

tagonistic view, urged by Huxley, that the cosmic and moral orders are in hopeless conflict. It avoids the latter view because it regards the moral ideas and institutions of man as part of the complete process, as factors in the movement which leads in time from nature to spirit. And it avoids the former view because it holds that the ethical element which is manifested latest in the temporal process, is presupposed from the first and necessary to the understanding of the whole. The ideal of goodness may contribute towards the interpretation of evolution, but its own explanation must be sought by another method.”<sup>1</sup>

Attempts to arrive at a synthesis of idealism and naturalism have formed the characteristic feature of French philosophy in quite recent times. Forty years ago it looked as if France had lost for a time its international influence on philosophical thought, the philosophy of Comte having been its last contribution. In a similar way the philosophy of Germany had already before that time, with the collapse of Hegelianism in its own country, ceased to exercise a leading European influence. In both countries philosophical thought seemed to have spent its creative power. Being at home fully occupied with criticising, assimilating, and modifying the new matter and novel ideas contained in those two great systems, it could not settle down and concentrate itself upon any definite and commanding idea. Each of these two systems had also bequeathed to the age that followed them a definite task which planned out the work for many minds and many years. This task was

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<sup>1</sup> Sorley, 'Ethics of Naturalism' (2nd ed., 1904, p. 332).