bound to occur and multiply.

Thus the original singleness in kind of physical manifestation of the vital principle became converted into vast and differentiated plurality.

At the behest of mechanical laws inherent in all existence and of the vital principles which were being liberated and actuated by the new movements, the now multiplex universe was invested with still further variety as between the natures of the numerous separated constituents of Being.

The new cosmic creation was whirled in circuits by impetus of the primal vital current, which was maintained in great though reduced force. This original current transmitted its orbital direction to each of the new units, but in different degrees according to the several circumstances of the recipients. Formation of collections of matter of considerable size throughout the universe was thus occasioned by collisive and communicative action.

Forced by the heavy momentum pressed on them

by the general Life-impulse, the new spirit-matter forms coursed along impetuously and generated immense heat by motion and friction. The primal condition of the materialized Life-stream was, owing to its rapid movement, probably susceptible to ready conversion into the consistency of intense electric charge.

The circulation, condensation, and collision of the multifarious sections of matter—containing imprisoned impulse—caused enormous electric storms and fiery outbursts. The genesis of form is likely at an early stage to have occasioned scintillations which travelled with such velocity as to develop widely spreading conflagrations. Conversions of physical properties were occasioned by the outbreaks and their numerous consequences. The disruptive, combinative, and metamorphic effects of intense heat were powerfully at work.

The fires caused radically different assemblage and distribution of matter. The same units and masses were repeatedly turned over, broken, fused, melted, and remoulded by the violent activities operating throughout Nature.

Complications of the cosmic forces produced results which caused eventual diminution of the original rate of speed of general Momentum.

The processes of burning and relative cooling, and of compression and expansion, and the consequent altered chemical composition of shapen Being, promoted transformation of the material entities into the special elements whereof the physical universe as known to man is constituted. It is constantly to be borne in mind, however, that all materiality is actually a spiritual phenomenon. Matter consists only of fixed ideas.

In the actuation of Matter many of the laws exerted by the various spiritual principles were substituted in part for the force of general Impulse.

It is clear that in material phenomena there are multifarious series of intricate mathematical, dynamical, and other interactions; such, be it observed, as might be strongly conducive to the constitution of nuclei for independent groupings of natural elements. And so centres for mighty worlds and the smaller bodies would be formed.

Under the mechanical law of gravitation, multitudinous centres of forcible attraction of bodies are constituted according to their relative positions. The physical universe contains myriads of such centres. The automatic rule constituting gravitation is, doubtless, derived from a general spiritual law connected with the principles of Conservation and Mastery. The attractive force acts as a compulsory balancing of the parts of Cosmos.

Therefore, it may be remarked here, once for all, that everything formed by the evolutionary processes has been and is strongly influenced by the hegemony-balance inherent in life. This kind of government covers each created body in its relationship to all surrounding matter. Remembrance of the fact is essential for understanding the workings of the principles and the developments in assemblage of matter and the voluminous production of material properties.

Furthermore, from the time of their creation, the physical elements were stabilized in their several natures by other kinds of operation of the principle of Conservatism. Matter was composed of imaginary units, improvised by spiritual process, but maintained in a firmly established condition. These products of Consciousness, collectively named Matter, are not of the fluent, unstable, internally mutable nature characterizing another emanation from Mind—namely, Thought. Having once been devised, Matter suffered no arbitrary change, but was and is under the fixed control of the principle of Conservatism. The alterations in Matter's constitution which constantly

happen, nothwithstanding this fundamental and intrinsic rigidity, are due to physically-governed collisive or combinative interactions between the several material entities. All bodies are equally conservative and unaccommodating in their own nature, but all of them cause differentiation in each other under definite automatic physical laws.

To the invading influences of neighbours each particle of matter opposes the strong but imperfectly effective resistance of its corporeal conservatism, which includes not only fixture of the fact of being, but the obstinacy of inertia. And the constitution of matter never alters except under the influence of intrusive physical activities.

Although the units and aggregations of units of substance were, from the first, partly interdependent, they were also largely independent and wholly unchangeable except by definite enforcements of a physical automatic code. There may, however, be expected a general metamorphosis, or, rather, dissolution of substance, at some future time and under influences at present unknown. The actual changes in matter are prodigiously numerous. But these are the effects of accretions, subtractions, blendings, or frictions, caused by various natural laws operating with mechanical rules among and between items of substance that are otherwise definitely established. Everything physical is subject to alteration of composition by means of such additions, withdrawals, fusions, and clashes. Left strictly to itself, however—that is, freed from internal or external physical activities—each group of Matter would, under the existing system, be of permanent constitution.

Like Matter itself, the physical laws emanate from Spirit. They are part of the general principles of Spirit-life, but are automatically and unalterably adapted to material conditions by the reaction of the artificial nature of all substance.

Through consciousness, which has liaison with vital impulse, every one of the spiritual principles is able to stimulate alterations in matter by physical process, but only Impulse can occasion the change by any direct method. With or without conscious instigation, vital impulse directly causes movement so as to produce reactions between neighbouring parts and thus change the natures of bodies.

Matter contrasts strangely with Thought, which is largely spontaneous and random, and always fugitive, although its resulting ideas become stabilized for some time when held in the department of Memory. And, when uninfluenced by external circumstances, thought possesses perhaps increased liability to vagrancy and evanescence rather than to rigidity.

Thought is an active entity ; Matter is pre-eminently stable. Under an internal momentum, the one constantly, unrestrainedly, and completely transmutes itself ; the other never by its own invention changes itself, and only passively and under fixed laws submits to movement or alteration. Matter was established. Under the stimulus of vital impulse it is subject to mechanical change by growth, or decay, or by operations of its environment. The material results of those processes are often fixed for considerable periods. But the spiritual faculty of Thought has a continual and pronounced variability of nature.

Spirit cannot create new matter. And to produce physical effects the spiritual principles must find executive means in physical laws. Nevertheless, Thought can and does originate and fix independent Ideas, based on Nature, in an intellectual kingdom which is controlled by the Consciousness principle. This function of ideation does not directly interfere with the constitution or distribution of Matter, or prejudice the monopoly of natural law in the physical kingdom.

Physical entities and qualities came into being as

entirely innovational factors. They consist solely of spiritual vehicles of Spirit, though these symbolical containers are distinguished by the names of Substance or Matter or material attributes. Composed of spirit, as matter was, its presence in the spiritual stream reacted on the essence of Life. The latter was influenced by the new sub-element to set up action resulting in emergence of the various spiritual principles.

Matter consists of spiritual mediums and symbols serving to house or carry the essence of Life; in other words, the essence of Life inhabits all matter. When Life was separated into myriads of fragments of matter, each unit or entity, by virtue of the Essence of Life lodging within it, became possessed of absolute universality of potential character. Thus each particle of matter was endowed as a full representative of the whole principle of vital Impulse and its powers. Owing to the community of origin and possession, all the units perforce submitted to a somewhat lax universal suzerain rule automatically but unconsciously constituted between them. This kind of over-rule was formed by collective influence of ordinary functions of the units.

In course of time the vast cosmic disturbances liberated from clogging conditions certain groups of matter which were conveniently assembled or circumstanced for individual mobility, and simultaneously caused the vitality in much other matter to fall into a state of inertness. The weakened masses were practically rendered incapable of internal actuation to movement, and were restricted either to stagnation in independence or to absorption by the neighbouring energetic bodies. But, nevertheless, the suppressed matter, in common with the volatile or mobile forms, retained its fund of latent principle or essence of life.

Under any conditions matter keeps full possession of its original spiritual life, and there can be no

deprivation other than temporary obstruction of use of that spiritual life.

Physical agency brings matter into liaison with the principle of Consciousness, and Consciousness causes co-operation between the spiritual principles and the matter in which they reside.

Thus, it will be seen, there existed compound formative activities and materials well qualified to bring about the varieties of life-forms which actually eventuated.

The more active among the sectionalized parts of nature proceeded to collect various combinations of matter within and around themselves. These systems incorporated whatever pliable inert matter was encountered in the immediate neighbourhood.

Probably millions of years filled with accidental clashes were required to bring the factors together in the proportions and conditions practicable for shaping highly compound substances and material groups. Experimental reproduction of many of the evolutionary processes evidently needs greater science than has at present been acquired by man. Nor is exemplifying by reconstruction of this sort absolutely indispensable in the elucidation of the Life secret. The early processes of evolution were probably so obscure, slow, and gradual, although conducted in fierce circumstances, that an artificial repetition of some of them might be imperceptible, even with the most sensitive instruments. Other such processes might be discoverable and comprehensible after some years of patient watchfulness.

Practical scientific demonstration of numerous stages of evolution has been achieved within the short recent period which has been given to study of the subject.

Chapter X

EMERGENCE OF PRINCIPLES

The Life-spirit is solely Will, which at the institution of Matter began to emerge in the form of various active special principles.

The violent experiences of Life in its pristine progress necessarily caused changing relationships between the bodies that emanated. The original partitioning of the life stream had doubtless been very unequal. Priority of some dividing operations over others would account for much diversity of results which, by its disturbance of cosmic balance, encouraged voluminous issuance of the evolutionary Principles.

The Principles may at a general view seem to consist of independent abstractions. But, as already observed, they are really various states of the prime element of Life, elicited by the force of erratic circumstances. Emergence of the principles resulted from reactions caused by agitation of Unity—that is, from disturbance of spiritual equilibrium. The process became emphasized by peculiarities of environments, and was further developed by inter-relations between the principles themselves. The Element of Life was originally possessed of an absolute oneness and similarity throughout its constitution—a state which rendered latent all the potentialities of variation. At the beginning of division into parts the unity was impaired, but the sameness of nature was not. Later the sameness was destroyed by an accession of novel circumstances, due to differences in times of scission and to consequential differences of dynamic experience. And there

was no general design or designer available to regulate these processes.

The disorder that resulted necessarily involved an involuntary or automatic restoration of some sort of balance, for equilibrium is one of the essential principles of Life as an entirety. Nature insisted that new adjustments for this purpose should enforce themselves. The dynamic laws which unconsciously performed this new task were physically and automatically formed in accordance with the principles of life. The use of the principles in this manner is not to be confused with their intervention in the mind for deliberate alteration of material conditions. The latter can be done only through the mediumship of consciousness.

Pure simplicity in physical being is impracticable. What is understood by the term Simple, as applied to materiality, is that which possesses the minimum of complexity, and is founded on one base. The characteristic of an irreducible complexity applies to the nature of the Life principle itself. The vital entity in its primal, simplest, unvarying condition necessarily included multiple qualities, such as Vividness, Activity, Unity, Singleness, Infinity. Further, Singleness, in connection with Life, implied a latent Self or Ego; Unity entailed Conservatism, Balance, Cohesion, and so on. It will be observed that no plurality of Being is implied by this multiplicity of qualities. While the Unity remained, the attributes were not assertive, distinguishable, or mutable; they were completely merged in and identified with the one current of Life.

When matter came into being it separated life into myriad lives, and consequentially, among other phenomena, a vast series of co-operations, reactions, and oppositions of the new physical laws based on the vital principles was promoted by impulse and circumstance. Thence ensued innumerable variations of stress of these laws, and modifications of their distribution. They became accentuated in execution

here, weakened there, so that from time to time prominence was given to one or more principles at the expense of others, according to the influences at work. Every human being experiences periodical variations in the play of his own principles, according to physical conditions. Physical laws increased in specialization correspondently to the several kinds of accommodation for them in the various classes of matter. Distinctions of function consequently widened in the physical universe, and the principles of Life themselves obtained strong definition or prominence. In this manner were the great principles drawn out for specific work.

In the lengthy evolutionary career of Impulse were produced from that vital force the potent principles of Constructive Progress, Justice, Responsibility, Egoism, Mastery, Absoluteness, Conservatism, Consciousness, Dependence, Providence. These are but phases, inflections, and mutations of the one Essence, Life, discriminated and severally emphasized as need compelled for instrumental purposes.

A feeling of constraint, unrest, instability, and tentativeness experienced by Spirit, owing to the materialized conditions of the latter, naturally caused all organic units of Life—when these came into being—to make advantageous use of the continued vigorous exercise of original Impulse force, and also served to stimulate Progress of the developmental sort. The principle of Conservatism was requisitioned in order to retain improvements gained. The Constructive Progress principle came to prompt the subconsciousness in each active particle of matter. Thus Matter, although in itself definite, was also to some extent plastic under the influence of the developmental Progress within it. Progress could, however, operate only through Consciousness, which itself utilized physical laws as opportunity offered. The great principle that stimulates improvement was able to bring about numerous

convenient recombinations of form. This was accomplished partly through the seizure of advantages caused by simple, casual movement, and also through incitation urged by necessities of material life. Practical selections were made from accidental physical alterations that happened. The Progress principle thus promoted new natural operations in Matter.

The principle of Consciousness, a variant of Mastery, includes a positive nature of its own, and is not only relational or instrumental to the other principles. It is a reflector or mirror of all powers and effects in life; but that is only one of its attributes. Its constitution includes a subjective system of sensory spirit, taste, or relish, which makes protean developments as the result of the interaction mobilized by diverse conditions within itself. Consciousness possesses profound sources of power, and can convert perception of external actions into new influences and into new psychical entities, such as producing ideas of music out of sense of the noise made by percussion of hard substances. The operations of Consciousness have another effect that could not be produced by a simple mirror—namely, the act of continuing images and other impressions after disappearance of the originals: an accomplishment known as Memory. Consciousness, in the form of undercurrent and indefeasible memory, is doubtless the medium which comprises and holds collected the whole imaginary corporeal Cosmos as an entity or assemblage of entities. In other words, the property of soul known as Matter exists only as a spiritual vehicle; and this vehicle is a subconscious automatic form of the Consciousness principle.

Justice is the phase of the Life Essence that, during the division of the latter into separate entities having different degrees of value to Progress, prompts the demand that the best shall prosper correspondingly to merit, and, generally, that what is right shall prevail.

Ego is the principle acting as stimulus for the concentrative and defensive effort required by each separate entity, during the state of temporary disintegration of the Unity of Life.

Dependence, or the inclination to confiding and co-operation, is another principle occasioned by the cleavage of Life; for, in the necessity of refuge experienced by relatively weak beings, favourable external circumstances and alliances have to be sought and utilized. Incidentally, Love is engendered by the principle of Dependence.

Providence seems to consist of a special partnership of the Dependence and Justice principles. Automatically and secretly using every vital agency available, it furnishes a varying amount of tutelage to all kinds of beings and activities, by reason of their instinctively recognized worth. In some cases an isolated action may be specially protected by this principle. It is probable that there always exists a sort of undercurrent, real, though weak and fragile co-operation between the multitude of lives that make up total organic Life. If so, this co-operative factor constitutes an additional explanation of the working of Providence, and also occasions a consoling thought to compensate for the temporary, or, perhaps, permanent, dissolution of identities in death.

The comprehensive function of Providence is to attempt the general reunion of Life under harmonious conditions. The power of Providence is limited by the competition of other forces, and is exercised chiefly by enlisting passing influences which are not of its own making. For example, it recognizes individual beings who show promise of becoming useful instruments of progress; and it follows up its choice of available factors by employing any advantageous circumstances that supervene, for the purpose of conserving those its agents, and guiding them well. On account of its subconscious correlating faculty

Providence has extremely subtle, complicated, and permeating capabilities. It appears to be able to arrange schemes whose salutary operations extend into future years, and, in so doing, to exercise the equivalent of prophetic function—that is, an intuitive valuation of powers which are yet to produce their effects. The providential agency adds a series of seemingly chance causes of progress to the really fortuitous occurrences in Nature that have been alluded to previously. The remarkable tutelary activities of Providence, which, as may well be repeated, are by no means absolute in their efficacy, seeing that they must compete with all evil forces, are evidently largely dependent on properties and vitalities of the objects protected. Such individual qualities are often unknown to the possessors themselves, but are patent enough to the inner and inter-related instinct of the great principles operating through cosmic agencies. The workings of Providence have a tendency to suggest the presence of supernatural influences; but, however striking in its effects the principle may be, illusions as to its nature can be easily dispelled; for it is not difficult to suppose that the faculties in common life are quite adequate to produce a collective agency possessed of great protective activities.

There remains to be considered the singular principle of Responsibility or Free Will. Search for a president of the principles would without much opposition conclude with selection of the entity of Will. Originally quite latent, this principle will eventually be in sole command of Life. Note that, whereas the other principles issue as mechanical effects of differences or antagonisms set up in the pristine unity of the vital element, the power of Volition appears to be a principal and not a secondary or relative entity, and that, notwithstanding its original latency and its constant use of mediums, it is often independent of anything external to itself for its instigation and momentum.

There is just conceivable a theory of vital activity wherein such principles as Egoism, Mastery, and Conservatism are introduced, as they must be in any system which is based on rivalry, but wherein the principle of Free Will is omitted—an omission alleged to have no prejudicial or disabling effect on the general developmental progress of life. After due deliberation, however, the Mind convinces itself that Free Will actually exists and exercises mighty and growing force. Although Will is often excited by externals, such as sense of physical needs and desires, and is assisted by them and other faculties in its executive work, the principle is not wholly dependent on externals for either its arousal or its powers of exercise, and it is essentially arbitrary in character. And therefore Will evidently furnishes some indication of the inner quality of the basic element of Life's very self. Contemplation of Free Will or Responsibility provides probably the one present true glimpse of the nature of the eternal Ens.

The question may occur: If deliberate Will is contained in the Vital Element, why was the former originally entirely non-operative? In current life and in favourable circumstances, unquestionably, Will is preeminently assertive and non-quiescent; but, on the other hand, to man's constant knowledge, the exercise is dependent on concentrated use of the faculty of Consciousness, which was completely undeveloped during the primal state of Life.

And now, indeed, it may be observed that a general review of the principles seems to resolve them into two units—namely, Will and Consciousness. Upon analysis, Impulse, Justice, Progress, Conservatism, Providence, Mastery, Absoluteness, appear clearly enough to be provisional, circumscribed, and indirect expressions of Will. Though less obviously, Ego and Dependence belong to the same category. When closely examined, they will each be found to consist

of a form of Providence. In all the principles, save Will and Consciousness, there is only an instrumental or relative nature, destitute of anything that can be regarded as intrinsic or positive. Will and Consciousness are substantive. They are spiritual basic essences. It is probable, indeed, that these two can be reduced to an original one—namely, Will, which at the separation of the Life-stream became divided, so that part thenceforth formed the permanent principle of Consciousness. In that case, Will is seen to become another name for the whole vital essence, and the latter is in every sense a single one-principled unity.

There was no preliminary design in the evolution of Life. There is still comparatively little foresighted management in vital affairs; but deliberate control is increasing, and at some future time all action will be bespoken felicitously by free Will.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that, as the entirety of vital action consists of invariable correspondence of effects with causes, there occurs a predestination in the career of all Being; but this predestination has no function of design.

It may also be observed, supplementarily, that the operations of Free Will constitute a train of virtual first causes severally interpolated among the continuous sequences of general causation.

Predestination is no more than a suppositional mirroring counterpart of the concatenation of causes and effects. It follows that the free will and other natural causes govern predestination—not *vice versâ*. Free Will and other causes can be affected by fatalistic notions, but not by predestination itself; whereas predestination depends on what ordinary causation will duly enact. Predestination is, in fact, not an active agency. It is also not foreknowledge, but only a simulacrum of anticipation—only an imaginary reflection of the future of cause and effect, a supposititious reflection theoretically fixed because the causa-

tion will in due course settle itself in one absolute, irrevocable train.

Free exercise of Will consists of a sequence of self-organized and self-variable but definite impulses and forces. Like Providence, Will is very liable to be foiled by activities emanating from temporarily stronger external influences.

All vital factors except play of Will and Consciousness have mechanical and rigid courses and consequences, changeable only by other mechanical factors or by Will and Consciousness. Mutations of causation bring equally definite and inevitable further consequences. The natural process of vital development is the production of a gradual series of effects, each item of which acts as a cause to an item next following. All effects are subject to the interference of other influences, themselves determined by previous causes, which include Will; and each such influence occasions definite consequences. These determinate results of causes commence from the moment each series of operations begins.

When an ascertained effect is declared to have been inevitable or predestined, the statement is true in an incidental sense on account of the fact that the volitional, intellectual, or mechanical working of causation has happened in a specific and unique manner. There has been default of effective alternatives, and when the process has happened it cannot be cancelled. Its ulterior effects can, however, generally be altered by further action, accompanied by further predestination. Correspondingly, future events are predestined, because only one out of several sets of conjectural causes and effects will happen at any one point in a series of causations. But which one is to happen depends entirely on ordinary Will, or on consciousness, or on a natural mechanical cause; and any of the factors is of course subject to modification by volitional powers exercised previously to the given

event. And the governing truth in the matter is that whatever happens is the work of ordinary volition, or of consciousness, or of the action of non-volitional, undeliberate natural causation, or of more than one of these, and not of predestination.

Comprehension of these facts is important in order to eject illusory ideas of operative agencies external to nature, and to eliminate fatalistic notions arising from whatsoever source. Those mental attitudes are apt to induce the Will's supine submission to circumstances.

The great Principles were evoked and were actively at work, as far as means allowed, from the time of accidental beginning of emancipation of Life—that is, from the commencement of the transitional state. Apart from Will and Consciousness, they consist, in fact, of temporary transformed expressions of spirit-power — innovations necessarily and automatically educed out of essential Life when and because it was in the new state of Unrest and diverse activity.

The principles are so many manifestations of rectifying power, forcibly, automatically, and reactively elicited from the Life principle by its temporarily disunited, discordant, and imperfect state.

During the processes of Evolution, however, the work of the vital principles is dependent on physical media, which in the rudimentary state were of very crude nature, and consequently there was but feeble effect from most of the operations.

The accidental causation of the first transforming development in Life was simple ; and, with the exception of the operation of Will and Consciousness of organic beings, there has been no subsequent actuation other than that strictly arising out of the one primal cause of change.

Chapter XI

ASSEMBLAGES OF WORLDS

Frictional, centrifugal, and gravitational influences produced Worlds.

Blind Impulse continued to be the paramount vital principle for a prodigious extent of time after the accident which brought change into Life. The Impulse force continued to circulate with intense vigour, notwithstanding the partial dissipation of power occasioned by division of Life into material fragments. The streams and circuits of matter were whirled in enormous trails by the original momentum. Their strenuous activity produced fusion and friction, contraction and explosive expansion, all of which caused multitudinous fires in the physical material.

Out of the furious laboratory of the heated matter came development of orbs of the universe, moulded by operation of the automatic, unvarying, self-constituted mathematical and dynamical laws which decree that given causes in given circumstances shall have effects exactly determined by those laws. At the institution of these natural laws the principle of Rightness or Justice had been drawn into action for attempted rectification of the balance and unity in Life. The various influences here envisaged were not themselves designed, nor were they able to design; they operated unconsciously.

Aggregations of the intensely heated substances occurred as results of forcible reactions between diverse physical powers. Corrections to the centrifugal forces were supplied by the self-acting gravita-

tional law. And so the nebulæ of suns and worlds were initiated.

The universe became a collection of seething, fiery bodies travelling in gravitation-governed orbits through vast areas of weakly resisting matter. Originally the exercises of the Impulse principle had been regular, notwithstanding its impetuosity. It had kept spiritual Life in one common career. But the erratic conditions of the new physical elements led the impulsive force into rebellions against the laws of balance, and caused new counteracting applications of those laws.

Congeries of heavy burning substance were developed, with compensating intense rarefactions of surrounding matter. For, following on the great condensations of substance and the numerous concentrations of such substance, the space which they relinquished had to be filled by the automatic stretching and consequent attenuation of the neighbouring matter. Between the solid masses the expanses of distended and therefore thinned matter suffered corresponding dissipation of energy. The double process of creation of extremes of solidity and looseness went forward apace in the early battles of the elements; and eventually the material in the sections of space at considerable distance from one or other of the growing worlds became extremely slight in consistence and frigid in temperature. Indeed, it is supposed that the tenuity became so extreme that the fine matter could not hold together, but broke apart and left vast gaps in universal Space.

Immense periods were occupied by these processes, and gradually, as a result of revolving, under the continued instigation of original impulse whose operations were themselves curbed by automatic laws of gravitation, the great separated bodies were developed into spheres. Upon consolidation of the globes gradual reduction of heat began to occur at their

surfaces. Hard and firm crusts were formed; and these tended to become covered by water that the chemical action of gases, freed by conflagration and other forces, created around them. But the inward fires of the spheres were compelled to make sporadic outbursts, thrusting through the firm surfaces, and incidentally occasioning great changes in the shapes of the globe-envelopes.

Thus were worlds created in their millions. By original Impulse and by the automatic laws of gravitation each was held together and each was kept in definite courses of movement.

As soon as each spheric system came together the vitality in its several constituents began to interact, and each world proceeded mechanically to be developed on special characteristic lines, but always in accordance with natural laws.

Chapter XII

GENESIS OF ORGANISMS

An accident in the play of Impulse actuated individual motility in bodies, and so created an organism.

Simultaneously with its majestic inter-sphere transactions, the active principle of Impulse was also concerning itself with mechanical elaboration of the minute units and the varied grouped substances constituting each of the worlds. Every one of those units and groups was possessed of its own basic Impulse ready to be developed. Through the agency of this force, the material entities comprised in each world were severally assembled into growingly complex elements, framed or concatenated and diversified according to their local circumstances. Surface matter was more especially subject to this activity.

From the time of the origin of matter each of its particles possessed constant but variously-expressible life. Consequentially on the first appearance of this new entity of substance, some emergence of the principles of Life occurred mechanically and proceeded automatically to produce physical laws. Those laws modulated themselves correspondingly with the developments of matter. The physical code represented natural logic, limited in scope according to its materials. Physical laws produced large changes in the distribution of the material particles. They eventually led to the accumulating and cohering of vast numbers of particles into groups. In every corpus one of the units unconsciously acted as nucleus and attrahent binder. The collections of particles varied

considerably in size and effective quality. The great cosmic storms and fires which created worlds were caused partly by collisions of masses of matter.

Physical force operating throughout the worlds includes power of light, heat, gravitation, electricity, original momentum, chemical action, motion, pressure, and collision.

Transformations in qualitative expression of matter occurred through the effects of varied environment and of manifold internal activities working in accordance with the chemical, electrical, or other mechanical operations of physical law.

Besides their work in formulating physical laws, the great vital principles were, by evolutionary changes, gradually awakened to a kind of independent stimulant or inspirational instrumentality, which became effectual with the aid of consciousness in each unit of matter. Among these operations, work by the principle which urges advancement or improvement was without doubt included. Progress was, however, not directly constructive, but only selective and erratically tentative in its activities. Not design, but accidental conjunctions and circumstances occasioned formation of the new distributions and collections of life. Restless tendencies of the material units and of their groupings caused the variations of action necessary for the innovational achievements.

For unimaginably long ages Matter proceeded with evolution of its qualities through the undirected agitation of Impulse and developmental Progress, and by interplay of physical forces. By those means the range of corporeal properties became extensively diversified ; and thus were created multifarious classes and grades of bodies.

Some of the corporate substances were rendered feeble owing to accidental repression by other bodies. Much of this effete material, although necessarily possessing life, had become absolutely inert. It served

as ready material for absorption by active bodies. The machinery of the accessions of substance consisted partly of simple dynamic reactions and partly of physical drawing-in or inward-percolation of material —processes facilitated by advantageous circumstances.

Just as chance had occasioned the original nodule, or coagulation, or separation in the life current, and thus set in motion the tremendous agency of evolution, so accident caused sundry revolutionary developments along the course of progress. The series of accidents may be described as the effects of restlessness making crude experiments, under the instigations and influences already noticed. New achievements depended, however, upon casual encounters of the several bodies with naturally helpful extraneous factors.

By such means at length came a stupendous advance—namely, the conversion of an inorganic mass of matter into the first organic entity. At some specially propitious juxtaposition of substances which probably occurred in the sea, a corpus of inorganic life was actuated by physical force to move backward and forward part of its outer surface in such wise that the motion assisted the existing tendency of the body to absorb by percolation some of the neighbouring matter.

The new method of action became habitual, and converted the being into the first example of organic matter or plant life, developments of which gradually occasioned increased subconsciousness. The improved subconsciousness awakened some modicum of the faculties of Will.

Physical conditions militate against current repetition of institution of change from the inorganic to the organic form of life. Inorganic matter comprises a range of forms in which specimens of any given class severally consist of exactly the same relative quantities of the basic elements of that class ; and those elements are not very numerous. If a supply of certain physical

elements be forthcoming in conjunction with a few suitable easy conditions, new creations of very many of the old types of inorganic matter can be achieved at any time by definite and rather simple combinations or reactions. But organic matter was created by an accident in peculiar circumstances sufficiently complex to be non-recurring in practice, and each organic group was also evolved in non-recurring conditions; so that there has been only one creation of each species of organism. Simultaneous return of the respective conditions is likely to have chances of billions to one against it; and the reason for this is that the factors were highly intricate and subtle, and therefore mathematically rare. In many instances some of the requisite circumstances, such as extremes of climate, became extinct at some time after evolution of the organic species concerned.

The primary organic body contained three kinds of components. Firstly, there was the nucleus or region of attraction, which, existing also in inorganic substances, gained new power when the metamorphosis to organism occurred. The tissue of this part became of very distinct composition. This nucleus substance was, however, subject to exchange of material with the remainder of the body. Around the nucleus was disposed other matter possessed by the organism at its commencement. Into that mass the third component, which consisted of annexed foreign matter, was from time to time absorbed. The imported substance served to improve and fortify the original body. In these several features the first organism was a prototype to all its successors.

The reason why the nucleus gained new power when organism was constituted out of inorganic forms is because the moving organ stirred the whole body and instigated the creation of a central governing influence. Coincidentally, rudimentary sense-functions were set up by natural collaboration and reaction between the

body-nucleus and neighbouring circumstances and conditions inside and outside the body. Thus was established some slight faculty for the appreciation and intentional use of material properties. In other words, a new development of subconsciousness was attained, and this made possible the specialization of parts of the body for particular purposes, concentrations of the necessary material and enforcement of expression of required properties therefrom being made in different sections. The departmental arrangement of the organism produced enhanced functional effects. Owing to the increase in subconsciousness efficiency, the influence of the Will principle was further stimulated.

The new mechanism of organic motility which produced so many progressive results was itself improved and amplified by successive accidents of favourable circumstance.

Chapter XIII

PARTITION OF ORGANISMS

Food-inflation of the organism resulted in fracture into two parts. These respectively grew and repeated the process. Continuous repetitions caused extensive multiplication of organisms.

The original organism became so inflated by absorptions that it was surfeited, and eventually was forced to break into two parts. The nucleus was involved in the partition, and each of the halves gathered a fully representative collection of matter from the original organism. The two new organisms thus created proceeded by fresh absorptions respectively to grow to the full size of the body to which they had belonged. The process of fission was in due time repeated in each of the younger organisms and in their successors. The various organic bodies thus divided from each other became widely disseminated by the liquid element in which they lived. Each organism served as a new absorptive unit, and repeated the process of feeding and distention and consequent disruption into new organic units, with the result that these became multifarious.

In some cases the disrupted parts of organisms did not, however, actually come apart, although, like those which did, they were converted into independent units by the effects of the surfeit of the parent body. In these instances the new beings cohered to the originating body or formed colonies thereon. The gregariousness had its protective uses. Moreover, there was almost immediately set up in the most naturally transitional manner differentiation of the functions of

the various congregated units. One unit was more exposed to externals than another, and was therefore more suitably situated for defensive operations. One was so placed as better to be able to seize annexable matter. Another had the advantage in absorptive capacity. These specialities of power obviously occasioned division of labour and some degree of mutual distribution of the results of the several efforts in the colony. Thus the corporation of independent units became markedly different in its various regions, and there was a new suzerain vitality established over and through the whole, each unit making a contribution of influence for the constitution of that common governorship.

In other cases the parent body pressed its surplus of entity into excrescences, each a complete miniature of its own essential constitution. These excrescences even produced similar excrescences upon their respective surfaces while all were still part of the parent body. In these instances, however, a failure of means of nutrition was sufficient to cause the excrescent beings to break away from the parent, and set up quite separate careers.

Chapter XIV

ORGANIC EVOLUTION

Gradual variations in organisms instituted distinct species. Brain and locomotive power were evolved.

Families of organisms were somewhat different from each other in constitution, and the external matter that they absorbed was also diverse, so that, in the ages of comparative plasticity, there was evolved an emphatic variation of species.

The earliest species were floating rudimentary plants, and where land emerged on the world's surface such plants proceeded to adhere to soil and develop roots. Later species were prototypes of animals.

Each individual being is an entity living to some extent separately, and within it the spirit of all Life is contained, for the full Life principle inhabits each smallest unit. At the first partition of Life no selective or differentiating power was available for division of spiritual essence, and therefore each fraction of the total Ens contained the full quality of the vital Essence. And the changes of property subsequently occasioned among the parts of matter were all due to their interaction causing varying degrees of emergence from inertia of the several portions of their respective natures. The essential content of each particle of matter was naught less than an epitome of everything, but almost entirely in potentiality only. Thus each separate being was, and is, co-extensive in interest with Universal Life.

Within given limits both quality and quantity of expression of the life essence can be suppressed or

elicited by external factors. Similar changes in realization of the life in the unit are indirectly produced by the inspiring, repressive, and reactive play of the vital principles occupying its own substance. These agencies do not augment or destroy the essence of Being in the unit, but, either through physical laws or through the consciousness principle, they stimulate or depress parts of that essence in such manner as to produce distinctive properties—that is, different demonstrations of portions of the essence, the rest being held in reserve.

The body of an organism is composed of numerous minor organisms ; but these lead a sort of independent existence as well as forming part of the corporate life.

Possession of organism produces special internal activity, and charges the constituent parts with changing degrees and kinds of expression of quality. As already observed, the aggregation of units into groups, so as to form compound individual organic bodies, led to specialization of functions in particular portions of each such assemblage. This entailed translation of power of current use of given properties from the generality of the body to its several sections. The process probably included gradual and successive exchanges of function from atom to atom under some kind of subconscious volitional instigation. Differences in faculty, colour, weight, vitality, and so on, in the various portions of a body are thus explained. The necessary apparatus of organism, at first extremely simple, was gradually elaborated in the original species and in its successive ramifications. When casual changes of circumstances occurred new tentative experiments, or seizures of opportunity, were employed ; and among the agencies impelling this selective or experimental work was the developmental progress principle. Manifold and increasing wants of organisms served as stimulants to the several advances. For, in course of time, development of

organs resulted in the need of obtaining, by way of food and exercise, specific and regularly recurrent renovation of practical energy.

In every kind of organism the skin or envelope, being in contact with external matter and forces, acquired a sensitiveness or irritability that augmented the subconsciousness of the individuals. Thus the portion of the body most closely approximating to an agency or medium of intelligence was the external surface. With the improvement of organisms, part of this sensitized coating folded itself into the body, for the purpose of self-protection and functional concentration and of convenient communication with the body's nucleus. By degrees the new organ in question became specialized into a subconsciously impression-receiving and action-suggesting mechanism for use by every part of the body. It developed into an elementary brain. For the purpose of conveying sensations to and from the brain centre, from the time of introduction of the process of enfolding, the organism contrived to develop series of nerves; and the special seat of consciousness and initiative consequently acquired a remarkable versatility of function.

At a much later stage in the progress of organic life the spiritual principles in some categories of beings were enabled to develop such great power that the physical laws, although still fully operative, became to a considerable extent subject to mental and psychical management. Consciousness acted as the nexus between the principles and the vital impulse. By such means certain species became in some sort representatives or agents of subconscious spirituality, instead of remaining almost wholly servile to automatic physical laws.

In response to needs of the respective principles of life and their chief instrument, which is the principle of consciousness, brain organized within itself departments of diverse intelligence and faculty. These

invaluable improvements were prompted by will, progress, mastery, and consciousness itself, the latter acting collaboratively with impulse which moves the physical apparatus. All of these propulsive factors seized any accidental opportunity presenting itself, as means of evolving the mental powers.

Inorganic life has not the appearance of possessing vitality; and, indeed, for the most part, it is sterilized by lack of outlets for expression. It possesses imprisoned impulse, but is rendered almost impotent by want of externally operative parts. It is, however, proved to be useful for vital purposes when absorbed into organisms. Many of the constituent units of very active organisms are themselves of static character, their contribution of assistance being rendered passively.

With the protruding organs that were used for mastering foreign matter—that is, appropriating food—some of the more highly developed bodies contrived, at an early era of progress, to propel themselves in and upon the environing elements, and thus to secure better scope of action. Like other evolutionary achievements, this faculty of independent motion from place to place was obtained through the help of various principles and the agency of casual experiments. By further stages limbs specially suitable for movement were developed.

Thus arrived an animal of locomotion, possessed of the will and means to use the new power, to the extent of travelling in many directions, and eventually for long distances.

Chapter XV

ENTRANCE OF DEATH

Ill-adjustment of constitution of organisms resulted in ultimate metamorphosis called Death, and in devices to avert it.

Complex organisms have always been ill adjusted in constitution, and for its own general guidance each has been dependent on feeble consciousness and on uncertain will power. For their maintenance as active bodies individuals have ever had to rely on renovation or nutrition from undependable extraneous matter. They have been defectively constructed, directed, and nurtured. The reparation, cohesion, and co-operation of matter in an organism are subject to fulfilment of physical laws ; and owing to internal irregularities in working—often caused by external violent or other influences—there is an inability to comply with those laws for an indefinite period. A continuous struggle between tendencies of renovation and dissolution of the organic apparatus occurs ; and, at a certain stage, complete cessation of function takes place. As the organism has been built up and maintained by organic processes, it commences to break up or decompose when the organic functions cease. It fails to render itself individually permanent, and eventually its corpus suffers division into manifold parts. Machines break down, although their constituent material retains its virtue. So, vital organisms fail and succumb, although the matter out of which they are made endures.

For nutrition the organisms captured and absorbed various selected circumjacent objects as food. They

had no alternative but to adapt themselves to assimilation of extraneous bodies; but they never completely succeeded in this process. The mechanism belonging to the vital organs was imperfect; and in every individual it became weakened by prolonged hard use, or by disease or injury, until the parts could no longer co-operate with due efficiency. In other words, the individuals gradually came entirely to outwear their functional powers. When this process of decay culminated, an organism discontinued to constitute a unity. Each body broke up and was resolved into its component parts. The constituent elements were released from service to the individual. Although remaining for some time within the decomposing body, they suffered various transformations, and in their new qualities were available for incorporation in other organic or inorganic bodies.

Thus the constitution of organism led to the introduction of a new vital factor, which came vulgarly to be regarded as at once the opponent and negation of Life; although, in reality, it was one of the most effective of Life's processes. This was the metamorphosis called Death.

Before organisms were instituted, chemical and other absorption of matter within inorganic bodies, and consequent decomposition and re-composition, had already taken place in nature; but Death involves a different kind of change to that of mere gradual partition and new assimilation.

Death is due to all-comprehensive automatic action inside the organism affected. The process is not, however, necessarily of internal initiation.

There was and is nothing that could kill the life in the elementary units of matter. Transformation and interchange of qualitative expression in such particles takes place under the experiences of intense or peculiar manifestations of physical forces; but those minute bodies escape death.

It was after creation of organisms that Matter for the first time became mortal ; or, in other words, that a body became liable to absolute cancellation of individuality, with sudden, radical, and general transformation, repartition, and reassemblage of its units and alteration of their expressed vital properties, all owing to internally actuated dissolution.

Death is in no sense fortuitous in its essential operations. The continuance of organisms as practicable machines depends upon approximately exact adjustments of parts to certain organs, and of all those organs to each body. Every elementary unit in a given organic body possesses its own independent existence, although, so far as it belongs to a healthy portion, its principal function is to aid in the corporate life of the master organism. The construction of the organism has not been done by an artist. The work is a commingling of many crude improvisations and accommodations. In the circumstances, the various aggregations of lives within one organism naturally fail to preserve the necessary degree of accuracy in co-operation for maintaining collective life for an endless length of time. Therefore, perfect constitution of extant organic physical bodies was and is practically impossible ; and, consequently, if the institution of death could in any manner have been avoided, the universe would in due course have been filled with comatose, inoperative organisms, and these would inevitably have ceased to progress or even to remain active. Death naturally and usefully intervened, and practically constituted itself one of the great regenerators of Life. Complete failure of the collaborating and conserving apparatus of each organism in turn allowed Death to introduce itself into the chain of processes of vitality.

The act of death causes instant termination of the partnership of the brain's physical units. Consequently the individual's collective consciousness also

at once comes to an end; and, this consciousness being the nexus between the organism's substance and its principles of will, impulse, mastery, and dependence, the corporeal units have no longer any controlling principle to hold them together. Spiritual life and physical life of the vital units alike cease from co-operative association. The body becomes a mass of negligible static or corroding matter and a useless assemblage of multifarious, non-collaborative active units in changed and varying states of life-expression. The body's consciousness and principles remain, confined and isolated, in the several physical constituents; but the loss of co-ordination results in the state of the principles becoming either latent or much reduced in power of expression.

The organism is subject not only to the necessity of food-nurture and to the fate of dissolution in death, but also to a continuous process of death of parts of its body consecutively during the period of its corporate life. Maintained as it is by the co-operation of constantly supplemented fragments of varied matter, the body is continuously shedding portions of its substance which have become effete. As a consequence of its exertion of energy it also ejects other portions of its material. The matter required to replace the loss, as well as to enable increases of body-growth, is obtained by the importation into the organism of suitable extraneous substance. So that, in the sum-total, the amount of matter newly annexed and ultimately re-dispersed during its lifetime by a growing-up or grown-up organism is prodigiously greater than that which its whole body possesses at any one time. By the dissipating processes, congestion of the frame through the collection of outworn material is obviated, and provision of corporeal complements is accommodated; and thereby Death is long deferred. The discarded fragments contain the same essential life as those still incorporated. All of them have doubtless formed part

of numerous other organisms, and will pass on to still further sentient bodies. Throughout their lives all organisms, however ephemeral, carry on this process of transfer of matter to and from other individualities. To a highly conscious being there is appalling significance in the fact that its own body must repeatedly pass in detail into abject servitude to countless inferior organisms, even contemporaneously with its own corporate existence. The solidarity of Life in its universe presents reassuring thoughts; but it also discloses many terrifying features.

Sensible of encroachments on their individual vitality, yet, through operations of the conservation and ego principles, rendered desirous to be imperishable, the organisms subject to decay instinctively sought means to contend against death. They strove for possession of the most suitable nutritious matter, to strengthen their constitutions. Later species evolved organs for reinvigorating themselves by circulatory saps containing rich vital properties. By the development of such methods, members of the various kinds of organisms severally warded off death as long as they could. But even the most subtle devices failed in the long run; and, one by one, each individual without exception was overtaken by death.

Chapter XVI

EVOLUTION OF GENERATION

Mortal organisms evolved reservation and protection of part of their bodies for development of living issue. Specialization of the processes led to institution of sex.

Dating from a much earlier time than Death, the simple organisms that became completely partitioned into new beings by mere fissure were in a sense capable of indefinite length of existence; that is, if the separated parts can be regarded as continuing the parental life.

Evolution of more intricate organisms caused alterations in the automatic process of continuance of life by division; for among them part of the parent body became too exhausted to endure. It lingered for some time after separation of the sections that were to serve as progeny, and then it suffered death. The surviving issue were subject to the same development of life as the parent, including eventual death of a portion of their several bodies.

The original form of procreation of organisms—by the breaking-up of one—was in no way actuated by propagative instinct. There was nothing to call such instinct into existence.

Under growingly complex influences working in many species, the organic body secured a relatively firm covering which tended to prevent the disruptions, and to cause new mechanical regulation of the reproductive partition.

In the course of the operations of evolution within many classes of organisms, a will-instinct to reproduce their kind took control of the automatic power for that

purpose already possessed; and thereupon strange and extensive specialization of the processes connected with the partitioning was gradually brought about. These developments were probably associated with an instinctive sense of the need of discovering means to introduce partial change of substance, and thus stimulate the vigour of organic constitution, for monotonous nature tends to become inefficient. Agencies were found for reserving some particular section of the organism for storage of fully representative but not unvaried reproducing substance, and for administering suitable nutriment and protection to the embryo being. The embryo included transmitted reproductive powers, for use when it should attain maturity in separate existence. Under instigation from the conservation and other principles, the reproductive section of the body was given suitable location for the preservation and eventual disentanglement and separation of the issue.

The reserved corpus managed at proper time to break away or emerge into independent existence. That new existence possessed crescent condition with potentiality to attain the full size of the parent body. The new beings created in this manner carried a sufficient equipment of characteristics to continue the respective species of organism. These recruits lost no time in gathering new nourishing matter to themselves. After development they, in their turn, reserved parts of their bodies in a protected state so as to maintain repetition of the reproductive process. Distinctive organs for reproductive purposes were developed. And thus by degrees organisms found how best to procreate vigorous representative descendants. The multifarious organic classes were preserved in this manner. Besides the generic characteristics, the full Life Principle was also infused in offspring as part of the heritage from the originating beings.

Be it remarked that disuse or increased use or

change in use of functions reacts on their appropriate organs. Unused organs become atrophied and withered in course of some generations. Those organs which are much encouraged develop correspondingly. The several alterations in usage which circumstances impose on a number of individuals of the same category become to some extent hereditary, and in the course of time considerable variation in the constitution of species is thus produced.

Elaboration of general features of organisms was among the causes tending to require more intricate processes for the formation of progeny. Evolution mechanically undertook all this work. The reproducing region of the body underwent remarkable developments.

Further, the individual organism desired and found means for repeatedly producing issue. In due course the procreation of many offspring by each individual became possible and largely customary. Among most species there arose the power to bring forth plural progeny at one time.

As the process of evolution went on the reproductive agency became divided into departments. A common kind of development in species introduced an initiator-essence, which was prepared in one part of the organism, for conveyance from time to time to another part, where parturient material and facilities were provided.

In some species circumstances rendered desirable a fusion of the bodies of two like individuals for the purpose of reproductive fertilization. With the same object co-operation between two beings also took other forms. Thus in certain species, all of whose members possessed the complete generative apparatus, fertilization was nevertheless initiated by a different individual upon the bearing parent.

Eventually the process of parturition, or labour of preparing the issue of offspring, became so complex

that in many species the work was, for practical convenience, delegated to a distinct type of individual; the necessary organs for development of germs being improved and specially adapted in units of this type. At some time before birth each of the two co-operative units, it should be added, possessed a similar basic constitution to the other, but became specialized in certain properties which served to distinguish the two rôles; and in each of the two types the complemental attributes were allowed to fall into desuetude and consequent impotence.

It is curious to note that among plants there occurs such an odd separation between the two parents that their reproductive co-operation is largely subject to assistance from external third-party agents. In still other organic species, including some animals, there is also remarkable provision, in that one of two alternative means of preparing issue is used according to circumstances.

For the advanced kinds of reproduction there is a provision of procreative material very different from that obtaining in the simple organisms. In the constitution of each sex there is reservation, not of matter ready to issue as progeny, but of germinal element—that is, of essence of developable life. The germinal materials from the two parents are fertilized, or started shaping into the features of the species, by means of fusion within the matrix. Part of the fertilized germplasm is not employed for conversion into the general physique of the offspring, but is left unchanged for the latter to use as reproductive material when opportunity offers. And the same group of plasm provides for all generations of progenies following. Only a small part of the fertilized plasm is reserved for future reproductive purposes; the remainder proceeds with the work of developing the general organism. The qualities inherited by the progeny are probably received exclusively from the germ-plasm of the two

parents. Among the lower organisms the fertilized egg is ejected from the matrix at an early stage; and the parturition is in those cases effected by warmth applied after the ejection, or by deposition in helpful environment, such as earth, water, or the interior of foreign organic material.

In its earlier stages the shape of the embryo is not a small facsimile or even a vague likeness of the body which is to emerge, for a graduated series of remarkable transformations is undergone before the birth eventuates. Many of the varying forms in the sequence are practically common in kind and gradation to numerous descriptions of species. The embryo passes through a series of mutations derived from the several species from which the parents are descended. Further, the newly-born individual commences with only elementary, uncouth properties, together with the mere potentiality of development into the final characteristic form.

Probably the embryo consists of matter endowed with primal and plastic vitality, and so arranged as to be compelled to re-enact various developmental processes, from the most rudimentary forms up to the pattern of the immediate progenitorship. The outlines of the embryo's developable qualities are fixed largely by its recent heredity, as may be surmised from the prevalence of family physical resemblances. The apparatus of mind is included in the embryo's original endowment of potentiality, but there are variations from parental forms, according to multitudinous minor circumstances. The hereditary factors account for family mental character, which permeates each individual, in spite of the impossibility of particular ideas being inherited. Similarity of notions occurring to both child and father or mother is often due to transmission of peculiarities of the parental character of intellectual machinery. In the great majority of species there are two parents of offspring,

and among these species individual characteristics of both father and mother and of the progenitors of the parents are transmitted to all the progeny. Peculiar qualities distinguishing individuals in the several generations of descendants and in the collateral membership of any given family are largely due to the intermixture of the very different ancestral traits of each partner concerned in causing the several progenitures. Each pair produces differences of character between the several members of its respective offspring, and this is due to the large variety of qualities in the germ-plasm, qualities which cannot all emerge at one time.

There is no suggestion that exercise of will of the parents can influence mental framework of the progeny in embryo; otherwise a race of angels would long ago have been inducted into existence. It is probable, however, that in germ-plasm there is some degree of impressionability to current mental conditions of the parents which helps to explain variations in constitution of members of any given family.

The germ-plasm was always stored with the comprehensive essence of the ancestral natures. Concurrently with the evolution of new kinds of species from old, the plasm, probably by some kind of subconsciousness, obtained the impress of the new potentialities, while retaining similar impresses of the whole range of species from which the latest types of organism were descended. Hence the changes of form of the embryo in early stages of each parturition.

It would be necessary to travel far in the fields of imagination if it were sought to discover circumstances more bizarre than those relating to reproduction of organisms.

In investigating the methods of procreation it will be convenient to remember that an organism is a spirituality, and that the essential image thereof is possibly capable of being conveyed by one rapid

series of subconscious acts to absorbent germ-plasm which may itself be of as simple character as the most pristine organism. The inception of each reproduction may be partially analogous to the instant visualization by the eye of a complete image of an object placed in the range of sight. Included in the unconscious or subconscious imprint from such an inception, however, would be a practical summary of evolutionary history. There can be no doubt that the Mind takes an important if not the dominant part in the initiatory mutual act of reproduction, and is at that time in a unique condition.

Although convenient in many respects, the institution of highly specialized methods of procreation caused redundant recruiting of beings in the already crowded ranks of organic life, and thus added extensively to the destructive clash of rival activities.

Chapter XVII

LIFE BY MURDER

Locomotion of organisms introduced intense competition among them. A reign of murder resulted, and this is the most powerful positive reason against any hypothesis of intelligent cosmic design.

Introduction of individually-directed locomotion of organisms caused immense development of the transforming processes of Life. Competition for valuable space and for other media of vital opportunities had already been employed in the mere act of expansion of organic bodies through absorption of surrounding matter; for inflation of an accumulative body beyond its original periphery could be attained only at the expense of neighbouring appropriable matter, and this frequently occasioned competitive exertion of acquisitive power between organisms, the weaker rivals suffering consequential restriction of natural growth.

Hitherto all the vital processes had been innocent of encroachment except, firstly, such as was compelled by the force of the general vital current, and, secondly, such as was constituted by individual absorption from the respective immediate vicinities. This pristine simplicity was changed as soon as organisms became animals of locomotion. The new privilege rendered them extremely combative. It was productive of struggles which grew increasingly fierce.

To meet the necessities of fighting between rivals, a series of modifications of body-structure was gradually evolved by various processes of adaptation to circumstances. The cause of Progress entailed immo-

lation of kind after kind of organism by its better-equipped neighbours.

For purposes which were quite natural, and, more than that, were absolutely necessary for continued existence of the victors, the individual animals were obliged to wage murder upon each other. All of them were compelled to secure aliment. The supply of this was limited, and its capture entailed mortal fights. Further, the food consisted largely of the very bodies of other animals. Nourishment had to requisition the most concentrated revitalizing substance available, and for many species no food was more suitable than the flesh of newly-killed animals, which, moreover, was often the only adequate means of sustenance to be obtained in a given vicinage.

Another cause of fierce struggle and slaughter came in the form of the rivalry of males for the possession of females at the breeding seasons.

Inevitably, the power to travel entailed violent clash of individualities. Owing to overlapping of habitats of the organisms, there was intense struggle for possession of vantage-ground and means of existence, and this introduced fierce and destructive propensities for extermination of opponents. These sinister features of the new means of maintaining corporal life increased with terrible rapidity. Animals were compelled to contrive ambushes against each other, with the object of slaughter. Fear, cunning, rage, and, as a developed refinement, horrible cruelty were originated and widely employed.

The pangs of the victims were intense, for development of keenness of sentiency was coincident with growth of the warfare.

It is the most remarkable of cosmic facts that, in happening upon the creation of myriads of beings, the stimulus of Life innocently caused the more advanced representatives of itself to fall into a vast anarchy of Murder. The physical necessities of the

multitudes of imperfect individualities caused universally diffused and ever-repeated hunger and its torturing sensations. Impulsive and incessant strife resulted. This antagonism incidentally, intuitively, and gradually promoted functional improvement in organic species. But the cost was a reign of atrocity, engrossing at times Life's whole developed capacity of suffering. Time was made to serve as a rack on which Nature was stretched and broken; and these pitiable conditions still endure, and are, moreover, destined to continue into an unknown period of the future.

Killing became the prime way of living; and Life, which is instinctively and confidently expected to attain an eventual state of complete and continuous Joy, was converted by force of blind circumstance into a horrible tragedy, protracted in all intensity from age to age, and fated so to remain until the discovery of a solvent of the justice-withholding Enigma of Life.

Murder was one of organism's pristine inventions, and it abides as a dominant feature of high evolution. Murder became installed as a pseudo-principle in control of life. This terrible agent established itself throughout the animal realm, and thenceforth wielded the power of the whole range of appetites and of all means available for attack. Murder abased itself to destruction of likes by likes, of kindred by kindred. The gamut of carnage was exercised up and down throughout Nature.

The universality of murder, inevitable consequence of multifold, crude, indigent organic creations, furnishes the most powerful of the positive reasons against any hypothesis of an intelligent general design of cosmic developments.

Some millions of successive generations of animals employed their constructive opportunities chiefly in improving their organs for use in murder or defence against being murdered. These brutal hosts acquired

scarcely any truly advanced faculties. If Progress had not been a persistently self-asserting principle at work, however slowly and indirectly, in an awakened but imperfect Cosmos, the future of Life might indeed have been hopeless. The most summary retrospect over many millions of years preceding Man's thousands is possessed of a peculiar ghastliness, because of the fact that the atrocious conditions were able to continue without any sort of relenting and without the slightest practical promise of emancipation from any quarter.

Chapter XVIII

THE CAUSE OF ERROR

Error is not a principle, but an accidental and ephemeral misapplication of good principles.

During the original, absolute reign of Impulse, Ignorance had always existed as an innocent soul-coma. Error, on the other hand, is an interpolated influence, a factitious product of the tentative workings of Evolution. The great difference between Error and Ignorance is seen in the entirely error-made War of Organisms and its consequences, which contrast strangely with the essentially inoffensive, negative results of Ignorance. Ignorance was deplorable, inasmuch as it passively obstructed realization of the amenities of Life; but Error is bad in the positive and active sense. As soon as the unguided, impulsive separation of the parts of Life had commenced, a genesis of Error was bound to occur, although the changes were not without considerable automatic mechanical correction. But the climax of Wrong came with the sanguinary competition of organisms.

Error is not a principle. The collection of all that is bad, known by the general name of Wrong, has no radical basis of its own, but is accidental, relative, and ephemeral throughout. Error consists of distortions of the good principles—misadventures caused by the riot of life's inevitable struggles; and there is always an association with ignorance. In the nature of Error or Evil, nothing exists but circumstance-caused misapplication of the good. And Error or Evil—save that which issues from Will—was at

first, and during all after-times has been, as innocent as Ignorance itself. As to Error which emanates from Will, it would unquestionably be non-existent in any condition of Life wherefrom Nature-created erroneous concomitants had been eliminated. Will possesses no independent source of Evil. At worst, the volition allows itself to be drawn into wrong courses not originated by its owner, or into those suggested within himself by involuntary error of the fellow-principles, notably Consciousness.

Evil has been spread and multiplied by the mutual and interacting agency of diverse groups of beings throughout the evolutionary eras. On the other hand, the sole direct advancement of good in the progress of vital conditions has until relatively recent times been restricted to developments within the individual initiating them, within the few kindred creatures with whom there could be effective direct communication, and within such other related creatures as could be effectively reached by heredity. And even those isolated improvements mainly took the form of elaborating means of defence and self-protective attack.

In common with other forms of Error, Cruelty is only the distortion of misguided good principles, and is not itself a principle. There is no quality or ingredient of Wrong in the essence of Life. If there were even one kind of root evil, the idea of a final absolute amelioration of existence would seem to be hopeless. Error is only a transient appurtenance of the universe. Mischief was introduced through ignorantly directed and inadequately regulated efforts of the just principles when the latter were striving against a chaos. The chaos was compounded of the obscurity, ill-balance, incompatibility, and conflict that necessarily followed simultaneous independent action of multitudinous beings and forces, however sound and legitimate the various animating principles might be in themselves.

Chapter XIX

DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIES

Some species throve; others were unfortunate. Dissatisfaction of spirit combined with aptness for improvement supplies a constant impulse to improvement of species.

In the several species throughout the kingdoms of Organism, Consciousness continuously found many opportunities for extending its operations. These advances were largely due to the interaction of the growingly stimulated principles and the improved agential faculties. Desires and consequent efforts to secure more suitable circumstances of living were promoted. One general result of the quickening of resourcefulness caused by universal warfare, and of the awakening of new appetites, was a chain of growing successes in adaptation of organism to surroundings. These achievements tended to facilitate various kinds of pursuits. The excessive fertility in progeny, intensifying the already severe rivalry for means of existence, also conduced to stimulation of the competing powers of organisms. Owing to such incentives and developments, the new generations of the majority of species were able progressively to improve upon the mental and physical efficiency attained by their predecessors. This sort of action occurred very extensively and dramatically in some of the earlier history of organisms, when there was less complexity of structure and, therefore, relatively great scope and power for evolution.

While the great functional changes were in progress, variety of environment and of general opportunity

naturally caused widened differentiation between the organic constitutions of members of one group and those of another. Specialization of structure, conforming to diverse conditions, led in process of time to the groups becoming marked by quite distinct characteristics. Organic life was thus, by long and laborious process, divided into hundreds of thousands of different species which are still to some extent undergoing formative changes.

The non-locomotive species that obtain nutriment partly by being rooted in the ground, and the much more active beings which possess the power of autolocomotion, whether in the water or air or on land, all became divided into prodigious numbers of groups with conspicuously distinct natures.

There was a tendency on the part of the earlier locomotive organisms to resort to crude methods of development of physique; and, among other accidental devices, many of the creatures amassed huge bulk for the purpose of securing brute strength. For, the attainment of expert means of fighting was then comparatively impracticable. Large animals secured ponderous mastery over the small, and magnitude increased. Later, however, growth in instinctive consciousness began to induce the smaller organisms to cultivate fleetness among other competitive expedients. These animals urged new devices on their organs of locomotion in order to evade their monster enemies. Thus, to a certain extent, swiftness managed to circumvent might. Both qualities were mastered eventually by another ramification of consciousness, promoted by beings who were neither large nor pre-eminently swift. This later conquest-bringer was the faculty of cunning. The innovating species which developed a large amount of cunning naturally increased their various kinds of resources by means of gradual amplification of the central or directing organ, the brain.

All parts of the system of organic apparatus were

constantly under the influence of evolution ; but in the advanced species the progressive stimulus was more particularly employed in bettering the controlling mechanism, or mind, and so rendering the animals readier, more intelligent, less dependent on muscular strength or speed of limbs. Intense competition for means of subsistence was the principal instigator of this orientation of activity. Among the striking effects of evolutionary process was eventually that of the skilful extermination of most of the uncouth, cumbrous, huge, and muscularly powerful beings. This happened owing, in a sense, to the creatures' own ponderous equipment. The nimble-brained though physically weaker beasts possessed numerous advantages over their heavier contemporaries.

The physical mechanism by which nature has acquired its consecutive successes in improving organic species is mainly accidental in initiation, and therefore selective rather than inventive in character. The mingling of qualities of two individuals in the process of reproduction of creatures causes the continuous appearance of new and well-marked varieties. Some of these varieties are fitter than others to become adapted to the influences of their respective environments. The more suitable specimens consequentially become stronger in physique than their competitors. They are less liable to suffer from the surrounding hostile species. Thus Nature serves in a compound manner as an accidental chooser of the individuals who are to survive and be given a practical chance of successfully competing with other creatures.

Survival of inferior species has depended to a considerable extent upon means of securing protective retreats and producing relatively great multiplication of progeny.

It is to be observed that the progressive principle, which by stimulating the individual to take advantage of favourable circumstance constitutes itself the base

of evolution, is no more able to attain omnipotence than any other principle. Progress does no more than tend to succeed. Frequently, in adverse or relaxing conditions, there is stagnation or degeneration among organisms instead of advance. Resulting from progress, it may also be added, there occurs complete destruction of vast numbers of the less developed competitors in the war of evolution. On the other hand, there are what may be called super-successes of temporarily useful specialization of organism which overreach themselves, for they lead up to entire extermination of the species because of the rigid special equipment being unable to adapt itself to some new change in general environment.

In the category of animals possessing relatively feeble physique was a series of ancestors of the alert and deviceful apes. Notwithstanding a notable development of its brain, the species remained unable to secure a strong position amid the general competition of animal organisms. The beasts in question led an arboreal life, and their hold on material things was but little more than that of the craftier birds. Yet, in course of time, some of their descendants were to possess the whole world in undisputed title.

The Simians mentioned attained considerable accessions of fitness through development of instinctive consciousness. At an advanced stage in their career a branch from the stock managed to discover the mental standardizing faculty and self-consciousness, and thereby created a new and very remarkable genus.

After evolving pursuits leading to satisfaction of some inferior appetites, most classes of organisms have virtually sealed against themselves the approaches to further progressive advancement, at least to any but an inconsiderable extent. A dissatisfied state of active spirit supplies a constant impulse to improvement. Many of the lower animals, possessing a little of that

stimulus, have continued to exercise it by instinctive efforts to perfect their structures on existing narrow framework which can never lead to idealization of life. To a greater or less extent all creatures dissipate the impulse in a superfluity of ordinary functional activity. Thus the progressive instincts within them are diverted from search for improved types of consciousness.

The principal, or at least the more striking, processes in natural evolution of organisms doubtless came to an end relatively early in the time-range of the majority of species. The very complexity and relative efficiency of past attainments tended gradually to increase stability of constitution, and so to reduce further faculty-developments to an extremely sluggish movement. The pristine scope of plasticity was lost.

Critics have objected that there is a paucity of relics of intermediate types between certain groups of beings nearest allied to each other, whereas series of remains of closely related organisms might be expected to have been deposited in the earth during the continuous ranges of nuance of evolution. It is sometimes difficult to demonstrate natural gradations in related classes of organisms owing to the occurrence of large intervals between existing species. There are good explanations of this fact. The relational lines between different organic species refer back to common ancestors, instead of being in the nature of a direct nexus between existing types. In other words, there is a radial or eccentric character in descents of complex organisms, and consequently ever-increasing divergences occur at the most recent extensions. In still other terms, marked peculiarities of the various descendants of the common ancestors were cultivated and intensified at early periods, and consequently there was wide diversity of characteristics between collateral generations of species in later times.

It is true that among discovered relics of the past there are also extensive omissions in examples of species in their several lines of descent. Some of the reasons for the absence of connecting specimens along the derivative lines include, firstly, the remoteness of the period of most intense developmental activity; secondly, rapid extermination of the less efficient species of organisms because of unsuccessful competition with their superiors in the struggle to secure means of existence; and, thirdly, operation of the directly destructive processes of Nature, such as animal warfare, which would tend catastrophically to extirpate whole classes, particularly such as were of specially transitional, undecided, self-divided character. There have been various agencies which frequently turned over much of the upper surface of the earth during long ages past, and they must have thrown up and destroyed many valuable fossil evidences of intermediate types of organisms. A further cogent fact is that much deep ground has yet to be probed. It may well be that the earliest geographical area of development of the higher organisms was relatively small, and that it has not yet undergone excavation; and even that it is inaccessible to present research, being, for example, possibly covered by sea owing to changes in land levels.

As previously indicated, a reason for stagnation in characteristics of most classes of organisms is that a great degree of attainment of ease and success in operating their existing functions occasions diminished incentive to radical organic change; and thus each group of such beings tends to settle into a rigid type, correspondingly to the degree of efficiency that it has achieved on transmitted lines. Intense specialization of existing function tends to be itself a preventative to the search for alternative or improved methods of development. On the other hand, where stimulus and facility for change of process exist side by side

they help each other, and progress comes to the organism, however advanced the latter may already be.

The outfit of qualities which tends to produce premature termination of the evolutionary processes includes an equipment of fairly good self-protective armament and a sense of ability to satisfy the specific desires formulated by low grades of consciousness prominently present in the organism. Evolution perseveres most strenuously where there is deficiency in these matters —that is, where self-protection is weak, and where circumstances have created a strong instinct suggesting and urging practicable improvements on present unsatisfying conditions of life.

The considerations last mentioned have particular bearing on the principal, ay, the one important product of the world—namely, Man—whom this survey is now approaching.

The ancestors of man were relatively ill provided for the competition in life, except so far as a high degree of cunning—that is, of acute sub-conscious mentality—came to their aid. And this proficiency in elementary brain-power strongly set their instincts on betterment of their conditions generally. Thus their very inferiority in defence, combined with their irritability respecting general vital conditions, furnished a stimulus which led to the pre-eminence of their successors.

In evolution one faculty is often improved at the expense of neglecting and weakening another of less consequence.

Animals who were ancestors of the progenitors of Man had specially cultivated the sense of sight, and the attention given to this capacity was in part obtained by some withdrawal of employment of the sense of smell. Relatively to the mental and physical cost of management, sense derived through the eyes is more remunerative than that obtained by way of the nostrils. The visual faculty is much more

extensive in range, more definite, more expeditious, and more generally informative than the mechanism of the olfactory powers.

The mechanical operation of Evolution of organisms is started chiefly by a series of accidental, abrupt, sharp changes in the nature of germ-plasm, and this is followed up by tendency of members of the species to preserve the types of individuals resulting from the variations, if such types prove to be specially suitable for current conditions and requirements. The process of changes in question is virtually of an experimental nature, and the initiation is probably due in part to sub-conscious acts instigated by the vital principles.

By such evolutionary leaps the extra functional resource due to elaborated sight led on to greater general mental capacity and control.

The novel powers produced practical expedients which enabled some members of the simian species to discard arboreal life, with its highly restrictive conditions.

Chapter XX

EVOLUTION OF MAN

An evolutionary leap in a simian animal and an accidental stimulus to use the new power introduced faculties of standardizing and memorizing ideas, and so created Man. The new mentality was improved by exercise and transmitted by heredity.

That enormous stride in Progress, the inception of independent locomotion by organisms, had been made by means of chance-aided experimental development of existing faculties. By far the most important link in the chain of revolutionary attainments for Life's advancement was yet another result of fortuitous coincidence of factors that were apt and available for natural collaboration. The agent was one of the individuals in the species that had been making such distinctive improvements in intelligence. The work was the producing of the first members of the world's highest organic group. The origination of Man, the thought-standardizing animal, was the issue of mental agility, probably due to a chance actuation. The necessary power had already been prepared through mental developments caused by one of the evolutionary leaps. Thereafter opportunity of exercise of the new power had been the only circumstance needed to bring about the master event, and accident found that opportunity.

The being who was to become the first man may have brooded in solitude, and therein he whose mind-work had hitherto been merely instinctive and always suggested by non-intellectual factors lighted upon a conscious comparison and fixed it in his mind so as to

start the germ of high reason, or, in other words, to originate the power of standardizing ideas. Memory had been no more than a servile medium that was transiently available at the call of very limited instinct automatically connected with certain definite physical facts and requirements. The incitement to remembrance had come only when material wants presented themselves, or when summonings emanated from specific external circumstances. From the time of the new development the faculty of recollection began to be utilized as an independent mental fulcrum. The processes of standardizing ideas and summoning them by volitional acts of memory were at first confined to a few extremely simple matters, such probably as the understanding and employment of digital numbers. For practical uses these exercises were, in fact, almost analogous to the instinctive operations by which the brutes were previously wont to acquire some transient ideas and to communicate the same to each other by signs and sounds. At first the knowledge dealt in was extremely simple and casual, yet there were insuperable barriers to transmission of the new faculty by the incipient man to more than a few other units of his original tribe. They already possessed noise-language and gesture signs such as many of the animals customarily employ in dealings with each other. These older media of communication had doubtless been founded on various natural expressions of impulse, and then had been widely adopted through instinctive mimicry. To them were now added such devices as symbolic use of fingers, sticks, and stones, and like illustrative processes. Crude conversation was established, and in that fact more creatures were converted into men. The small community maintained the exercise of common elementary intelligence among its members. For the mental metamorphosis their brains had already been prepared by evolutionary change of mechanism, and this change had

been incorporated in germ matter, and was available for inheritance. Therefore some of the progeny were endowed with the crude ratiocinative power, and were able to pick up its use from their elders.

The new mentality was gradually improved by means of exercising its own capacity to discover analogies, much as in present-day experience one new thought involuntarily encourages emergence of another and tends to increase thinking power.

Thus the initiation of the human species was due to an act of the principle and mechanism of Consciousness within a creature of lower status. Man's pedigree is from an animal in which instinctive faculty took a specially mercurial and acute but also a destructive turn. Some of man's simian collaterals, from the same ancestry as himself, have developed these unworshipful qualities with but few redeeming features. Even although constantly increasing measure of knowledge has been at man's disposal, the mischievous strain in his derivation should be recalled for the purpose of palliation of misdeeds recorded in every chapter of his history. This consideration of descent cannot, however, be extended to exculpation for deliberate misuse of the free will.

Chapter XXI

MAN'S MENTALITY

The generalizing power of mind became extended. It always has corporeal associations, from which, however, it will eventually be freed. Mental processes have fugitive material location.

Never had there been an evolutionary promotion at all comparable with that won by the attainment of the faculty which created a rational being. The acquisition introduced a category unique among organisms. But the important gain in consciousness was evidently, at first, but a weak nucleus of what it was to become. Hitherto intelligence had consisted of what may be described as a simple and servile agency. Although it exercised control, it was actuated thereto strictly and solely by the immediate behests of physically-caused instincts and requirements derived from the individual's interior appetites, exterior coercions, and other bodily experiences. It acted as sensation attendant upon many corporeal transactions. Beyond these operations it had not extended. It now began independently to initiate action ; at first, and doubtless for many ages, wholly for physical ends. The standardizing power naturally led to a capacity for generalizing. When once the generalizing or comparing faculty, and the incidental co-ordination of ideas, were set in motion in man they began to be enlarged in range according to his aptitudes. Though eventually they were in large measure instigated psychically, the new intellectual processes were compelled to operate by means of the physical brain. At length they developed into an elaborate system of

functions which is still to some degree widening. The human mind's capacity includes: standardization of ideas, and memory to retain them; powers of comparison of phenomena in the experience of the senses; research in metaphysics, in idealism, and in concepts on numerous kinds of improbabilities and impossibilities such as supernaturalism; deductions and constructions from and upon all of these; and communion with the ego.

It may be observed again that, great though the powers of consciousness be, they cannot extend to production of new substances; albeit, matter is only an imaginary entity. So far as the present conditions of the universe are concerned, the material elements were instituted as indefeasible, space-comprehensive realities at the beginning of the career of Constructive Progress or Evolution. Their variations are accomplished through physical laws only. Nor, so far, has Consciousness, in even its most intellectual exercise, been able to invent ideas independent of material attributes. Thought is invariably associated in some way with ideas of corporeal objects. Schemes of logic or mathematics always enlist either a clear or a vague form or forms of substantiality as their instruments or subjects. Spiritual ideation is ever founded upon or involved with corporeity.

Throughout the universe, in its material aspect, precise conditions obtain, and these have a marked subjection to conservatism. On the other hand, Ideas and Memory exist in a state of being which permits much elasticity, fluency, and evaporation. Mind possesses spiritual capacities of receptivity, inventiveness, and redisposition, enabling rapid assemblage of new factors and their equally expeditious transformation or obliteration. The intricate material and the physical activity of the brain and its agents are obviously the sole seat of the mental evolutions; but not in such manner that particular fractions of the material

apparatus could even theoretically be identified with given items of thought and idea, in the sense that physical properties occupy specific matter. The fact of fugitiveness of material location of mental processes is exemplified in the repeated use of the same optic and aural nerves for multifarious conscious impressions. Mind is never remarkably strong in conservation of its stores—namely, ideas; and it is reduced to a subject, plastic state by new inspirations of consciousness and other principles. Fixity of Ideas, or Memory, is apparently not to be associated with strictly appropriated brain-matter, for a given recollection suddenly disappears or recedes, and seems to yield its material platform to another set of images. Such surrenders and seizures of mental room seem to be inconsistent with any sort of tenure of specific matter by an idea in the memory. It is evident that the brain-substance, which itself changes but little, accommodates a sequence of temporarily enduring, but eventually passing, collections of remarkably different ideas; also that, for fixing remembrance, recency of happening has less power than have associative peculiarities of each idea.

With respect to the present restriction of imagination to subjects having or introducing material bases or connections, it must, notwithstanding, be insisted that there exists in man a desire for intellectual invention which shall be absolutely independent of such bonds. And Reason testifies that the Mind will be enabled sooner or later to create ideas that will have no dependence on the existing physical universe, with its miserably straitened conditions.

The main framework of animal structure had long been arranged by Evolution ere the special functions that make and distinguish Man were developed. But the new stimulus to standardize consciousness, which started with the first human being, began to adapt such developable capacity as the physical mechanism

for mental operations possessed, and this was not inconsiderable. The peculiarity in brain-power introduced in the fact of man's creation led to a new orientation of evolutionary exertion. The human being was unable to evolve claws or tusks for more effectually tearing and rending other animals. His aptitudes in arming himself were not in those directions; but, on the contrary, his mother-wit tended vigorously to supplement and thereby partly to supplant his equipment of physical force. Like the wilder inhabitants of the world, he found it necessary to kill creatures for food, but his special aggressive capacity consisted in superior mental fitness. Ultimately this power conferred on him advantages over all other animals.

His inquisitiveness and his faculty of comparison and synthesis together enabled him to proceed with bringing his mental machinery to some degree of commanding expertness. He increased in skill, in lieu of physical strength or fleetness. His speciality was pre-eminently that of mind-development. This tendency eclipsed all others within him, and constituted his most salient trait in relation to the rest of the species. He resembled his ancestors in possessing a relatively weak body, and found in practice that his progress must be made through the agency of the brain. He developed a far-reaching judgment which became his best means of attack for securing living animal food, and of defence against the operations of his ferocious enemies. In time his science succeeded in making and handling weapons and tools which served as auxiliaries to his limbs and faculties.

Chapter XXII

PROGRESS AND REACTION

Man has acquired an ideal of general betterment, which struggles with the wilful reaction whereof he possesses a virtual monopoly. He has a unique task involving great difficulty. He does not represent finality of vital form. There is much waste of his efforts. Ancient methods of amelioration are difficult to eliminate when their use has ceased.

Man's singular and never-sated intelligence has, after an evolution through many ages, discovered that it can apply itself to work on general schemes for betterment of his conditions of life. Humanity has not yet, however, been able to gain large effects from its projects for securing a prevailing state of well-being. The means devised have hitherto been obscure and casual. Men have, however, been acquainted with fugitive spells of good fortune and felicity, and they have endeavoured to find resources for rendering those particular experiences permanent. Eventually the human mind has arrived at formulation of the idea that it cannot voluntarily regard as inevitable and final any state of being that falls short of all-pervasive happiness.

Notwithstanding this ambition, man's great powers suited to the work of life's betterment have mainly continued to be subverted into paltry and erroneous courses.

The human agent has been destined to defer taking up his mission consciously and adequately until a very late era of his race's existence.

He has been environed by obstructive forces. His

own mental outfit has been ill-controlled, and his ideals and policies have been ill-informed.

At this point the encumbrance of man's evil conditions might be discussed, but perhaps a more convenient subject is that of the misuse of his personal Will.

Man's standardized consciousness is the main potential vehicle of true progress, and it ministers to all good purposes. But under bad influences it is also very active in misleading the will. Much that the human Consciousness registers is falsely coloured or is otherwise improperly translated, with the result that the volitional powers are tempted into wrong-doing. Consequently, Man is possessed not only of a supply of progressive tendencies, but of a virtual monopoly in wilful reaction. The lower animals have no direct progressive functions, but at least they do not make any considerable degraded use of their faculties. Man alone is capable of being a gratuitous malefactor on a large scale.

There is barely a page in a common dictionary that cannot produce its own special chapter-title for a treatise on turpitudes invented by Man.

Will is greatly under the influence of the lively Impulse principle—a fact which encourages the use of improper empirical methods in human suasion. The Consciousness is often but hastily consulted when Will is exceptionally active, and Reason itself at its present best is trammelled with error and ignorance. The will's action is therefore sometimes bent below standards of ethical conduct that might properly be expected to exist in the possessor. Under the suggestion of sound principles, volition guides man to worthy deeds that he would not otherwise perform, and these include advances in constructive progress. Under error and ignorance, the highly-empowered Will draws him into activities that the animal world would disdain.

Among seeming paradoxes in human history, the most singular of all is the fact that the possession of reasoning power should so often have introduced illogical motives into current Life, which had hitherto been supplied at least with straightforward causes for all the errors that had occurred.

Upon this topic it must suffice here to have indicated notable causes of fertility in human evil action without cataloguing the numerous disastrous effects. Ever-improved conscious faculty and the will-power enfranchised by it are both inveigled to a very large extent into the crooked ways of Error. There exists a vast mass of man-originated factitious mistakes which adds its weight to the automatous obstacles against attainment of perfect conditions of Life. All of these obstructions have created a mighty clearance task for developmental Progress.

Notwithstanding his aberrations, Man has generally throughout his time and in various ways been improving his own characteristics and gaining estimable accessions of science and other ameliorative possessions. Thus a curious difficulty presents itself in theories explaining the trend of human history. The fact of the growing accumulation of living maleficence has to be reconciled with co-existence of its antithesis, a demonstrably progressive state of the human race. The explicatory truth is that there is simultaneous duality of incremental trend. Perverse conditions are fostered by interplay of errors transmitted from earlier times, and simultaneously new causes of evil are at work. For long periods together the pace of the sinister combination is greater than that of concurrent betterment. At other eras, which on the whole have more influence upon their successors, the progressive spirit tends to overtake mischievous conditions.

Man's psychic being works unsatisfactorily owing largely to his diffuse and unsystematized interests—

a sorry fact, which, however, serves appreciably to pique his will to the exercise of his ameliorative impulse and powers.

The human race, which in collective physical bulk constitutes so small a proportion of the sum of universal life, is, in fact, the only group of the Earth's organisms that is progressive in the sense of general or altruistic improvement, and on this one species rests the entire onus of solving the problem of Life's purpose so far as one of the worlds can contribute to that end. The solution in question is the only important task of this sphere, and Man is the only agent for performing the task.

As an individual, he will possibly not attain much greater than the present development of intellectual capacity. Unfortunately, also, each man is compelled to waste a considerable part of Nature's fund of resources in re-enacting for himself the common processes of intellectual evolution and in acquiring parts of the stock of knowledge that myriads of his fellows have already more or less assimilated.

It may be observed here that Mankind does not represent any finality of vital form, for the complete result of Progress will probably include an entire metamorphosis of the universe, in which individual beings will merge into a new united but variform entity.

It seems probable that in most other worlds the chain of accidents necessary to produce a being corresponding to man has not presented itself. Some spheres, on the other hand, may have experienced special circumstances which have led to production of creatures superior to man. It is also possible that upon a common ground of one or more of the great astronomical units there may have been evolved several kinds of intellectually advancing species, and that these live in mutual rivalry or, alternatively, in a state of co-operation. And each of these hypo-

thetical species may possibly be derived from separate initial processes.

It is, indeed, not impossible that, in the World belonging to Man, beings analogous to himself, but developed out of trains of progress differing from his own, may have presented themselves in past times, and that they warred with and were totally exterminated by him, or that they perished for other reasons, such as famine, before their numbers were sufficient to spread so widely as to ensure permanence for their race or races.

Man's work of amelioration of Life is not solely a process of slow and certain step-by-step advance. If his plain and direct labours could suffice to secure corresponding permanent and net accretions to the sum of progress, his life-task would be relatively simple, however stubborn might be the material operated upon, and however diminutive the instalments of gain. But large part of his duty for some time to come is, in fact, to contend against retrogression, distortion, malversation, and every treacherous form of Error which disturb results of sound work previously established. The reactionary tendencies have kept much of the good genius of man fully engaged in struggle with them, and periodically they have produced sufficient evil to counterbalance all the beneficent work of the contemporary progressive influences. In other words, there has not infrequently been a preponderance of badness in the sum of the World's innovating activities.

It was inevitable that Life, developing without deliberate, designed, or properly united direction, should fall into error. Even the special acquisition of reasoning powers fails largely to save man from the necessity of his actions taking place before adequate guidance is obtainable.

The clashes of energy incident to rivalry of organisms form an enormous category of error. One organism's

activities which are justifiable on individual grounds are thwarted by the equally valid doings of another being; and this crossing of purposes is multiplied universally.

Among the miserable consequences of action emanating from the evils in Nature, Waste occupies a very conspicuous place.

Observe the ridiculous superabundance of units in most classes of natural productions. The living examples among these are continuously suppressed to give place to others of tediously similar forms. Decay is inadequate by itself to carry out the destructive work involved. Even wholesale extermination of the several kinds of beings by others—which is a vile method of necessary rectification—can but barely accomplish its share of the work of reducing the useless and cumbersome multiplication of organic sameness. The operations and results of the respective processes of procreation and elimination are nearly all monotonous, puny, and futile. Little of them, other than the destructive contests, discloses any ardent energy. The prodigal waste in nature is decidedly not associated with ideas of opulence. The effect is deplorably wretched. In contrast, Man has invented forms of lavishness that are gorgeous, even in their after-effects of decay. He has created ostentation and extravagance that, despite all their disadvantages, have elicited new values from Life, not least in the sensations accompanying the stages of ruin. The general waste in nature possesses little of this liberal aspect of redundance and mighty downfall. Waste, in its non-human and lower human connections, arouses a sense of devastating stultification and very waste of wastefulness.

The prodigality of natural growths is almost wholly destined to absolutely unimportant ends. The energies of all organisms lower than the human are thrown away, except so far as they subserve the small pro-

portion of man's work that is progressive. For, the very labours of Man himself, even those that are well directed, are nearly all squandered. Portions of the attainments of his work are satisfactory up to the point they reach ; but most of his successes evaporate, for, notwithstanding the many educational agencies that exist, there is defective mechanism for preserving, concatenating, and developing the conquests made by mind. There can, for instance, be no more profound fallacy than to suppose that whatever possesses utility, and is kept in readiness for action, is bound to arrive at its day of valuable use. That propitious day is generally the least accessible of the elements of success. There is no greater art than the production of fair opportunity, in the absence of auspicious accidental circumstances. The prodigious character of Waste cannot be pictured by the mind. The very considerable amount of loss, even in the immediate department of his ordinary intellectual work, goes on almost unperceived by man's critical faculties.

Intellectual error is a compound of static Ignorance and active, intrusive Fallacy. Naturally, under such inspiration Mind strays widely from right courses and initiates enormous evils, compared with which the single fault constituted by isolated Ignorance is insignificant. In current practice the whole train of principles of Life is largely enlisted into the operations of Error. Under malign direction, Egoism, so good and necessary as a means of concentrated, equitable purpose, is converted into a factor of intemperate assertiveness, and hence of proper repugnance; Mastery, which is normally the coadjutor of Justice, becomes the author of deliberate deception and tyranny ; and other great principles are correspondingly misapplied. In association with them under such conditions, intensification of Consciousness, unless it liberates corrective considerations, causes extension of Error, and in very obstinate form.

Naturally, the emphatic use of the Consciousness principle to provide enhanced executive strength of mental power involves multiplication of opportunities of fallacious results. Thus, the more improved the intellectual status has become the greater is the mind's potentiality for production of error of conduct. High capacity of Consciousness does not, however, necessarily involve the actual incidence of proportionally more error. The power to deviate from right courses may, and fortunately does, remain largely unemployed. And at some stage in Man's development of intelligence and judgment, or at his acquisition of complete knowledge, he will probably be successful in wholly counteracting his liability to wrongness.

The cumulative influences of Error form a universal virus. The contaminating effect is of so insidious a power that the work of the developmental Progress principle is thereby set back for centuries together. But, despite the vast strength of Error, Progress achieves a gradually increasing victory. This is probably largely due to the protective functions of Life's immanent Providence, Conservation, and Justice principles.

But for obstruction and reaction caused by Error, the natural operation of Progress might already have wrought the solution of the Problem of Life. If there had been absence of error the movement of constructive progress against Ignorance might indeed have been slow, but there would then have been avoidance of the monstrous bewilderment of mankind which is disclosed to every mind contemplating the past and current narrative of Time.

Mind was inducted to consciousness of progressive processes in detail long before the time of Man's awakening to the idea of developmental Progress as a general purpose. Down to the present time, indeed, wide knowledge of the common ameliorative aim has occurred only in isolated groups of the human world.

Within these groups are to be found some relatively scarce living representatives of enlightened altruism and foresighted vision. Discovery of dignity and duty amid the obscure experiences of Man's life was the achievement of a few individuals, some of whom were the originators of cults. From these advances came the great and ever-extending stimulus to victories by comprehensive Progress. Without such kinds of powerful inspiration the human mind would tend to settle down to exclusive service of corporal needs, under cover of debased and enslaved consciousness. Schemes founded on the physical aspect of Life still virtually dominate activities of the larger part of humanity.

So far as evidence avails, self-consciousness has been a development among mankind only. Again, among men, knowledge of general progress, as the subject of a mission, is limited to certain groups and individuals.

Possibly, discovery of the new faculty or science that will solve the universal problem will be so difficult as to be feasible only by very gifted experts. But, it should be added, the immediate result of accomplishment of the work of those few fortunate minds will be a comprehensive consciousness diffused through and through vital being.

In view of the progressive stages of past acquirements in Consciousness-power, Reason may justifiably hope that, in the course of evolutionary and intellectual efforts, the human mind will secure developments of new types of faculty, represented presumably by new cerebral convolutions. Successive discoveries of new powers may be pending. Or, on the other hand, it may be possible to solve the Problem of problems with Man's present intellectual equipment, either by studious application of its resources or by securing from it one happy stroke of genius, such as has not infrequently surprised past generations.

Because of the many errors which have to be encountered and laboriously removed, constructive progress advances by irregular and involved stages. For instance, to temper Man's crudeness of nature, to render him conscious of duty, to inspire in him a predominant desire or respect for impartial right, to nurture his morale and zest—which motives are wanted for leading him to reflect upon civilized work, and for enabling him to execute it—the propagandism of various strange spiritual faiths was formerly necessary, and these had to make much use of digressions through labyrinths of symbolist mythologies of mainly irrational nature. The pardonable inspirational methods referred to were developed by the wiser individuals among the tribes. In course of time the old media of incitement severally became inoperative for good purposes, and their function was transformed from aiding into enormously encumbering advancement. They have usually proved obstinately persistent. Much of the difficult work of current progress consists in the elimination of what is obsolete in the preparatives to advances already achieved.

Chapter XXIII

THE HAPPINESS ILLUSION

Man craves happiness, but experiences only a balancing of pleasure and pain. He nurtures illusions on the subject. His constitution is agential. His spirit of absoluteness will eventually secure a state of complete happiness.

In every heart and will possessed of rich human consciousness there is an intense and invincible craving towards a permanent state of felicity of existence. Clear or distorted in form, the desire animates and stimulates the whole career of each individual. In its primal nature the aspiration is urgent, individualistic, and unconnected with any scheme of general human improvement. Happiness was desired long before there were deliberate ideas of progress. But, according to every intelligent test, the craving for a preponderantly happy life has never yet been satisfied.

Experience of pleasure has hitherto been limited to intermittent crises of happy feeling, gained by means of equivalent travail in advance, or balanced by subsequent compensating pain. In either case, therefore, the pleasure has always been completely equipoised by its opposite.

There are common delusions to the effect that the securing of a greater total quantity of pleasure than of unhappiness in a lifetime is within current human grasp. In part these fallacies are sustained by contemplating hypothetical, post-dated amelioration—a process collectively called Hope. In passing, it should be observed that, for his present pleasure attained in the act of Hope, the epicure of sanguine dreams has

to endure reaction, just as if his sensation were any other kind of bliss.

Achievement following upon strenuous labour applied to definite tasks gives a strong sense of gratification. Here, again, the pains and the pleasure incidental to the work are exactly commensurate with each other.

The normal desire to secure throughout the range of life a net excess of happiness over its opposite, a wish animating every individual, has never yet reached gratification. Notwithstanding that fact, the human spirit is continuously and fervidly, though mainly sub-consciously and ill-directedly, engaged in the endeavour towards total elimination of pain and institution of a monopoly of pleasure. Man will continue restless and adventurous in the quest of Happiness, for he possesses the principle of Absoluteness, and the task to secure undying Felicity will beset him until there is full attainment. The attempt at fulfilment of the desire is vain in his present state of constitution. Nothing less than a transformation of Nature will bring success.

Spiritual or intellectual as well as material mollifications of existing life are futile in themselves, and they delay the inevitable struggle for progress and serve to prolong the present evil circumstances of mankind. The rational enterprise is research, whose object is to secure conditions enabling an eventual, complete, and permanent state of happiness.

Much intellectual labour is wasted in pursuits not ignoble in themselves, but unproductive towards the permanent sum of human accomplishment. Frequently such occupations are akin to those which may be expected to gratify the spirit in the elysian state; but, so far as man can exercise them, they are rendered nugatory by circumstances, their duration is brief, and they misemploy the faculties of progress.

Such is the natural impetus of man's spirit that, if

the motive to produce valuable permanent accomplishment be absent, he will inevitably fall into some lower field of vitality, wherein he will vigorously exercise his life's momentum in pursuits that might as well be entirely set aside. Such misemployment of life is instanced by the tragic exhaustion of spirituality in working for certain religions that, being virtually static, fail to serve as progressive incentives to their followers. The energies of the personnel of such religions, individuals devoid of forward enterprise in spiritual acquisition, naturally become diverted to the multifarious meaner objects in life which, when reached, are found to be empty delusions.

The present constitution of the human being is mainly suited to agential purposes, and its nature is unpossessed of the faculty to experience personally appropriable satisfaction in any enduring, substantial sense. It may appear strange to use the term agential in connection with an organism which has had no deliberate design and has been evolved from the simplest form. But it is to be borne in mind that there manifestly exists an unsolved problem connected with the universe, and that the development of consciousness has opened in man a sense of power which by itself confers mission on him for attempting the solution. In him have been awakened a knowledge of the prevalence of evils and a desire of complete emancipation of Life from unhappiness. It is the last-mentioned wish, whose fulfilment is possibly placed in the far future, that establishes itself as the chief motive of ambition and incites the goodness in mankind to take up an ideal agency.

Without adoption of the task in question, human existence would be worthless either to itself or to the Cosmos; as much so as is the life of the lower animals.

Prodigies in successful experiments and labours have been accomplished by man during the duteous

quest appointed by a rationally-founded, growingly insistent, and singularly prognostic hope.

Right deliberation promises to the Reason the discovery of absolute satisfaction in life at a future period; and this fact does and must inevitably enlist all intelligent vital impulse into the great adventure for attainment of the stablished happy state. The major portion of Man's really ameliorative activity is being conducted in unconsciousness of its true destiny and often with the mistaken notion that it will procure to life an almost immediate amplification of enjoyment; whereas the improvements are only contributing to the advantage of what will possibly be a remote posterity. When thorough disillusionment shall have come and individuals are convinced that they have no propinquity to a happy régime, there will be all the more stimulus to intelligent minds to work in a reasonable manner for the benefits ultimately to be obtained through Man's efforts.

The most sterile pursuit of the race has ever been that directed to immediate personal happiness.

There has been cultivated a semi-enlightened notion that felicity cannot indeed be universalized, but that the greater part of the lives of the majority of men can currently be made agreeable, an awkward lacuna being left for the unfortunate minority. Another tenet predicates the idea that a state of total happiness can at any time be secured by pursuing a moderate course of life.

It is not necessary to labour the inconcealable truth that abject failure has been attendant on all generations of devotees of concentrated pleasure.

The fact that happiness is by itself an object worth gaining and possessing is scarcely contestable. That it sometimes arrives and makes considerable displays is proven by experiences of every human being. Pleasure is a much-appreciated state of consciousness actually introduced into all lives; but universal record

of reliable character tells that the much-desiderated experience has always come in very brief fugitive sensations. Throughout life's proceedings the senses hunger for an abiding condition that proves to be not available—namely, one of absorbing, perfect enjoyment. In view of the ardent reality of the craving itself—of the presence of numerous agents that appear destined to minister to it; of the many though fleeting gifts of transcendent joy that each soul experiences; of the tacit promise of permanent establishment which, notwithstanding all disappointments, these casual gratifications seem to hold out to future sentiency; of the improbability that Life should possess a quality so perverse and grotesque as that of tantalizing with the anticipation of stable pleasure, but refusing the eventual possibility of attainment; of the intensity and sanguineness of Life's effort for consummation of happiness; and of the constant though obscure expectation of imminent success from approaching commerce between the true constituents of joy—in view of all these considerations, Reason confidently entertains the belief that Life will at some time achieve the desired state of absolute felicity.

Every normal and moderately enfranchised mind is by its own deliberation convinced of the future eventuality last mentioned. Any alternative destiny seems incomplete and therefore non-final. It is true that the mind is not entitled to assume that whatever is desired is currently or ultimately attainable. Many ardent personal and general wants are unsound and certainly doomed to perpetual disappointment. But the principle of absoluteness is persistent throughout Life, and Life goes forward invincibly; and it is justifiable to assume that the absolute principle will at last prevail in whatever purpose is good. Every individual experiences spells of happiness. Contrary currents of sensation neutralize these foretastes of gratification; but Life is a continuous whole through-

out the generations, and it is to an ulterior accession of power at some time in the serial cosmic progress that philosophy looks for attainment of the sublime state. Mind actually though fragmentarily experiences happiness, and the confident prospect of diffusion of that state entirely and in perpetuity throughout life emanates from healthfulness of spirit, fortified by the sanction of reason. A contrary belief indicates unsound mentality that has become generally pessimistic.

It is not to be supposed that, before a comparatively late period in the progress of Man's evolution, there arose any design to press for ideal happiness. Eras went their uncounted way prior to development of conscious pursuit for Life's whole beatification.

Sustained happiness evidently requires a conditioning of life that man has been unable thus far to accomplish. Assuredly the main need is development of a new organism for consciousness. There is nothing in pleasure's own nature to suggest that it is incapable of being made continuous. The great principles and laws of life unintermittingly endure, and Felicity will begin an eternal reign as soon as a medium for it has been rendered efficient. In a somewhat similar manner, for instance, full application of the continuous and perfect principle of Justice requires the use of instrumental methods and systems that have not yet been invented.

Defects in organism are undoubtedly responsible for the neutralizing interruptions and recoils which Happiness has to encounter or undergo. It appears to be the case that subconscious standards of purpose have been established in the mind, and that under instigation of the principle of absoluteness the present faculties are constantly endeavouring to accommodate themselves thereto. The mind is consequently in a continuous state of natural tension. Spells of enjoyment or unhappiness cause deflection of this normal condition, and complete reactions consequently occur.

Mind is attuned to large scope of consciousness, but not to the blissful or painful state thereof. The pleasant or unpleasant passages can be got by straining the instrument, but necessarily with equivalent reverberant results.

At the time when the basic structure of mind which has been inherited by all sentient creatures was evolved and radically instituted there was no awakened incentive to seek happiness. The full possibilities of consciousness, as of other principles, were not then suggestible. The immediate needs of the individual and the desires they occasioned did not solicit anything from the domains of bliss. Material acquisition and conservation were the two urgent wants, and for them the mind was gradually shaped into the framework whose main lines have since been compulsorily fixed by physical conditions. The faculties, pressed by later developments of consciousness, began to accept spiritual inspirations with aims at perfectness of life. When evolution brought quest of happiness within the scope of deliberate ideas, the necessary distention or agitation of the mental fibres was found practicable, but for only short periods, and oscillating rebounds occurred at each effort.

In order to secure continuous unalloyed pleasure, man would require to subject all his faculties and principles totally to the exercise of pleasure consciousness. His will would have to be directed wholly to the production of happiness. His present structure of mind, however, is ordered for more urgent purposes.

No form of progress on ordinary evolutionary lines appears to be capable of radically altering the dominating features of the present structure of the mind; at any rate, so far as regards the limitations of pleasure.

The inevitable reaction from pleasure to pain, or, at least, to prolonged dejection equiponderant with pain, is a tantalizing fact that men are by no means willing to acknowledge. Their familiarity with incessant,

ironical failure does not cure them of hope in individual and early success in their several quests for media of established pleasure. They endeavour in all kinds of ways to justify a sanguine view of the personal prospect. To a large extent the complex and varying aspects and conditions of existence and the frequently uneven incidence of sensations obscure the facts of the matter and allow the false idea to be fostered that there is or can be more happiness than pain in present-time experience. The common confusion of interpretations is another cause of fallacy on the subject of feasibility of prolonged pleasure.

In as many variant terms as the fact will suggest, be it repeated that a complete equipoise of pleasure and pain occurs in every human being's existence. Happiness is always preceded or succeeded by a corresponding amount of allied dissatisfaction or suffering. Whenever pleasure or pain is experienced, the correlated incidence of a previous or subsequent counter-sensation is an automatic certainty, although there are bewildering inequalities and varieties in the respective instalments of consequential operation. The straining of the mental mechanism to produce joy causes one or more rebounds that collectively entail pain equal to the joy, and vice versâ.

It is important to remember that the sensation of pleasure or pain in each individual is fabricated and produced entirely by his own mind. The process may be, and generally is, suggested or stimulated from without; but pleasure ready-made cannot be injected into him from external sources. His capacity to urge his mind into a state of happiness is part of his determinate constitution, and the aptitude is precisely equal to his degree of liability to undergo suffering, for in reverse ways the same faculty is employed to elicit both sensations.

External circumstances influence the individual's incidence of pleasure-pain by causing him to indulge

in new or changed exercise of his own powers. Such extraneous influences thus induce curtailment of current sensations of happiness or of suffering, but in so doing they cannot prevent the eventual balancing of whatever pleasure or pain has already been experienced.

As previously stated, the governing cause of the reaction seems to be the present restrictive scope of consciousness or of its apparatus, conditioned as both of these are for special application to constructive tasks. It may be further suggested that the nervous system of animal consciousness demands balance of the incidence of joy and pain, whereas under ideal conditions acquisition of a more ample nature will automatically secure the desideratum of continuous happiness. Play of pleasure-pain is a peculiar distorted use of the Consciousness faculty, involving, among other things, derangement of the normal rate of mental activity. Possibly the career of the vital principle in the individual is unhealthily hastened during the enjoyment of pleasure, and as morbidly retarded or obstructed while undergoing pain. If this theory be correct, the fact is obvious that the emancipated mind will discover means to prevent the retardation or disturbance, and to render the process of acceleration healthy and permanent.

The gain of constant bliss will arrive only with the achievement of deathless and perfect organism and the conquest of knowledge of comprehensive Truth. Decay and error are inconsistent with the reign of happiness. And, probably, even if the first animals had been conscious of the desirability of happiness, they would not have been able to evolve in their own minds a capacity that could in practice give more than a small margin of pleasure, considering the many evils in crude nature that would necessarily militate against a state of continuous gratification.

Man's provisional employment of pleasure is perhaps

not wrong essentially; but there are sweeping reservations, for in premature exploitation of happiness the price paid is endurance of the exact equivalent in the opposite state of sensation; and, further, the proper human agential work is delayed by the diversion.

Some of the external instigations to pleasure waylay the senses in an unavoidable manner. A curved line is as gracious, beautiful, and irresistibly pleasing to man as it can ever be to a perfect organism; and as the case stands with regard to one detail, so it extends to all the expansive region of æstheticism. The free mind of an intelligent human being, confronted by whatever contains beauty, inevitably experiences pleasure. Notwithstanding this innocent nature of causation, the pleasure is but an interloper, and will entail a penalty of some sort and of exact amount.

Careful observation will demonstrate the truth of what has here been said on the subject. In human experience happiness and pain, by sundry instalments often occurring with several intervals and generally extending over unequal periods, exactly counterbalance each other in their respective incidence. Sometimes long tedium is compensated by a few intensive spasms of ecstasy, or actuation of the two opposing sensations may alternate with fairly regular force and duration, or some punctually timed short experiences of quiet happiness may be the reward for spells of humdrum work which has been attended by slightly conscious or subconscious ill-ease, or acute twinges may result from some lengthy tolerable periods. If neither hardship nor cross happens to come as an instrument for counterbalancing felicity, then assuredly will arrive satiety or ennui—perhaps the most disagreeable form of anti-pleasure. Much of the afflictive sort of experience consists of the rigour of consecrated discipline which is zealously voluntary. Here the practiser may fail to recognize that the irksome effect partakes of the nature of pain. The experience in question is, how-

ever, full of severity—a quality which comes within the category of sensations opposed to pleasure.

There is probably one exception to the law of pain-happiness balance experienced by man in common with other animals, but even that is due solely to a sudden interruption of the process. The exception in point refers to the case of violent death. Doubtless there are some mitigating passages in the period between the causation of such a death and the fact of expiring, but they can scarcely equal the total amount of pain involved.

It may also be well to mention the truism that all experiences, whether or not attended by pleasure or pain, are independently agreeable or disagreeable, acceptable or unacceptable, on grounds unconnected with those relating to gratification of sense. For instance, the bearing on progress should be the most important personal consideration in connection with the desirability of every occurrence.

There has never existed a contemplative mind that has not been more or less aware of the constant occurrence of even-proportioned counterplay of the happy and unhappy sensations. Ardent individuals, however, easily delude themselves with the supposition that greater measure of felicity than of suffering prevails in their customary experience. To many people the sensation of pain comes in forms widely distributed and correspondingly rarefied, so that, by habitude and by contrast with what has been found strikingly good, the unhappy effect is minimized in conscious valuation.

Such pleasure as happens to the individual he tends to hoard in memory. Hence there is a one-sided effect as the result of partiality of recollection. The relatively notable crises of joy are cherished, and on that account remembrance emphasizes them in its registry, whereas there is a tendency to avoid and discard the troublous passages. The actual experience

of annoyance cannot, however, be lessened by the subsequent oblivion. Where pleasure is thinly distributed and pain makes the crises, the violent circumstances are clearly remembered; but even here the affection of the memory for pleasure will tend to exaggerate the interspersed alleviation. Time itself is a pleasure-contriving wizard; it invests nearly all the Past with an agreeable glamour of sentiment. But there should be added the warning that those who succumb to enjoyment of retrospects also have to undergo compensating spells of ill-ease which then become due.

Balance-susceptibility of sensation is wont to extract a pleasant melancholy out of a spell of misfortune; just as in a converse manner it may gather an attack of ennui from the protracted pleasure offered by a redundance of good things.

The experiences known as good and bad fortune, benefits, and adversities, which are so unequally distributed among the members of society and along the course of each individual's career, are seized by the respective personal accumulations of pleasure or pain arrears as opportunities for finding outlet. A sudden favour of fortune will even cause temporary diversion of an unexhausted despondent spell into a phase of pleasure. Incidence of joy and pain is, however, at present under a law essentially independent of beneficence and maleficence, although the experiences of fate provide convenient vents for glad moods and their opposites. Be it added that a surfeited sense of pleasure receives with relative indifference further accesses of good fortune, and overwrought sense of pain may be correspondingly blunted to augmentations of misfortune. Fortune cannot prevent the balancing of pleasure and pain, although it can temporarily distract the operation. Conversely, the act of balancing of pleasure and pain does not alter other actions and experiences, except that occasionally

it influences them by reason of the will seizing it as cause for new activities.

The sensations of joy and pain are not to be confused with the exertions of passion. The latter constitute another form of misuse of the vital powers, and are due to obstruction, irritation, excitement, or inflammation of the various principles which, stimulated by these means and left insufficiently controlled by Will, hurry and enrage life's force into violent activity. Passion and pleasure-pain are, however, to a large extent brought into mutual association. The nature of enjoyment and suffering is passive. Passion is accompanied by experience of those passive sensations, but is itself a very active and turbulent agency. Much of the incidence of both gratification and distress is, it will be found, unconnected with passion, and the perfected state of pleasure will be quite free of turmoil.

Under present conditions occurrence of a pleasant spell is either preluded or followed by a disagreeable phase of sensation, and whichever is second of the two experiences comes as a natural and inevitable reactive influence against the other. Joy fails to appear without its wretched counterpart marching before or after; and, by actual impression on the feelings, the annoyance more or less convinces man's consciousness of his true situation in regard to happiness.

Until principles and faculties shall have achieved the perfect development of Life the attempts to enter into felicity are a deplorable diversion of vital power, whose legitimate employment is mainly in the advancement of research. Pleasure-snatching may succeed for brief spells, but inevitably there follow recoils of the principle or faculty that has been perverted; and thus the enjoyment involves full payment by way of various kinds of noxious reaction.

Notwithstanding the preceding considerations as

to general resort to pleasure, it is of importance for man's right development that he should not be without some experimentation in enjoyment; for his work demands that he should have knowledge, however inadequate, of the amenities that will pervade the perfect condition of life. Acquaintance with the potentialities of happiness is valuable and necessary for encouragement in the quest of great Progress. Entire absence of joyful experience would involve a negation of the rationally sanguine spirit that is one of man's best instigators. The means of amelioration of vital conditions would then be limited to sense of duty in repellently abstract forms, supplemented by whatever fortunate accidents of discovery by Consciousness might be forthcoming.

The reason for occasional excursions into enjoyment is also created in part by the needs of the soul and body's health; for Man's constitution requires not only labour and rest, but some degree of relaxation. It need scarcely be added that the tonic use of pleasure is preceded or followed by related and equivalent experiences of the opposite kind of sensation, like all other essays in happiness. The purpose of indulgence in this connection is really to secure alleviation and variety of occupation and mental condition for health's sake.

But the pursuit of happiness as if it were a grand object attainable in present circumstances is a futile employment of faculties and an injurious act against the true prospects of Being. This is a vital master-fact, neglect to recognize which will largely invalidate any scheme of Life.

Chapter XXIV

MAN'S TASK

Man's mind has illimitable possibilities of discovery. Sense of duty is general among men, and is to be cultivated. Unravelment of the secret of Life's essence will enfranchise the universe.

Against the ignorance and the manifold imperfection of life as it now exists, the mighty principles enfranchised in Man are ever at corrective work, although with obviously restricted success. There is a gradual but uneven general amelioration of conditions. It is evident that the body of nescience, error, and wrong continuing in the universe is of monstrous proportions, notwithstanding the devoted labours of constructive Progress. Compared with the present, however, the life of the ancient world was in a much worse condition. Among mankind there was then proportionately greater ignorance; and there was a far smaller volume of progressive achievement. Reason may confidently suppose, therefore, that the further back it could travel in Time, the more defective and impotent would be the contemporary accumulation of human consciousness that would be discovered.

Knowledge is in a state of developmental transition. Considered over long periods, there is a rather consistent movement towards its perfection. Man possesses an innate prompting to probe Truth, and in the human organism are also mental potentialities for progressive achievement. By those means the betterment of Being is gradually and arduously being accomplished. There is, however, very little

manifestation of directly-wrought inventiveness in the developing agency. For the most part, even the finest genius of man operates either by merely concatenating or rearranging already promulgated knowledge, or by accidentally stumbling upon facts hitherto hidden. The methods of Progress are, therefore, not strikingly expert. The principal devices will be found to consist, not in express creation of startling novel contrivances, but in experimentation and chance discovery leading to new attainments that in a clear state of intelligence and knowledge would come without much effort.

The great truths whose discoveries constitute the chief gleanings of Progress have been existent or potential throughout all previous ages, and have eventually been brought to light by accident, and often through obscure labours. The subject-matter of such discoveries has, from eternity, been innate in the principle of Life. Ignorance has occupied the place of manifestation. Developmental Progress consists in securing disclosure of what has previously been existent but unexplored, and in utilizing the new knowledge by piecemeal constructive processes.

Hitherto Consciousness has always been experienced as a restricted principle or faculty. Reversion to latency or concealment is a process to which Man's perception is continually subject.

Ignorance is the substitute for those parts of Consciousness that are unborn; and, amid the obscure changes incident to progressive movement, Ignorance favours Error. Consciousness has had either insufficient development or inadequate application to penetrate the nature of Life's essence. That essence is but a single self-consistent Element covering the fields of Infinity. When this single element and this infinity or either of them shall be clearly understood, there will result a perfect Knowledge, enabling complete enfranchisement of the universe. The revelation

will, incidentally, explain the mystery of self-existence of Life.

The processes of mentally reducing all phenomena into one irreducible element, so that the latter shall be thoroughly comprehended, may seem an inadequate means for accomplishing the emancipation of Life; but it should be realized that the incidental analytic work will disclose the whole sequence of experiments in distribution of the Life-element that, at first very sub-consciously, and later more or less deliberately, were employed by Evolution for bringing about constructive progress.

The future state of perfection will be brought about by one master-act of intelligence that will incidentally explain all derivations and correlations, and will transform the Cosmos into ideal harmony. The intimate nature of the Life-element, the means of its original separation, and the manner of development of the results are mighty facts that have only in parts disclosed themselves to Man's imperfect consciousness. Not least among causes of the concealment is the complexity of later progressive phenomena. Intensification of consciousness, clarification and extension of knowledge, and utilization of these instruments for much constructive work are matters to which Humanity must apply itself in order to procure consummation of universal felicity.

In face of the fact that the Life-element is of a simple nature, an average mind is bound to find itself encountering the idea that the unravelling of the ultimate secret is not likely to be interesting in itself or in its consequences. Let such an idea be discarded. From results of the quest will be discovered potentialities of new and ideal division and recombination of the basic element—developments which will create more glorious variety than can ever until then have been experienced. And the variety will entirely exclude discord.

In Man's current life it is common experience that the matters already discovered lapse continuously into temporary or permanent oblivion. The relegation to latency is mainly, indeed, a need of convenience and an act of volition. Without temporary suppression of all but a minute part of the contents of Consciousness, the department of the mind devoted to current ideation would be crowded with mutually destructive images. The consignment of a man's ideas into a mental limbo, to which he has more or less ready subsequent access, is an incessant and universal phenomenon. And the fact helps to illuminate the collateral truth that man's enterprise has yet to rouse consciousness with regard to many matters whose existence has never been suspected. It is incumbent upon him to make constant resort to that other mental limbo from which he can extract new ideas. Until all truths are rendered intelligible, the possibilities of disclosures leading to extensive and invaluable innovations are illimitable.

The total accumulated product of developmental Progress is scattered, obscured, and tangled. The present resources of Consciousness are inadequate to gauge either the whole extent of achievement or the amount or character of its current instalments. Be it re-asserted, however, that, considered over long periods, there is a gradual movement towards a perfect condition. Meditations and speculations on that prodigious but slow and far from steady process of betterment give somewhat misleading and mischievous consolation to many men. They sit down in idyllic but pathetic contentment, feeling that matters are shaping well, and that the good influences will prove completely victorious in seasonable time without the smallest intervention of specific individuals such as themselves. Unfortunately, much of ostensible progress is engaged in penetrating into a mass of reaction that, by superiority of strength, is

really carrying the good achievements backward. Seeming progress is largely illusory, and the general faith in it is correspondingly unjustified. Many agencies which are in themselves demonstrably beneficial in tendency are largely contributing to the sway of overwhelming retrogressive activities. If advancement of truth and right needed no more than plain goodwill and work, the great movement would be comparatively very simple. Experience displays a far different reality. Attainment of the good involves operation of the profoundest policy.

Notwithstanding the deplorable set-backs to progress, a review of each successive millennium indicates a substantial increase in the total of valuable acquisitions resulting from human operations. The Providence immanent in Life gives much aid to the great work, and the Conservative principle that so desperately obstructs nascent good causes somewhat paradoxically favours establishment of their effective conquests.

Not until comparatively late times did Progress come forward as a declared creed. Thereafter nearly every leader of men came to adopt the idea, nominally and often in good faith. There are few human organizations that do not emblazon the name of Progress on their principal banner.

The World does not, in common practice, however, seem a very amenable place for the operations of Progress—albeit they are destined for accomplishment in that uncongenial venue. Efforts for improvement are forced to contend not only with obviously malevolent but with misdirected pseudo-philanthropic activities. On the other hand, the supply of real enthusiasts and truth-seekers is, fortunately, perennial.

By cultivation of lowered standards, any ills short of violent torture appear to be not only endurable but acceptable in the customary life of mankind. A rational human being, however, cannot willingly accommodate himself to conventions made under deplorable con-

ditions. Individuals possessed of sound ambition are conscious enough of the need for discovering a workable scientific scheme elucidating the general nature and proper utilization of life. Such persons know how defective are the existing systems designed for guidance of the human career. There is sad suppression of one or more of the reasoning faculties if a man experiences little or no perturbation respecting efficiency of even the very best of the generally current vital standards.

Numbers of people appear to defer crucial thought on the great issues of Being, so that their decisions on really important matters remain in suspense during their most eligible periods for exercising intelligence; but very few minds deliberately believe in a bad or mediocre culmination to the common existence. Casual cogitation on the subject usually ends in indifferentism or inconclusive deductions, and in an emphasized concentration on minor matters that present themselves more urgently.

The quest of the secret clue for Life's grand consummation abounds in the most vivid human interest. In this quality of powerful attraction, indeed, the undertaking is without a rival that will bear deliberate trial by the matured mind.

Widespread inculcation of the true object of life will entrain into the pursuit of research a volume of human impulse which hitherto, in default of good vigorous stimulus, has been engrossed in foolish careers. Human effort will, in fact, receive a common momentum of a quite unparalleled character. No other system of spirituality will have occupied man's mind and energy with the same amount or kind of intensity.

Perhaps the greater part of the volume of human activity has been unaccompanied by consciousness of valuable purpose in Life. However, Man works better than he knows. He weeds his World. He does much more; he is impelled to sow it with ideals. The lower

animals have no ideals; they are intensely practical. From the standpoint of materialism, Man is the least practical of creatures, precisely because he is uniquely ideal; that is, he is guided in very many activities less by natural appetite than by imaginative inspiration. His career represents a strange mixture of idealism and body-service—not, however, a harmony or amalgam, but a crude medley of incongruities and antagonisms. For immediate minor needs—which really require comparatively little study—he is inclined to be critically scientific; but, unfortunately, where his ideals, his real interests, are concerned he is as a rule peculiarly unbusinesslike and credulous.

Even the least considerable of men cannot shake themselves quite free of ideals. The grand ulterior object of the general Life is enjoyment of a truly liberal existence; and an ideal, however remote from heroic purpose it may be, is always the result of a call from some sort of representative of that vital culmination-to-be. In the clear pursuit of every ideal there is a fragmental anticipation of the destined coming of Life into plenary powers. The inspiration to each noble or imaginative object, or flight of human spirit, can be described as a kind of backwardly directed radiation from the Future, and among the principles that produce it is always Absoluteness. This principle is the spirituality which, continually accompanying the human being, attempts to insist that his various activities, especially those that are self-chosen, shall aim at securing the quality of Perfection. In possessing an ideal of any sort, Man carries about with him the prophecy of an admirable and happy termination to the general Life, the accomplishment of which much-desired object can be achieved out of resources possessed by himself, when these shall be capable of proper exercise. Unfortunately for the ideals of all categories, the obstacles and diversions that Man encounters in the spiritual fields are terribly effective.

In increasing numbers, however, individuals enter as active votaries of the full cult of the Absolute—a principle which, fundamentally, is as ineradicable as Life itself.

Among the fallacies that hamper Mankind is the pleasant gloss ever assumed by the Past, despite the irrevocable turpitude of so many deeds that have happened therein. The causes of the delusive attractiveness of the bygone are the treasuring in the memory of picturesque and other agreeable events, the mental obliteration of tedious and despicable concomitants, and the existence of a special perspective glamour attaching to all ideas of distant phenomena. The adoration that the Past engenders is often accompanied by a depreciation of all that the Future is likely to conceal. Notwithstanding this sort of idolatry respecting olden times, each generation of men is impelled to make large provision for its more enlightened successors.

At nearly all modern periods an individual has occasionally emerged as the personality that does noble things for an altruistic idea. And man has ever been undismayed at the conspicuous place allotted by circumstances to such a small being as himself in the cast of the World's drama. His shoulders bear many oppressive burdens, and beside them a little pack containing the tentative charts of spiritual adventure—schemes wherein are concentrated the hope and promise of the Future.

The earlier labours of every Man of Progress should occur within the province of Ethics. Thereby he will obtain general direction for his future plans of all descriptions. Nothing can be more important in the conduct of life than morality—that is, fulfilment of Duty. Unhappily, Ethics is one of the most backward of sciences, notably in the department relating to necessary adjustment and restriction in employment of good principles, such as their compromises with

each other, with their opposites, and with other circumstances. Construction of a sound system of philosophy of conduct is urgently needed for producing in individuals provisional conviction of mind, strength of character, and proximate justness of action —all so essential to Man's great work.

Until a widespread movement is made in the popularization of large-spirited Duty, the actions of the masses of men will probably continue to be actuated mainly by the natural inclinations of animal life—that is to say, to feed well, to be amatory, to sleep off fatigue, to stretch the limbs enough for maintaining vigour, to be self-defensively on as good terms as possible with surroundings, and to be a little sociable. It is curious, however, that many among even the wrong and foolish doings of mankind are not within the range of what are called animal proclivities. Often the ill-directed aims refer to self-respect, social authority, enterprise, or fame. Wrong as well as right efforts and deeds are devoted to these objects, largely to the neglect of animal appetites. High ambitions, however ill-handled, are thus manifested among entirely unprogressive groups and sections of the race. The idealistic incentives peculiar to man, which even in his worst times were dimly demonstrated to be good in themselves, are clearly destined to lead him into successful ameliorative courses.

To some degree the human being is ever conscious of duty. This sense occurs at the secret or other prompting of the principle of Right, working against evil-ridden circumstances. If there were not both a recognition by the individual of his duty to the master principle of Life and firm execution of the correspondent precepts of conscience, the existing imperfections of Man's universe would be enormously prolonged; and the one hope left for solution of the vital problem would then depend upon accident and mechanical advances of progress.

Many well-intentioned people take up ambitious work which proves to be ill-inspired. Hosts of others are perhaps still more infelicitous in resorting to philosophies which teach that existing evils are inevitable and are to be tolerated.

The scientific inquirer is an individual who submits to no restrictions in the intellectual means of search for final knowledge leading to amelioration of life. To him the most obstinate difficulties attending reason and effort are but provocative circumstances—obstructions to be surmounted and to be demolished. It is this attitude and the resulting intensity of action that also create the hero, the intrepid discoverer, and any other species of the man of worth—beings who truly invigorate the race and promote progress.

Man's close application to his constructive work introduces him to a sequence of accidents in invention which become revolutionary in effect. The discoveries in question are in a line with such fortuitous accomplishments as the first division of vital Impulse into parts and the institution of Mankind itself. Casualness of origin renders the fortunate disclosures irregular in incidence; but they have occurred with growing frequency. They include such paramount achievements as the idea of wheels for easing passage of carriages; introduction of vocal language, writing, printing, and telephony to communicate thought; and detection of the various utilities of electricity.

The movements serving as preparatives for the effort toward Life-enlightenment include the pursuits of Philosophy, the Arts, Literature, Physical exploration, Politics. The Arts and Literature are invaluable in progressive work; but it is to be noted that their nature has a peculiar liability to become wholly self-centred. Physical scientific research inclines to dissipate itself in a petty ministry to unessential wants. Politics have the misfortune to be not well regarded by other professions. But all of these great influences,

well directed, are essential factors in the paramount quest.

It is common and ancient knowledge that each one of the pursuits named is sufficiently absorbing to enlist ardent votaries, who often forego other interests in order to apply themselves exclusively to a very limited object which they have chosen from the fields in question.

But these occupations are only false allurements if they become ends in themselves—that is, if they do not lead on to the main effort of purposeful life. That principal task involves a prodigious quantity of investigation among evidences of primal forces and their resultants. The work is exacting, but it is also fascinating. Be it well noted that the processes include skilful prognostications. All present pursuits should be subsidiary to the endeavour for the final solution of Life's secret. The ultimate object is creation of the empire of the ideal, embracing whatever is good in Life's present experience, with infinite extensions and brilliant new ramifications. And the way to achievement leads through the field of every interesting constructive faculty which life has developed.

Chapter XXV

FEATURES OF TRUTH-QUEST

Mind has no intimation of its incapacity for Truth-search. The great quest which should be undertaken has grotesque appearance. So has every phenomenon of life.

In the main quest there are three planes of knowledge to be explored—namely, one as to the nature of the Life Element (that is, knowledge of fundamental truth); another as to the interactions and reactions of elemental influences and the resultant emergence of the great principles and cosmic phenomena (that is, knowledge of past development and its present results); and the third as to logical applications of discoveries from the other two (that is, knowledge of what is to be constructed and of the means to be employed). Solutions of the problems connected with the first and second, and perhaps the third, are possible by means of powers existent in all minds as at present framed. Part of the third, however, may require forms of Consciousness yet to be originated by organic development. The master-key to all knowledge may be discoverable in any one of the three regions of inquiry.

Among the enemies of rectitude is to be included any influence that debars or in whatever way discourages full and continuous investigation into Truth. The progressist asks that access to the intellectual implements of research may be absolutely free, and that opportunity may be vouchsafed for their most practical use. From Man's research, aided by the good providence that attends right activity, the desiderated solution of Life's problem should confidently be expected.

If the mind be incapable of eventually probing to the foundation of Life, Reason asserts that an intimation of the fact ought somehow to be forthcoming in order to obviate waste of labour in unproductive investigation. It is admittedly the case that no inference as to likeliness of either success or failure of man's radical quest can be drawn from the actual absence of such monition ; but, in view of the lack of authentic information on the subject and considering the large issues involved, it is right that the mind should proceed as if its scope were proved to be unrestricted. The non-existence, or non-disclosure, of authoritative indication as to limits of the mind's jurisdiction is consistent with either the supposition that there are bounds which will always prevent comprehensive knowledge or the counter-assumption that there are not ; and any vigorous individual intellect will not fail to give itself the benefit of the doubt. In all probability, however, its hesitation will already have been removed on other grounds.

Gratuitous presumption has, indeed, reached its climax in the idea that, because of absence of existingly visible means of getting the necessary knowledge, any element of truth that is unknown is unknowable to the investigator. Belief that Man's nescience on any subject will be perpetual is untenable scientifically. The only evidence bearing on the matter is against the view of permanent ignorance on any subject. One witness is the fact that, with regard to truths previously seeming to be inaccessible, the mind is continually arriving at new science and at avenues to more. In the workings of Life, secrets are constantly seen to have their destined time for enlightenment by common agencies ; and who but the purblind shall, because the period for concealment of one or other solution has not run its course, venture the assertion that there will never be an effulgent climax to that particular mystification ?

Failures of previous effort do not prejudice the repeated claims of research. Thwartings give zest to persistence of the feeling that right is to be done, at the same time that they evidence the defective but far from sterile material with which investigative work is supplied. Man has been surmounting this kind of difficulty throughout his history.

The spectacle of an absorbing universal search for a key to a secret seems grotesque ; but oddity of effect is common to every phenomenon of Life thus far revealed. Let mundane actualities be at all closely examined, and there will not be found an item that is not strange to the point of extravagance, although every one of them is conformable to practical reason. The ordinary life-monopolizing exercise, consisting of a series of futile imitative poses that superficially appear reasonable simply because they are conventional, is a truly ludicrous misemployment of existence. To the mind that takes a discriminating view, the usual methods of conducting a career are more absurd than the grimacing performance of a mountebank. The professional antic-player takes raw nature for the material of his travesties, and occasionally casts curious light on some sort of truth. The case is otherwise with the average mimes who restrict themselves to the common practices of life. Indeed, it is only by artificial and illogical limitation of mental vision that current customs can be made to appear, to an intelligent being, as anything save senseless distortions of existence.

All Nature is imperfect, and therefore partly foolish ; and elimination of the folly can be done only by means which themselves, juxtaposed against superficial criteria, sometimes appear charged with eccentricity.

All features of that Life and Infinity in the midst of which Man is journeying are necessarily strange when analytically regarded by his present intelligence ; but imagination may reasonably conjecture that the

common phenomena of life in the earliest ages of progress would, in comparison with the most quaint details now to be found, seem to the modern mind a procession of grotesque weirdness.

Man's own induction into life is fantastic; his career, considered individually or socially, is mainly chimerical; and his inevitable final experience, which he is ever contemplating, is always veiled in mystery. The formalities and ceremonies that seek to round off the singular fact of his demise are no more than a masking of the barely credible reality—save that, to some extent, they incidentally form an ironical attempt at pacification of the survivors.

If the masses of mankind were currently pursuing any great mundane purpose of philosophical significance, something would need to be said on the merits thereof compared with those of the scheme of search which in these pages is regarded as life's present main object. Beyond the manifold experimental labours of individuals or small groups—with which activities the theory here suggested is in general harmony—Man is doing little that can be regarded as grandly progressive. He is working at no co-ordinated plan for giving serious and substantive meaning to his own existence. The fact is intensely strange.

Could the generation now living find itself suddenly confronted with the world of, say, fifty years hence, a phantasmal impression would undoubtedly be experienced. How much more would this be the case if the revelation should refer to a period perhaps a century or two later! Everywhere life incites amazement.

Now, Man has advanced to his pre-eminence by persistent action of the principles of will and constructional progress, which have increasingly become co-operative with his consciousness. The knowledge of his station entails a sense that his work is very far from ended; so much so that no hint of even the direction to its climax is yet available. The justice of

discriminate human pride is assured ; but its great use —namely, its inspirational power—is to prompt man to exploit to the furthest limit the developmental progress by which his unrivalled position has been attained.

Human policy should be designed wholly with the object of research towards the ultimate attainment of permanent Felicity. The work involves a great increase of intellectual enterprise, especially in promotion of cumulative Knowledge.

The knowledge most essential to ameliorative Progress is that relating to the nature of Life and of Infinity, and of matters most likely to elucidate both.

The sudden and accidental emergence of primal Consciousness resulted in the creation of what is called Matter, and thence eventually of Organism and of Man. Division of life into particles and groups was the starting-point of evolution ; but separation would not by itself produce change in the internal nature of the several sections. The mighty breaking-up did, however, entail the coming forth of the various vital principles whose inauguration into activity had been impossible under a régime of life that was utterly lacking in diversity or consciousness. The great principles, in their turn, directed numerous operations in association with collisions and recombinations of divided matter, and thus worked for production of ever-changing phenomena. These facts provide some of the subjects which need intensive investigation.

Chapter XXVI

MAN AT HIS WORK

Inspiration is a common human experience. It can be cultivated in association between individuals. Examination of the cardinal principles of life is the chief means to secure progress. The quest of Truth is adequate to satisfy Man's ambitions, and the call to it is urgent. The culminating act of evolution will be an eclipsing transformation of all existence.

Every human being experiences inspiration. He cannot trace its origin more intimately than to the fact that it seems to spring from chance contacts of independent ideas present in the mind. The phenomenon itself is as familiarly known as any other common act in life.

One of the finest of man's possessions is cognition of the truth that no limit can be assigned to the possibilities of future disclosures from casual conjunction of ideas. It may legitimately be supposed that by revelations of this sort, prompted by purposeful or random thought, the mind can proceed from point to point in knowledge until the final illumination of verity and the plenary enfranchisement of life are attained.

Possibly, complete solution of the master-secret of Life will be achieved by a single discovery as to the nature of Infinity or of Basic Life. Whether that encouraging suggestion of general enlightenment at one stroke be justified or not, the studies of Man should be resolutely directed to the subjects already named, so as to attain knowledge that will serve as a key to permanent felicity. All else done by him is either subsidiary and inferior preparation for the same

great object or, alternatively, is mere idleness or mischief.

Every individual who realizes the significance or the desideratum that Life should be beatified will perceive, also, that there is implied a personal interest and a circumstance-imposed and truth-imposed vicarious duty to be taken up by himself on behalf of the future of all Existence. His own intelligence and principles summon each man to make an endeavour towards solution of the Problem. No one is immune from the duty. There cannot be too many minds engaged in the quest.

The Justice principle dictates an absolute law that what is right and paramountly necessary to be done should be done, and this renders the claim of research for Truth imperative. The personal obligation will not be discharged by delegating the task to other individuals or by seconding the activities of others in blind trust. But much of the requisite effort for the great unravelling will necessarily and beneficially be conducted by leagues of individuals animated with projects approximately at one on the subjects concerned. Each person must, however, take direct responsibility in the principal corporate operations of the groups with which he is connected.

Possibly, it is only Society—that is, the collection of individual wills, working accommodatingly and solidly with each other—that can give Man his final triumphs as the great agent of cosmic consummation. Important progressive design could not have been put into operation before human beings commenced to form communities. It is, however, curious that the chief factor in this connection is the intellectually adventurous individual who works in more or less privacy on behalf of Society, but so successfully as to secure adoption of his labours by his fellows. He forms a strange contrast to the men overtly leading or representing masses of humanity.

A genius occasionally springs from the human ranks, and obtains some new instalment of discovery to aid the work of the whole social body. New collaborations of individuals also occur, at intervals, to secure specific improvements in arts and knowledge and in their practical application.

Successions of individuals working privately and separately in scientific investigation have throughout recent centuries been contriving to link together their respective deductions and productions. And by this pieced labour splendid progress has been made in knowledge of the natural sciences and in their application to mechanism for physical purposes. These victories, indeed, have often come prematurely, for the moral organization of society has not been prepared for the great impetus to growth of populations and wealth and other powerful factors that has resulted from the multitude of mechanical inventions.

The desultory nature of incidence of past discovery does not suggest that there will be a direct course for progress in the endeavour to solve the principal vital problem. It is also to be noted that many and various preliminary requirements for the enterprise remain to be provided. Under existing conditions of knowledge, merely to cogitate intently and restrictively on the nature of Infinity, for instance, is likely to prove unproductive.

The wisest plan of action for each individual will be to begin with research in ethics, and to proceed with acquisition of some of the best available liberal education. He should afterwards attempt original work on specialized lines. By those means, if the student take due measures to shake off prejudice against heterodoxy, he will tend to further discovery, not only in actual knowledge, but in types and ramifications of powers of Consciousness. Much evidently remains to be done in the development of physical science, and it is easily conceivable that the salient inspiration

for solution of the Life-problem may be derived from this field. But the higher means to secure progress is in the examination and cultivation of the cardinal principles. It is chiefly they that represent the universe and its most developed epitome, Man. For attainment of the supreme object of Cosmos, the most likely agency is discovery among the manifestations of spirit in the republic of the mind.

Ideal evolution of life enlists all factors that show themselves to be in any way salutary, provided that they are not encumbered with equivalent disadvantages. The final act of the development, however, will not be a crowning addition to cumulative amelioration, but an eclipsing though natural transformation of all existence.

It may be the destiny of one individual's one sudden master-stroke of thought to attain the desired All-comprehending solution, and so, dramatically to effect the universal enlightenment. If it be granted that Life's transfiguration is capable of being produced by an achievement from the isolated work of one mind (one perhaps not previously conspicuous among millions of others), it is patent that every individual—or, in other words, every potential discoverer—should nurture an enhanced sense of duty zealously to enter into the quest.

The ruling spirit of the person who wilfully discards progressive work is not that of an equity-loving human being. He virtually abandons his share of duty to the labours of other individuals, who have no greater obligation than himself. Obviously such unjustified delegation to his fellows leaves life's true work to a distant future that, so far as he is concerned, is equivalent to Never.

Is it not natural for every human being to wish to venture on work that possesses real importance in life? There are, however, myriads who appear to contrive to miss such obvious promptings.

At the most egoistic, the most optimistic, and the most inclusive estimate, the independent personal interests of a man are narrow and small. They are certainly insignificant in comparison with practical participation in the happy metamorphosis of the universe. Consider the quest for solution of the tantalizing enigmas and intense and continuous troubles of Cosmos, for the means of recomposition of the state of unison in Life, and for the investment of that Life with complete and bounteous felicity. And let that quest be contrasted with the present all but absorbing occupations of humanity. The pragmatists claiming to be the practical leaders of men have embarrassed life with an excrescence of prosaic useless duties. These conventional demands destroy the main part of human opportunity, and involve a servitude which advantages nothing. They stupefy the sense of humour and other sane methods of valuation, and thus cover with the appearance of falsity all the saliently real concerns of life.

From its outset measures are taken to stultify the human career. They presumably have no such intention, but unwitting acts are as effective as any others. Hitherto customary education has been nearly as obstructive as instructive in its results upon the majority of people. Mechanically, under this training, the individual sets himself to slavish imitation of the thousands of millions of other futile ephemerals environing him in past and present. He becomes a unit among the creatures that may be likened to the insects circling in clouds about each other in one narrow space of the air. Practically, the common human standard directs the individual to live only a physical existence, with much redundant routine and perhaps some super-animal graces added. These graces resolve themselves into mental sedatives. A certain number of people do, however, realize that even the best copyist style of career is not worth living,

and upon this at present small minority unquestionably depends the ameliorating of existence.

Partly through familiarity with common events, man inures himself to the cruelty in nature, instead of attempting a labour of emancipation. All minor creatures unconsciously make an appeal to the generosity of the human being that he may use his powers for general and progressive life-betterment. The response is mainly a gesture indicative of little but callousness.

By grotesque multiples of millions, the organisms come—plants, feeble migrants, the nobler animals, man—out of their germs into a pathetic universal descent to dissolution. The participants pass down to the mingling again with motley matter, wherefrom their fragments will be promiscuously taken for remodelling into other forms of life; and the immense majority of the latter cannot escape condemnation to absolute futility. Only one unit in many millions constituting that enormous throng is practically capable of providing any contribution to the real betterment of Life. Contemplate the relatively few units that are human beings, and perhaps one in a hundred thousand of them is seen to offer, in a first-hand and energetic manner, something which helps the progress of organisms to produce significantly useful new results.

The foregoing truisms must at times confront every human intelligence. Incidentally they betoken the existence of a sort of cruel and compound purgatory instituted by the death of each organism; a destiny taking the form of continuous relegation of the body's constituents into other vital frames, all of them tormented.

Among various considerations on the subject there may occur a criticism that, in self-dedication to developmental progress, the individual is using his life for purposes that will not benefit himself personally,

at any rate in his present form of individuality. The nobility of an enlightened self-abnegation need not be pressed in the counter-argument. Nor is it necessary to dwell much on the fact that the individual constitutes part of the universal life that will eventually be ameliorated by his good work, and that he is thus provided with some manner of participation in the coming state of felicity. The most telling answer to the objection against undertaking dubiously requited personal service seems to be that the alternative to truly progressive work is a career which renders the individual a cipher—a phantom undergoing buffeting and mockery for a lifetime without useful purpose—a dupe of the pursuit of ever-tantalizing sensations. Surely there is no other method of clear satisfaction in man's life than to be useful, and the one way of utility is in the culture of general developmental progress.

There can be no possibility of evading the stigma of career-sterility for those who do not help in a substantial way, directly or indirectly, in the search for final Truth.

And, in those who have not neglected high duty, Life will signify practical worth only to the extent that they have successfully assisted in the great common work. Occasional resort to the fostering of transcendent ideals, purely for affection or rich appreciation's sake, constitutes an exception to the general fact conveyed in the preceding sentence. For it cannot be questioned that the act of pausing reverentially on ideals is valuable, independently of progressive motives. But in any case man's intellectual capacity will not admit of intensive admiration of the intrinsically beautiful or sublime for long spells together.

If an individual who has passed over to death could be revivified in his tomb, and invited to spend a further term in current life, what would be the nature

of his deliberation? It would probably be of a divided character. A retrospective glance at the meanness of old experiences would be inevitable. But, surely, there would also occur a sense of the fact that power to do good is better than a state of extinction; and a return to life would be chosen, with the single thought of devotion to the achievement of some instalment of progress. And it is the same actuation of spirit that all men who breathe, but who are at present reduced by their intellectual attitude to a virtually moribund condition, should be invited to welcome.

The quest of Truth and of eventual felicity is generously adequate for satisfying the aspirations and the round of faculties of Man and all men; and it would be pessimistic to suppose that the right standard of self-imposed duty will not gradually become enfranchised on an extended scale.

The community may be expected to simplify its customs, and, incidentally, what is called practical science will become less obtrusive. Really labour-saving devices will be continued and even multiplied; but there will be a notable lessening of the incubus created by a numerous variety of petty contrivances which have been introduced into everyday life, to the material dissipation of each man's time. Inventive thought will be commensurately applied to the field of cosmic theory. Associations of investigators will concentrate action thereon. On a very extended scale research will be publicly fostered, and the co-operation of the community therein will be encouraged.

Society will confront and candidly and openly recognize the universal problems and the general duties that they occasion. Special facilities will be accorded to individuals, possessing intelligence of proven capacity, to devote themselves to sections of the common inquiry. Organized collaboration will proceed apace.

Research colleges will array and co-ordinate the

continuous augmentation of knowledge. In order to secure impartiality and freedom of thought, representative alternative versions of phenomena, and of their causes and effects, will be adequately promulgated.

In those later times people will live in goodly hostels in well-appointed communities. Beauty, geniality, and enthusiasm of surroundings will inspirit the members of each social congeries. Resources of combined human activities will render possible the general construction of grand works—noble buildings and equipments, fine avenues, perfect communications. Kindred spirits will be attracted together, and culture of idea will thereby be engendered and maintained. Nothing can be more quickening to the body of knowledge than a free flow of interchange of impressions between interesting and vivid intellects. The fine arts will be employed and appreciated to a much larger extent than ever before: partly as promoting the contemplation which develops ratiocinative habit. The protean range of music and drama will find expression at clusters of splendid theatres.

Some of the hostels will have open studios, where those persons interested may familiarize themselves with operations of artists, amid the attractive aroma and other agreeable appeals of colours and mediums, and may become acquainted with intricacies of apparatus of skilled work that are so engaging to the vigorous mind. Here will be the fact of production in process, and the most delicate nuances of art will be divulged. Whether in the appreciating or in the performing, artistry is one of the forms of activity that the human being loves best of all. No excitement belonging to play can equal the interest associated with the craftsman engaged at his labours.

The work of analyzing, comparing, and synthetizing the mind's discoveries will proceed from conquest to conquest. Further large accessions will be drawn to

the ranks of the investigators. Human society will become consecrated to progress, and will grow into a grand congress of Mind. Arts will bring their urbane influence on work, relieving the ardour of scientific pursuits, encouraging creativeness, and suggesting methods for the Greater Quest. Science, literature, philosophy, will flourish everywhere, while subordinate labours will receive the appreciation due to them as processes for the maintenance of suitable vital conditions in the kingdom of Intelligence.

The true spiritual quality of man will be evinced. Mind, employing liberal investigation, will illuminate the subtle nature of the material elements, and will discover all their capacities. The constitution, reactions, and uses of the psychic principles will be manifested. An appreciation of final verities will begin to emerge.

How long the experiments will need depends on human application. Compared with the cumbrousness of much of the unnecessary work of mankind they will be quite facile. Not improbably the emancipation could be accomplished within a few decades were the world well directed.

Done that work will be, by one date in time or another. Reason cannot possibly countenance the idea that the intellectual Life, with its absoluteness of volition and infiniteness of outlook, with its apparent potentiality for securing eternal perfection and felicity, and with its versatility of resource, will for ever be baffled by any kind or combination of impediments.

Chapter XXVII

THE CULMINATING STROKE

There will be a transfiguration of life by one liberating idea. Existence will stand clarified; and an infinity of pleasure will result.

One instant glance of spiritual illumination in one intelligence—one thought, one act of genius, such as has solved many an olden problem—will light on the final liberating idea, and will restore to Life a unity, thenceforward not only harmonious but brilliant and delightful.

Immediately the critical disclosure is made it will communicate itself spontaneously everywhere. All the cosmic being will know truth, and will be instantly transfigured. For at that moment will vanish the whole materiality of Life—the mountain systems and their waters which divided races of people; teeming cities each a world to itself—together, a prodigal number of worlds; mighty republics made by generations of self-reliant men; forests and plains that gave lodging to animals in thousands upon thousands of kinds; the vast seas and their mysteriously multitudinous inhabitants; planets, suns, and constellations; the whole prodigious contents of the corporeal universe. In that first moment of the intellect's full assertion the evolutionary amassments slowly gathered by the labours of a million ages of Time will be cancelled. The Cosmos will have served its purpose, and Life will have discarded everything that is not of infinite value.

Thus suddenly shall the Will-spirit shake itself free

of its trammels, and emerge into clear existence, and know the plenitude of its power.

The legions of worlds, those crystallized figments of imagination, will have been dissolved by a master-thought springing from the genius of one of their surface-inhabitants, possibly without co-operation from his fellows.

Clumsy screens as the physical phenomena were, although so necessary as temporary expedients, their elimination will have removed every element which hides the essential oneness of Life—a unity thenceforth embracing an all-perceiving and joyous state of being.

Throughout the old times did not each creature's strange and complete transformation by death prognosticate the final dramatic metamorphosis of the whole fallible physical universe? But, unlike those creatures, the Cosmos will have died at the instance of a unique faculty which possessed the secret of converting the dissolution into a perfect new state of being.

Existence will now stand clarified; conscious throughout; rectified in all principles; exercising the rightful enjoyment of the universal resources. How simple will have been the enigma of Life; how near at hand the answer to the problem that has held men spellbound; how obvious the nature of the principle that constitutes Being; how delightful the gratification at its climax—the entry into unending pleasure! The slightest error of judgment or act of wrong will now be an impossibility; for there will be neither motives nor materials for such evils. Indeed, right itself will be of a new, a free consistency. As corrective media, Truth, right, progress, and the gamut of principles will have completed their work, and their assertiveness will be altogether changed in form. Their activity will have been required chiefly in oppositional relationship to ignorance and error.

Volition and Consciousness will, in the infinite state of Being, possibly continue to need certain ministrants from among their subject principles, which are merely phases of Will; but the new duties will obviously be entirely different from the old. Everything that implied sacrifice or asperity will have departed. Hardship is associated solely with error and effort, both of which will then be non-existent. Life will exist eternally for its present moment, free of all care, in plenary felicity. There will be no further knowledge to acquire. Now that the labour of liberation is accomplished there will no longer be occasion to discipline the mind to duty by the infliction of restraint. No longer will the capacity for pleasure be limited by a mechanical apparatus of mind whose vibrations thrilled but also produced painfully poignant reversals as inevitable consequences. Progress and Consciousness, freed of their mighty cosmic task, will be available gracefully to effect a gratification of desire which will experience neither recoil nor satiety. For the first time since the adventure of the worlds began every evil will be inverted into its right adjustment of principles. For the first time in the infinity of Life there will be an absolute continuity of pleasure.

Chapter XXVIII

RETROSPECTS OF PROGRESS

Evolution was inevitable, and so will be the solution of Life's problem. There is nothing arbitrary in the idea of a period of change intervening in the eternity of non-change. Cosmic elements were not designed. A law of rightness has been partly operative throughout evolution. This theory may be named Autonomism.

The series of processes of evolution or amelioration was commenced as the result of an accident which must probably sooner or later have happened, seeing that it was dependent only on juxtaposition of either two naturally co-efficient or two naturally repellent points in the eternally moving stream of life. The solution of Life's problem was automatically rendered inevitable when once progress was started on its career. For Life entered upon the realization of sequential and persistent powers of discovery, adjustment, and rectification as soon as Consciousness and Will were set at large by institution of myriads of enterprising entities.

Nothing arbitrary appertains to the theory predicating existence, in character of the universal activity, of a period of non-change preceding—and another following—the state of continuous change. The circumstantial evidence supports the view that there was an original period of unchanging form of animation. For mutation must have beginning, which beginning is necessarily based on a provisional non-mutability. It is absolutely necessary to suppose activity to have been beginningless, but such a necessity does not apply to mutation of forms of life. The

racial forms of life at present experienced are unquestionably changeful, hence the several kinds had beginnings, and these were based on a vital state which possessed undiversified nature and action. A retrospect of mutations indicates a primitive irreducible simplicity. There was not an equal incidence of change throughout time and kind, but sometimes a crescent or a compound development, sometimes stagnation. This fact contrasts strikingly with the presumed maintenance of evenness of motion or activity throughout the infinite times before and after the progressive ages. The mid-Infinity or transitional period, with which alone man is acquainted, is full of aberrations from normal courses.

The cosmic elements were not designed; they resulted mechanically from interacting movements of the separated vital essence. In their turn, such elements were, except accidentally, unable to design any act until they became assembled in a form that reached its present climax as the mind of Man. Most of even Man's share in Evolution has been undesigned. But Nature's factors and processes alike have insensibly tended to subjection to the eternal law of rightness, which has been partially operative throughout, as a restraining, mechanical influence. That law, one of whose names is Logic, has ever been available as a guide to the intelligence of man. Logic can enable infallible results to be achieved wherever the relative scientific data are complete.

The ultimate solution of the vital secret seems to have been assured from the beginning of progress. A yet unknown outlay of effort and time will, however, be entailed in the work—time not to be measured by years, but by agonies and by crimes. And the sooner the consummation is achieved, the less will have been the aggregate burden of incidental misery. Towards its execution the task calls upon all men of right will for instant and incessant endeavour.

The story of Life may be summarized thus: Primarily, there was beginningless spirit possessed of absolute uniformity of condition and motion, a state which was tolerable because unconscious; that unity, at some time, at some juxtaposition of parts of the current, experienced an accident causing division; the division occasioned struggle and error, but also, formed out of them, progressive acquisitions in consciousness and betterment, and these changing processes were gradually productive of a felicitous new unity which is to last for evermore.

And here is a somewhat more specific epitome of the suggested history of Evolution. Firstly, Life, a wholly spiritual, all-comprehensive, self-constituted entity, existed throughout Infinity; until a certain time, as a changeless, united current exercising the fund of impulse emanating from its own unconscious, undeveloped Will. The general rotary movement at a universal equality of speed caused constant change of contact of points. Secondly, these points possessed latent powers liable to be elicited by very rare accidental juxtapositions, in circumstances knowledge of which is obscured in the general ignorance as to nature of Infinity. One such juxtaposition took place, and resulted in creation of a nodule or knot in the circulating current. Thirdly, the nodule involved division and regrouping in the current. Fourthly, the division and its incidental processes caused the emergence of rudimentary consciousness. Fifthly, the consciousness at once and automatically brought about institution in fixed imagination of the entity called Matter—that is, of defined, formal, or symbolical ideation of sections of life. Sixthly, division of Life, by the act of introducing Consciousness, began the emancipation of Will, which is the essence of the spirit of Life itself. Seventhly, at the beginning of its development Will had to take the forms of principles bent, in their several appropriate capacities, on

the circumstance-impelled work of reunifying life. Division of life thus caused another and collateral separation of spirit into specializing powers or principles for the instinctive purpose of trying to restore harmony. Eighthly, Consciousness, original Impulse, and the other principles, and Matter proceeded by accidents and by various reactions to develop mechanically the involved composition of the physical universe. Self-locomotive organisms were the highest products. Ninthly, an accident caused consciousness to begin standardizing itself in the brain of one of the animals, and so converted that animal into Man. Tenthly, Standardization of Consciousness began the further emancipation of Will, giving it deliberative power. Eleventhly, Volition and Consciousness will discover system of perfection, and will thereby completely transfigure the universe. Matter will be dissolved, and the instrumental principles will be metamorphosed. The result of the transformation will be an ideal state of Life, commencing an eternal régime of Felicity. Throughout that eternity Volition, utilizing the principle of Consciousness, will create desires and will simultaneously ensure their fulfilment.

A suggested name to cover the idea of this theory of self-constituted, self-developing, Life-monopolizing Will is Autonomism.

Chapter XXIX

THE BLISSFUL EMPYREAN

Physical Nature cannot develop into happy beauty. In Elysian Life new faculties will be invented, and there will be continuous, varied enjoyment. Unpleasant memories will, however, remain.

Features of the perfected state of Life may be prognosticated by means of current resources of Reason.

The existing constitution and mechanism of the world do not possess a relatively large amount of ideality. Nature is essentially gross in construction and operation, and cannot be purified without an entire remodelling. Its institutions are inextricably compromised by obtrusion of the faculties of slaughter. Many of the external forms of animal beings most beautiful to the human eye include among their special charms the signs and shapes of organs of murder, struggle, and treacherous allurement. Other forms suggest suffering or senseless passivity. These several characteristic features cannot be made to appear ideally pleasing. Foremost among eulogists of existing circumstances are the professional Nature-worshippers. Owing to the character of its most representative functions, organic Nature is rendered incapable of developing itself into happy beauty. The present Cosmic Nature will certainly furnish no pattern of forms for the Elysium. There is a kind of beauty that, being referable to sense of fitness of organisms for given operations, will necessarily vanish together with those activities. There is also much detail in Nature that is lovely because of chance

conformity with the canons of pure Beauty. With examples of the æsthetic like these, there will be resemblances in the final state, but all the anticipants will have been of accidental occurrence. No true idealist can desire that forms necessarily associated with destruction in its many developments should be perpetuated.

It is incredible that volition, with a full command of the vital principles, will tolerate suffering of any sort of unpleasantness, and therefore it may be assumed that there will be one general condition or mood of Elysian Life—namely, that of Enjoyment. This state need not exclude the indulgence of occasional agreeable repose. The only class of exception to the universal happiness will be mentioned in due course.

The state of Perfection and everlasting Beatification will probably include far more faculties than any previous phase of Life will have contained. To secure these, special analyses, redispositions, and new combinations of the vital element will be put into operation by the will and consciousness.

Consciousness has strong personality among its properties, and is therefore incomparably more than a mechanical medium of external agents. Consciousness inspires and collaborates with the Will, and is itself the capacious sensorium of Life. The healthy, the permanent, state of Consciousness will be that of happiness. The mechanism which Consciousness and Volition will provide for achieving and maintaining happiness will include the means of constant change of idea and occupation, without which, it is most emphatically to be said, happiness could not long continue.

Who envies the porcine race its appetites—attributes which, if it could dream of heaven, it would certainly strive to incorporate there? In the permanent climax of Life, corporeal conditions will have ceased, and

therefore physical sensualism will form no part of gratification.

Humanity is disposed to take its feasts of mundane happiness with condiments of evil, which are introduced under a number of euphemistic and even spiritual names. How can these noxious incitants possibly be retained in a Paradise? No accommodating argument can justify them; they are destined to banishment.

Many curious and all but immovable predilections are but perversions of a just desire for vividity, and they will be displaced by more versatile exercises.

After full reflection on the attractions of exceptionable indulgence that exercise so much spell on man's imagination, let the mind summon in contrast any of those moments of truly transcendent delectation that are occasionally experienced in current existence. Preference will certainly be given to the latter.

Elimination of the mood of puritanism will be as complete as the eradication of vicious pleasure. True austerity in goodness has never been more than a guard against the disorder and wrongdoing that accompany imperfect conditions. Offences and defences will disappear together. Licentiousness will have been ejected, and there will remain a generous exercise of real felicity—not chastened, for it will be whole and unadulterated.

On the other hand, the final state of universal happiness will be subject to one great reservation. This will relate not to then existing circumstances, but to things of the Past. The exceptional mood will thus be of a reflective character. There can be no doubt that Memory will be retained among the functions of Life; and it seems probable that what will be remembered will not be controlled exclusively by happiness-bespeaking volition. Sheer indiscriminate consciousness of past actuality will sometimes intervene. Recollection will be a painful factor, in so

far as it must remind the eternal Will of the torture of life throughout the cosmic history. There will be perfect satisfaction in all other then current conditions; but it would seem that the full retrospect, which can never be amended, must necessarily remain as a partially disagreeable subject in experience throughout the eternal consummation.

The most optimistic view of this feature is that the painful recollections will serve as zest-givers to the enjoyment that will be continuous save for the interruptions in question. Such a possibility seems the more plausible and legitimate after considering the circumstance that it will have been integral Life itself, and not extraneous victims, that suffered past pains and calamities. But let not this thought palliate in any degree among individuals the current commission of offences. Every crime produces its own evils, which cannot be nullified by man's meditations on the common derivation of the author and the sufferers. The final universal Memory will be in a position to take more tolerant views, because it will represent all Life.

It is noteworthy that human experience includes many hardships which occasion pleasure in remembrance; and, although there are others that are for ever poignant, it may well be supposed that intensity of the state of general Happiness will speedily allay by contrast the effect of intrusion of these recurrently disagreeable reminiscences.

One of the peculiar details encountered in investigations on the future definitive state of Being is the scarcely questionable fact already mentioned, that some of the great principles will then have come to the end of their activities. When Life has attained its state of Emancipation and Unity, there will remain no need of Egoism as a defensive principle. In mundane experiences Ego is most conspicuously associated with awkward passages of life: most admiredly, with

great rallying efforts of the will; most frequently, with exercise of defence. Egoism is also employed in connection with the feeling of possession of special belongings. Where no enemy or opposition exists, no defensive faculty is required; where everything will be owned by a unity, no hoarding spirit is conceivable. The sublime state of existence will possess intimate Consciousness, with perspective and standardizing powers having the most comprehensive range; but Ego as an active force will be wholly unnecessary. For analogous reasons, the need of dominant Mastery and protective Providence will also have vanished.

It may be anticipated that the coming Happiness will consist only partly of spells of sweetness and soporific delight, even although the possibility of insipidness and monotony from any kind of source will have been banished for ever.

Chapter XXX

THE IDEAL SENSES

Old-time media will be preserved, so far as they conduce to ideal pleasure.

The continuous sequence of felicities will be contrived from some of the old-time media, as well as from many newly devised. All fair colours and designs, and the vibrations that cause musical sound, and other ministrants of fine spiritual sense, represent mundane resources that will have immortality bestowed on them. Their modulations and combinations will produce a noble and infinite range of beauty.

Two of the five senses of the human organism are possibly incapable of being continued apart from physical function; and as the latter will be non-existent, those senses may have to be relinquished. It is open to question whether paradise can have a use for Touch, or means for securing its gratification. If the sense is to remain, it will certainly be sublimated above its present nature. Even the perception of delectable smoothness, of comforting heat, or of the agreeable throb of movement, appears to be connected exclusively with the physical organism. Gustation—that is, taste associated with the palate—will cease. The permanent continuance of scent-sense is a little doubtful. The pleasure derived from perfume is comparable with the relish in the tasting of food; yet fragrance possesses states not much inferior in the scale of æsthetics to the most beautiful sounds. Possibly sensation of touch, taste, and scent will be maintained with completely novel causative bases.

Entirely new senses will probably be created to co-operate with the other services of Happiness.

Sound is the sense-minister elevated more than any other above associations with physical appetite. Music renders a truly liberal inspiration to Life: employing the serene beauties of mathematical law in the production of ecstasies, lavishing exhilaration on the mind, inciting enthusiasms, humouring meditation.

Music has invented its own brilliant system of colour, light, form, plastic content, chiaroscuro, most vivid life, warmest ardour, suggestion of sweet aroma, consciousness that is delicately intimate, movement the most flexuose. All of these effects are produced with scarcely a suggestion of materiality. Music possesses urbanity, humour, grandeur, imagination-filling opulence, simplicity, pathos, glory. Music discovers all the plenitude of Thought's versatility and endows it with distinguished and intensive interpretation.

The language of music is not so much articulate as sinuous, and its message is correspondingly subtle. Melody evokes a gracious volatility of spirit in the recipient senses. Round the clanging notes seem to come fascinating, infinitely widening circles of sound; in the suspended passages are probings of thought that is never otherwise accessible; and those movements which are rapidly expressed command and confer enlivening decision. From each mood conjured in the listener's sanctum of consciousness a phase of happy or consoling idealization arises. Music opens gates to the galleries and recesses of recollection; and in those places of enchantment it leads onward, so that the spirit travels delightedly, treasuring each step, finding new ways to emphasize the values of life. Music, in the very act of its expression, is invested in what seems a haunting self.

Music is free; in its amplitude building edifices which rise to a firm state of grandeur, yet constantly

melt their constituents into ever new sensations. It concentrates on some gorgeous piece of colour, which transmutes itself into another; and the latter seems to surpass the former and to be without possibility of increase of beauty, but is immediately succeeded by one more brilliant. So, in richest variety, the convolutions of the musical structure proceed until they are perhaps transfigured into simple forms of gentle pathos; and by those, pre-eminently, the music endures in memory.

Music renders the walls of human life diaphanous to the Elysian glories.

In current visual sensations there can be found beauties that are unconnected with suggestion of physical purpose; and this kind alone, among existing experiences of the eye, will be everlasting. But sight tends gratuitously to devise notions of materiality for pictorial effects, even in the case of representations of imaginary forms: whereas beautiful music is almost purely spiritual, and very slenderly conjoined with ideas of the physical.

Among the accessories of the beatific state will unquestionably be the glow of colour—in the range of hues that nature has produced, and possibly extensions that supreme knowledge will invent. Iridescence will abound. The glint and sheen of bright metal, the sparkle of crystal, the radiance of gems, give joys that assuredly are for eternity. These and the like delightful intangible emanations from substance are contemned only by the unimaginative.

Luminous resplendence will be perhaps the cardinal scenic glory of the Elysium. The graces of Light will be diffused throughout infinite space in all their resources of intensity.

On all sides, avenues and corridors, delightful in pure joyousness, will spring to the eternal sequence of Wish. And the volition can endow each one of them with immortality.

To enlarge and linger on these æsthetic delights may be liable falsely to suggest a static, and even a somewhat austere, paradise. Let the conception be refreshed by summoning what many psychic venturers would hesitate to use as an illustration. Let the consciousness recall the spell that accompanies theatrical pageantry, in its idealizing framework, its changeful surprises, and its opulently complex felicities. And, be it asked, what other essential elements occur in all that vivid splendour than movement, colour, light, and rich design?

Chapter XXXI

ELYSIAN VIVIDNESS

Life will be buoyant, and will comprise ecstasy, zest, love.

Life insists on action; and in perfect Life buoyant animation will assuredly be enfranchised by means of new channels of invention.

At rare times the existence of human beings seems to be located in a palace of gratification. Few individuals have not experienced an ardency in love, in success, in sense of beauty—an ecstasy that exalts life into transcendence infinitely richer than that which man's abstract concepts of Perfection can confer. Among human treasures there is also the Memory, which delicately tones and enshrines the glorious passages of life. Disillusioned as is the individual man concerning old faiths, steeped as he is in the sense of fallibility in nature, and staled by laborious and prosaic eclectic processes which are his only kind of resource in reasoning, every such man, at every point of experience, tends to be rendered dubious as to what embodies truth. In his latter days he will therefore often be found seeking chief consolation in the memory of past-realized feasts of the happy emotions. Be it observed incidentally that such olden delights have been culled usually, not in the pursuits of pleasure, but in cardinal events relating to duties of life. Though the experiences have become but recollection, there is a present stability, actuality, and sense of possession in former accesses of Happiness. Every human being has intensely lived such sensations, counterbalanced by affliction or hardship though they

were. Whatever be the illusions that Life has experienced, there is no fallacy about the heavens of joyous emotion tasted at intermittent passages of bygone time. Can reason sanction the idea that the consummation of perfect Life will not incorporate more than the equivalents of the ecstasies of pleasure that a baser state of existence has afforded?

Just as the needs of Life-rectification heretofore prompted the drawing forth of the great struggling, conquering Principles, so the call of Joyous Desire will move the mighty elasticity of Being instantly to evolve in Consciousness a series of special faculties by which many happy kinds of contrasts and versatilities of experience will be enfranchised. And these new faculties will succeed in transmuting the act of living into inexhaustible variants whose natures are as yet unimaginable. Existence will be blithe, clear, ideal; but, through all, it will be free, opulent, and vivid.

The whole intellectual field is an arena for the imagination, most exhilarating of the ministers of pleasure. Expedients for provision of engrossing entertainment to the infinite Intelligence will be amply forthcoming.

The culminated spiritual state will possess, above all other properties, that of fervour or zest. There will be a sensation of ardent geniality pervading the consciousness. Over the range of existence will flourish a healthful glow of enthusiasm. Warmth in perceptive faculty provides an essential medium for gratified appreciation of all beauty.

To engage the whole curiosity, to liberate and refresh the spirit, variety of sensation will be enfranchised in the Ego, even to the point of volatility. Unity of intelligent life has nothing in common with monotony. In states of being which are controlled by high consciousness, perfect co-operation of faculties involves continual changes of their exercise; and

paralysis or disunion comes in default of sustained diversification of the sort.

It may be supposed with confidence that the oneness of the eternal Ego will not be inconsistent with a means of immortalizing Love. The spirituality termed Love is the flower of the principle of Dependence. That principle is, like the others, destined to be merged in the infinite Will. But the power of Affection has evolved a profoundly distinctive and exquisite charm which cannot be suffered to depart; and therefore Love will attain an enduring apotheosis. For the special purpose of perpetuating endearment, Life will devise a reciprocity between separate entities, into which part of the Ego will at times be resolved. Some appropriated portion of Life will be differentiated into two counterpart natures. The dualism will be formed that mutuality may result. An interdependence of the two kinds or existences will be created and cherished. Each will possess a pride and confidence in the other. Each will develop a delicate understanding in the most minute ideas and wishes of the beloved counterpart. There will subsist a delightful sense of enjoying shelter in love on the part of each. More, there is severally a delectable interchange of being. Both, passing out of self, discover themselves guests of an objective existence. Each will enjoy a new universe, which is that of the beloved; and the two in unison will realize a transcendent state, gloriously perpetuating the loves of old time. The spirit of mutual affection will thus continue its enchanting influence within the ambit of the sole Ego.

Health carries exuberance of feeling, but is self-poised throughout. It is characterized by inherent equity and truth, absoluteness, and stability. This will be the state constantly experienced by the unified Life.

Consciousness is the sensory of warmth, light,

colour, tune, odour, and other gratifying experiences; but it possesses far more significance than is implied by that range of capacity. Consciousness enjoys a delightful amity with its own being as the very percipient or representative of Life, and an active, familiar communion of its parts, a circuit of genial interchange of ideas, a lively current of self-fellowship. Enfranchised Life will ever entrain consummate taste and wit, and will experience that internal hilarity which represents either pleasant surprise or innocent exuberance of spirit—the only forms of laughter that are good. Incidentally, consciousness will possess the art of contriving what is unexpected by itself.

Released from militancy, the ego will be devoted to passive service as an auxiliary to consciousness. The ego here envisaged is the spirit identified with concentration and autonomy. It will embrace Totality—the universe, and therefore have no antagonism. Its solidarity and universality are essential to the consistent and comprehensive action of the faculty of appreciation provided by the principle of Consciousness.

Consciousness will be transpicuous. Innumerable images will fill the scene of sensation, and perception will simultaneously penetrate to all. That the Consciousness will command artistry, in every sense of the term, is a reliable assumption; for without this qualification all the other possessions of the ego would be vain. As, however, other labour than exercise of option will not be needed in any production, the artistic attributes of the perfect Life are perhaps better described as those of an exquisite connoisseurship. There will be sense of preciousness, supreme interest, and catholicity in all that the Consciousness experiences. Only intelligence provided with absolutely comprehensive knowledge could wield the powers of appreciation indicated.

Ego will be loyal to its own principle throughout.

It will delight in contemplation of the fair passages of its former times. Divested of physical elements and of all falsities, such memories as those of pleasant nuances of quondam emotion and romance are treasures that are cherished for ever.

Chapter XXXII

RESUSCITATION OF MORTALS

Essential beauty of each mortal will probably be revivified. Æsthetic guises will be adopted, and will form a gorgeous living Lamp of Recollection.

Each mortal individual naturally desires personal participation in the future Bliss; and probability supports the hope that, in some sense, this will be accorded. It seems equitable, and therefore morally imperative, that the essential beauty of each being which ever lived should be revivified, and that it should, in some individual form, be invested with infinite life. There is a rational element in the view that resuscitated souls will assemble for perpetuity, to enjoy a state of intense and unceasing happiness. Has not each man's mind possessed precious chambers, wherein his friends have continued to commune with him after their bodies have been placed in the grave, and wherein delightful incidents of his past have lived on in exaltation? Has he not found multitudinous, aye, illimitable dwelling-places for those endeared beings and experiences? But the cherished ones have continued to flourish only as part of the individuality of their friend; not separately therefrom. In the Elysian state, however, the revived souls should be individualized again, within the embrace of the great Ego. They will then be intimately and continuously conscious of their participation in the Whole Life. Only that part of their activity which represented true virtue will be immortalized. Whatever of worth was realized in the

soul of each self that once lived in the struggling universe will be revitalized in the reliquary of a Life which cannot know death. Each of these multitudinous relic-lives will be a microcosm of all entity, and will thus have full consciousness of the joyful experiences of immortal being. Each will have a bond of communion with former connections, and will delight in genial relationship with them. The enveloping Ego will be utilized in co-ordinating this extensive companionship; and therein the universal Consciousness will maintain common enjoyment in what was good of former time. There will be neither provision nor need of organic constitution for the immortalized mortals. All movement and sensibility will be spontaneous. Limbs such as have been expressly connected with corporeal activities would be incongruous because unnecessary in the eternal state. From spiritual place to place, when they desire, the immortals will waft themselves by the agency of volition. Purely æsthetic guises will be adopted by them, for the external forms of material organisms would be meaningless. The totality will form one gorgeous living Lamp of Recollection.

Enfranchised Life will possess sense without material organs, movements that would ridicule limbs, vitality that would instantly consume body.

Chapter XXXIII

ETERNITY OF GRATIFICATION

An eternal continuity of pleasure is equitable, and will be maintained.

In the infinite range of delightful action and reverie, novelty and variety will be as resourceful as harmony is absolute.

The phase of volition known as Desire will be in immediate contact with the other phase—that which commands satisfaction. Life is to maintain one constant wish and will: that there shall be something superlatively pleasant happening at this instant, actual Now. For the perfect employment of eternal life Logic can indicate no likely alternative exercise in lieu of the gratification of rational desire for pleasure.

The full Life will suffer no reactions in its experiences. Each wish will at once be satisfied. And it will be replaced by an inexhaustible line of others, all equally effectual.

Continuous gladness is absolutely accordant with equity. Self-denying standards would be decreed only as the result of repressive conditions, which will now be non-existent and not rationally desirable.

Life will be exultant in a career which is freed from all that is vile. Saddened memory will be neutralized. There will be no temperamental recoils, and appreciative power will be indefatigable.

There will be no arduous occupation in the culminated state of existence, and therefore no repose will be needed. A mood consisting of luxurious

leisurely pensiveness will, however, be a highly agreeable variant in the states of consciousness.

Penetrating flavour, piquancy, a tinge of keenness are proper to all life in order to counteract a too mellifluous tendency. These stimulating qualities will be maintained in Life's permanent enjoyments. The satirical vein will have vanished; there will be no subjects or appetites for it. Nevertheless, a subtle flower of pungency will remain. It will appear in much of the appreciation of the Elysian activities. The quality of poignancy possesses many applications too charming to be neglected. It occurs in man's most exquisite joys. The discriminating mind is acquainted with a process of inversion of honeyed experiences which is uniquely successful as a minor adjunct to the delectation.

Spirituality, when disengaged from Matter, will possess degrees of intensity never contemplated by man. Compared with the body of ideal faculties of the old Cosmos which will be included in the everlasting Elysium, the harmonized life of Infinity will be incomparably more comprehensive in scope. This fact implies much more than an indefinite extension of enjoyment in the sorts of pleasure that have before existed. At the Emancipation great secret resources will be unsealed by newly available vital co-operants.

If complete knowledge had been practically accessible during the evolutionary passages of the universe, the vile systems that have sprung up within the immense span of time would have been wholly avoided. The event will prove that the anguish experienced from era to era has been rendered necessary by straitened intelligence.

The original state of All-Life was that of an active, uniform Impulse, without incentive to develop the range of its resources. The eventual state will constitute a triumph of simple knowledge attained as the outcome of a prodigiously lengthy series of tentative

operations. These will have been accomplished in a finite, and ultimately dissolved, Cosmos. A sequence of multitudinous divisions and conflicts and efforts will have gradually developed Consciousness to a point at which it could bring Life again to a unity; a unity possessed, however, of enlightened and enfranchised instead of ignorant conditions.

Life will enjoy a never-dying moment of ecstasy—a moment occupied by continuous change of experience. The Ego will embrace a psychic empire of glorious and beautiful invention. There the excitement enjoyed by a traveller entering into the pageantry of wonderful novel domains will always endure, for the realm will also be ever-new. And the grandeur of existence will be the paramount sensation.

Chapter XXXIV

DOUBT AND ASSURANCE

Rational theories have to include unusual features. Sense of the universality of strangeness assists in their acceptance. Doubt touches the root of all theories; but past successes in scientific achievement give promise to the Future.

The summary retrospect of Life will disclose a simple, almost a single and direct career; and not less grand than simple. It will reveal a crescendo of intelligence and volition, springing from ignorant but fertile element, and ending in an enlightenment which will transform existence into Elysium for eternity.

The unconscious uniform Life-force originally existed in a state of impetuous activity in an absolutely undeviating course, and it seems strange that this ignorant, unenterprising vitality should have lighted upon means to bring about its own gradual analysis, leading to the mighty synthesis which will provide the bountiful excellence of paradise. But is there any sequence of cause and effect, however familiar to man, and however reasonable according to approved criteria, that does not, under examination, appear to be infinitely marvellous? The wonderment roused by all phenomena justifies no faith in gratuitously extravagant romance as to origins, such as the supposed operations of exotic forces, however imposingly legends anent the latter may be stiffened and embellished by opaque incrustations of symbolism. But the fact of universality of apparent marvels does undoubtedly help the credence in theories which, although demonstrably probable according to logical

codes, have to share the common lot of possessing what seem to be bizarre features. Sense of the general mysteriousness surrounding each detail of existence rightly assists the mind in accepting as very truth a tenet which presents many semblances of oddity, provided the proposition as a whole possesses rational superiority over its rivals.

At present the human mind has relatively little thoroughly cleared, sure ground upon which it can develop the knowledge of truth. But the Past has not been unproductive of means for securing instalments of tolerably good ratiocination. For the rest, such precedents of achievement as are extant constitute a promise of gradual further improvement and of eventual complete scientific conquest. Man will arrive.