

of the age: in science to extreme specialisation, in philosophy, to a discussion of separate logical, metaphysical, and ethical problems, such as have occupied us in the preceding volumes. Nobody nowadays would venture to rewrite either the 'Kosmos' or the 'Microcosmos'; the field in either case seems too large, the material too overwhelming. And yet the process of unification of thought has in neither case been arrested. Let us for a moment try to understand by what means this process has been or can be successfully carried on.

32.
Unification
of thought
not arrested
by failure.

And first, let us look at scientific thought. Whilst the range of facts and phenomena has enormously increased, a few highest principles or generalisations, such as have occupied our attention during the first section of this work, representing the uniformities termed natural laws, have suggested themselves to the human intellect—they have enabled naturalists to put into order and describe in more or less simple terms the otherwise bewildering variety of facts and events which surrounds us. The comparative unity or system of nature arrived at in this way is a purely logical one, which through application and actual verification, through calculation and prediction of unknown facts and future events, has received the impress of reality, leading our thoughts and regulating our conduct in the outer world. The success attained in this region of thought and knowledge has been so great that natural philosophers have attempted to construct systems of philosophy by elevating one or two among the accepted leading principles to the supreme position as expressions of the innermost essence of things. Such principles are, notably, the