

and industrial world, where the comprehensive grasp of details in a single mind has in many cases been quite as important as the highest professional knowledge of the expert or the inventor. Huge industrial enterprises grow up like organisms under the combining genius of great organisers, who themselves boast of no actual originality in discovery or invention, and they not infrequently collapse as suddenly with the departure of the leading mind, just as a living organism collapses when the indescribable spirit of life has left it.

89.
Why the
atomising
process is
inadequate.

The reason why the atomising process is inadequate seems to be twofold. First, the actual arrangement of separate things, be they physical particles or mental ideas, if once broken up cannot be again restored as it was found and seen in its actual existence; something is lost which cannot be regained. And further, the process of analysis, of finding the ultimate constituent elements, is endless: as space is infinitely divisible, so also the elements out of which things natural are compounded seem to be out of reach. The lane through which we walk in the attempt to reach the last constituent elements of things natural has—contrary to a popular saying—no end, it never turns, and the point which we choose for retracing our steps is purely arbitrary, fixed by the knowledge of the moment. The analytic process is irreversible. The point at which we start to synthesise or put together is purely arbitrary, fixed by our knowledge or rather our ignorance, and the product of such synthesis is accordingly artificial, not natural: the world of things, images of thought or practical constructions, is accordingly artificial; these are neither natural nor artistic.