

\_Phil.\_ Look what you are doing! When you say, \_I--I--I want to exist\_ you alone do not say this, but everything, absolutely everything, that has only a vestige of consciousness. Consequently this desire of yours is just that which is \_not\_ individual but which is common to all without distinction. It does not proceed from individuality, but from \_existence\_ in general; it is the essential in everything that exists, nay, it is \_that\_ whereby anything has existence at all; accordingly it is concerned and satisfied only with existence \_in general\_ and not with any definite individual existence; this is not its aim. It has the appearance of being so because it can attain consciousness only in an individual existence, and consequently looks as if it were entirely concerned with that. This is nothing but an illusion which has entangled the individual; but by reflection, it can be dissipated and we ourselves set free. It is only \_indirectly\_ that the individual has this great longing for existence; it is the will to live in general that has this longing directly and really, a longing that is one and the same in everything. Since, then, existence itself is the free work of the will, nay, the mere reflection of it, existence cannot be apart from will, and the latter will be provisionally satisfied with existence in general, in so far, namely, as that which is eternally dissatisfied can be satisfied. The will is indifferent to individuality; it has nothing to do with it, although it appears to, because the individual is \_only\_ directly conscious of will in himself. From this it is to be gathered that the individual carefully guards his own existence; moreover, if this were not so, the preservation of the species would not be assured. From all this it follows that individuality is not a state of perfection

but of limitation; so that to be freed from it is not loss but rather gain. Don't let this trouble you any further, it will, forsooth, appear to you both childish and extremely ridiculous when you completely and thoroughly recognise what you are, namely, that your own existence is the universal will to live.