THE NATURE AND VALUE OF PHILOSOPHY

I take some delight in recollecting that I have had a role in the arrangement for the present symposium on the nature and value of philosophy. The proposal was put forward by me, although it might have been in the minds of many, and my intention was, I believe, not too unobvious. Even though, as far as I can see, there has not been too much of serious philosophizing in our country (or in this part of the globe), there has, after all, been some amount of philosophizing, and with some sort of continuity and global affiliations. It, therefore, appeared to me to be worthwhile to stop for a while, as it were, and to reconsider the very fundamental question in any serious philosophical activity, namely : ' What is philosophy all about ? ' It was, actually, a proposal for *putting our heads together* and rethinking the question of the real nature of philosophy, as well as its real value and relation to our actual living. It was hoped that thereby it would be possible to dig out prejudices and misconceptions, if any, to keep our study and teaching of philosophy on the right track, and thus reap the best out of the resources at our disposal.

In fact, rethinking the nature of philosophy is nothing uncommon in the history of philosophy. Sorcrates and Plato did it; so did Bacon and Descartes, Hume and Kant, the positivists, the Marxists, and, most recently, the linguistic analysts. This rethinking is still going on, as even an average student of current philosophical writings is well aware of.

Let me put the matter rather more bluntly. If philosophy is really a useless pursuit, as many people in our country (and some people in any country, perhaps) seem to believe, it is high time for us to bid good-bye to it.

If not, it is, I think, important that we understand the job as clearly as possible and do the job with all the seriousness it deserves. It is no use murmuring, complaining, or groping in darkness.

The Nature of Philosophy :

The problem of defining the nature of a theoretic pursuit can be approached from three different perspectives—its subject-

matter, its method, and its goal. It should not be too useful to approach the problem of defining the nature of philosophy from the perspective of its subject-matter for several reasons.

First, there is no one subject-matter of philosophy, but an indefinite jumble of subject-matters. Indeed, almost anything is or can be a subject-matter of philosophy when looked at from the latter's peculiar point of view. The scope of philosophy, as commonly understood, ranges from God to the electrons, and from meta-mathematics down to gymnastics and advertisements. There is hardly any province of human experience with which philosophy has not been or cannot be concerned. During the Greek period the so-called ultimate reality was the dominant subject-matter; during the middle ages, the reality was replaced by God and His paradise; during the modern period, both God and the reality were shadowed by the problems of knowledge, and, during the recent and contemporary times, the problems of logic and language have been dominating the field. Moreover, we now hear of the philosophy of economics, philosophy of games, and even of " the basic philosophhical issues posed by the controversial subject of abortion."[1]

If philosophy is, at least in theory, a study of *everything*, it cannot be defined in terms of what it studies, just as a person (or perhaps a demon) who eats everything cannot be defined in terms of what he eats, but only in terms of *how* he eats, or *when* he eats, or something of that sort. Sometimes, an attempt is made to define or at least to identify philosophy by presenting a list of problems and calling them philosophical, but it is not explained why they are philosophical rather than otherwise.[2]

A strict definition would require philosophy to have both a generic and a differential aspect in respect of what it studies, but this condition cannot be fulfilled, as it could be fulfilled in the case, for example, of such natural sciences as physics and biology.

It has been said that, in the main, philosophy aims at giving a general description of the universe *as a whole*.[3] But this is not what a philosopher always does. He may be doing this when, like Spinoza, Hegel or Alexander, he is aiming at a speculative, synoptic view of the whole, but not when, for example, he is considering whether it is possible to have synthetic a priori judg-

ments. It has also been said that philosophy differs from all special sciences in that its problems are of the highest degree of generality. It is, indeed, true that its problems are usually of a general nature; but it is not clear what could be meant by the *highest* degree of generality in each case. When, for instance, a philosopher considers how colours are to be distinguished from their physical correlatives, it is not clear whether his problem is more fundamental than the question how time may be considered to be the fourth dimension of space.

The truth seems to be that it is only in its method and point of view that we can expect to discover the differentia referred to above. Why it cannot be discovered in its subject-matter, we have already seen. It is also not difficult to see why it cannot be discovered in its *goal*. If we call its goal theoretic, so is that of pure science; if we call its goal practical, so is that of stenography or gastronomy; if we call its goal both theoretic and practical, so is that of mathematics or hydrography. In so far as philosophy is concerned with the ultimate reality, the aim of philosophy is perhaps entirely theoretic; but problems concerning morals or bare existence are not surely entirely so.

It seems true to say that the only sure way to identify a problem as philosophical is to show, first, that it is theoretic (though not necessarily without a practical bearing in every case), and, secondly, that it is such that it can be and should be solved only by a certain method. This is the method of *reflection*, the method of argument and analysis, to put it in a nut-shell.

But here we may have gone too far. Even if one were prepared to accept that philosophy can be defined or distinguished only by its method, its procedure and point of view, one might still ask if this characterization of its method, was, indeed, final. Let us, therefore, consider this point in some detail.

There are four possible methods of investigating a theoretic problem : the method of authority, the method of experience (observation and experiment), the method of reflection (argument and analysis), and the method of intuition. The method of authority is fundamental in theology, and widely used in common sense and science, although it is never a final court of appeal in the latter. The method of experience is fundamental

to all natural sciences, and so on. But philosophy does not recognize any authority except insofar as it ventures into metaphysical or cosmological reflections based on scientific discoveries, or, more. generally, into any inquiry which involves reflection on scientific data of any variety. Russell's analysis of matter, for example, has much to do with modern physics, or Ryle's philosophy of mind makes an extensive use of psychological findings. But philosophy accepts the authority of science only in this sense, and only insofar as it believes that science is, at bottom, non-authoritarian.

The method of experience is foreign to philosophy, because if philosophy were based on obvervation and experiment, it would have been a search after the kind of knowledge which the natural sciences investigate. In that case philosophy would have been only one among other sciences, retaining its difference, not in essence, but perhaps only in the degree of generality or just in name. Natural sciences study *observable* facts, aiming at discovering *fresh* observable facts, but, whether philosophy aims at discovering any kind of fact or not, it at least does not aim at discovering any kind of *observable* facts. Observation, therefore, cannot be the proper method of it. Moreover, observation cannot be the method of philosophy because philosophical propositions, even when they are explanatory hypotheses concerning facts of a certain kind, are not confirmed or confuted by a discovery of *further* facts, as it is the case with scientific hypotheses.

The option now remains only between *reflection* and *intuition*. Historically, it is true that there have been exponents of intuition, and the intuitionists have indeed been called philosophers. But if they have been *called* philosophers, they cannot be excluded from the class of philosophers straightway. This exclusion can be justified or proved desirable only in either of the following ways :—

(1) It may be shown that, whereas philosophy aims at definite, impersonal, and verified knowledge of whatever subject it may be concerned with, intuition, because of some intrinsic limitations, is not a dependable instrument for such a purpose.

(2) Even if intuition is a dependable instrument and compares well with reason, it is so different from reason that both

cannot be the methods of the *same kind* of inquiry (it remaining understood that philosophy has to be defined with reference to its method). To continue to include both as methods of the same kind of inquiry would in that case be purely artibrary and a matter of choice.

Let us take them up one by one. One might even question whether philosophy is, indeed, a search after definite, impersonal, and verified knowledge. But it cannot be denied that many or most of the philosophers look upon philosophy as something of that sort. It is well known that Descartes took up the mathematical procedure and initially doubted all sources of knowlegde only in order to arrive at knowledge that was beyond all question. If this point be not granted, we would have two theoretic aims—first : definite, impersonal and verified knowledge, and second : indefinite, personal and care-free conjectures (or feelings)—and would be obliged to consider whether both the aims should be called philosophical.

Let us, however, assume that this point has been granted, that philosophy is, indeed, a search for a kind of knowledge which transcends personal conjectures, personal feelings, and is prepared to subject it self to reasonable tests. But if so, intuition is at once discredited in the first of the two ways. It may be recalled here that the reflective procedure does not and cannot exclude intuition as a kind of direct, immediate perception of truths. Reflection as a method of argument and analysis should welcome correct intuitions as delightful short-cuts. Moreover, argument or analysis must begin with something already there, on pain of losing itself in an infinite regress. The ultimate premises or basic data must be obtainable in some direct way; and indeed sensations and feelings are intuitions in this ordinary sense. What discredits intuition is that it claims to stand by itself, not necessarily subjecting itself to rational examination or reasoned proof. It is not necessarily unprepared to be corroborated by experience or reason, but if the latter comes into conflict with it, so much the worse for them. It is this which renders intuitionism so fundamentally different from the logical procedure, with the result that the two procedures *cannot* be taken to be methods of the same kind of inquiry.

Moreover, argument, test and proof are inter-personal public affairs, whereas intuition is essentially private. It is especially clearly so in the case of the mystic who claims to have intuitions with 'inexpressible' contents. The intuitive procedure thus permits its practitioners to adopt private criteria of testing beliefs, while it is logically impossible that there are any such criteria. To claim to have an absolutely private criterion of test is actually to decline to put one's beliefs to test.

Suppose, however, that intuition is, indeed, able to furnish us with a knowledge of philosophical truths, that it has a strange kind of ability for entering, as Bergson would say, into the very heart of mysteries which sense or reason is (*a*) quite unable to fathom, or (*b*) only equally able to fathom. But in either case it is still legitimate to ask whether intuitionism should be included in philosophy. If (a), were true, it only would follow that reason as an organ of philosophy is worthless, that philosophy, insofar as it claims to be based on reason, is impossible. It would not follow that the search for the said kind of truths, based on intuition, would be pihilosophical, unless 'philosophical' were definable in terms of subject-matter (which has already been found to be impossible). This search would be a commendable one, but would require to be called by a different name unless we were prepared to be arbitrary in naming. But, what is more interesting the same conclusion would follow even if (b) were true. Unless it is legitimate to characterize two travellers in terms of their place of arrival, one travelling by air is not of the same kind as the one travelling on foot. A soothsayer is not the same kind of person as one making scientific predictions, even if the pronouncements of both are equally correct.

In fact, intuition, of whatever variety, is the same in form as sensation (or any other actual or possible kind of immediate awareness) and just as sensing is not doing philosophy, however important a matter sensing may be, so also intuiting is not doing philosophy either. Sensing is not investigating; so also intuiting. Of course, an analytic description of either sensation or intuition would be philosophy; and if intuition were really a special kind of acquaintance, it would be a statement (an important statement) in philosophy to say *that*. But intuition is not the same as this statement, or any statement, for that matter.[1]

The General Nature of Philosophical Assertions

With this in mind, our next question would naturally be : What, precsisely, do we aim at knowing by the reflective method? If *facts* be the answer, the pertinent question would be : What facts ? Are there two kinds of facts, say, observable and non-observable, and are the later kind of facts revealed in philosophy? Well, we hear of a distinction between particular facts and general facts. That I am mortal is a particular fact, but that all men are mortal is a general fact. We hear even of a distinction between positive facts and negative facts. Even though the existence of negative facts is a question-mark, we still somehow understand the distinction. But what about the distinction between observable and non-observable facts ? What kind of fact would be a non-observable fact ? A non-observable fact, let us say, would be one which we could only think of but never be *acquainted with.* But why is acquaintance in this case impossible ? Possibly because none of the sense-organs we possess is good enough for the purpose. But if it is alleged that no sense-organ or, for that matter, no organ of direct acquaintance, however, powerful, would be good enough; if, in other words, an acquaintance with such facts were impossible *in principle*, then one could perhaps reasonably doubt the existence of any facts of this kind. Aware of the possibility of a purely *verbal* dispute, we may define a fact as whatever is the case or as whatever there is, and it is not clear why, while the special sciences are engaged in discovering various kinds of facts, there should be a leftover of so-called non-observable facts for philosophy to dig out.

The special sciences study things and events of different categories, but these are all natural categories in the sense that they are defined solely on the basis of an observation of nature. Water is a natural category, so is sulphur, vertebrates are a natural category, so are mammals. The function of a special science is to assign the things and events within its field to different categories and to formulate the uniformities that are discoverable in them. The things and events are the facts it studies; the uniformities are the models into which these facts are thrown; they are not facts of a fresh kind; they are not what constitutes the

Universe, but only the regularities displayed (or rather taken as being displayed) by facts that really constitute the Universe.

A philosopher, working in the field of metaphysics (precisely, constructive or synoptic metaphysics) takes over these uniformities and tries to bring them under broader uniformities. He is thus only a further step away from facts—engaged, not in discovering fresh facts (namely, unobservable facts, or something of that sort) but only in rearranging the facts of the scientists under wider generalizations or more fundamental categories. But still there is something that makes all the difference.

The categories which scientists work with are *natural* or factual categories for the reason indicated above; but the categories a metaphysician works with are not natural in this sense. They are supplied by reason a priori. While water and sulphur are natural categories, substance and quality are not; reality, being, becoming, one, many are not all the more. Sulphur is seen, discovered, experimented upon; but substance and reality are nothing of that sort. But if the categories of a metaphysician are not natural or factual, in all plausibility, they could only be *logical*. We could also say that while the categories of special sciences are descriptive, those of a metaphysician are essentially prescriptive or normative. A metaphysician, unlike a scientist, proceeds with some basic a priori norms or standards in hand, and seeks to reconsider and rearrange facts in the light of them.

The facts, for the metaphysician, are already there. His question, for example, would be : When or under what conditions, should we call a fact real, and when only an appearance ? As I look at the paper-weight on the table, it displays or seems to display perfect constancy of position and character. I, therefore, call it a real paper-weight. If, instead, it has started appearing and disappearing without any apparent reason, I would tend to call it ghostly. But when I call it real, it thereby does not gain in quality; it remains just the same paper-weight as it was before. Just as a thing does neither gain nor lose in size when it is called large or small (or larger or smaller than something else), so also facts neithter gain nor lose in quality when metaphysical categories are applied to them. Metaphysical thinking

about things is like shelving books in order of classification, like calling a person the father-in-law of Mr. Khan, of Mrs. Sengupta (and definitely not of Miss Thomson).

And the same is true of philosophy in its other fields. In *epistemology* the categories of belief, knowledge, opinion, certainty, probability, etc. are all a priori, supplied by reason. The facts to be categorized, in this case, are the facts of perception, thought, intuition, imagination and inference, and what the philosopher considers (in addition to discovering and formulating these categories) is which cases of perception, for instance, are knowledge, which judgments of perception are only probable, and so on. In *ethics*, as is well-known, the philosopher's procedure is thorougly normative. In the *philosophy of language*, including meta-ethics and other meta-theories, the philosopher proceeds to rearrange facts of language by applying certain logical norms such as those of the criteria of meaningfulness, ambiguity, synonymy, and so on. Even when the philosopher is engaged merely in clarifying the meanings of basic expressions used in other disciplines, he is applying norms of clarity definable in terms of ordinary idioms, direct observation, or something of that sort. In brief, whatever area of facts or experiences philosophy may be concerned with, its aim, unlike that of science, is essentially not to discover *further* facts in the area, but to clarify or rearrange the facts already known according to certain a priori logical models.

The Value of Philosophy

In considering the value of philosophy, the point of reference is often left unclear, if not altogether understood. Value with reference to what ? If human life in general be the answer; philosophy undoubtedly has a value. The argument is simple enough. At least the philosophers themselves enjoy their business; hence it has a value in *their* life; therefore, it has a value, because philosophers are after all human beings. It would be useless to argue that philosophers constitute only a small minority, since pilots too are a small minority; or to argue that philosophers are an exceptionally peculiar class of beings, since the mountain-climbers are also a peculiar class.

In all probability, when philosophy is set aside as a worthless pursuit, the point of reference is what is known as *practical*

life. But what life is practical ? I have so far come across no formal definition of ' practical life ', but have come to hold that by practical life is generally meant the life in which we take care of the *body* and work for its continuation through generations. Besides intake of food, dressing, shelter, and things of that sort, some light amusement may also be involved, such as may be essential for the good care the body itself; but that is all.

If philosophy is condemned as worthless because it contributes little or nothing to practical life so defined, we may proceed by asking two questions : Is it necessary for philosophy to contribute to practical life in order to be worthy or valuable ? Does philosophy really contribute nothing to practical life ?

A person may be interested in activities which have little or nothing to do with practical life as defined above. In fact, poets and artists are often so interested. There does not seem to be any argument by which such people could be prevented. If physical pleasures are worth having, there seems no reason to doubt that intellectual pleasures are at least equally worth having; if the care of the body is desirable, care of the mind seems at least equally so. Persons caring for the mind (precisely, the philosophical mind) cannot be stopped unless their interests unjustly interefere with the interests of those caring for the body; but the converse is equally true.

Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between being valuable and being merely useful. A thing can be valuable without being useful at all. A person may enjoy looking at the Taj absolutely for the sake of the enjoyment itself, just as he may enjoy the same because he wants it to help him in his convalescence. In fact, to be useful is to be a means to some end, and the end is really what is possessed of value. ' Useful ', therefore, is not necessarily a word of commendation. Something that is valuable may of course, be useful at the same time, but it need not be; while what is useful may be entirely without any intrinsic value.

Aristotle, long ago put forward two main arguments in defence of the superiority of philosophy and its freedom from the bondage of utility. (1) One of the arguments is logical—rather, analogical. A free man is superior, in the sense of being more honourable or more admirable, than a slave; so also is philosophy,

which we pursue for its own sake, than those branches of knowledge that we pursue for the sake of some utility. (2) Philosophy as a study of first principles is not bound to utility because "it is when almost all the necessities of life and the things that make for comfort and recreation had been secured that such knowledge began to be sought.[5]

These arguments are worth considering. Even if pure knowledge be not, as Aristotle thought, superior to useful knowledge, there is no reason why it should not be equal in merit as long as there are people to enjoy the pleasures that accrue from both. Again, it is only natural that people will search after the pleasures of pure knowledge only when they have been able to meet their bare physical needs. It is nothing surprising if pure wisdom, just as pure poetry or pure art, cannot grow in an empty stomach. At the same time, it must be clear that, since there is no priori reason for considering theoretic pleasures as superior to other kinds of pleasures, lovers of pure philosophy should not consider themselves to be intrinsically superior to other classes of people; nor have they any right to feed on the labour of the latter. Unless, therefore, philosophy makes any contribution to the 'practical' life of the common people, it can live and thrive only under the private initiative of the philosophers themselves.

It may now be considered whether philosophy does or is able to make any contribution to practical life, after all. This is a question which, naturally, puts a philosopher in an awkward situation. If he answers it negatively, he may not be telling the truth; if affirmatively, he may look like an impudent self-advertiser. The question, however, may be approached historically or a priori. The historical approach, obviously, should be left to the historian on the sociologist. Still I may venture to speak a few words.

What is most important here is a general truth which seems boastful and high-sounding but is, indeed, a fundamental fact. As any student of the history of science knows, towards the beginning of man's intellectual culture any theoretic inquiry was known by the name 'philosophy', and the special sciences had only gradually stemmed out of philosophy at different stages of the latter's development. Thales, who is known in history

as the first scientific theorist, is also known as the father of philosophy in the West. No history of science can be written without mentioning such philosophical stalwarts as Pythagoras, Aristotle, Avicenna, Descartes, and Leibniz, not to speak of numerous other major or minor figures. Philosophers have inspired investigations not only in the field of mathematical and natural sciences but also in other fields.—The ancient Greeks emerged out of the mythological period only through the persistent activity of their philosophers; the relative darkness of the middle ages fell upon the Western world when the philosophical spirit of the Greeks lost its original vitality. It does not seem that the social and political thinkers such as Hobbes, Rousseau, and Voltaire, and, later, the most challenging figures such as Marx and Engels would have been the kind of thinkers they were if their minds had not been nourished in philosophical culture. I do not think that Russell would talk about politics, religion, and life in the way he did unless he was the kind of logician and philosopher he was, or that his suggestions regarding morals and the conquest of happiness would be the same as they were, unless he was the kind of philosophical personality he really was. In short, it could be said in a general way that the factors that have been mainly responsible for the growth of civilization and culture are the freedom of thought and action, systematic opposition to religious fanaticism as well as such absurd political theories as the Divine Right theory of Kings, and rational investigation of nature, and that philosophers have been the champions of all these, sometimes even against oviours hazards.

Coming to the priori approach, it seems true to say that a serious study of philosophy or any serious philosophizing is likely to have a wholesome effect upon the nature of a person mainly in the following ways.

(1) As a result of thinking, searching and reflecting, his power of thinking is likely to improve considerably. Practice makes perfect, and it is not clear why this epithet should not hold good in the case of philosophy.

(2) As a result of critically considering problems which are popularly taken in a naive care-free spirit, he is likely to develop a critical attitude, i.e., an attitude of taking almost anything in a spirit of unbiased deliberation and scientific examination; and

only naturally should this attitude be transferred from theoretic to practical life. A person who has improved his muscles by doing gymnastics can and does use them beyond his gymnastic arena, and, conversely, a person willing to make a good use of his muscles in his work-a-day life cannot but spend some time 'uselessly' in a gymnasium.

(3) Being seriously concerned with apparently useless problems and abstract, general concepts, he is likely to be partially withdrawn from petty superfluities of ordinary life and view things in a spirit of moderation, thoughtful sacrifice, and calm contentment. Through the greatness of the Universe which a philosopher contemplates, as Russell remarked long ago, his mind is also rendered great, so that he can more or less be above "narrow and personal aims", and have a life which, in comparison with the instinctive life, is "calm and free".[6]

(4) Last of all, a person engaged in free and impartial contemplation, which is what philosophy is, is likely to be impartial in his practical and emotional life, and nothing, obviously, could be more urgently wanted in a system of practical life which is to be upright and happy. To quote Russell again : "The mind which has become accustomed to the freedom and impartiality of philosophic contemplation will preserve something of the same freedom and impartiality in the world of action and emotion. The impartiality which, in contemplation, is the unalloyed desire for truth, is the very same quality of mind which, in action, is justice, and in emotion is that universal love which can be given to all and not only to those who are judged useful or admirable."[7] This, I hope, needs no comment.

The social effect of all these should be wholesome, and this wholesomeness is something which is not only important but indispensable in any good and happy society. For there to be a good society, there must be good individuals; the former presupposes the latter and not conversely; and this, I think, should throw enough light on the kind of importance philosophy enjoys even in our so-called practical life. It, of course, remains true, and this is significant, that philosophical activity can be immensely useful in this sense, only if it is done with the earnestness it deserves. Lack of earnestness in doing philosophy will, in turn, contaminate practical life and do all the damage it is able to do.

It may be recalled here that we have so far been considering the utility of *theoretic* philosophy (in which knowledge is sought for its own sake). But a department of philosophy remains, called the *philosophy of life*, which is directly concerned with what we have defined as practical life. When the Pythogoreans prohibited the eating of beans, when the Stoics preached and practised the principle of austerity, when Plato conceived his Republic, when Rousseau expounded the gospel of equality, and when Russell pondered over the conquest of happiness or the principles of social reconstruction, they were all delivering fragments of this philosophy of life. It seems true that this department of philosophy is not only inescapable but immensely profitable, and at least a great deal of our sufferings is due to a neglect of this.

One word of caution, however. Even though in the philosophy of life a philosopher is directly concerned with the question of well-being, he cannot lose sight of the philosopher's peculiar method and point of view. Here also he is after the true or the rational—though mainly the true or the rational concerning the best means of promoting human welfare—and his method is logical reflection, as elsewhere, and not authority or intuition. Moreover, his interest in welfare does not entitle him to distort or bungle with facts, although his theory may not completely exclude the desirability of distorting or suppressing facts to a certain extent in very special cases. It is odd to believe that, at the level of theory, our interest in truth and our interest in welfare can ever come into conflict; rather, while it is absurd to believe that welfare can ever determine the nature or degree of truth, it is reasonable to expect truth to help determine the nature and degree of welfare. If a proposition were known to be true beyond all doubt, no interest in welfare could demand that it be denied in a theory of life. But if the truth of a proposition is still a matter of debate (e.g., that there is a life after death, or that God exists, or that mind is a different substance from matter), a theory of life may assert, deny, or emphasize it according to its advantage. A so-called tender-minded philosopher of life may meddle with facts in this sense, whereas a tough-minded philosopher may not feel any such queer theoretic requirement.

If this respect for truth or rationality is essential in the case of the philosophy of life, it is obviously more so in the case of pure

philosophy. In the oriental tradition (as also sometimes in the western tradition) a general tendency is to demand that truth cannot lose sight of the problem of human welfare. It is believed that philosophy is primarily interested in human welfare–rather in human salvation—and, therefore, a correct philosophical theory must somehow satisfy our interest in happiness and progress just as well as our theoretic quest. But it seems proper to say that philosophy, except in what is known as the philosophy of life, is not primarily interested in progress and welfare but in truth and knowledge (or at least the ' rational ' or the ' reasonable '); nor does it seem at all clear. how philosophy, in handling every particular problem, could take the practical interest into consideration. How, for example, in considering the nature of causal relationship or the criterion of meaningfulness could philosophy incorporate the practical interest ? It is not clear how the practical interest is even relevant in such cases.

It may be possible to conceive of a study of philosophical problems in which the theoretic and the practical interests will *somehow* be combined; but such a study will not be the same as philosophy, just as a mixture of honey and milk is not the same as honey, or milk either.

One could argue that we can *call* such a study philosophy; but then we should have a separate name for what we now call philosophy. The point at stake is not a verbal one; what needs to be emphasized is the difference between pure honey and the mixture.

In sum, whatever else philosophy may be, it is not preaching or lecturing, or delivering sermons from a pulpit of dogma; nor is it to be confused with science or its reverse, poetry. Nor should Bradley's ironical remark, " Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct " mislead us, i.e., lead us to believe that in philosophy pretending to argue is as good as arguing. Philosophy is essentially an activity of arguing—thinking, meditating, analysing and weighing evidence—about whatever problem it may find in its way. Enjoyment of arguing, so long as one can afford it, is no more silly than watching a magic show or

attending a dance drama. But history seems to have amply shown that it is, even from the so-called practical point of view, more than sheer enjoyment.

Dept. of Philosophy,
University of Dacca,
Dacca, Bangladesh.

Abdul Matin

NOTES

Note :—This is the first paper read in a symposium on the nature and value of philosophy arranged by the Bangladesh Philosophical Association during its second annual conference held at Rajshahi, Bangladesh, in March, 1975.

It is published here with the kind permission of the Bangladesh Philosophical Association.

1. Vide– the back page of *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (Princeton University Press; Vol. 3, Fall, 1973).

2. Vide– H. Titus, *Living Issues in Philosophy* (American Book Co., 1964). Also G. E. Moore, "What is Philosophy?" *Some Main Problems of Philosophy*.

3. G. E. Moore, "What is Philosophy?", P. 1. B. Russell, *An Outline of Philosophy*, P. 2 : Philosophy is concerned with "the harmony of the whole body of special sciences."

For a criticiem of this view see A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic, pp. 47–48.*

4. Of course. the method of argument and analysis, which we have called the method of reflection, need not necessarily assume any single form; indeed, it does not. A reflective argument may proceed in various ways. It may proceed like a mathematical demonstration, or a reduction ad absurdum, or by conceptual analysis resulting in a definition, and so on.

5. Mackeon, R., ed., *The Basic Works of Aristotle* (Random House, N. Y. 1941), p. 692.

6. *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 156–57

7. Ibid., p. 161.