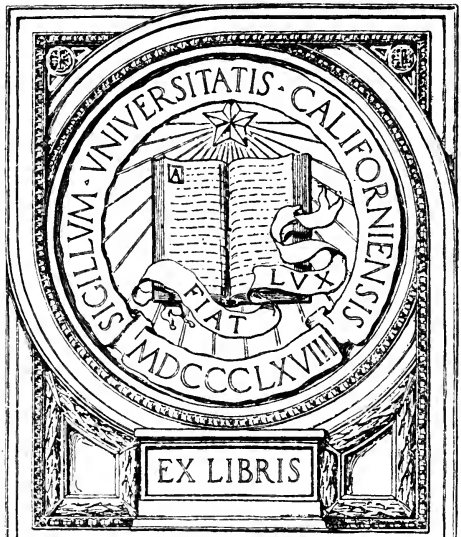

EXPERIENCE;

THE RISE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORATE IN PHILOSOPHY

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Meae carœ matri et sanctæ memoriæ patris mei, omnibus meis grammaticis et rhetoribus, qui mihi principes et ad suscipiendam et ingrediendam rationem humanitatis fuerunt atque doctoribus J. P. Gordy Carolo Gray Shaw et Roberto McDougall quorum praelectiones philosophicas audivi maxima cum gratia haec dissertatio inscribitur

"INTRODUCTION."

In an exposition of the historical development of the concept of experience we are dealing with an epistemological problem. We must take account at once of the character of this concept and its relation to the mind which is attempting to get at fundamental truths. Such a problem could only arise when the mind begins to reflect upon the possibility of the existence of knowledge and of its origin.

The ancient philosophers could not have raised such a question, for according to them the world in its completeness was taken as a fact, and the question was: How did it get into the mind? They were only concerned with the metaphysical question as to the nature of the first and ultimate principles of a material world order. Even the Sophists, who began to lay stress on the subjective element, were concerned with moral conduct rather than with the problem of knowledge. But in placing emphasis on the importance of looking upon the individual as an end in himself, they rebelled against the existing conditions in philosophy, in which cosmological problems engaged the attention of thinkers, rather than "anthropological" ones. The Sophist movement was characterized by a breaking away from these traditional methods. The new school began to inquire into the validity of all the existing principles and laws. Its members looked upon the individual as a microcosmos in himself, who ought to work out his own destiny. When the habit of inquiring into certain laws was acquired

there was no stop to the progress of it. All possible principles connected with the welfare of the individual were carefully discussed and thus great stress was laid upon the individual. Conclusions previously arrived at were cast aside, and the subject was made the starting point and criterion for truth. Thus the first attempt was made to interpret the world in terms of the individual rather than in the reverse order.

This same attempt characterizes the method of modern philosophy, where the problem of knowledge is a fundamental one. Such a method inevitably leads to the discussion of the nature of experience.

In trying to define true knowledge the Sophists were looking for a criterion of truth. Protagoras then stated his celebrated maxim, "Man is the measure of all things." Things are what they appear to be to the individual. It seems to me that this tendency to find a subjective criterion for truth culminated in the rise of a theory of the idea of experience with the Stoics.

They were really the first thinkers to inquire how we get knowledge and whether it is a given thing to every man. In their uncritical contemplation it was but natural to view the vast scenery before them as projecting its image as it was reflected in the pupil of their fellows. And from these observations they were led to theorize about the part played by the senses and the soul—a duality which was then fully accepted as existing—in the making of a content of consciousness, which they called experience. The senses were, then, the active media through which the objects projected their images upon the soul as upon a blank tablet, or, according to some Stoics, making impressions on it as on a piece of wax. The impression or state was the experience of the earlier Stoics. The more critical of them, however, were not entirely satisfied with this theory and amended it to the effect that the impression thus produced at the same time alters the state of the soul—in which state the

soul announces both its existence and that of the object. The originally vacant soul is thus filled with characters or images, which are retained by memory. The memorizing of these states constituted for the Stoics knowledge by experience. It is pertinent to state here that this exposition of the Stoics' concept of experience is very similar to Locke's critical elaborations of the idea as the basis of human knowledge.

This dogmatic assumption of the Stoics regarding the nature of knowledge did not flourish without opposition. The Sceptics attacked it with powerful weapons. They showed that senses are deceiving and the intellect alone cannot give knowledge. Furthermore, the world of objectivity is totally independent of the subject, and no relation between the knower and the thing to be known is established. The chasm remains unbridged.

However successful the Sceptics may have been, they could not doubt the existence of consciousness—a fact neither to be proved nor contradicted. And this led Descartes in modern times to begin philosophy by assuming the sceptic position. He began by doubting everything—even his own existence. But he was conscious of his doubt and therefore certain of his existence. Thus his own consciousness became to him the ultimate criterion. He did not, however, adhere to his subjective point of view, but from a clear and distinct idea which he had of God, dogmatically inferred God's independent existence. His correct starting point promised, if logically and critically carried out, to yield most convincing results, but in his digression into the realm of Metaphysics he completely failed to reach the epistemological position.

Locke, on the other hand, by inquiring into the nature of the human understanding, as preliminary to the inquiry into the nature of the world, struck the right point, and with his school the development of the concept of experience in modern times assumes the character of a methodological inquiry.

His great merit lies in the fact that he was the first one to make a distinction between primary and secondary qualities of things. There are qualities of things with which our mind is impressed through the medium of our senses in the same way as the Stoics argued, but these qualities are not the sum total of the world of objectivity. There are qualities in addition to those primary ones, which are in us, such as: color, tone, etc. These secondary qualities are produced in us as a result of the way in which our senses are affected by these primary qualities of things. The impressions thus produced form for Locke the sensuous experience. These experiences form the ideas of our mind which are the basis of knowledge.

But history was to repeat itself. The same opposition that the Stoics had to face became now the lot of the Lockian school. Hume, the profoundest of modern sceptics, carried Locke's theory to its logical consequences and denied the possibility of knowledge of primary qualities at all. In the eternal flux of images there is no room for even a permanent mind. All there is are impressions or sensations and the union of these. By force of habit we are accustomed to group these in a necessary relation. We are nothing but a lot of states of consciousness made up of the sum of our sensuous intuitions and ideas upon these.

If this be true, then Hume's, as well as the Pyrrhonic scepticism before him, left a consciousness unexplained—a stuff to be examined. And this task was taken up by Kant. So far as our sensuous intuitions go, Kant admits, Hume was right. But what about the consciousness that acts upon these intuitions? Such an ego was denied by Hume, but since no satisfactory logical account of such facts as memory and identity of personality was rendered, a reconstruction of Hume's theory became necessary. The school of Leibnitz, on the other hand, of which Kant was then still an adherent, while recognizing the self-activity of the mind and certain innate possessions of

it, had arrived at its standpoint not epistemologically or critically, but dogmatically. In this conflict between the two opposing schools Kant saw his opportunity. Intuitions of the senses, Kant says, give us sensations, disconnected, chaotic appearances, but without them the mind can know nothing, because they serve as the material of knowledge. The mind must react upon them, put them together and place them, as it were, in their respective groups—hold together and synthesize them, so that knowledge may arise. Through this synthesis, on the part of the understanding, of the intuitions received through the senses, experience arises. This experience is the content of consciousness, the knowledge, the criterion of truth. Before we proceed with our examination of the history of the further development of the concept of experience up to the present day, we must take account of the way in which Kant reached these conclusions.

He took an object of knowledge and analyzed it and found (1) that we have sensuous intuitions and (2) that there are elements in it contributed by the understanding. A further analysis of intuitions reveals the fact that there are two *a priori* elements of space and time under which all intuitions must be subsumed. They are like colored glasses, through which we must look in order to see. Now it becomes the function of the mind to act upon these intuitions by means of categories or laws of the understanding. They are universal and necessary conditions under which we must subsume the sensuous perceptions in order to be able to judge intelligently. And this necessity means for Kant a justification of their a priori nature. It is not that the a priori forms have been there before we began to know (in the Leibnitzian sense innate), but we put them there as a necessary presupposition to any experience, as a synthesizing unity of the manifold intuitions. It would be well to stop here with our quest, for in Kant's theory the concept of experience is in its full bloom. But Kantianism,

after a thorough exploration of this great field of knowledge, concludes with a duality in which the factors are separated by a deep chasm. Through experience we attain to knowledge of the phenomenal world order. As to the things-in-themselves, the noumena, the substratum behind the phenomenal world, these we cannot know, because they are in a range outside of any possible experience.

The successors of Kant, Fichte and Hegel undertook to bridge this abyss. In doing it they continued to develop the concept of experience. Fichte explains away the thing-in-itself by making individual freedom the source of it and Hegel makes it dependent upon Absolute experience. Another important divergence from Kant is to be noted. While Kant derives the knowledge of the categories by an empirical study of judgments, Fichte and Hegel attempt to arrive at them by the dialectical movement of thought itself. The Ego first posits itself. But it recognizes the non-Ego as its object of consciousness, which serves to give a content to the original Ego and produces a third Egohood, a subject-objectivity. This movement completes itself in a logical way. Through the Ego positing itself we get, according to the principle of identity, the category of quality; by its opposing itself to the non-Ego we get, according to the principle of contradiction, the category of quantity; by uniting the two, Ego and non-Ego, we get, according to the principles of excluded middle and sufficient reason, the categories of relation and modality. There is, then, a constant genesis of these categories. But why a genesis? Because experience, according to Fichte, arises from an act that springs from a feeling of necessity. He demands that we must not observe what the consciousness *does,* but how it *must* act in order to gain experience. And Hegel assents to this, but attains the categories through genesis of an absolute experience. Experience, then, in Fichte's and Hegel's philosophy is the same as in Kant's, but in its genesis and application the abyss between

the duality of the phenomenal and noumenal world order is here done away with, the whole world being a manifestation of a noumenal mind.

We have now come on to the period in the history of philosophy where no new theory of the concept of experience is advanced. As a result of the various theories of the concept we have learned the various methods whereby the concept of experience is attained. In order to close with the historical development of the concept of experience, we must also take account of the manner in which Herbart attempts to get at reality by treating of experience. Experiences, according to him, from whatever functions they may result, are a necessary precondition to knowledge. But we must not accept them at their face value. We must compare various experiences of the same sort and remove whatever contradictions, uncertainties or ambiguities may arise and thus gain a clear and distinct insight into the knowledge sought.

The foregoing is an outline of the development of the concept of experience. It becomes now necessary to see what practical consequences this theory entails; for, after all, of what use are theories, if not practically applied in our conduct of life. For, since weight is placed upon the importance of the individual, we must take account of the practical application of every theory. The Pragmatism of to-day takes up this question. It tires of these theoretical subtleties. It claims that no theory in particular can stand a searching scrutiny. We must, after all, go back to the Empiricism of Hume. All knowledge resolves itself ultimately into belief and rightly so. We assume the truth as a practical necessity ex hypothesi. Experience, no matter what the particular one may be, is the criterion of truth. We must observe what difference a certain experience, a certain state or content of consciousness produces, and if this difference is the same in every case of the same experience, we have a perfect right to assume and believe for

practical purposes that this experience gives the truth. Pragmatism, then, says that if your experience be the result of a sensuous intuition acting upon a passive mind (Empirical), or the synthesized intuitions by an active understanding (Critical), or, again, the result of a fact-act, a unity of subject-objectivity (Fichte and Hegel's), it is practically the truth as long as it gives the same idea with each test.

With these preparatory remarks, we can begin the exposition of our subject matter in detail:

(1) To trace history of the concept of experience from the time it became a criterion of truth.

(2) To show the motives which actuated the various thinkers in adopting *experience* as a criterion for estimating the validity of our knowledge of the world.

(3) To show the growth of the concept, in the history of philosophy, as an organic one (each philosopher completing or building up his concept as a result of inadequacies he found in preceding philosophers—especially true in the Lockian and Kantian movement).

I

The concept of experience receives its first scientific stamp in the Stoic ἐμπειρία μεθοδική as a κριτήριον of truth. Although Aristotle speaks of κρινῶν and κρίνοντα*, it was not in the meaning of the Stoic criterion, for he speaks of it in connection with such idle questions as waking and sleeping. The Stoics demand sensuous distinctness in their mode of cognition, and this, they argue, arises from objects of experience. All knowledge, therefore, based upon this assertion arises from sensuous perceptions. The soul resembles a blank piece of paper, upon which representations are afterwards written by our senses. Experience, then, as a criterion of knowledge was καταληπτικὴ φαντασία —the representation which, being produced in us by the object, is able, as it were, to take hold or grasp (καταλαμβάνειν) that object. Zeno defines representation as an impression upon the soul (τύπωσις ἐν ψυχῇ) and Cleanthes compares it to the impression made upon a piece of wax; but Chryppopus opposes the definition of Zeno, taken in its literal sense, and himself defines φαντασία as an alteration in the soul (ἑτεροίωσις ψυχῆς). The φαντασία itself is only a state (πάθος) produced in the soul to which it announces both its existence and that of its object. They further continue to argue that, through our perceptions of external objects and also of internal states, the originally vacant soul is filled with images, as if with written characters (ὥσπερ

* Metaphys. IV, 6.

χαρτῶν ἐνεργὸν εἰς ἀπογραφήν), and then the memory thereof remains behind. *From the combination of similar memories arises experience as* τὸ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν πλῆθος.

The concept is formed from single perceptions by generalization, which may be either a spontaneous or unconscious (ἀνεπιτεχνήτος) act or a conscious and *methodical* one (δὶ ὑμετέρας διδασκαλίας καὶ ἐπιμελείας); so that in the former case "common ideas" or "anticipations" ἔννοιαι κοιναί or προλήψεις) are formed; in the latter, concepts. Common ideas are general notions developed in the course of the nature of all men.* These ideas (although termed ἐμφύτοι προλήψεις) were not viewed by the earlier Stoics at least as innate, but only as the natural outgrowth from perceptions. Rationality is a product of the progressing development of the individual; it is generally "agglomerated" (συναθροιζέται) out of his perceptions and representations until about the fourteenth year of life. It is only then that man is able to form concepts, judgments and syllogisms, for their formation depends on the observance of certain rules, which he could not possibly grasp during the undeveloped stage. Here we have, for the first time in the history of philosophy, the exposition and the definition of the concept of experience. The elements entering into the making up of the concept are the idea of sensation of the functioning sense-organs and the idea of an activity in the mind called forth by the stimulus of the senses. This stimulus through the senses then gives rise to a self-realization of the consciousness of the individual.

The Stoics, on the borderline of ancient thought, are the only philosophers who first defined and expounded a theory of the concept of experience both from a logical and a psychological standpoint.

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* Diog. L. VII, 54.

II.

During the mediæval period philosophy is assuming a theological character, and not until man began to adjust the disciplines to a scientific standard can we find the concept of experience in its growth. Toward the end of this period William of Occam speaks of the concept of experience from a logical point of view. He argues that the fundamental principles of science are obtained from experience by induction. The concept of experience is defined by him as a process of perception and thought regulated by norms of logic. The knowledge of whether a thing is or is not, Occam claims, we get by intuition. We can only gain the knowledge of the existence of individuals, not of universals, for these are general concepts formed in thought by abstraction. And in order to know the particular we must resort to experience. By judgment we can come into possession of knowledge. The act of judgment (actus judicativus), however, presupposes the act of apprehension (actus apprehensivus). Our states of consciousness as such we know by experience only; their essence, however, we cannot know, because experience cannot there be applied as a proof on behalf of an hypothesis. It is evident, then, why Occam affirms that science is the knowledge of the necessarily true, which knowledge can be generated by the agency of syllogistical thinking, whose fundamental principles are obtained from experience by induction. He does not show, however, how it is possible for apodictical knowledge to rest on the basis of experience. Consequently he was not protected against the objection of the subjective a priori philosophers, namely, that the principles on which the generalization of experience depends cannot themselves be derived from experience. From the above statements and from the fact that he relegates all knowledge transcending experience to the sphere of mere faith, we can see that the concept of experience begins to loom up in Occam's philosophy as a criterion of validity.

III.

During the period extending from the Stoics to modern times the development of the concept of experience suffers a sort of hibernating slumber, only to awaken again in the earlier period of modern times. The first sign of it we find in the works of Paracelsus, the physician. He mentions the concept of experience in the words: Erfahrung, Erfahrenheit, Erfahrnuss and Experienz. These termini contain for him a theory of knowledge.

The following will, however, prove that in one passage he regards experience as a logical concept and again places it outside of philosophy. He says: "Das Experimentum ad fortem geht ohne die scientia; aber Experimentia mit der Gewissheit wohin zu gebrauchen mit der scientia. Denn scientia ist die Mutter der Experienz. Ohne der scientia ist nichts da."* On the other hand, he says: "Also ist die Arzney im Anfang gestanden, dass keine Theorica gewesen ist, allein eine Erfahrenheit."† The termini Experientia and Experienz stand for the concept of experience (for they are spoken of in connection with scientific problems), while the terminus Erfahrenheit stands for data of experience.

During the period of independent and scientific research we find here and there a mention of experience, but not as a logical concept. Data of experience are here required from experiments in order to study the law of natural forces. Experience becomes, however, the terminus a quo at all events and in this fact we find the true development of a subsequent criterion of all knowledge. It marks the period of Empiricism from the Stoic ἐμπειρία up to Locke. It asserts that the method of philosophical enquiry is experiment, and philosophical knowledge is limited to objects of experience.

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* Labyr. Medicor. op. 6.

† Commentaries on the Aphorisms of Hypocrates.

IV.

The empirical school had its adherents in England, beginning with Bacon and ending with Locke's theory of knowledge; in France with Condillac's sensualism, and in Germany with Hollbach's materialism. In Locke we find a truly scientific elaboration of the concept of experience. Under the concept of experience he understands the impressions upon our mind produced from objects which are received through the medium of the senses. In other words, sensuous experience is the sole basis of knowledge. And in this connection we may cite his famous dictum: "Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu."* It is in his "Essay Concerning the Human Understanding" that he sets out to elaborate the theory of his concept of experience.

The profound nature of Locke's inquiry is here manifest. Rationalism is now to be subjected to a psychological examination. The study of the nature of the mind becomes more important than that of the material world. The increasing volume of the mind, as it is fed by all the streams of sensibility, becomes manifest and the study thereof gives an impetus to later investigations in Psychology. In undertaking this profound task Locke becomes the father of modern Psychology.

Now, we have seen above what Locke understands by experience. Is there any part of experience which is native to the mind and not derived from outside? Locke answers in the negative.

It becomes necessary, before leading up to the discussion of the theory of experience as a source of our ideas, to examine the false pretensions of Rationalism by carefully looking into the facts of consciousness and the manner in which our ideas originate. This relates to the supposed existence of innate ideas. "When men have found some general propositions that could

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* Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Book II, Chap. I, 24.

not be doubted of as soon as understood, it was a short and easy way to conclude them innate."* The second step in the explanation of the theory of the concept of experience is to establish the empirical explanation of experience.

Locke refutes the theory of innate ideas (*κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι*). If ideas are innate, they are a mystery not to be investigated or explained. He argues against this theory by taking the example of the consciousness or mind of a child, idiot and savage. Is the principle of contradiction, for instance (which, according to Rationalism, is innate and necessary to experience), already existing in the mind of the infant, whose attainments go no further than the ability to scream when it is uncomfortable?†

If, however, it is argued that these ideas are dormant in the minds of new-born men and become exhibited in consciousness as the reason matures, it would be tantamount to saying that reason makes men know what they knew already. If mathematical truths are innate, all relations of space and time must be so equally; if self-evident propositions are innate, then such truths as that sweet is not bitter, black is not white, must be innate also. If, however, the human child does not come into the world with an inborn treasure of certainties, truths and conceptions, where then is the true origin, the only primary source of all our ideas and knowledge to be sought?

The answer is: In *experience* alone, which we receive through the gates of our senses. Or, as quoted above, "Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu."‡

The soul is originally a *tabula rasa*,§ a blank sheet of paper

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* Op. Cit., Book I, Chap. IV, 24.
† Book I, Chap. III, 2.
‡ Book II, Chap. I, 2.
§ Book II, Chap. I, 24.

upon which sensations are written at will. The end organs are the avenues conducting them to the mind. Thus ideas are created. The soul is as little able to create for itself ideas out of nothing or to destroy those which have been framed as man is to create or destroy the smallest mote in the sunbeam. No idea of color can be given to the blind or of sound to the deaf.

Reflection is opposed to sensation. The latter is experience of the external world, the former of the inner one, namely, a mental state. But even internal reflection would be impossible if sensation did not first stimulate this state of mind. The mind in this state is sometimes active, sometimes passive. Perception is the representation of things external given by sensible impressions. The mind in this is purely passive; it is as powerless to escape or alter these impressions as a mirror to change the impressions made in it. It is, therefore, an attenuated form of external experience. Retention is the revival of former representations, and the mind in this is not wholly passive. There is a natural defect of the human mind associated with the faculty of recollection, namely, that the latter only recalls its objects in a succession or by an association. "Although we may conceive some superior, created, intellectual beings, which in the faculty may have constantly in view the whole scene of all their former actions, wherein no one of the thoughts they have ever had may slip out of their sight,* the human mind has no such power.

All the functions of the senses belong also to the lower animals. The highest attribute of reason, however, of which lower animals are bereft, is to compare, distinguish, unite and separate; and in this the human mind far surpasses that of brutes in virtue of the gift of abstraction, or universal notions, which he alone possesses. In acquiring experience the mind, as we

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* Essay, Book I, Chap. III, 26.

have seen, is passive. But in the higher processes of reason and understanding, which are stimulated by the material of perception, the mind becomes active.

In all this we see a general outline of the analysis of mental operations and their dependence on the world of sense. Through this analysis of the nature of our knowledge Locke then is led to draw another important distinction between sensations and the real essential qualities of bodies—or the distinction between primary and secondary qualities of bodies. If we can only learn by experience of the external world as much as affections of our senses tell us, it becomes a question how much of the data of experience are due to this subjective element, and must be allowed for accordingly, if we wish to attain to knowledge of the thing as it is in itself. It is obvious, for instance, that the sweetness of sugar exists in our palate, heat, light, color are feelings in me, but they do not constitute the qualities in things, and can only be regarded as the effects produced by the objects on our organs of sense. What then are the qualities pertaining to things in themselves? Obviously these primary and original qualities which are inseparable from the idea of matter are the same under all circumstances, and present in the smallest atoms such qualities as, for instance, solidity, extension, figure, position and number of parts, motion, etc. "These ideas of primary qualities of bodies are resemblances of them, and their patterns directly exist in the bodies themselves; but the ideas, produced in us by secondary qualities, have no resemblance to them at all. There is nothing like some of our ideas existing in the bodies themselves. The bodies are only the power to produce those sensations in us, and what is sweet, blue, or warm in idea, is but the certain bulk, figure and motion of the insensible parts in the bodies themselves which affect us in particular ways."*

* Essay, Book II, Chap. VIII, 9, 10.

These primary qualities are also derived by sensation, but not modified by it.

Of space and time, he says, we obtain an idea by experience, namely, sight and touch. These stock ideas are capable of innumerable modifications and this leads us to the idea of infinity. The position of an object can only be determined in relation to something else. Without space neither solidity nor motion is possible; but the latter, the true qualities of matter, differ toto coelo from space. As to time, he argues, we reach the conception of it by reflecting upon our feelings and thoughts in the order in which they succeed each other in the mind; without perceptions, we should not have the idea or duration of time. The idea of succession cannot be derived from motion; on the contrary, the latter has to be translated into mental sequence. As the idea of space, so does the idea of time conduct us to that of infinity, *i.e.,* to the idea of eternity.

The ideas of liberty we get from the inner experience of our will—a mental inclination to choose.

About the idea of material and immaterial substance Locke says: They are something which we imagine underlying and supporting, now the sensible, perceptible properties of external objects, now the forms of consciousness which we perceive as states. But what this thing may be, we know as little in the one case as in the other. Forces and effects constitute the major part of our ideas of substance. So that what little we know of them we get from experience by hypothesis. But while we cannot possibly conceive the production of these effects, we have constant experience of all our voluntary motions as produced in us by the free action or thought of our own minds only. In a word, all our ideas of substance are but "collections of simple ideas with a supposition of something to which they belong and in which they subsist."*

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* Essay, Book II, Chap. XXIII

The complex ideas he divides into three classes: Modes, relations and substances. Our daily experience of the alterations in external things, the observation of the constant change of ideas in our mind, depending partly on external impressions, partly on our choice, leads the human understanding to the conclusion that the same changes that have been observed will also take place in future in the same manner and through the same causes. Receiving impressions is, as above stated, passive power, and reflecting upon them in our minds is active power. And by combining the two processes we get a clear concept. Internal experience teaches us that by mere volition we can set our body in motion. Will is, therefore, a cause to effect a purpose. So we get the ideas of causal relations and other relations by experience.

In this way Locke proceeds to refer the origin of all knowledge to ideas, which constitute our experience. It may seem that he is trying to attain to practical rather than to scientific or theoretical ends. But the thoroughness with which he deals shows that we have here, for the first time in history, the concept of experience fully developed. Besides differentiating primary from secondary qualities of things, another merit of his was also the profound insight into the nature of *general ideas* and the connection between them and language, a result also of the development of the concept of experience. Let us see how he does it.

The faculty of abstraction and the general ideas arising from it are proper to man alone and form the true nature of his reason. Abstraction is the faculty of generalizing under a certain name the ideas received from individual things. Everything that has to do with the real existence of these single things, such as time and place and other concomitant qualities, must be separated, and the idea alone presented to the understanding apart and made applicable, under a particular name, to all the things in which it is met. The same color which

I perceive in milk, in snow and in other objects becomes, under the name, white; in general, an idea for the color of all things which produce it at any time. But the origin of all general ideas is to be found in sensible perceptions.* The simple ideas thence derived cannot be defined. No explanation will convey any idea to the blind. Words cannot help, for they *are only sounds. To endeavor with words* to make any one who has not had the experience of the sensations realize the taste of an apple, or its red and white color, is the same as trying to make sound visible and color audible, or rather to make hearing a substitute for all other senses. All immaterial ideas are originally taken by metaphor from ideas of sensible perception.† When Locke says: "What a vast variety of different ideas does the word triumphus hold together and deliver to us as one species,"‡ he refers to the fact that it includes the utmost variety of objects, furnished by the widest experience.

Having now followed up Locke's development and exposition of the concept of experience, it may not be out of place to note the essentials and limitations in his theory.

To the essential and novel additions to philosophic thought belong the following truths:

1. The conception that general ideas are true objects of thought and that they are perfected in men by abstraction is an intimation that there is a connection between them and language; the statement of the problem as to the origin of true ideas and the tracing them back to sensible impressions is the indication of the connection between sense and reason.

2. Since all our ideas and thoughts proceed from individual perception or contact with the external world, the idea of substance is inaccessible to human knowledge.

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* Essay, Book II, Chap. II.

† Essay, Book III, Chaps. III and IV.

‡ Essay, Book III, Chap. V.

3. The distinction between our sensible impressions and the true qualities of objects—between primary and secondary qualities—points to a future limitation of our knowledge to objects of experience.

The necessary limitation of all knowledge follows:

1. The hesitation of Locke between individualism pure and simple, which can only conceive things as they are given by senses and imagination and can therefore never go beyond its subjective standpoint, and the assumption of an objective world actually existing in itself in space and time* is apparent throughout his argument.

2. This indecision prevented Locke from entering upon a more thorough investigation of the nature of reason, and from showing what nature and characteristics have grown up and been developed through the reception of sense impressions. To Locke the mind appears as originally a dark room, into which rays of light from the outer world penetrate by certain rifts and cracks, and so increase and complete the thinking faculty. The active side of this faculty, however, is much neglected and often entirely overlooked.

3. Thus the whole function of thought and rational knowledge appears as a process affected from and by the world of sense without. In representing the law of causality as a product of experience, Locke suggested Hume's doubt and gave rise to the profound investigations of Kant.

4. Locke's profound and important view that general ideas are true objects of thought was not as much utilized and developed by him as the importance of the subject and the simplicity of the principle allowed and required. It was necessary,

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* I, as an individual, am fixed and determined as the subject of knowledge, and it is impossible that I should know the finite object in itself, much less the infinite. I can only know either of these indirectly, in so far as they come within the range of my consciousness, in so far as they are represented in my sensations and my thoughts. Schopenhauer, World as will and idea. Book I, Chap. V.

and he himself held it to be the chief task of philosophy, to examine carefully into the origin of ideas not from sense-perception and self-observation alone; the origin of ideas from preceding ideas as revealed in the history of human language should have been set forth, too. It is true that in the age of Locke such an undertaking would have been difficult, as the Science of Language did not yet exist. Otherwise Locke would have had to surrender his erroneous belief that man can form ideas from words which are only the conventional signs for ideas already existing in thought.*

Clearer knowledge on this point would have enabled Locke to define the concepts of thought and of ideas far more sharply, and he would not then have ascribed to mere sense impressions the character and value of ideas. "It is certain that the mind is able to retain and receive distinct ideas long before it has the use of words, or before it comes to that, which we commonly call the use of reason. For a child knows as certainly, before it can speak, the difference between the ideas of sweet and bitter, as it knows afterwards that wormwood and sugar plums are not the same thing."† Schopenhauer clearly refutes Locke that ideas are originated in partibus orationis when he says: "It is very surprising that no philosopher has yet traced all the various manifestations of reason back to one simple function, which might be recognized in them all, by which they might all be explained and which would therefore be seen to constitute the proper inner nature of reason. The admirable Locke, indeed, describes abstract universal ideas quite rightly as marking the distinction between man and beast, and Leibnitz repeats this with complete assent. But when Locke comes, in his fourth book, to examine reason itself, he loses sight of this chief characteristic altogether, and falls into a hesitating, indefinite, fragmentary expression of incomplete and second hand opinion."‡

* Max Mueller, Lectures on Science of Language II, P. 75.

† Essay, Book I, Chap. I.

‡ Schopenhauer, Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, Pp. 45, 566–70.

At the same time Locke's concept of experience as a source of ideas has an important bearing on the future philosophy, and this is duly recognized by Schopenhauer in the following passage: "Locke was the first to proclaim the great doctrine that a philosopher who wishes to prove or derive anything from ideas must first investigate the origin of these ideas as to their content, and everything thence deducible must be determined by their origin as the source of all knowledge obtainable through them."*

V.

In his discussion of the theory of experience Locke had shown that certain qualities considered objective were due to the mind, but he still retained certain primary qualities which, while stamped upon the mind, are also present in the objects. Hume, although adopting Locke's theory of the concept of experience, brushes away the remaining cobwebs of dogmatism in his theory and carries it to its extreme conclusion by denying the possibility of anything which is not sensuous experience or derived from it. Every possible object of knowledge he reduced either to an impression or an idea. "The difference between these consists in the degree of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thought or consciousness. Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence, we may name *impressions;* and under this name I comprehend, Hume says, all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul." "By *ideas* I mean the faint image of these in thinking and reasoning; such as, for instance, are all the perceptions excited by the present discourse, excepting only those which arise from the sight and touch, and excepting the immediate pleasure or uneasiness it may occasion."†

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* Schopenhauer, Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, P. 570.

† Hume, Treatise of the Human Nature, Book I, Part I, L.

Hume reaffirms Locke's theory of simple and complex ideas and the fact that they are ultimately traced to single perceptions. These impressions and ideas are the sole contents of the human mind. And if we are to establish the reality of a fact, we must be able to trace it back to a concrete impression, which it reproduces. No matter how much we may try to fix our attention out of ourselves, we never really can advance a step beyond ourselves, nor can we conceive any kind of existence but those perceptions which have appeared in that narrow compass.

On this ground Hume denies the existence of substance, or rather the fact that we can have any knowledge of it, if it exists at all. We cannot form any idea about it, because it is not given to us through sense-impression. It cannot be derived from reflection, because impressions of reflection resolve themselves into our passions and emotions, none of which can possibly represent a substance.

The idea of substance, therefore, it nothing but a collection of simple ideas of qualities that are united by the imagination.* He not only denies the existence of the material substance, but also of the spiritual substance, the self, because we cannot get an idea of it from sensuous impressions. Hume says, that, when he enters most intimately into what he calls *himself*, he always stumbles on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure, but never can catch *himself* at any time without a perception and never can observe anything but the perception.

His most important contribution to philosophy was the analysis of the idea of causality. There seems to be an all-pervading relation which stands between ideas and our self, that makes knowledge possible, namely, the relation of cause and effect. Here again he demands: what is the impression from

* Book I, Part I, 6.

which the idea of cause is derived?* An impinging ball will cause the motion in the other, but we cannot perceive any other causal relation between the action of the ball and our mind. We find such relations present as contiguity and succession and from these perhaps the idea of relation must be derived. But these do not exhaust causation, for an idea may be contiguous and prior to another without being considered as its cause. We may now add the idea of necessary connection. But then where is the impression from which this idea can be derived? Hume, therefore, throws out the idea of necessity and with it the idea of causality. We can only get knowledge of things that are given us in our sensuous experience. The question now is: Since there is no causal relation and everything is in constant flux, how do we come to imagine that we have things before us, and that they affect each other? How do we know that a chair is not a table? Hume answers, that it is due to our *habit* of constantly associating certain ideas with the various impressions, and thereby we are enabled to recognize the objects on account of their similarity to those ideas arrived at during past experiences. The relation then that stands between us and the world is the constant conjunction of ideas, the force of custom or habit.

Hume comes then to the conclusion, (1) that the basis of all knowledge is an experience which contains no a priori factors (to use Kant's expression), but is solely impression, and (2) that he must consequently deny the existence of ideas such as substance and causality, as they are extra-experiential and therefore unwarranted.

The influence that Hume exerted on Kant is evident from the following:

(1) The negation of the idea of the self and the idea of causality and the attributing of these ideas to habit aroused Kant from his dogmatic slumber.

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* Book I, Part III, 2.

(2) Hume's consistency in denying in his account of experience the objective existence of substance and causality aroused in Kant the need of supplementing that account and deriving substance and causality from non-empirical sources.* These destructive criticisms in the theory of Hume make him the proper stepping stone to Kant's philosophy.

VI.

This leads us to the consideration of Kant's concept of experience. He treats the concept of experience manifestly in a different way from Locke.

"All knowledge, he avers, begins with experience, but not all knowledge springs from experience."† (Locke had said, all knowledge springs from experience.) In this sentence the concept of experience manifests itself as the problem, the solution of which is the business of the Critique of Pure Reason. Kant discovered, as it were, a new phase of the concept of experience, one which Locke and Hume had denied. And it depends solely upon the precise form and content of this concept, that he should reconcile the legitimate demands of the sceptical Empiricism and the dogmatism of Pure Reason.

Experience, to him, is a continuous combination of sensuous intuitions—*a synthesis* by the understanding, which elaborates the raw material of sensation. Now, by abstracting the work of the understanding from this concept, there remains sensation. In studying the component parts of sensation, Kant found it to consist of a material and formal element. There are sensations, such as color, tone, etc., but they appear in certain forms. These forms are those of space and time. These formal elements, however, are both

* Kant, Prolegomena, Preface.

† Intro., Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, I.

pure intuitions, a priori, and not derived from experience, for experience will show us that space and time exist, but it will never show us that these are a conditio sine qua non of intuition. Experience tells us, indeed, that something is, but not that it must necessarily be so and not otherwise.* Space and time cannot be removed from external objects or events, for in order to gain the impression of the external world, we must have the intuition of space and time as a conditio sine qua non. It would be a wrong experience from which space and time are borrowed. No experience is sufficient to give us space and time, which are the formal elements of all sensations. These forms can be compared with a sort of colored spectacles, through which we must look all the time, in order to get hold of the world around us. Without them we would be totally blind. Space and time, then, are given to us as a priori forms of all intuitions.

The second half of the sentence, as quoted above, begins with a "but"; "*but* not all knowledge *springs* from experience." The significance of this is apparent, for there is a manifest difference between *begin* and *spring*. All knowledge begins in relation to space and time. There is only a πρότερον or ″στερον τρὸς ἡμᾶς but no πρότερον ἁπλῶς. Here Kant's account of experience differentiates itself in a very marked degree from that of Locke. There may be a more or less complicated cause of knowledge. And this cause can only be in the succession of my experience as it is synthesized by the mind. The causal nexus is not a mere association, as Hume had affirmed. So that, while all knowledge begins necessarily with associations of sensuous intuitions, we may find an heterogeneous arrangement in mere association and no intelligible knowledge as yet. The additional aspect of transformation necessary we shall consider presently.

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* Critique of Pure Reason, Intro., Part III.

The sensuous intuitions of space and time,—which are a priori forms,—constitute the passive receptivity of the mind. All phenomena are put into these forms. This form of experience alone, however, conveys no intelligent knowledge. It is the combination of this given material with the spontaneous activity of the understanding, elaborating these intuitions by its categories or laws that produce experience, from which knowledge *springs*. One factor in the make-up of experience without the other is of no value; both factors are necessary. This he particularly illustrates in the sentence: "Thoughts without contents (sensuous intuitions) are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind."* Without either of these, thoughts would be meaningless and knowledge impossible. The understanding can perceive nothing and the sense can think nothing. All sensations depend upon affections of the senses and all concepts upon the functioning understanding. *From the work of the understanding through its categories upon the intuitions does experience arise.* The a priori forms of the mind thus become the root of our knowledge and the universal and necessary in the world depend upon this factor of experience (which is itself not derived from experience). In this way experience loses its old meaning in the sense of Locke (tabula rasa; passivity). "Experience, therefore, is *produced by* the understanding out of the raw materials of sensation.† In this sentence we have both sources of experience, its beginning in sensation and its springing from understanding. Through the first process of external experience, objects are given to us, through the second process of inner experience objects are known by us. Intuitions and understanding supplement each other in the formation of experience. The inchoate matter of feeling given through sense perception receives its form from the a priori concepts of the understanding, and the world of conscious

* Critique of Pure Reason, P. 41, Muellers Trans.

† Critique of Pure Reason, Transcendental Analytic, passim.

experience arises. True cognition a priori therefore implies experience in order to be of any value at all, while experience in so far as it is necessary and universal (in other words objectively valid) implies cognition a priori. In this way Kant reconciles Rationalism and Empiricism. The activity of the mind is exerted validly only upon experience, and experience is possible only by means of a system of pure conceptions, conditioned by an a priori unity, or, in other words, through pure reason.

Now to develop some of the above points in detail, Kant's theory of knowledge falls into three divisions.

1. The transcendental æsthetic, dealing with sensibility, the receptive element, which intuites the, as yet, blind matter of sensation under the forms of space and time;

2. The transcendental analytic, treating of the understanding, the active element, which contributes to the material furnished by sense, its own categories or conceptions;

3. The transcendental dialetic, concerning itself with the Pure Reason, which through its ideas tries to extend the conditioned, actual experience, attained by means of the senses and the understanding.

At the outset let us say, that Kant in speaking of the understanding, alludes to it as the unity of the functions of the mind. The function of the understanding is to construct experience or cognitions out of intuitions. This it effects by imposing upon them its pure conceptions, the categories, or, in Kant's own language, subsuming the forms containing the perceptions (VIZ, SPACE AND TIME) under these. Perception, he says, which is purely subjective, merely presupposes the primitive unity of the consciousness together with the laws of the connection of perceptions therein. Knowledge, cognition or experience, on the contrary, which passes beyond the mere subjective connection of sensations, ascribing objective reality

and a definite objective order to the presentations contained in them, presupposes the categories.

The first part of the Critique giving us formal conditions of sense-experience, was spoken of above. The second section, giving us the categories as forms of thought, we will now discuss.

How did Kant discover the categories as the formal conditions of experience? In the same manner in which he recognized space and time as a priori forms of intuition; in removing the constitutive elements, which we put into objects, from these constituents, which form the material part of experience. It doubtless, therefore, appears that the a priorism is known through reflection upon that which we possess in experience. It certainly could not be different, for the first sentence, "All knowledge begins with experience," shows it conclusively. When Kant asks, "How are synthetic judgments a priori possible?" he answers that the possibility depends upon the synthetic unity which we put into the things. This synthetic unity manifests itself in the categories. The categories are to be understood as a priori from a three-fold aspect, namely: (1) they are called a priori as concepts of the understanding, (2) as such they are separate from the elements of knowledge, and (3) after intuitions are subsumed under them, they become forms of experience. Thus Kant conceives them apart from any empirical cognition and yet claims for them an objective validity, resting this claim, as above, on the fact that it is only through them that experience in what concerns the forms of thought is possible, and so they relate a priori to objects of experience.*

How, then, does the mind transform sense-experience into knowledge by means of the categories? By subsuming the intuition under the categories. This subsumption occurs in the

* Critique of Pure Reason, Transcendental Deduct. of the Categories Section, passim.

form of judgments. Experience, in fact, is a series of judgments. For instance, when we say, This is red, we pronounce a judgment. There are certain laws, then, which prescribe the course which the categories must follow. It would be wrong to say that this red color is long or short, or that the hardness of the table lasts five minutes, putting it in relation to time. In order that we may judge intelligently we are bound to adhere to certain rules of the understanding, e. g., the axioms of intuition, which say, that all phenomena are, with reference to their intuition, extensive quantities; anticipations of perception, which say that the principle which anticipates all perceptions as such is this: In all phenomena sensation, and the Real which corresponds to it in the object (realitas phænomenon), has an intensive quantity, that is, a degree; the analogies of experience, the general principle of which is: All phenomena, as far as their existence is concerned, are subject a priori to rules, determining their mutual relation in one and the same time, etc.*

In considering the elements of experience we found that one of these was sensuous intuition, and that the categories had their function in transforming these intuitions into knowledge. We shall also find that for us the categories have no meaning unless applied either to sense experience or to possible experience. The concepts of the understanding, to repeat, are applicable only to objects of sensible intuition, for a faculty of non-sensible or intellectual intuition is not possessed by man. The noumenon, an object of neither sensible nor internal perception, is not to be known through the categories.

While it is outside of the province of the subject to consider the noumenon, still, as putting a limit upon our knowledge, it is important to refer to it. By the noumenon, Kant means (1) the unknown substratum of experience, a substratum which being outside of space and time (since these are sub-

* Critique of Pure Reason, Transcendental Analytic, P. 136.

jective), cannot, therefore, be known; (2) ideas which the metaphysical faculty present in mankind, has assumed, as ultimate in the world,—ideas which since they are not verifiable or applicable to experience cannot be known by the categories of knowledge. These ideas are the soul, the world as a totality, and God.

In studying the philosophies of Locke, Hume and Kant, we saw the concept of experience interpreted in a twofold manner. In Locke as sensuous intuition and in Kant as a product of the understanding acting upon sensuous intuition. The latter extended Locke's conception of experience by showing that intuitions are not yet experience, and it is not until the *activities* of the mind develop the impressions that experience arises. Kant, in the words of Hegel, would, however, be an impossibility without Locke: "Kant's idealistische Seite, welche dem Subjecte gewisse Verhaeltnisse, die Kategorien heissen, vindiciert, ist nichts als die Erweiterung des Lockianismus."*

The foregoing is an exposition of Kant's concept of experience, as I understand it to be. This treatise contains the most salient features of his doctrine on that subject. It shall now be my privilege to point out various inconsistencies and limitations of his theory.

1. He is not clear on the point, as to whether his categories are functions or activities, or whether they are structural forms of the mind. As Schopenhauer points out, there are passages intended to be elucidatory in which the distinction sought to be established is so wiredrawn as to be hardly intelligible.

2. Ueberweg† and Volkelt‡ rightly object, that Kant in excluding the formal conditions of experience from the Ding-an-sich, does not positively prove the incognizability of

* Hegels Werke, Vol. I, P. 31.

† Ueberweg, Gesch. der Philosophie, Bd. III, P. 185.

‡ Volkelt, Kant's Erkenntnisstheorie, Pp. 40-50.

the latter. In asserting that space and time, inasmuch as they are forms of sensibility, cannot obtain in objects as things-in-themselves, he is assuming a dogmatic attitude with regard to it. On the other hand, it cannot be disputed that the basis of our knowledge is a space and time of our own, and Kant is right in saying that the world of noumena is not in this world of space and time (because *that* is subjective).

3. Against the Critique of Pure Reason, as undertaken by Kant, it has been objected, that thought can only be scrutinized by thought, and that to seek to examine the nature of thought antecedent to all real thinking, is like attempting to swim before going into water.*

4. His statement, that space is a necessary a priori notion, because it is impossible to form a notion of non-existence of space, is no proof of its being a priori.

5. Kant has not sufficiently justified the double use, which he makes of space, time and the categories, in that he treats them, on the one hand, as mere forms or ways of connecting the material given in experience, and yet, undeniably, on the other hand, also treats them as something material, viz.: as the matter or content of thought from which we form synthetic judgments a priori.

6. That space is only the form of the external and not the internal sense, and that time, per contra, is the form of the internal, and indirectly, also of the external sense, are truths to be inferred, in Kant's opinion, from the nature of external and internal experience. But in fact to space belong no less, "phenomena of internal sense," images of perception as such, representations of memory, conceptions, in so far as the concrete representations from which they are abstracted constitute their inseparable basis, and therefore to the judgments combined from them, in so far as that, to which the

* Hegel, Smaller Logic, Introduction.

judgment relates, is also intuitively (through the sensibility) represented.

VII.

So far it is evident that both Locke and Kant agree upon the fact that experience is the basis of knowledge. But knowledge of what? of phenomena. Locke maintains that we can know objects through the experience of our senses and that knowledge is limited to objects of sense only. Kant tells us that we can know only phenomena and that the knowledge of them is valid only in as much as we can verify it in an actual or a possible experience. But noumena, things-in-themselves, we cannot know, because they transcend the sphere of experience.

Hegel and Herbart, however, contend, that the knowledge of the noumena is accessible to us through experience. In this fact lies their importance. The concept of experience assumes an enlarged aspect in the theories of these philosophers and we shall now proceed to consider them in detail.

Before considering these we must turn to Fichte, who represents the extreme development of Kantianism on the subjective or psychological side.

Fichte, in his Science of Knowledge, draws forth into light the concealed mechanism by means of which consciousness is realized. His theory rests on a first principle in which the matter and the form of knowledge so condition each other that that principle requires no other to condition it as regards form and content. There are two aspects to consciousness, the objective or empirical and the subjective. Kant took up the analysis of experience as a product of our activities. But what about the process of the mind in the making of consciousness? Fichte investigated *our* mode of action in the conscious process.

Beginning then with the subject, Fichte maintains, that

the Ego first posits itself, then the non-Ego acts on the Ego and through this reciprocal activity consciousness arises. This is a state or form plus a content or matter. Neither would have a meaning without the other, nor could knowledge arise without the interaction of the Ego upon the non-Ego. The most primitive act he assumes to be that by which the unity of the subjective and objective is posited, and he describes this in his First Principle as follows: The Ego posits absolutely its being. He requires that a conception be thought, and then that we observe not *what* one *does* when one thinks, but what one *must do;* here it will be discovered that what is contained in thought, or, rather, precedes it as a *conditio sine qua non,* is a self-positing or self.* The essential thing is that the absolute, not individual, Ego be conceived as a pure act (not as something active), as pure or absolute knowledge (neither as a knowing or as a known somewhat), as the self-penetration, for which there is no other word than Ego-hood. To bring to consciousness this Ego-hood underlying every Ego is therefore something entirely different from mere self-observation; it is rather an intellectual intuition before which one's own being vanishes, and which makes its appearance, not as being, but as act.

To understand the foregoing technical accounts of Fichte, we must see how he agreed with and differed from Kant. Both accepted experience as the subject of investigation. But Kant took experience as an organized structure, and by means of analysis attempted to arrive at the universal forms which made experience possible. Thus, while his categories were a priori forms of the understanding, they were discovered empirically by analysis. Fichte, on the other hand, did not take experience for granted at the start, but only the existence of the self or Ego. Thus, he said, the Ego posits itself, meaning

* Fichte, Science of Knowledge, Part II, Section 1.

it is a primary fact. Now what does this imply? That the Ego is the conditio sine qua non of all experience. He proceeds from this self, which must be present in all experience and yet not be limited by it. We have said before that experience is a reciprocal activity between the self and the content, that is between the state, as such, and the content of consciousness. This constant activity then suggests Heraclitus' flux of things. Now if we abstract in thought from this active consciousness the form or state, we have, what Fichte terms, the absolute self, the universal Ego, the permanence in this flux. If we say, that because the Ego is posited by itself, it therefore is, we abstract the Ego from the subject—object (the thinking individual). This constitutes the content of the law of thought. Since categories are laws of the Ego, valid only so far as they apply to objects, reality is given to an object only by its being posited by the Ego; i.e., thought under the laws or categories of the Ego.

The Second Principle is introduced in a manner entirely similar to that in which the First was introduced, that is to say, originally in a descriptive form, later in the form of a postulate. In the descriptive form it runs as follows. To the Ego is opposed the non-Ego (as content of consciousness); in the form of a postulate it is required to bring the original opposition of Ego and non-Ego into consciousness. Although outside of *what* takes place by the positing act, nothing new enters, there does enter something new as regards the *way* in which it takes place. Fichte calls the act itself, and likewise the principle that formulates it, conditioned as regards content and unconditioned as regards form.* Just for that reason, also, is the product of this act designated by the expression non-Ego, which indicates something in a relation. That is, the Ego deals with a content that stands over against it. At the same

* Fichte, Science of Knowledge, Part III, Section IV.

time were it not for the Ego, that content would not exist. The content Fichte calls the non-Ego. As the fact of its existence is dependent upon the Ego, he calls the non-Ego conditioned in form by the Ego and unconditioned in its matter, because the Ego finds a certain opposition between itself and the non-Ego, an opposition not due to a difference of form between the self and the not-self.

If these two postulates (the posited Ego and the non-Ego) are granted, the Third, the combination of the two, follows of itself, without, however, the identity of consciousness being lost sight of. Since these two annul each other, the act which shall combine the positing of the Ego and its opposite the (non-Ego) must consist in a reciprocal partial negation or limitation of each by the other.

If, therefore, the postulate of this partial negation be carried into effect, there results an act which Fichte describes thus: There is a reciprocal activity between the Ego and non-Ego, both uniting into an active consciousness (the subject-objectivity). This consciousness, therefore, involves a duality —best expressed in the German *Urtheil*—a state or form on the one hand, a content on the other, and a consequent synthesis of this duality forming a unity of an active consciousness, with a content therein. The First Principle of Fichte, therefore, is analogous to the thinker, who is unconditioned by the content,—the object. The Second Principle is analogous to thought, which is limited partially by the thinker and partially by the object. And the Third Principle is analogous to consciousness,—of which the other two phases are only abstractions, which can only arise when the thinker actually thinks and purposely wants to know something. And with it the circle of possible principles is exhausted. Reflection upon the form of this principle should yield first the law of thought of the Ground; and because *Ground* (of relation and distinction) lies only in the partial coincidence and falling asunder,

there results, further, from this Principle, the third qualitative category: Determination. But, at the same time,—because "partial" is a quantitative conception,—the categories of quantity are therewith known in their proper source.

These three Principles are related to each other as thesis, antithesis and synthesis, and are at the foundation of the entire investigation. Knowledge arises from ideas of individual consciousness. In contrast with those ideas, which may come and go in an involuntary and contingent manner, there maintain themselves other sets of ideas, and these latter are characterized by a "feeling of necessity" that can be distinguished with entire certainty. That is to say, we get notions fleeting and passing by us, without any desire on our part to reflect upon them. On the other hand, there are ideas which arise with a distinct purpose, with a desire on our part to examine them. The thinker expressly and purposely wants to compare and distinguish them. These ideas are contents of an active consciousnes. They are manifestly different from the states of consciousness as such, but they influence these states. They are the non-Ego, something other than the Ego, and by the reciprocal activity of this Ego and the non-Ego, knowledge arises. Fichte calls this system of the ideas which emerge with a "purpose" or a "feeling of necessity" EXPERIENCE. He thus shows, like Kant, that experience is a synthesis of form (Ego) and content (non-Ego). The forms or categories of the Ego, however, are not assumed, but derived in the dialectic movement by which the abstract Ego and the abstract non-Ego are synthesized into concrete consciousness.

VIII.

Hegel signifies in the main a return from Schelling to Fichte, a giving up of the thought that the living wealth of the world can be derived or deduced from the "Nothing" or absolute indifference, and the attempt to raise this empty substance

again to spirit,—to the self-determined subject.* Thus, while Hegel goes back to the Fichtian idea of experience as synthesis of Ego and non-Ego, the Ego with him is not the individual Ego, but that of the Absolute. The categories are derived from "absolute experience." The world with its categories is the self-unfolding of absolute experience. Such knowledge, however, cannot have the form of intuition or immediate perception (Anschauung), which Schelling had claimed for the Ego or the Absolute, but only that of the *conception or notion* (Begriff). If all that is real or actual is the manifestation of spirit or mind, then logic has to develop the creative self-movement of spirit as a dialectical necessity. The conceptions, of which mind or spirit takes part and analyzes its own content, are the *categories of reality,* the forms of the cosmic life; and the task of philosophy is not to describe this realm of forms as a given manifold, but to comprehend them as *moments* of a single unitary development. The dialectical method, therefore, serves, with Hegel, to determine the essential nature of particular phenomena by the *significance* which they have as members or links in the self-unfolding of the spirit. He works this problem out in the scheme of the dialectic trinity of Positing, Negation and Reconciliation. All conceptions, with which the human mind has ever thought reality or its particular groups, are woven together into a unified system. Each retains its assigned place, in which its necessity, its relative justification, is said to become manifest. But each proves by this same treatment to be only *a moment* or factor which receives its true value only when it has been put in connection with the rest and introduced into the whole. Antitheses and contradictions of conceptions belong to the nature of the mind itself, and this also to the essential nature of the reality which unfolds itself from it, and their truth consists just in the systematic connection in which the categories follow from one another.

* Hegel, Phænomenologie, Vorr. W. II, 14.

Hegel thus also makes use of an inner experience, a unity of subject and object in an active consciousness, but he extends the term to include Absolute Experience or the Idea, the highest form of experience.

IX.

So far we have dealt with the concept of experience in three different phases. Locke demands everywhere a sensuous experience coming from objects, that make their impression upon our mind through the medium of our senses, while Hume does the same thing without referring the sensuous experience to any source at all.

Kant says: "Nur in der Erfahrung ist die Wahrheit." But his experience is a product of the understanding. The subject becomes conscious of this cosmos as his own creation, he gives laws to its forces, and attributes properties to its existence. The nature of the thing-in-itself is unknown to the subject, because he cannot experience it through the medium of the understanding.

Fichte and Hegel, on the other hand, deduce from the unity of an active, purposive mind the knowledge of the nature of the world.

In order to logically conclude the history of the development of the concept of experience, we ought to take into account what Herbart teaches. There is really no advance to be recorded, in his theory, upon the preceding thinkers. He studies experience in order to have a guide, as it were, which is to lead him to absolute truth; while other philosophers maintain that experience contains the root of truth in itself.

We start and must start from experience, says Herbart, but it gives us no immediate knowledge. It becomes, however, knowledge, when it is elaborated. Experience sets tasks to thought in as much as the sensations which we experience ar-

range themselves in certain forms and series. And in comparing and compiling various empirical data with the requirements of strict Logic, we attain to knowledge. For experience is full of mistakes and contradictions, hence it is necessary to go to something else in which the contradictions should be solved. Every sensation, he argues, gives us an appearance (Schein). Every appearance necessarily implies Being (Sein) —something permanent, which is the cause of sensation. The sensations are not copies of things, nor do they afford us to immediate knowledge of things, but they inevitably point to a Being, an absolute position within them. We never can know the things-in-themselves from experience, he agrees with Kant, but we do know from the fact that we have experience, that there are existences as causes of this appearance. And from this fact he also deduces the theory, that experience is the object and foundation of knowledge. The mind does not project knowledge, is not set over against experience, but the latter must be given first before the mind can act. It is impossible to conceive a mind transcending experience. But experience shows us Becoming and change; we deal with appearances which we cannot accept at their face-value. They are apt to be different at different times. Sound is heard through the medium of solids or liquids, but not in a vacuum. Color is not seen at night as well as in the daytime. There are evidently contradictions in experience. Amidst all this change, he asks, where is the permanence? Our task, then, is to find behind each appearance the underlying Real. Because, if we are not to look for some permanent truth, we are apt to fall into absolute scepticism. Since experience gives us many appearances, there must also be many Reals; "So viel Schein, so viel Sein."*

The theory of the Real is a metaphysical one. Since the Ego is a Real, we ought to deal with it in Metaphysics, but,

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* Herbart, Psychologie als Wissenschaft, 149, note 2.

since it also underlies our consciousness, Herbart deals with it in his Psychology. As a Real endowed with different changing states or qualities, it involves contradictions. And as a psychological problem, we must consider such contradictions as appear in the ideality of the subject-object (of Fichte). The contradictions, which this ideality contains, can be removed, when we think the Ego as the permanent, unchanging Real behind the changing appearance, that it exposes to us in experience. The Ego or soul possesses certain powers and activities, and these are nothing else than the force of self-preservation. These forces are variously expressed in the relation of one Real to other Reals. Thus, a Real, by virtue of the force of its activity, becomes the cause of the activity in the related Reals. Conscious experience is the sum total of these active relations. During this continuous conflict among the Reals we experience various changes in the (Schein) appearance of the Reals. And what in Psychology we term thinking, feeling and willing, is only a variety of appearances of the self-preservation of the soul. The Real itself during all these activities remains unchanged.

Thus, he concludes, that Fichte's "The Ego posits itself" depends upon an inner experience and Heraclitus' "Eternal flux in things" upon external experience, but either position cannot be regarded as final. As a result of this experience, then, he brings out the problem of manifoldness of existing things (Reals). And to explain this, means for him to remove these contradictions in experience. Hence, when a thing is presented in experience with a new quality which it did not possess before, we must, if we are to explain it, go beyond the thing itself and assume the existence of one or more other Reals with which our perception relates it. The difference between the first and second appearance of a given object of experience is to be elucidated by comparing it with another object of experience itself not yet changed. Activity (which is

also change) only seems to occur in experience, because we relate one thing to another thing occurring at intervals of time. Thus, the conception of activity forces itself into consciousness with experience.

In arguing from phenomena (Schein) to Being (Sein) Herbart consistently asserts that appearance is not an essential quality of Being, but that every true explanation of the sensuous world must exhibit appearance as entirely contingent to Being.* So that, while each particular Real is independent of all others, it is experience that changes and composes qualities.

It is outside of the province of this thesis to discuss at length the nature of the Reals. One idea in Herbart's mind we must notice, viz.: that Metaphysics must underlie Psychology.

X.

In an exposition of this kind it may not be considered out of place to take account of a contemporary doctrine in vogue;—not strictly dealing with experience as treated above. The whole doctrine is looking upon experience not as theoretical, but as practical, and as determining our attitude not only to knowledge, but to all of life.

In Kant and his followers we have a most intricate analysis of the concept of experience. But after the task is completed we have, in a certain sense, made no further progress with it than with the Empiricist account. Herbart rightly says that experience contains contradictions. The theoretical exposition of Kant, as pointed out, contains more than one difficulty. Ultimate knowledge practically becomes impossible and resolves itself into belief. For it matters not now intricate the process may be, which gives us experience, we after all get only ideas and not knowledge of objects. Our contemporaries, like the

* Herbart, Psychologie als Wissenschaft, 149, note 2.

school following the Dogmatists of old, tire of these subtleties, and turn to Radical Empiricism. It is the tendency towards what has been lately named "Pragmatism," the tendency, namely, to characterize and to estimate the processes of thought in terms of practical categories, and to criticise knowledge in the light of its bearings upon conduct, or rather action in general. I say action, because the word practical is not used in this doctrine in the Kantian sense (as used in the term "Practical Reason"). The word "pragmatic," in the Kantian sense, is (in the sense of "having a practical purpose"),—what Professors James and Peirce have in mind when they speak of "practical." The roots of this doctrine are found in Fichte's philosophy, which is a deliberate synthesis of pragmatism with absolutism. Hegel made the question a fundamental one in various places in his Logic. In the *Phaenomenolgie,* the romantic biography of the *Weltgeist,* we find the principal crises due to the conflicts of the theoretical with the practical interests. And James, in our times, by assuming that the end of man is action, fairly describes the utilitarian spirit of Americans of to-day.

Peirce speaks of Pragmatism in the following manner: "Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to **have.** Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object." James maintains that Pragmatism is the "doctrine that the whole 'meaning' of a conception expresses itself in practical consequences," either conduct to be recommended or experiences to be expected, if the conception be true, which would be different if it were untrue.*

Pragmatism, then, lays stress on the fact that there is an organic connection between thought and action, and this connection manifests itself in a concrete rather than in an abstract

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* Baldwin, Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology, article Pragmatism.

fashion. For we must admit that each different notion tends to produce a different act, and the best method of discussing points of theory is to begin by ascertaining what practical differences would result if one alternative or the other were true. What is the cash value of a particular truth in terms of particular concrete experience? This illustrates the position of Hume. Peirce summarizes his own position thus: "Thought in movement has for its only conceivable motive the attainment of belief, or thought at rest. Only when our thought about an object has found its rest in belief can our action on the subject firmly and safely begin. Beliefs, in short, are rules for action; and the whole function of thought is but one step in the production of action habits. If there were any part of thought that made no difference in the thought's practical consequences, then that part would be no element of thought's significance."*

Thus we see that the most characteristic doctrine of the method before us is that the meaning of an idea, or concept, comes out only as it modifies activity. In the idea itself there seems to be nothing inherent that determines whether its effects will be of one kind or another. All we can say of it is that, if it remains a vital mental content, it will have some sort of overt consequences. All such contents apparently stand on the same level in so far as they are merely beliefs, or opinions. And pragmatism, as expounded by James, holds that our world of fact is in some measure conditioned by previous beliefs, and the order that has once got established reacts back on the ideas that have not as yet emerged into full fact.

The test of the reality of an idea is its power to influence action, and the way in which any sort of action or conduct comes into existence, is through the instrumentality of the idea or belief that it should be so. That is to say, our conscious attitudes are naturally organized with reference to action; hence,

* Irving King. Pragmatism as a Philosophic Method, Phil. Rev., Vol. XII, 5.

they are meaningless unless they in some way modify or produce activity. And this capacity to produce change seems to be conditioned entirely by what is already objectively real. Mere working, however, will not establish the validity of a concept. As James and Royce demand, a working of a *certain kind* is essential. Not only must we see *what* difference a concept produces, but what kind of a difference it *ought* to make, in order to make pragmatism a philosophical doctrine. For instance, a true philosophy must be more than a logical one. It must also be able to awaken active impulses or satisfy æsthetic demands. There are, however, various *kinds* of active impulses, and therefore we must look still further for a standard; that is, a thing not rational *merely* because it makes a difference in conduct. James finds this further criterion in the familiarity of the action that is aroused by the thought; that which suggests customary movements in which we can easily pass from one thing to another, we regard as rational. The suggested activity must further be congruous with our spontaneous powers, must not baffle or contradict our active propensities. In the above statement we find a radical difference from dialectical philosophy. Pragmatism sets over the concept of a rational philosophy against a merely logical one, for it assumes that thought may be logical and yet not reasonable. For after all, we act as though the world of activity was a given fact, and in virtue of this fact, it is valid. Hence, congruity of the new with the old is the test of the reasonableness of the new. So that a thought or experience comes true when proved to produce such new results as are in harmony with old facts.

To sum up, we may say of pragmatism that, as first proposed by Peirce, it primarily furnishes a *practical maxim,* to the effect that consequences in action or conduct of any concept or idea are really all there can be to the *meaning* of the concept. It is not, however, mere consequences that concern the pragmatist. There is a "concrete reasonableness" over and above

all concepts, an objective system of which they are to become a part if they refer to real differences in the ultimate constitution of things.

The emphasis of both James and Peirce is essentially on the practical. The theoretical is constantly to submit to the test of the concrete. And by concrete I mean the conception that finds its proof and test in the analysis of everything that betrays a reflective elaboration in the process of experience. There can be no doubt that it is this that makes pragmatism an attractive doctrine. The man who is impatient with metaphysics feels that here at last he can escape the vagaries of theoretical speculation by referring everything to concrete experience.

CONCLUSION.

From the foregoing investigation we may conclude that the concept of experience is elaborated for the first time in the Philosophy of the Stoics. The ancients could not have spoken of the concept of experience in relation to knowledge, for they accepted knowledge as given and ready made. With them it was only a matter of defining what knowledge was, rather than explaining its origin.

In modern times the theory of the concept of experience becomes significant, for modern philosophy becomes critical. It goes back of the ancients and asks how knowledge is possible at all, and in giving account of a possible knowledge it must necessarily look into the elements that go to make up that knowledge. Such critical procedure demands proofs and tests for the truth of such a possibility, and the concept of experience becomes the basis of knowledge. Up to the time of Locke the ontological and cosmological problem was paramount, but he placed more weight upon the psychological, or rather the epistemological problem. He examined the ways in which the human mind attains to knowledge, and concluded that through sensuous intuitions we get ideas of objects. The ideas are stamped upon our mind, which is a blank tablet. The senses are the avenues through which the objects project their images and give rise to a consciousness of them. This is the sensuous experience which Locke adopts as his basis of knowledge. This view swayed the mind of the entire Empirical School.

Locke, however, was not entirely free from the ontological influences of his predecessors. He clearly distinguishes primary

from secondary qualities of things; the latter are produced in *us* as sensations, such as color, tone, etc., but are not present in objects, while the former, such as bulk, figure, etc., are inherent in the objects themselves, and we only form notions about them by an inner reflection. Such a theory carried to its logical consequence must become untenable. And Hume clearly shows this fallacy. He agrees with Locke as to the absence of the intellectual factor (in the ideal sense). Then sense-experience is the sole basis of validity. Only our present, momentary sensuous intuitions or those of our past experiences retained in memory are known to us. Since then such ideas as of substance and causality are not mediated to us through sensuous intuitions, we are unable to know anything of them. In carrying out Locke's theory to its logical conclusion, Hume gave rise to the profounder investigations of Kant.

The philosopher from Koenigsberg was neither satisfied with the onesidedness of the theory of the dogmatic-idealistic school of Leibnitz, nor with that of the empirical one of Locke. He started all over again, and as a result gave the concept of experience a new aspect—he was not satisfied with a passive mind. It is the activity of the understanding exerted upon the raw material given through the senses that constitutes Kant's concept of experience. Both elements are the indispensable constituents that go to make up knowledge. The senses cannot think and the mind cannot see. The mind receives the impressions through the senses and, transvaluing them, gives them form, and thus produces knowledge. Experience, then, is not a terminus a quo but ad quem. Kant, however, deals with the knowledge of appearances, of phenomena. Things as they are in themselves, he maintains, we cannot know, because we cannot verify that knowledge in the sphere of our experience. It remained, then, for Kant's successors to explain how we come to know the noumenal world-order.

Fichte, in elaborating the concept of experience as a crite-

rion of knowledge, develops the subjective side of Kantianism to its extreme, while Schelling does the same thing with the objective side of Kantianism. Experience, says Fichte, is the fact-act, the synthesizing activity of the mind, the unity of an active, striving, purposive consciousness, the subject-objectivity.

Hegel tries to blend the theories of Fichte and Schelling. He agrees with Fichte's fact-act and with Schelling as to the possibility of having absolute knowledge. But he objects to their method. He discards Schelling's method as producing a ready-made knowledge, as if shot out of a pistol. We do not have knowledge, Hegel says, boxed in receptacles ready for us to label at pleasure. In order to attain absolute knowledge, we must pass through a series of degrees. We begin with sensuous appearance, and by the dialectical method develop the concept, until we obtain absolute knowledge of phenomena through a combination of outer and inner experience. The thing-in-itself is only an abstraction.

And finally, Herbart tried to get all the truth out of all these previous expositions of the concept of experience. He was a sort of an eclectic. He says we begin with experience, and under this term he includes an inner and an outer experience. But we shall find contradictions between what is given from these two sources. We must appeal to Logic, he argues, in order to remove these contradictions and clear up the matter, and thus attain to true knowledge. But experience at all events is the first element in knowledge, and ultimately becomes its basis, for without it knowledge would be impossible.

In conclusion we noted that, while preceding philosophies as considered, had laid stress upon the intellectual way of arriving at truth, Pragmatism, which still is immature as a philosophical doctrine and scarcely deserving a place in the history of philosophy, nevertheless marks a healthy tendency, viz.: to consider the problems of the world, not by the intellect alone, but by the whole of man's rational nature.

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