

**PHILOSOPHY, ITS SCOPE
AND RELATIONS; AN
INTRODUCTORY COURSE
OF LECTURES**

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Philosophy, its scope and relations; an introductory course of lectures by Henry Sidgwick

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HENRY SIDGWICK

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BY PROFESSOR HENRY SIDGWICK

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PHILOSOPHY

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PHILOSOPHY
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AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE
OF LECTURES

BY THE LATE

HENRY SIDGWICK

KNIGHTBRIDGE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE
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EDITORIAL NOTE

SOME three months before his death, when he knew that his illness was likely to be fatal, Professor Sidgwick asked the editor to take charge of certain of his uncompleted works which he thought might be found suitable for publication. About the same time he dictated an account of them and made various suggestions in writing concerning their treatment, substantially repeating what he had before said in person. The present book he described as "a course of eleven lectures, together with three printed lectures, in which I attempt to define the scope of Philosophy and its relation to other studies, especially Psychology, Logic, History, etc." "This," he adds, "I judge might with advantage be published. It wants revision. In the earlier part there would be some difficulty in fitting in the printed lectures with the oral comments on them, and in the later part there are some repetitions which would have to be cut out."

Professor Sidgwick had long ago planned such an introduction to the study of philosophy. In 1892 he delivered a short course of lectures bearing the title of the present work. These, considerably expanded, were repeated as *Elements of Philosophy (Theoretical and Practical)* in the two following years. In 1897 he began working up this material, and three lectures, dealing severally with the Scope of Philosophy, its Relation to Psychology, and the Scope of Metaphysics, were privately printed. But his further progress was temporarily—and, as it has proved, was permanently—interrupted in consequence of his undertaking to deliver in 1898 and onwards the complete course of lectures on 'Metaphysics,' as specified in the syllabus of the Moral Sciences Tripos. Though called 'Metaphysics,' the subject as

outlined there is really in the main Epistemology; and there is little doubt that the more detailed treatment of the Theory of Knowledge, which this change of work involved, would have been turned to account, had Professor Sidgwick been able to resume the preparation of his Philosophy.

To the students attending this 'Metaphysics' course copies of the lectures already printed were distributed, and the first five lectures of the course were occupied in supplementing and elucidating these—the whole by way of introduction before entering upon the study of the special questions and text-books prescribed. Out of this material, that is to say the three printed lectures and five manuscript lectures referred to in Professor Sidgwick's statement as "the earlier part," Lectures I-V. of this book as it stands have been made up. Only a few of the printed sentences have been omitted: these have been replaced by fuller expositions in manuscript that seemed obviously meant to supersede them. But from the written lectures the omissions have been more extensive, 'oral comments' being here frequent that were plainly intended only to serve a temporary purpose. Lecture V. is unfortunately very incomplete: the special topic of which it treats—the Relation of Metaphysics to Epistemology—was reached only at the very end of the last printed lecture, and even in the corresponding manuscript lecture it is but cursorily handled. In fact this topic was one appropriate to a later stage in the course of lectures on Metaphysics, to which the earlier part of this book served as an introduction: the fuller treatment was therefore naturally deferred. Professor Sidgwick was himself well aware of this defect and suggested that "perhaps some assistance might be derived" from using certain portions of the Metaphysics course which he goes on to mention. But this course assumes the constant use of particular text-books—Kant's *Critique*, his *Prolegomena*, Sigwart's *Logic*, and several others—and detailed references to these are frequent: without re-casting and in part re-writing them, portions of such lectures could hardly be fitly incorporated in a book like the present. One passage has, however, been inserted as an Appendix to Lecture V.: to attempt more has not seemed wise. On p. 103 it is proposed in subsequent lectures to examine the Transcendentalism

of the late Professor T. H. Green. This was done later on in the Metaphysics course; and possibly this criticism may find a place in a volume of philosophical remains which, it is hoped, may be published hereafter.

In what Professor Sidgwick called "the later part," Lectures VI.-XI. that is to say, the editor was only advised to cut out repetitions. Nevertheless some of these, and in particular the *resumés* with which these lectures usually begin, have been allowed to remain; for the re-statement is often further statement, and excision without mutilation or foreign interpolation was in some cases not possible. As 'the earlier part' of the original *Elements of Philosophy (Theoretical and Practical)* was used separately as an introduction to the advanced lectures on Metaphysics, so this later part was used separately—apparently with considerable additions—in a course entitled *Philosophy and Sociology*, delivered in 1896 and again in 1898. The original *Elements* had concluded with three lectures on the Scope and Divisions of Practical Philosophy and its Relation to Theoretical Philosophy. Now it will be found that on p. 27 there is a reference to a subsequent discussion of the relation of Ethics to Politics; and again on p. 94 a further treatment "of the problem presented by the relation of Theoretical to Practical Philosophy" is promised. Yet no mention was made of these topics in the brief statements Professor Sidgwick had dictated, nor were the MSS. of the lectures themselves among those he had put together as belonging to this book. Two of them were, however, discovered after some search among his ethical papers. One, in which the relation of Ethics and Politics is discussed, is too fragmentary for publication;¹ but the concluding lecture dealing with the Relation of Theoretical to Practical Philosophy it has been thought well to include here, since its separation from the rest can be explained by what has been said, and since, further, the passages cited seem to negative the supposition that its omission was intentional. It appears accordingly—solely on the editor's responsibility—as Lecture XII.

In Lecture V. the author has made use of a few passages from an article on the 'Criteria of Truth and Error' contributed to

¹ A discussion of this question will be found in the *Methods of Ethics*, bk. i., ch. ii., and also in the *Elements of Politics*, ch. xiii.