

# the vagabond

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## the great sects

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Common Sense, Science, Philosophy, Art, Religion.

Consider these as different modes of making adjustment to Reality. Examine them not as abstractions but as you find them in men whom you know. Look for example at the group of men to whom common sense, as they understand it, is judged to be sufficient for all the uses of life and who neglect or perhaps despise science, philosophy, art and religion. You can find such men in any neighborhood. Consider in like manner the groups of men who are wholly absorbed in science, or in philosophy or in art or in religion and who neglect and scorn all other ways of dealing with life. You can find men of each type without long search.

*the president discusses  
some of the possible  
approaches to life*

The deepest mutual understanding among men exist between those who belong together within any one of these five sects. The deepest misunderstandings and most incurable hostilities exist between men who belong to different ones of these five sects.

For example: At the International Congress of Psychology in Paris, I met a high caste Hindu, a most admirable gentlemen, an obvious aristocrat, to whom the whole program of the Congress on our modern scientific psychology was an amusing illusion. They *knew*. They, the Indian Mystics, were at one with the Eternal Truth. Also they were instant brothers in Spirit to our occidental Mystics however different from themselves in language, education and race. What then does the occidental professor of experimental psychology with his arsenal of machines and measurements think of those mystics? The professor knows the mystic. He is a mental case. He requires diagnosis. He needs to be cured.

There is a sectarian scientist who has grown to be quite blind to the beauty for which the artist lives. There is a sectarian artist to whom the name of science is an abomination. "Here's to the confusion of Sir Isaac

Newton." Shelley is reported to have said: "Why so?" "Because he has driven poetry out of the solar system."

On the other hand there are men who essay to belong to two or even to all the five sects. Some of these are superficial dilettanti. Some are of undeniable greatness such as Goethe.

I pursue this meditation no further now. I believe that no adequate view can be had of the history of civilization or of civilization at any date or of the human problems of every sort upon which we must act without due consideration of the profound hostilities and profound alliances between what I call The Great Sects—Common Sense, Science, Philosophy, Art and Religion.

