

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN PHILOSOPHY AND THE
FOUNDATIONS OF PLURALISM.

I. *Introductory.*—The opening years of the twentieth century have witnessed, among other things, the gradual emergence of a new school of philosophic thought, and a new philosophic method. To the former, which originated in America, the name of 'New Realist' has been given. The exponents¹ of the latter designate it the 'Scientific Method.' New Realism is largely imbued with the spirit of the scientific method, and, for the purposes of criticism, the two may be treated together. The new method claims² to make an entirely fresh start in philosophy, to discover what problems are capable of solution, and to open the road to that solution to those who are willing and able to make the requisite effort.

The reason for this new departure in philosophy is not far to seek. The last half of the nineteenth century gave birth to changes in the world of science of a revolutionary nature. To take two examples alone, Darwin's doctrine of Natural Selection and Maxwell's Electromagnetic Theory brought about an entire change of outlook in their respective domains of biology and physics, with a consequent overhauling of all the traditional concepts and principles. It is a commonplace that science and

¹ Whitehead and Russell.

² B. Russell, *Our Knowledge of the External World*, Lect. I and conclusion of Lect. VIII. Mr. Russell designates his particular type of realism, "logical atomism."