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SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS
AND NATURE.¹ I.

THE ultimate purpose of the present paper is to reach and, in closing, to sketch some views as to the relation of Man to Nature. By way of introduction, I must first define the place of my inquiry in the general catalogue of philosophical questions, and must then state the theses that I mean to defend.

There are two great divisions of philosophy — theoretical and practical. The present paper concerns itself with a matter belonging to theoretical philosophy. Within the range of theoretical philosophy, however, one may distinguish between the discussion of the ultimate problems of knowledge and of truth, and the treatment of the more special theoretical problems suggested by our human experience. General Epistemology and general Metaphysics have to do with what can be made out about the deepest nature of our knowledge and the final constitution of the universe. But there are, within the scope of theoretical philosophy, other problems relating to the constitution of our finite world, — problems which are often grouped together as the questions of special metaphysics, or of the Philosophy of Nature, — a doctrine to which has also sometimes been given the name Cosmology. The problems of

¹ A paper read before the Philosophical Club of Brown University, May 23, 1895, and later considerably enlarged and supplemented. The argument of the present discussion continues, although without any express reference thereto, the investigation opened by the paper on the "External World and the Social Consciousness," in the PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW for September, 1894.