

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

scientists who still contend that the sole object of science is "the knowledge of facts, the objective investigation of isolated phenomena"; that "the age of philosophy" is past, and science has taken its place.* This one-sided over-estimation of experience is as dangerous an error as the converse exaggeration of the value of speculation. Both channels of knowledge are mutually indispensable. The greatest triumphs of modern science—the cellular theory, the dynamic theory of heat, the theory of evolution, and the law of substance—are *philosophic achievements*; not, however, the fruit of pure speculation, but of an antecedent experience of the widest and most searching character.

At the commencement of the nineteenth century the great idealistic poet, Schiller, gave his counsel to both groups of combatants, the philosophers and the scientists:

"Does strife divide your efforts—no union bless your toil?
Will truth e'er be delivered if ye your forces rend?"

Since then the situation has, happily, been profoundly modified; while both schools, in their different paths, have pressed onward towards the same high goal, they have recognized their common aspiration, and they draw nearer to a knowledge of the truth in mutual covenant. At the end of the nineteenth century we have returned to that monistic attitude which our greatest realistic poet, Goethe, had recognized from its very commencement to be alone correct and fruitful.†

* Rudolph Virchow, *Die Gründung der Berliner Universität und der Uebergang aus dem philosophischen in das naturwissenschaftliche Zeitalter*. (Berlin; 1893.)

† Cf. chap. iv. of my *General Morphology*, 1866; *Kritik der naturwissenschaftlichen Methoden*.