

II.

The "firmament of thought," the all-comprising experience which contains in its slow and recurrent changes the whole of the world and existence, so far as this is accessible to us, presents the same alternation between analysis and synthesis on the one side and continually repeated synopsis on the other.

It is a remarkable fact that Hume, in his study of the Human Understanding, confined himself to analysing and dissecting the content of our mind, and to the processes of artificial bringing together, that is, of synthesis and association of ideas; that he seems to have overlooked the original order or setting in which these ideas occur and their totality or ensemble. Descartes seems to have taken a wider view of the philosophical task when he laid down his "Regulæ" or rules of method. The first three of these mark the three stages of thought just mentioned, defining them as: first, immediate evidence; second, division; and third, order. Now order or arrangement is not an idea derived from single definite sensations or perceptions; it is a something that remains in our mind, even if we neglect or forget the single elements which are arranged; it is what we retain of the comprehensive glance at a multitude of elements, or of the totality which the synoptic view revealed.

This totality or ensemble of what at any moment constitutes the firmament of our thoughts grows richer, wider, and more intricate in detail and order, as our experience grows: this enrichment is owing to memory