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PROCEEDINGS  
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*Containing the Papers read before the Society during the  
Twenty-Ninth Session, 1907–1908.*

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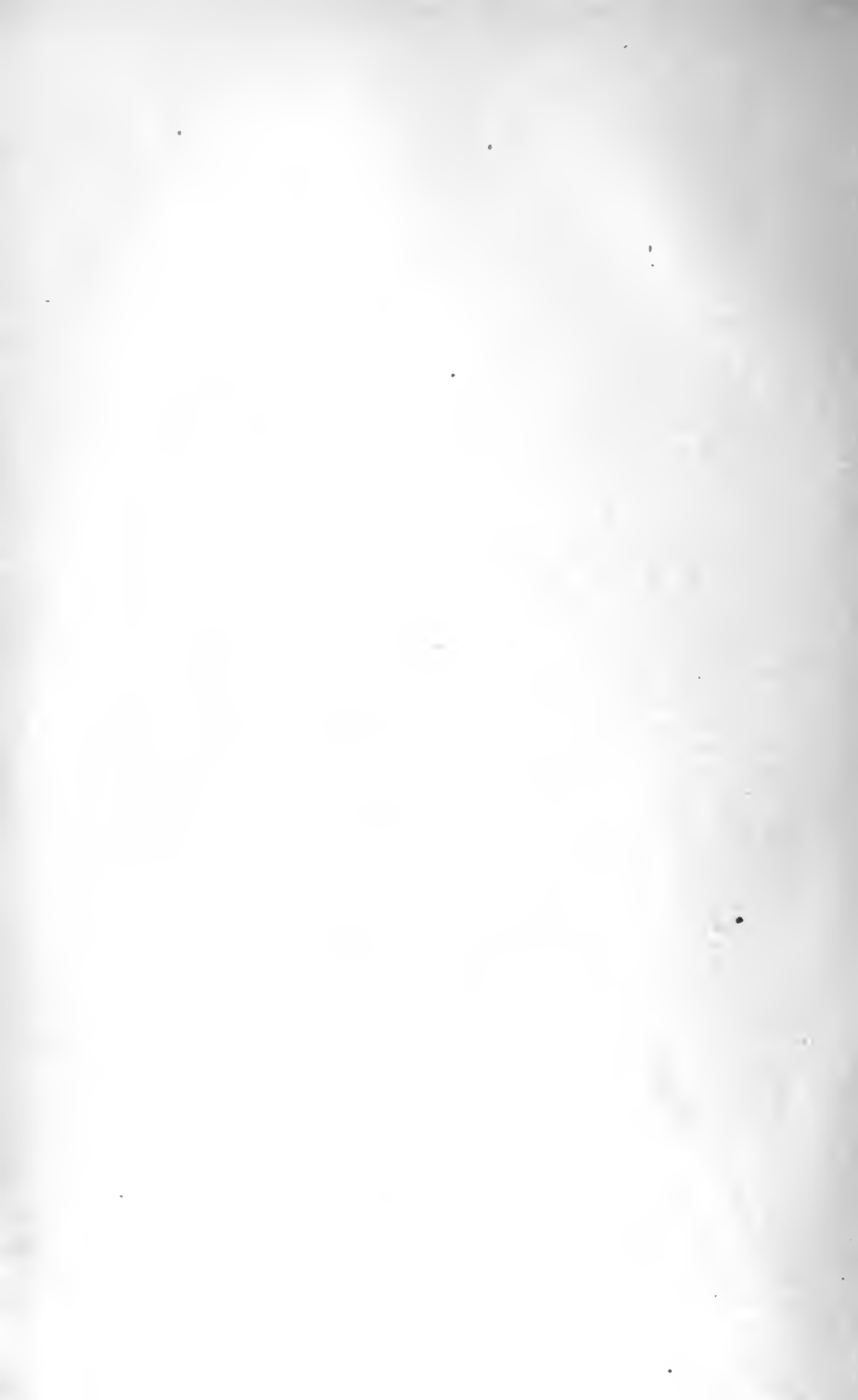
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PAPERS READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY,  
1907-1908.

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I.—THE METHODS OF MODERN LOGIC AND THE  
CONCEPTION OF INFINITY.

*By* R. B. HALDANE.

IN an address delivered some two years ago and since then published, I made an attempt to estimate the influence on economic ideas of the great advances effected in the methods of modern logicians. Whether I succeeded I do not know. But the moral which I sought to point was that economists of more than one shade of opinion would do well to criticise their categories, and to see to it that they do not confuse what are in reality only valuable working conceptions with concrete realities. My purpose in this paper is to pursue the same method, and to suggest that, in yet another region, abstractions are apt to be hypostatized into realities.

Both in daily parlance and in mathematical science the word "infinite" is freely employed. Yet this expression is, as a rule, either not defined at all, or, if defined, employed in a special sense which excludes what the word means when used in other connections. An infinite series suggests, or ought to suggest, nothing analogous to an infinite God. The former may be limited by a finite quantity which the sum of the members of the series, though themselves increased in number without limit, cannot exceed. Such a numerical series can be treated as collapsing into a whole which is finite, and this whole is determined by the law of the series, through the medium of

the definite relationship between the members which constitutes that law. Finite, in the sense of ended, is in this fashion prevented from coming into contradiction with infinite, in the sense of unending. The two aspects are present in one whole, and are not inconsistent with each other. But there is nothing final about the whole which they constitute. It is one single system alongside of others, and is itself included in an indefinite succession of larger systems, which may or may not be capable of being summed in an analogous finite whole as their limit. In the region of space and time real finality is sought in vain. The progress is endless. And this is entirely true of the more general category of Quantity. Quantity as such is not a concrete thing. It is a relation or category. Even in mathematics the category of quantity is not always used. The new science of Projective Geometry seems expressly to exclude the quantitative relationships of space, and to confine itself to qualitative distinctions of points and lines. In the infinitesimal calculus the better opinion appears to be that from the notion of definite quantities or quanta, as ordinarily understood, we must free our minds and speech if we would escape self-stultification. But before I go further into this topic I should like to examine the notion of Quantity itself a little more closely.

Quantity is sometimes defined as the capacity of being increased or decreased. This definition is tautologous, but it points to a real distinction. The distinctive element in quantity is the capacity of being increased or decreased without alteration of character or quality. In pure quantity, whether we deal with occupation of space or with number, unit passes into unit, and the substratum remains through the change of quantity qualitatively identical. This is so notwithstanding that quantity possesses a discrete as well as a continuous aspect. Quantitative magnitudes are not of two kinds, but inherently possess two aspects, that of unbroken self-identity or continuity, and that of divisibility into units or parts. On whichever side

we take quantity we find ourselves faced by the capacity of indefinite extension. This capacity is sometimes spoken of as extension to infinity. But the word infinite as so used betokens no true infinite. It simply signifies that something greater or less can be set up beyond any given stage. But this something beyond is essentially existence alongside of, and in contrast to, the phase of existence already reached. It is therefore a finite. The true infinite cannot exist by contrast—cannot be a cause, even a first cause, or a substance, or numerically different from anything else; for these, all of them, carry the badge of finitude. A true infinite must be self-contained. It follows that no quantum can be infinite, and that to escape from its inherent finitude we must turn to its qualitative relations. From this side quantity may have an aspect in which it is self-contained—for instance, as the sum of a series, but it is only in one aspect that such a sum has the resemblance of self-containedness. The number 2 is the sum or limit of an arithmetical series that in point of number of members has no limit. But although in its aspect of a limit it contains the whole series, in its aspect as a definite number it has an infinity of numbers outside itself. It is therefore only *sub modo* that it is representative of what is self-contained, and for the series such a summation is possible only in virtue of a law or relationship in which the notion of a limit is inherent. From the failure of mathematicians to notice the ambiguity in the word “infinite” a great amount of apparently unnecessary controversy has arisen. The methods of modern logic, with their stringent insistence on criticism of categories, might, if carefully applied, have delivered them from much.

I am not a mathematician, and I speak with some reluctance on that which I have studied mainly as the *corpus vile* on which to attempt logical investigations. When, however, even an outsider enters on an examination of the principles of the infinitesimal calculus he is impressed with the evidences of confusion. But I will quote the language of men who are not

outsiders, two distinguished mathematicians—both Americans—who have been candid on this subject. I will begin with Dr. A. T. Bledsoe's "Philosophy of Mathematics":—

"The student of mathematics, in passing from the lower branches of the science to the infinitesimal analysis, finds himself in a strange and wholly foreign department of thought. He has not risen by easy and gradual steps, from a lower to a higher, purer, and more beautiful region of scientific truth. On the contrary, he is painfully impressed with the conviction that the continuity of the science has been broken, and its unity destroyed by the influx of principles which are as unintelligible as they are novel. He finds himself surrounded by enigmas and obscurities which only serve to perplex his understanding and darken his aspirations after knowledge."

Commenting on this passage, Professor Buckingham, of Chicago, in his striking book on the "Differential and Integral Calculus," goes further:—

"The student," he declares, "finds himself required to ignore the principles and axioms that have hitherto guided his studies and sustained his convictions, and to receive in their stead a set of notions that are utterly repugnant to all his preconceived ideas of truth. When he is told that one quantity may be added to or subtracted from another, without diminishing it; that one quantity may be infinitely small, another infinitely smaller, and another infinitely smaller still, and so on *ad infinitum*—that a quantity may be so small that it cannot be divided, and yet may contain another an indefinite and even an infinite number of times—that zero is not always nothing, but may not only be something or nothing as occasion may require, and may be *both at the same time*, in the same equation—it is not surprising that he should become bewildered and disheartened. Nevertheless, if he study the text books that are considered orthodox in this country and in Europe, he will find some of these notions set forth in them all; not indeed in their naked deformity, as they are here stated, but softened and made



as palatable as possible by associating them with, or concealing them beneath, propositions that are undoubtedly true. It is indeed strange that a science so exact in its results should have its principles interwoven with so much that is false and absurd in theory, especially as all these absurdities have been so often exposed and charged against the claims of the calculus as a true science. It can be accounted for only by the influence of the great names that first adopted them, and the indisposition of mathematicians to depart from the simple ideas of the ancients in reference to the attributes of quantity. They regard it merely as inert, either fixed in value or subject only to such changes as may be arbitrarily imposed on it. But when they attempt to carry this conception into the operations of the calculus, and to account for the results by some theory consistent with this idea of quantity, they are inevitably entangled in some often absurd notions that have been mentioned. Many efforts have indeed been made to escape such glaring inconsistencies, but they have only resulted in a partial success in concealing them."

I have quoted Professor Buckingham at some length, because, as a mere logician, I prefer to rely on the authority of a trained mathematician, rather than to express views of my own. But there is no need for me to confine myself to Professor Buckingham. In 1684 Leibnitz first published his method in full—the method of Infinitesimals. His fundamental assumptions are thus stated by his disciple, the Marquis de L'Hôpital. First:—"We demand that we may take, indifferently, the one for the other, two quantities which differ from each other by an infinitely small quantity, or what is the same thing, that a quantity which is increased or decreased by another quantity infinitely less than itself, can be considered as remaining the same." Second:—"We demand that a curved line may be considered as the assemblage of an infinity of straight lines, each infinitely small; or, what is the same thing, as a polygon with an infinite number of sides, each infinitely small, which

determine by the angles which they make with each other, the curvature of the lines.”

Here we have remarkable confusion. That these infinitesimals are regarded from the side of quantity on which it presents its discrete aspect and are meant to be minute quanta, is plain from the next step which Leibnitz takes. He goes on to treat the infinitesimals of his system as themselves composed of an infinite number of parts, infinitely smaller still, and so on. It is plain that a circle cannot be regarded as really made up of a polygon of an infinite number of sides, as Leibnitz claimed, each infinitely small, and of which the prolongation is the tangent to the circle. No doubt, as Lagrange afterwards explained, the error finds itself corrected in the results of the calculus by the omission which is made of infinitely small quantities. Leibnitz himself likened them to grains of sand in comparison with the sea. But, as Comte remarked, this explanation would, if true, completely change the nature of this analysis, by reducing it to a mere approximative calculus, which, from this point of view, would be radically vicious. As another great critic, himself a mathematician, D’Alembert, said, Leibnitz’s explanation “ruined” the geometrical exactness of the calculus.

But we know that the Infinitesimal Calculus is an exact science, and that it cannot rest on an inexact hypothesis. To the logician, who has examined the conception of quantity with the suspicion which a metaphysical training engenders, the source of the confusion is apparent. Quantity, as I reminded you at the beginning of this paper, has a continuous as well as a discrete aspect, and can therefore, in the first of these aspects, be made the subject of a science of rate of change which does not involve the dragging in of the other aspect and the attempt to treat quanta as if they could be infinitesimal, a very contradiction in terms. The infinite of Leibnitz is a false infinite, and imports mere unendingness in increase or decrease of finite quanta. The qualitative infinity which belongs to the con-

tinuous aspect of quantity cannot be reached by addition or subtraction. Leibnitz was too great a genius to be dominated in the result by such a fallacy. But logic, as it has come to be since Kant and Hegel scrutinised its foundations afresh, did not exist in his time, and he fell into uncritical and dogmatic assumptions which led to insoluble antinomies. Newton, whose method of fluxions was founded on larger notions, was able to reach the results of Leibnitz without being subject to the reproach of contradicting himself in first principles.

As far as I can venture to express a view, founded on an examination of a number of treatises which I have endeavoured to study, the broad working conceptions of the Differential Calculus, apart from theories as to their meaning, are usually expressed somewhat as follows:—

(1) A Differential Coefficient expresses the rate of change of a function with respect to its independent variable. The work of the Differential Calculus is to find the derived function when the original function is given. The Integral Calculus seeks, conversely, to find its original function when the derived function is given.

(2) If there be a fixed magnitude to which a variable magnitude can be made as nearly equal as we please, and if it be impossible that the variable magnitude can ever be exactly equal to the fixed magnitude, the fixed magnitude is called the limit of the variable magnitude.

Now, this second proposition bears the mark of the cloven hoof. The idea of negligible difference is present in it. Nevertheless it points to the real underlying principle, which is that we are to take the continuous aspect of quantity as real equally with the discrete aspect with which arithmetic is concerned. It suggests that we may treat quantity, not only as capable of being increased and diminished *ab extra*, but as being actually alive, as it were, and inherently in a state of change. If so the Differential Calculus is a science of rates, and its peculiar subject is quantity regarded as a state of

continuous change. Rate is a complex idea of which the elements are time and change, but where one uniform rate is compared with another, without regard to absolute values, as in  $dy/dx$ , the symbol of the differential coefficient, the idea of time may be left out of the question, and the comparison may be made through that of the simultaneous changes of the two rates themselves; so that the ratio of the simultaneous increments of any two variables which increase at constant rates, does in fact perform a double office, representing not only the ratio of their changes, but also that of their rates of change, which will of course be constant. Just because of this characteristic, the rates at which the quantities may be changing are not affected when their values become zero, and may pass from *plus* to *minus* quantities. The equation  $0/0 = a$ , thus has a meaning:  $a$  may be the ratio, not only of quantities or of their increments, but also of their rates of increase, and therefore, when applied to the so-called increments with which the Differential Calculus deals,  $a$  must indicate the ratio of the rates of change of their increments as they pass through the zero point of their value.  $dy/dx$  is thus a symbol which represents, not actual or separable minute quantities in their relation to each other, but simultaneous rates of change in  $x$  and a function of  $x$ . Apart from their relation to each other,  $dy$  and  $dx$  are non-existent; they have reality only as moments in a relationship which belongs to the continuous aspect of quantity. Thus it is only as symbolising rates of change in certain aspects of magnitude that curves may be treated as though made up of lines. The relationship of the differential coefficients of such magnitudes is to be conceived as existing, neither *before* they disappear, nor *after*, but as the relation *with which* they disappear. In virtue of the principle of continuity the vanishing magnitudes still retain the ratio which characterises their relative rates of change. It follows that the transition from the function of a variable to its differential, must be regarded as no difference by so much,

but as a reduction of the finite function to the qualitative relation of its quantitative elements. What is present in reality only the qualitative relation of quantitative *principia*, which, as being *principia*, are elements but not quanta. Thus we get rid of the "beyond" of the false infinite of quantity taken as discrete. It is by grasping truths of this class that we rid ourselves of the limitations by which the science of quantity, assumed to possess a merely discrete character, is confused, and gain the free use of the great instrument of analysis which the genius of Newton and Leibnitz has placed within our grasp. In the notions themselves which underlie the calculus there is nothing particularly abstruse. It is the confusion of ideas which logically imply different categories that makes this branch of mathematics seem a mystery. As Professor Perry points out in a very useful book which he has written:\* "Surely there is no great difficulty in catching the idea of a limiting value. Some people have the notion that we are stating something that is only approximately true; it is often because their teacher will say such things as 'reject  $16.1\delta t$  because it is small,' or 'let  $dt$  be an infinitely small amount of time' and they proceed to divide something by it, showing that though they may reach the age of Methuselah they will never have the common sense of an engineer."

I have dwelt thus long on the illustration from mathematics of the false infinite of quantity, because I believe that much confusion and many antinomies have arisen in connection with it. The controversy as to the character of this false infinite was raised by Kant, and was pursued still more fully by Hegel in the second section (that which deals with quantity) of the first book of his large *Wissenschaft der Logik*. His "Encyclopædia" Logic does not go into detail on the point. A brilliant exposition of the attack made by Hegel on what he deemed to be the bad metaphysics of the Leibnitzian view is

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\* *The Calculus for Engineers*, p. 22.

given in the second volume of Dr. Stirling's *Secret of Hegel*, a book which ought to be carefully studied. This exposition produced a keen controversy, in which the late Professors Tait and Robertson Smith took up the cudgels for Leibnitz. Dr. Stirling replied in a pamphlet entitled "Whewell and Hegel," which is bound up with his lectures on the "Philosophy of Law." After that time—nearly 40 years ago—the controversy dropped. It is interesting to find the root question discussed once again in the much later writings of the American mathematicians whom I have quoted. The whole subject is only one more illustration of the truth that there is a borderland between science and metaphysics, the boundaries of which require much more exact study and ascertainment than they have hitherto received. It is the province of modern logic to embrace this region within its survey, and to set up warning posts for men of science and of metaphysicians alike.

One further remark I wish to make here. It is a common delusion that logicians and metaphysicians desire, by some high *a priori* method, to endeavour to do the work of the physicists. This is a delusion, the existence of which is due to the circumstance that the latter have, as a general rule, failed to take the trouble to study the criticisms of the former. The method is the same in both cases, the testing and modification of hypotheses by facts. It is not the necessity for experiment, or the results attained by it, that philosophy claims a right to criticise. The claim is confined to theories about the facts—theories which the history of science itself is constantly showing to have been dogmatic, uncritical, and *a priori*, in the most objectionable sense. It is, in other words, not the physics of the physicist, but his unconscious metaphysics, that are brought under scrutiny.

If, then, we must rule out the notion of mere endlessness as a help to the conception of infinity, and turn away from quantity on its discrete side, it follows that space and time must be rejected as a field of study. For they can yield us no picture

of anything but finiteness endlessly repeated. Nor do these other relationships which are treated in the higher mathematics avail us. They give us, it is true, the notion of infinity in the sense of what is as self-contained, and as expressible in terms of relationships which are free from the characteristic of implying the "*Beyond*" of quantity in its discrete aspect. But they are abstract, and the true infinite cannot be abstract. What is abstract has been divided or wrenched from a context. It has, therefore, something outside it, and is thus infected with the characteristic of finiteness. The true infinite must, it would seem, be not only concrete but completely self-contained, with nothing beyond it. It can be, in fact, only the ultimate reality into which all else is resolvable, and in terms of which everything can be expressed, while it can itself be expressed in terms of and be resolved into nothing beyond. What, then, must be the characteristic of such an infinite? It cannot be a cause, for a cause is really conditioned by its effect. Nor can it be a substance, for then the attribute would be another, and would limit it.

When Bishop Berkeley came to the conclusion that the real world was but a set of ordered ideas in the mind, and when David Hume followed this up by showing that the same analysis disclosed the mind itself as a mere series of ideas, men began to reconsider their position. Kant's doctrine regarding the synthetic Unity of Apperception was simply a way of saying that reality and the substance, both of the external and the internal world, must be sought within the mind itself. Over the significance of this doctrine a great controversy has raged. It has been, on the one hand, insisted that what is not capable of being the object of knowledge of some kind has no meaning and therefore cannot be deemed to exist. On the other hand, it has been rejoined that reality cannot be resolved into universals of knowledge. Now it is obvious that both propositions may be simultaneously true. Moreover, for the second there is warrant in common experience.

When I look at the room full of people opposite me it is plain that I do more than simply reflect ; I perceive. What is my object world is still the content of mind, but content of a different quality. It is true that all perception depends on, and consists in large measure in, the application of universals, but these do not make up the whole nature of perception. The moment of sense or feeling is present throughout, and if thought and feeling are two separate and self-subsisting entities then perception can no more be resolved into mere thought than it can be resolved into mere feeling. But it is a mistake to infer from this that in the process of perception there are two separate elements. The truth seems to be that thought and feeling, the universal and the particular, are both abstractions made within a concrete whole, a self-consciousness that is *individual* and *singular*. Real knowledge appears to be always either concrete and singular or else a process of abstraction from what is concrete and singular. Mind itself appears as a process in which the structure of the universe, including the isolation in knowledge of the mind itself as one of its own objects, is evolved by reflection on a concrete experience which is constantly being made more definite and distinct and thus progressively transformed. The mind is not a thing beside other things, but a process for which the view of other things and of itself with them develops itself within the activity which is the real characteristic of mind. It is only by abstraction that subject and object are separated as if they were independent existences ; whereas, like the universal and the particular, like thought and feeling, they seem to be only abstractions falling within a single entirety.

Much of the controversy over what is called Idealism has arisen from overlooking this circumstance, and from the tacit assumption that the methods and distinctions of psychology can be employed to throw light on the ultimate nature of knowledge. It is of the nature of the subject to manifest itself, not as inert substance, but as activity, the activity which is



knowledge and which embraces within its ambit the universals of thought and the particulars of feeling alike, and distinguishes them, not as independent realities but as aspects arising by abstraction within itself. It is thus that experience develops, and it is thus that it seems to be constituted. The supposed unknowable things in themselves are notions which arise, not in the concrete actuality of this experience, but from abstractions growing out of reflection upon it. They are really limiting notions which are due to another feature of what is actual in knowledge. The subject is real in the form of the self-consciousness within which arises by reflection the object world which it distinguishes from itself, and yet, as part of the process of turning its reflective activity upon itself, regards as containing itself as a part of the whole. It is as belonging to the object world that it constructs the conception of itself, and of necessity constructs it, as that of one among a plurality of subjects. But, regarded as the foundation and essence of the experience which contains the knowledge of itself and the rest of the universe, the activity of the subject has another aspect. In this it is never object. It is the condition of any object world arising, and is describable consequently, in Kantian language, as the synthetic unity of apperception. But this becomes real only as a concrete individual, which is yet, on its universal side, more than individual. In other words, the infinite is no aspect existing independently of the finite, but realises itself only in and through the finite. The finite, on the other hand, is no independent aspect, but is real only for and through the infinite. The real individual of experience is thus an infinite-finite. In the language of Theology, man is as indispensable to God as God is to man. The true infinite is a process of logical development through finite forms, the limiting concept of which is a whole which is never realised as statically complete, but is yet presupposed as the condition and foundation *ab initio* of the entire process.

This result appears not only to get over many of the difficulties which Idealism has to encounter, but to accord with the investigations of modern logicians. These investigations tend to represent the test of truth as the possibility of complete and harmonious inclusion within a system, which again falls within and accords with a larger system. Our intelligence creates and sustains our real world by a continuous judgment which embraces certain forms in their concrete connection within the unity of a single system. It is the fitting into this unity and the accord with the system in question which is the test of truth, and is what compels our assent and our purpose when we reason. As Mr. Bosanquet puts it towards the close of the second volume of his *Logic*: "Necessity is, then, a character attaching to parts or differences interrelated within wholes, universals, or identities. If there were any totality such that it could not be set over against something else as a part or difference within a further system, such a totality could not be known under an aspect of necessity, *i.e.*, as a link in the chain of the process of development of knowledge. The universe, however we may conceive it as including subordinate systems, must ultimately be incapable, *ex hypothesi*, of entering as an element into a system including more than it. Strictly speaking, therefore, its relation to knowledge must be one of reality, not of necessity. But, also, strictly speaking, it is a reality which we have no power to question or to explain, because all our questioning or explanation falls within it. There can be no meaning in talking of what might be the case if the universe were other than it is, or about what has been the case in order to make the universe what it is."

Every judgment assumes a larger whole and is the analysis of it, and affirms a necessity based on the reality of this whole. We can never include the entirety of the universe in the object world of that experience from which we distinguish knowledge as including it within its system. The entirety

and this entirety we must assume, is at once the foundation of reality and at the same time incapable of being completely given in that reality. It is of the nature of the only self-consciousness that we know, that the development of its knowledge should remain incomplete. Yet, such finite self-consciousness presupposes the infinite which becomes real in it. The two are separable, not as concrete individuals of reality, but only in the abstractions of reflection. The one *is* the other, and neither is reducible to its logical complement. The possible completion of the system is its key note, presupposition, and foundation. Yet this completion is incapable of being realised save in the unending process to which it gives its character and of which it is the summation.

Let us try to gather together results:—

(1) There is no infinity which does not realise itself in finite forms; there is equally no finite form which has not its foundation and signification in what is infinite. In the popular language of a much abused and little understood *Credo* we must neither unduly confound persons nor divide substances. Each aspect is as real as the other.

(2) The infinite does not exist in contrast with the finite—nor as another numerically apart in time or space. It is no more prolongation of the finite to endlessness.

(3) The real infinite must be regarded as a self-contained system which is real under the aspect of a process, a progress of notional development within which time and space and the limited self of experience appear as stages, constituents, or moments.

(4) To ask for the presentation as a completed perception, or even experience, of such a self-contained system is a contradiction in terms. Its presupposition is the foundation on which such perception and experience in general rest, and it contains them as stages of development within itself.

(5) Such an infinite cannot be substance and must be subject. The category of self-consciousness is the highest

category we know. If a completely self-contained self-consciousness could present itself to itself, apart from the element of the finite which it requires for its purposive development, there would be no opposition within it between subject and object. This is the meaning of the doctrine of Immanence.

(6) It follows that the supreme controlling power of the universe is to be sought not in causes, but in ends and the systems which progressively realise them. The system of nature is the logical antithesis which reflection sets up between the universality of abstract reflection, and the particulars which are the limit confronting abstract reflection. These are essential as the condition without which finite spirit could have no basis on which to rise into existence. On the other hand, nature is not prior in time to mind, but arises in and through its distinctions. Moreover, the distinction between thought and feeling is not ultimate. It is in so far as they are severally and abstractly brought before consciousness as among its objects that the distinction between them arises. This distinction, therefore, is made and falls within consciousness, and is not prior to it.

(7) The metaphysical principles above indicated, however difficult they may seem, are necessary, and are as old as the teaching of Aristotle. They have been often forgotten and several times rediscovered. They must be borne in mind if the methods of modern logicians are to have their full application, and if confusion is to be eliminated from the treatment of infinity, even in mathematical science.

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## II.—PURPOSE.

*By* R. LATTA.

IN recent epistemological and metaphysical discussion the conception of purpose is freely used, and important conclusions are frequently derived from it. "The purposive nature of our intelligence" is emphasised as a cardinal principle of general psychology, and the primacy accorded to cognition in what may be called the "mechanical" systems of psychology is being transferred to the active or volitional side of our mental life. The methods of formal logic are criticised, and the procedure of science is analysed, from a standpoint which demands the recognition of purpose as a determining factor, and both relativist and absolutist metaphysics find the conception of purpose, in various senses, a most useful instrument of interpretation. My object in this paper is to make an endeavour, however imperfect, to discover the meaning of this much-used conception.

The most immediately obvious meaning of purpose is its psychological sense, and for convenience we may take as a starting-point the definition given by Professors Baldwin and Stout in the *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, vol. ii, viz., "a project which is adopted for execution, but not yet executed." In the same volume a project is defined by Professor Baldwin as "a possible course of action conceived simply, but not decided upon." Combining the two statements we may say that, in the view of these authorities, a purpose is a possible course of action, conceived and adopted for execution, but not yet executed. It is further explained that a purpose is an unrealised end (in the sense of a remote, rather than an immediate, end), and it is said to differ from intention in being

limited to the elements actually present to the mind. This description corresponds very fairly to what is meant by purpose in specific relation to conduct; but it seems to me to be too narrow a definition even of conscious purpose, in view of much common usage. The terms "purpose" and "intention" may often be applied indifferently, and this not through mere looseness of terminology, but because of a substantial identity of meaning. From the point of view of law and ethics, it is no doubt necessary to insist on the distinction between "purpose" and "intention," and from the same point of view it may be necessary to define purpose as a conceived course of action directed to a remote end. But if we leave out of account the problems of these normative sciences, we must allow that purpose is not necessarily a conceived course of action, that it is not always directed to a remote end, and that it is not limited to the "elements actually present to the mind." In logic, for instance, we may quite fairly speak of the purpose or intention of a statement, and we may insist, as Mr. Schiller does,\* that this purpose must be taken into account in determining the meaning of the statement. Purpose in this sense is not a conceived course of action, nor is it necessarily directed to a remote end. It may be a merely momentary purpose, and its end may be immediate. Nor is it necessarily anything definitely conceived. It may be no more than a vague, partly subconscious disposition, imperfectly realised by the person whose purpose it is. It would be absurd to say that in every statement a man makes he has some definite purpose present to his mind, and yet it may fairly be said that no intelligible statement is purposeless. Indeed, one of the most satisfactory ways in which language (in the widest sense) may be discriminated from involuntary exclamation or gesture is to discover whether or not the supposed sign has a purpose. Again, there are cases in which a person acts under

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\* *Studies in Humanism*, pp. 9, 10.

the influence of an indefinite and growing purpose, of which he becomes definitely conscious only at a comparatively advanced stage in his course of action. Becoming aware of his purpose, he may look back on his previous action and recognise that, without his knowing it, his doings had been dominated by this purpose from the first. As Professor Taylor points out, "it is a familiar fact of experience that we often learn what our purposes are for the first time by the pain which attends their defeat." And again, "when I speak of feeling as 'purposive' or 'teleological,' I do not mean to make what, to my own mind, would be the monstrous assumption, that it necessarily presupposes *conscious* anticipation of its guiding end or purpose. All that I mean is that the processes of conscious life are as a matter of fact only intelligible with reference to the results in which they culminate, and which they serve to maintain; or, again, that they all involve the kind of continuity of interest which belongs to attention."\* It seems to me, therefore, that, even in the merely psychological sense, purpose cannot be limited to what is clearly and definitely conceived by the purposing mind.

Professor Taylor's statements, however, have been challenged by Mr. Schiller,† on the ground that they ignore the element of "agency" in purpose. "Professor Taylor hardly seems to conceive purpose in the natural way. He habitually regards it rather from the external standpoint of the contemplative *spectator* than from that of the purposing *agent*, and it will always be found that a philosophy which refuses to enter into the feelings of the agent must in the end pronounce the whole conception of agency an unmeaning mystery. . . . This external way of conceiving agency from the standpoint of a bystander was Hume's fundamental trick, the root of all his naturalism, and the basis of his success as a critic of causation." I find it somewhat difficult to understand Mr. Schiller's objection to

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\* *Elements of Metaphysics*, p. 55, note.

† *Studies in Humanism*, p. 230.

the attitude of the spectator. It is surely the business of the philosopher and the scientific man to understand the objects of his study. His ultimate aim may be practical; but his endeavour is to understand, in order that he may act or regulate his action. And in order to understand he must be a spectator—a spectator of himself and of the world. To “enter into the feelings of the agent” can only mean either to have the feelings of the agent, which every man has in so far as he is an agent, or to be a “spectator” of the feelings of the agent, *i.e.*, to understand them and take account of them. Mr. Schiller’s contention, then, must mean that Professor Taylor ignores an essential element in the conception of purpose, the element of “agency.” Similarly, his criticism of Hume seems to mean, so far as I understand it, that Hume, in his analysis of Causation, neglected certain elements in Causality, and more especially (I take it) the element of agency. For it can hardly be meant that Hume refused “to enter into the feelings” of a cause. If, then, “this external way of conceiving agency from the standpoint of a bystander” or a “spectator” leaves “no room for the conception of agency,” we must either give up the scientific and philosophical attempt to understand ourselves and the world or “pronounce the whole conception of agency an unmeaning mystery.”

But, assuming that a spectator may observe himself and other beings to be agents, we may consider whether, and in what sense, “agency” is an element in purpose. This seems to me to depend on the answer to the question whether or not the agent is necessarily an agent conscious of the ends of his action. Activity and purpose are each teleological: every activity and every purpose is a tendency to an end. There are many activities in which the agent is unconscious of the end; and there are many purposes in which the agent is conscious of the end. Can we say that there are activities which are entirely purposeless? We do speak of some activities as purposeless or aimless, when we mean that their ends are vague or



indefinite. But vagueness or indefiniteness in the end of an activity is not necessarily a sign of the absence of conscious purpose, for there are endless degrees of definiteness in an agent's consciousness of his end, and consequently many activities with vague and indefinite ends are activities in which the agent is conscious of the end. On the other hand, there are activities, both of living and of inanimate things, in which there is no consciousness of the end. It may, of course, be maintained that such activities are purely mechanical, and are, therefore, not entitled to the name of activities in the strict sense, *i.e.*, in the sense of tendencies to ends. But that would mean that there is no activity in the strict sense, except activity consciously directed to an end, and I do not think that those who insist on the importance of agency as an element in purpose are prepared to admit this. For if there is no activity, except activity consciously directed to an end, there is no purpose except conscious purpose, and the attitude of Hume is justified, except as regards one section, an island, of reality, in which alone it is necessary to take purpose and agency into account. Are, then, these unconscious activities purposive? If they are not, it seems necessary to admit the existence of agents without purposes. But if the conception of agency is extended so as to include agents without purposes, it is difficult to see how it can be regarded as an "immediate experience," for we have no immediate experience of unconscious agents. To postulate such agents must mean, it seems to me, either to maintain that there is an arbitrary and incalculable factor in the means to any end or the cause of any effect, or to say that in every tendency to an end there is a system of conditions, having a real unity and not being merely a collection or sum of independent elements. To adopt the first of these suppositions would be equivalent to regarding nature, as ultimately unintelligible. But in the second sense, that in which an agent is regarded as a real system of conditions, having a definite unity, agency is the most important,

if not the sole, element in purpose, and, indeed, in every activity.

It may, however, be contended that while in unconscious tendency to an end, as viewed from the standpoint of science, there is no purpose or agency, the whole scientific conception of things is only relatively true and must be taken as a construction of conscious agents, acting under the guidance of conscious purposes. It may not be possible directly to find purpose and agency in the unconscious processes of nature ; but indirectly the whole universe, as it is for us (*i.e.*, the only universe we can know, the only universe that matters), is dominated and determined by the purposes of conscious agents. All our statements, whether they are individual propositions or systems of doctrine, can only be understood by reference to the purposes of the conscious agents who make them, and their degree of truth is relative to these purposes. Now, in one sense, this is a contention which cannot be denied. It is so obvious that there is no need to defend or illustrate it. Every statement, and every theory, has definite meaning and truth only in its context. This context may, as Mr. Schiller contends,\* be the purpose of the person who makes the statement or frames the theory, though I think it a great exaggeration to say that "the whole of one's concrete personality" goes to the making of each of one's assertions. [That may be the case ultimately, from an "absolute" point of view ; but I should have thought that practically, from the "pragmatist" point of view, much less than the whole would suffice.] We cannot, however, in my opinion, identify the context with the purpose of the assertor. If the meaning and truth of the statement depends upon its context, it must be possible to comprehend and state this context. If the context is uninterpretable or inscrutable, if it is a purpose which cannot be fully and definitely expressed, the meaning and truth which depend upon it must be arbitrary, and the statement

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\* *Studies in Humanism*, p. 86.

must in the last resort be unintelligible. Now, if the context is the whole of the assertor's personality, it is obviously a context which cannot be fully and definitely expressed. And if the context is a specific purpose, which can be definitely stated, we must further ask,—is the context the assertor's purpose as it appears to himself or is it the assertor's purpose as it is understood by others? Very frequently the assertor misreads his own purpose. Nothing, for instance, is more common than the supposition of an assertor or theorist that his purpose is the pure, unprejudiced investigation of truth, when in reality, and in the opinion of others, his purpose is to convince other people of the truth of some preconceived opinion. It is a snare which besets us all. We are often self-deceived, and we cannot therefore take our own conception of our purpose as necessarily determining the meaning and truth of our statements. On the other hand, it is equally obvious that our purposes are often misunderstood by other people, and we cannot, therefore, take their conception of our purpose as determining the meaning of our statements. The nature and purposes of a conscious agent, whether as recognised by himself or as interpreted by others, may, in certain circumstances, be a more or less important part of the context of his statements; but they are not necessarily the sole context and in many cases they are a negligible element in the context. In so far as they enter into the context, they do so, not in virtue of their being conscious acts or purposes, but in so far as they are conditions on which the truth of the statement depends. If a colour-blind man makes assertions about colour, if an inaccurate observer or a careless reader of documents makes scientific or historical statements, we are bound to take into account the colour-blindness, the inaccuracy or the carelessness in estimating the meaning and value of the statements. Similarly, if a man is known to be endeavouring to deceive us, we must take his purpose into account. But we take these things into account, not merely because they are characteristics or purposes of conscious agents, but because they

are grounds or conditions of the statements. Every statement rests on grounds or conditions and its meaning and value depend on these grounds or conditions, which constitute its context. If the whole context of any statement, including the contexts of every element in its more immediate context, could be fully expressed, the statement would be completely determined, both as to its meaning and its truth. And thus an absolutely true statement is not a statement which is true independently of any grounds or conditions, nor a statement which is true under each possible condition in a totality of conditions, but a statement of which the whole system of conditions has been made explicit. Accordingly the relativity of the whole scientific conception of things is not, I think, due to its being a product of conscious purpose, but is another way of saying that the conditions on which it depends have not been made fully explicit.

The question of the existence of purpose in nature may however, be looked at from another point of view. It is generally admitted that every purpose has an end, in whatever sense we use the term "purpose." Indeed, purpose and end are so closely connected that we often use the terms as if they were equivalent. Conscious purposes are undoubtedly conscious ends; any difference there may be between them is a difference of aspect. Can we say the same of all ends, whether or not they are ends which a conscious agent sets before himself? If purposes imply ends, do ends always imply purposes? We do recognise ends other than those of conscious beings. We recognise ends in organic beings, both conscious and unconscious, and in general it may be said that wherever there is function there are ends. Now the essence of function is the mutual fitting or the mutual conditioning of elements in a system. The function of an organ or the function of an element in a chemical combination or the function of any property or quality in a material object is the way in which it conditions and is conditioned by the other organs, elements or properties,

so as to maintain the unity of the whole. Function and end are thus present in every system, in everything which has a unity, however imperfect, in everything which is not a mere collocation, if such a thing as a mere collocation is possible. Wherever there is system, there is end. Can we say that wherever there is system there is purpose?

As a matter of fact, we constantly attribute purpose to organic beings. We investigate the purposes of organs, and in many cases the apparent purpose of an organ is a guide to the determination of its nature. And again we attribute purpose to the parts of such inorganic systems as machines, as well as to the machines as wholes. It may, of course, quite rightly be pointed out that, in this last case, our attribution of purpose is a recognition that the machine is the expression of human purposes or that it has been deliberately designed as a means to human ends, and accordingly that what we call the purpose of the machine is the purpose of a conscious agent. But I do not think that this is a full statement of the case. The parts of the machine, however they may have been put together, have purposes or functions analogous to those of the organs of a plant, and we cannot say that these are the expression of human purpose, although we do regard them as purposive. There is, however, an obvious rejoinder to my contention. The attribution of purpose to organic and inorganic systems is merely a metaphorical use of language, due to our tendency to interpret everything in terms of our own experience as self-conscious beings. We read purpose into unconscious things, just as we call the sea cruel or the wind biting. Now, language is undoubtedly full of metaphor, and most of the abstract terms we use in philosophical discussion are metaphorical. Every metaphor rests on some analogy between the primary and the metaphorical use of the term, and the analogy may have endless degrees of exactness. It may be exceedingly fanciful it may have a core of significance which entitles us to regard the metaphor as an imaginative insight, or it may be so exact

that the discrepancy is almost negligible. Now if the attribution of purpose to organic and inorganic systems is metaphorical, the analogy on which the metaphor rests does not include consciousness as a common characteristic. We do not attribute purpose to these systems on the ground that they are conscious agents. We do not personify them. Our attitude is not that of the Highlander at the battle of Prestonpans, who thought that the watch he found was a "wee beastie." Our point of view is not that of animism. If we apply the term "purpose" metaphorically to systems other than the system of our conscious life, it is because we find in those systems a relationship between part and part and between part and whole analogous to that which we find in our own purposive existence. The analogy is a real and not a fanciful one, it can be made explicit, and it seems to me to indicate the essential meaning of purpose.

On the other hand, in nature, as conceived from the purely mechanical standpoint of physical science, we do not find purpose. The deliberate abstractness of the scientific point of view excludes it. The scientific attitude does not expressly exclude the possibility of regarding the universe as a system in which every element has its function or its purpose in relation to the other elements and to the whole. But it does leave the whole out of account. It endeavours to explain everything, not by making explicit its relations to the whole, but by showing its relations to other parts. A is related to B, B to C, C to D, and so on *ad infinitum*. It is, doubtless, a presupposition of the possibility of such relations that the universe is a system, that the parts are parts of a real whole; but the mechanical standpoint abstracts from this. So far as the mechanical interpretation of nature is concerned, it is a matter of indifference whether the universe is conceived as a real system, or a chance collocation or an endless series of interrelated phenomena, regarded as the effects of a hypothetical First Cause. This abstract point of view is, of course,

applicable not merely to inorganic phenomena, but also to organisms, conscious and unconscious. But wherever it is applied it leaves elements in isolation, considers its objects as if they had no real systematic relation, and, consequently, regards them as without purpose.

These considerations suggest, though, doubtless, they do not conclusively prove, that we find purpose in things in proportion as we find in them systematic unity, and that a thing has a purpose in so far as it is a unity of conditions in a system, in so far, that is to say, as it has individuality and is not a separate and colourless element—an isolated part. Actual systems vary indefinitely in the degree of their unity, and, consequently, in the degree in which they may be regarded as exhibiting purpose. The degree of unity of any system may, I think, be regarded as equivalent to the degree of unity between means and end, which characterises the system. The closer the relation between means and end, the more perfect is the systematic unity. In the most perfect kind of system, the system which appears in the life of a self-conscious being, there is the most complete unity between means and end. This is sometimes obscured by the tendency to regard the end as the last stage in a course of action, and most, if not all, thinkers who lay special emphasis on the element of process in conscious purpose seem to me to be, however unwittingly, under the dominance of this idea. Process for them is process from one thing to another, from a definite beginning, through a series of means to a particular end. The process in its various stages, the successive unfolding of the means, is practically treated as a series or combination of particulars which ultimately culminates in the end. The end is regarded as relatively, if not entirely, independent of the means. You can, it is said, attain the same end by a variety of means. Now, in proportion as you regard the end as dissociated from the means, as external to the means or as indefinitely related to the means, you are approaching the mechanical and receding

from the teleological standpoint. For the extreme mechanical standpoint is one in which process is everything and end is nothing, a standpoint from which the world is regarded as an endless series of distinct elements, so that if you desire to find an end in it, you must simply "stop somewhere," intervene at some point and declare that the stage at which you intervene is the end of all that has gone before. But in no system is end separated from means, and in a self-conscious system end and means are in indissoluble unity. One may even, I think, maintain the apparently paradoxical contention that in the case of a self-conscious being there is only one means to any end. In all our desires and purposes the end is present from the beginning. In so far as the means are realised the end is realised: we do not have to wait for the end until the means are completed. The specific nature of the means is an element in the end; the end, apart from the means, is not the end that we really seek. That the means is often an element in the end is at once evident from the numerous instances in which the pursuit of an object is desired as well as, yet not apart from, the object itself. To take the ancient example, in our purpose of attaining truth the search for truth is itself an element in the end. But, it may be said, there are often alternative means for the attainment of the same end, and we have constantly to choose between such alternatives. Superficially this appears to be true; but I do not think that it will bear examination. All our ends are exceedingly complex. They are ends within ends, elements in a comprehensive system of ends. They are not, at the times in which we desire them, clearly present to our minds in all their detail and in all their complex relations. Indeed, when we say that our end or our purpose is so-and-so, we are referring only to the most obvious or important elements in our end, and not to our end in its concrete individuality. When the end is thus vaguely conceived and comparatively undetermined, the means are correspondingly vague and



indefinite. There are always alternative means to an indefinite end. But the necessity of making a choice between these alternative means impels us to a more full and exact definition of our end. We are compelled to bring into consciousness real, though perhaps subordinate, elements in the end which we had hitherto not clearly conceived. The deliberation which results in our choice between the apparently alternative means is at once a definition of our end and a discovery of the only possible means. Otherwise our choice would in the last resort be unmotivated; we should be in the impossible position of Buridan's ass. I say, *e.g.*, that my end is to arrive at a particular place. There are various ways of getting there, and I can choose between them. Whenever I begin to consider the alternatives I see that my end is much more complex than the general end of arrival, say, in some town. My end is to reach the town, if possible, at a particular time, to arrive at a convenient station, to make the journey at a definite or indefinite limit of expense, to travel with enough comfort to enable me to do some work on the journey, to go through picturesque rather than dull country and so on almost *ad infinitum*. It may not be possible for me, in the given circumstances, to harmonise all these ends, and it may therefore be necessary to sacrifice some of the less important of them. But when my choice is made, the means adopted are the only available means, within my knowledge, for the accomplishment of my end. The end pervades and dominates the means, and this high degree of unity between means and ends is the special characteristic of our self-conscious life.

The unity of a merely organic system is less complete. Its ends are less complex and its organs, as means, are not to the same extent identical with its ends. The organs, as means, are still dependent on the ends, on the organic system as a whole; but the fact that there are separate organs, having more or less definite functions (*i.e.*, corresponding to more or less particular ends) indicates that the systematic co-ordination of the ends is

less intimate, less perfect in its unity, than the co-ordination of ends in a self-conscious agent. The functioning of the organs as means is not necessarily an element in the ends. There is a greater possibility of regarding it as a distinguishable unity of conditions on which the ends depend, although the special adaptation of an organ to its ends indicates that the ends are not mechanically related to the organ, entirely external to it, but are in a sense present in it. In a quasi-organic system, such as that of a machine, the relative independence of end and means is still greater, and in inorganic systems or processes this relative independence is as great as it can be, consistently with the existence of any systematic unity. But wherever we have process leading to a result, we have means and end, and wherever there is means and end there is a certain degree of systematic unity; the end is present in the means in the form of the natural adaptation of the means to the result. We recognise in language the various degrees of unity in the various systems by using the term "purpose" mainly with reference to systems of the highest unity, such as self-conscious systems, and by substituting for it the term "function" as we descend in the scale, while in systems of the lowest degree of unity "function" tends to pass into "property."

Although it seems to me that this systematic unity is the essence and core of purpose, I do not mean to suggest that self-conscious purpose is merely a variant of purpose in its lowest form or degree. The typical system is a self-conscious system, the typical purpose is self-conscious purpose, and it may be possible to construct a metaphysic which shall show that in the last resort the system of the whole universe, comprehending all lesser systems, is a self-conscious system, and that the purpose of the universe is a self-conscious purpose. But it seems to me that in certain current speculations there is a tendency to ignore the less perfect forms of purpose, to treat self-conscious purpose as a peculiar and inexplicable phenomenon, the essential features of which are relative lawlessness, indetermination, and contin-

gency, and thus to misunderstand, not merely the nature of purpose in general, but also the nature of self-conscious purpose in particular. This appears specially in the emphasis that is laid upon selection as an element in purpose. If our attention is directed solely to self-conscious purpose, we tend to regard selection as a more or less arbitrary process, by means of which conscious agents introduce order and unity into a given chaos of phenomena, with the result that we construct a system of scientific and other laws which have a value relatively to ourselves and our purposes, but not necessarily any ultimate validity. Now, selection seems to me to be undoubtedly a most important element in purpose, taken in the broadest sense. For selection means system, not merely, however, in the sense that it is a conscious agency or process, by means of which system is produced out of chaos, but in the sense that selection presupposes system, both in the things selected and in the selecting agent. As a matter of fact, selection appears, not merely in self-conscious agents, but in unconscious organisms. Plants select as well as human beings, and their selection depends, on the one hand, upon the systematic nature and structure of the selecting organism and, on the other hand, upon the nature of the things selected. Similarly, all human selection is dependent on principles, which appear both in the nature of the selecting agent and in the nature of the things selected. A perfectly arbitrary selection, a selection determined by no principles, inexplicable by any reference either to the nature of the agent or to that of the things selected, would be indistinguishable from chaos. And it is impossible for us to select out of chaos. The principles governing our selection are part of our nature as conscious beings. They are not independent of one another, but are systematically related. If this were not so, we should have to suppose chaos selecting out of chaos, an unthinkable hypothesis. Let us suppose, then, a systematic purposive self-consciousness confronting a chaos. Even if its selection depends on its own purposes, it must select in accordance with

the nature of the things it selects. They must be adapted to its purposes, which is to say that their nature must be in systematic relation to the nature of the selecting agent. And if that is so, the supposed chaos is not a chaos, but a system relatively undefined, a system which the selecting agent is, by his selection, rendering explicit. Selection, then, presupposes system, and free selection is not arbitrary or unprincipled selection, but rational selection, selection in which the selecting principles, both in the things selected and in the selecting agent, are clearly recognised in their systematic unity.

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## III.—PROFESSOR JAMES' "PRAGMATISM."

By G. E. MOORE.

My object in this paper is to discuss some of the things which Professor James says about truth in the recent book, to which he has given the above name.\* In Lecture VI he professes to give an account of a theory, which he calls "the pragmatist theory of truth"; and he professes to give a briefer preliminary account of the same theory in Lecture II. Moreover, in Lecture VII, he goes on to make some further remarks about truth. In all these Lectures he seems to me to make statements to which there are very obvious objections; and my main object is to point out, as clearly and simply as I can, what seem to me to be the principal objections to some of these statements.

We may, I think, distinguish three different things, which he seems particularly anxious to assert about truth.

(I) In the first place, he is plainly anxious to assert some connection between truth and "verification" or "utility." Our true ideas, he seems to say, are those that "work," in the sense that they are or can be "verified," or are "useful."

(II) In the second place, he seems to object to the view that truth is something "static" or "immutable." He is anxious to assert that truths are in some sense "mutable."

(III) In the third place, he asserts that "to an unascertainable extent our truths are man-made products" (p. 242).

To what he asserts under each of these three heads there are, I think, serious objections; and I now propose to point out what seem to me to be the principal ones, under each head separately.

(I) Professor James is plainly anxious to assert *some*

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\* *Pragmatism: A New Name for some Old Ways of Thinking: Popular Lectures on Philosophy.* By William James. Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907.

connection between truth and "verification" or "utility." And that there is *some* connection between them everybody will admit. That *many* of our true ideas are verified; that *many* of them can be verified; and that *many* of them are useful, is, I take it, quite indisputable. But Professor James seems plainly to wish to assert something more than this. And one more thing which he wishes to assert is, I think, pretty plain. He suggests, at the beginning of Lecture VI, that he is going to tell us in what sense it is that our true ideas "agree with reality." Truth, he says, certainly *means* their agreement with reality; the only question is as to what we are to understand by the words "agreement" and "reality" in this proposition. And he first briefly considers the theory that the sense in which our true ideas agree with reality, is that they "copy" some reality. And he affirms that some of our true ideas really do do this. But he rejects the theory, as a theory of what truth means, on the ground that they do not *all* do so. Plainly, therefore, he implies that no theory of what truth *means* will be correct, unless it tells us of some property which belongs to *all* our true ideas without exception. But his own theory is a theory of what truth means. Apparently, therefore, he wishes to assert that not only many but *all* our true ideas are or can be verified; that *all* of them are useful. And it is, I think, pretty plain that this is *one* of the things which he wishes to assert.

Apparently, therefore, Professor James wishes to assert that *all* our true ideas are or can be verified—that *all* are useful. And certainly this is not a truism like the proposition that *many* of them are so. Even if this were all that he meant, it would be worth discussing. But even this, I think, is not all. The very first proposition in which he expresses his theory is the following. "True ideas" he says (p. 201) "are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot." And what does this mean? Let us, for brevity's sake, substitute the word "verify" alone for the four words which Professor James uses, as he himself

subsequently seems to do. He asserts, then, that true ideas are *those which* we can verify. And plainly he does not mean by this merely that *some* of the ideas which we can verify are true, while plenty of others, which we can verify, are not true. The plain meaning of his words is that *all* the ideas which we can verify are true. No one would use them who did not mean this. Apparently, therefore, Professor James means to assert not merely that we can verify all our true ideas; but also that all the ideas, which we can verify, are true. And so, too, with utility or usefulness. He seems to mean not merely that all our true ideas are useful; but that all those which are useful are true. This would follow, for one thing, from the fact that he seems to use the words "verification" or "verifiability" and "usefulness" as if they came to the same thing. But, in this case too, he asserts it in words that have but one plain meaning. "The true" he says (p. 222) "is only the expedient in the way of our thinking." "The true" is *the* expedient: that is, *all* expedient thinking is true. Or again: "An idea is 'true' so long as to believe it is profitable to our lives" (p. 75). That is to say, *every* idea, which is profitable to our lives, is, while it is so, true. These words certainly have a plain enough meaning. Apparently, therefore, Professor James means to assert not merely that all true ideas are useful, but also that all useful ideas are true.

Professor James' words, then, do at least suggest that he wishes to assert all four of the following propositions. He wishes to assert, it would seem—

- (1) That we can verify all those of our ideas, which are true.
- (2) That all those among our ideas, which we can verify, are true.
- (3) That all our true ideas are useful.
- (4) That all those of our ideas, which are useful, are true.

These four propositions are what I propose first to consider. He does mean to assert them, at least. Very likely he wishes to

assert something more even than these. He does, in fact, suggest that he means to assert, in addition, that these properties of "verifiability" and "utility" are the *only* properties (beside that of being properly *called* "true") which belong to all our true ideas and to none but true ideas. But this obviously cannot be true, unless all these four propositions are true. And therefore we may as well consider them first.

First, then, can we verify all our true ideas ?

I wish only to point out the plainest and most obvious reasons why I think it is doubtful whether we can.

We are very often in doubt as to whether we did or did not do a certain thing in the past. We may have the idea that we did, and also the idea that we did not; and we may wish to find out which idea is the true one. Very often, indeed, I may believe, very strongly, that I did do a certain thing; and somebody else, who has equally good reason to know, may believe equally strongly that I did not. For instance, I may have written a letter, and may believe that I used certain words in it. But my correspondent may believe that I did not. Can we always verify either of these ideas? Certainly sometimes we can. The letter may be produced, and prove that I did use the words in question. And I shall then have verified my idea. Or it may prove that I did not use them. And then we shall have verified my correspondent's idea. But, suppose the letter has been destroyed; suppose there is no copy of it, nor any trustworthy record of what was said in it; suppose there is no other witness as to what I said in it, beside myself and my correspondent? Can we then always verify which of our ideas is the true one? I think it is very doubtful whether we can *nearly* always. Certainly we may often try to discover any possible means of verification, and be quite unable, for a time at least, to discover any. Such cases, in which we are unable, for a time at least, to verify either of two contradictory ideas, occur very commonly indeed. Let us take an even more trivial instance than the last. Bad whist-players often do not notice



at all carefully which cards they have among the lower cards in a suit. At the end of a hand they cannot be certain whether they had or had not the seven of diamonds, or the five of spades. And, after the cards have been shuffled, a dispute will sometimes arise as to whether a particular player had the seven of diamonds or not. His partner may think that he had, and he himself may think that he had not. Both may be uncertain, and the memory of both, on such a point, may be well known to be untrustworthy. And, moreover, neither of the other players may be able to remember any better. Is it always possible to verify which of these ideas is the true one? Either the player did or did not have the seven of diamonds. This much is certain. One person thinks that he did, and another thinks he did not; and both, so soon as the question is raised, have before their minds both of these ideas—the idea that he did, and the idea that he did not. This also is certain. And it is certain that one or other of these two ideas is true. But can they always verify either of them? Sometimes, no doubt, they can, even after the cards have been shuffled. There may have been a fifth person present, overlooking the play, whose memory is perfectly trustworthy, and whose word may be taken as settling the point. Or the players may themselves be able, by recalling other incidents of play, to arrive at such a certainty as may be said to verify the one hypothesis or the other. But very often neither of these two things will occur. And, in such a case, is it always possible to verify the true idea? Perhaps, theoretically, it may be still possible. Theoretically, I suppose, the fact that one player, and not any of the other three, had the card in his hand, may have made some difference to the card, which *might* be discovered by some possible method of scientific investigation. Perhaps some such difference may remain even after the same card has been repeatedly used in many subsequent games. But suppose the same question arises again, a week after the original game was played. Did you, or did you not, last week have the seven of diamonds in that particular

hand? The question has not been settled in the meantime; and now, perhaps, the original pack of cards has been destroyed. Is it still possible to verify either idea? Theoretically, I suppose, it may be still possible. But even this, I think, is very doubtful. And surely it is plain that, humanly and practically speaking, it will often have become quite impossible to verify either idea. In all probability it never will be possible for any man to verify whether I had the card or not on this particular occasion. No doubt we are here speaking of an idea, which some man *could have* verified at one time. But the hypothesis I am considering is the hypothesis that we never have a true idea, which we *can* not verify; that is to say, which we cannot verify *after* the idea has occurred. And with regard to this hypothesis, it seems to me quite plain that *very often indeed* we have two ideas, one or other of which is certainly true; and yet that, in all probability, it is no longer possible and never will be possible for any man to verify either.

It seems to me, then, that we very often have true ideas which we cannot verify; true ideas, which, in all probability, no man ever will be able to verify. And, so far, I have given only comparatively trivial instances. But it is plain that, in the same sense, historians are very frequently occupied with true ideas, which it is doubtful whether they can verify. One historian thinks that a certain event took place, and another that it did not; and both may admit that they cannot verify their idea. Subsequent historians may, no doubt, sometimes be able to verify one or the other. New evidence may be discovered or men may learn to make a better use of evidence already in existence. But is it certain that this will *always* happen? Is it certain that *every* question, about which historians have doubted, will some day be able to be settled by verification of one or the other hypothesis? Surely the probability is that in the case of an immense number of events, with regard to which we should like to know whether they happened or not, it never will be possible for any man to

verify either the one hypothesis or the other. Yet it may be certain that either the events in question did happen or did not. Here, therefore, again, we have a large number of ideas—cases where many men doubt whether a thing did happen or did not, and have therefore the idea both of its having happened and of its not having happened—with regard to which it is certain that half of them are true, but where it seems highly doubtful whether any single one of them will ever be able to be verified. No doubt it is just possible that men will some day be able to verify every one of them. But surely it is very doubtful whether they will. And the theory against which I am protesting is the positive assertion that we *can* verify all our true ideas—that some one some day certainly will be able to verify every one of them. This theory, I urge, has all probability against it.

And so far I have been dealing only with ideas with regard to what happened in the past. These seem to me to be the cases which offer the most numerous and most certain exceptions to the rule that we can verify our true ideas. With regard to particular past events, either in their own lives or in those of other people, men very frequently have ideas, which it seems highly improbable that any man will ever be able to verify. And yet it is certain that a great many of these ideas are true, because in a great many cases we have both the idea that the event did happen and also the idea that it did not, when it is certain that one or other of these ideas is true. And these ideas with regard to past events would by themselves be sufficient for my purpose. If, as seems certain, there are many true ideas with regard to the past, which it is highly improbable that anyone will ever be able to verify, then, obviously, there is nothing in a true idea which makes it certain that we can verify it. But it is, I think, certainly not only in the case of ideas, with regard to the past, that it is doubtful whether we can verify all the true ideas we have. In the case of many generalisations dealing not only with the past

but with the future, it is, I think, obviously doubtful whether we shall ever be able to verify all those which are true; although here, perhaps, in most cases, the probability that we shall not is not so great. But is it quite certain, that in all cases where scientific men have considered hypotheses, one or other of which must be true, either will ever be verified? It seems to be obviously doubtful. Take, for instance, the question whether our actual space is Euclidean or not. This is a case where the alternative has been considered; and where it is certain that, whatever be meant by "our actual space," it either is Euclidean or is not. It has been held, too, that the hypothesis that it is not Euclidean might, conceivably, be verified by observations. But it is doubtful whether it ever will be. And though it would be rash to say that no man ever will be able to verify either hypothesis; it is also rash to assert positively that we shall—that we certainly can verify the true hypothesis. There are, I believe, ever so many similar cases, where alternative hypotheses, one or other of which must be true, have occurred to men of science, and where yet it is very doubtful whether either ever will be verified. Or take, again, such ideas as the idea that there is a God, or the idea that we are immortal. Many men have had not only contradictory ideas, but contradictory beliefs, about these matters. And here we have cases where it is disputed whether these ideas have not actually been verified. But it seems to me doubtful whether they have been. And there is a view, which seems to me to deserve respect, that, in these matters, we never shall be able to verify the true hypothesis. Is it perfectly certain that this view is a false one? I do not say that it is true. I think it is quite possible that we shall some day be able to verify either the belief that we are immortal or the belief that we are not. But it seems to me doubtful whether we shall. And for this reason alone I should refuse to assent to the positive assertion that we certainly can verify all our true ideas.

When, therefore, Professor James tells us that "True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot," there seems to be a serious objection to part of what these words imply. They imply that no idea of ours is true, unless we can verify it. They imply, therefore, that whenever a man wonders whether or not he had the seven of diamonds in the third hand at whist last night, neither of these ideas is true, unless he can verify it. But it seems certain that in this, and an immense number of similar cases, one or other of the two ideas is true. Either he did have the card in his hand, or he did not. If anything is a fact, this is one. Either, therefore, Professor James' words imply the denial of this obvious fact, or else he implies that in *all* such cases we *can* verify one or other of the two ideas. But to this the objection is that, in any obvious sense of the words, it seems very doubtful whether we can. On the contrary, it seems extremely probable that in a *very large* number of such cases no man ever will be able to verify either of the two ideas. There is, therefore, a serious objection to what Professor James' words imply. Whether he himself really means to assert these things which his words imply, I do not know. Perhaps he would admit that, in this sense, we probably cannot verify nearly all our true ideas. All that I have wished to make plain is that there is, at least, an objection to what he says, whether to what he means or not. There is ample reason why we should refuse assent to the statement that none of our ideas are true, except those which we can verify.

But to another part of what he implies by the words quoted above, there is, I think, no serious objection. There is reason to object to the statement that we can verify all our true ideas; but to the statement that all ideas, which we can "assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify," are true, I see no serious objection. Here, I think, we might say simply that all ideas which we can verify are true. To this, which is the second

of the four propositions, which I distinguished above (p. 35) as what Professor James seems to wish to assert, there is, I think, no serious objection, if we understand the word "verify" in its proper and natural sense. We may, no doubt, sometimes say that we have verified an idea or an hypothesis, when we have only obtained evidence which proves it to be probable, and does not prove it to be certain. And, if we use the word in this loose sense for incomplete verification, it is obviously the case that we may verify an idea which is not true. But it seems scarcely necessary to point this out. And where we really can *completely* verify an idea or an hypothesis, there, undoubtedly, the idea which we can verify is always true. The very meaning of the word "verify" is to find evidence which does really prove an idea to be true; and where an idea can be really proved to be true, it is, of course, always true.

This is all I wish to say about Professor James' first two propositions, namely:—

- (1) That no ideas of ours are true, except those which we can verify.
- (2) That all those ideas, which we can verify, are true.

The first seems to me extremely doubtful—in fact, almost certainly untrue; the second, on the other hand, certainly true, in its most obvious meaning. And I shall say no more about them. The fact is, I doubt whether either of them expresses anything which Professor James is really anxious to assert. I have mentioned them, only because his words do, in fact, imply them and because he gives those words a very prominent place. But I have already had occasion to notice that he seems to speak as if to say that we can verify an idea came to the same thing as saying that it is useful to us. And it is the connection of truth with usefulness, not its connection with "verification," that he is, I think, really anxious to assert. He talks about "verification" only, I believe, because he thinks that what he says about it will support his main view that

truth is what "works," is "useful," is "expedient," "pays." It is this main view we have now to consider. We have to consider the two propositions:—

- (3) That all our true ideas are useful.
- (4) That all ideas, which are useful, are true.

First, then: is it the case that all our true ideas are useful? Is it the case that none of our ideas are true, except those which are useful?

I wish to introduce my discussion of this question by quoting a passage in which Professor James seems to me to say something which is indisputably true. Towards the end of Lecture VI, he attacks the view that truths "have an unconditional claim to be recognised." And in the course of his attack the following passage occurs:—

Must I," he says, "constantly be repeating the truth 'twice two are four' because of its eternal claim on recognition? or is it sometimes irrelevant? Must my thoughts dwell night and day on my personal sins and blemishes, because I truly have them?—or may I sink and ignore them in order to be a decent social unit, and not a mass of morbid melancholy and apology?"

"It is quite evident," he goes on, "that our obligation to acknowledge truth, so far from being unconditional, is tremendously conditional. Truth with a big T, and in the singular, claims abstractly to be recognised, of course; but concrete truths in the plural need be recognised only when their recognition is expedient" (pp. 231—232).

What Professor James says in this passage seems to me so indisputably true as fully to justify the vigour of his language. It is as clear as anything can be that it would not be useful for any man's mind to be *always* occupied with the true idea that he had certain faults and blemishes; or to be *always* occupied with the idea that twice two are four. It is clear, that is, that, if there are times at which a particular true idea is useful, there

certainly are other times at which it would *not* be useful, but positively in the way. This is plainly true of nearly all, if not quite all, our true ideas. It is plainly true with regard to nearly all of them that, even if the occasions on which their occurrence is useful are many, the occasions on which their occurrence would *not* be useful are many more. With regard to most of them it is true that on most occasions they will, as Professor James says elsewhere, "be practically irrelevant, and had better remain latent."

It is, then, quite clear that almost any particular true idea *would* not be useful at all times and that the times at which it would *not* be useful, are many more than the times at which it would. And what we have to consider is whether, in just this sense in which it is so clear that most true ideas would *not* be useful at most times, it is nevertheless true that all our true ideas *are* useful. Is this so? Are all our true ideas useful?

Professor James, we see, has just told us that there are ever so many occasions upon which a particular true idea, such as  $2 + 2 = 4$ , *would* not be useful—when, on the contrary, it would be positively in the way. And this seems to be indisputably clear. But is not something else almost equally clear? Is it not almost equally clear that cases, such as he says *would* not be useful, do sometimes actually happen? Is it not clear that we do actually sometimes have true ideas, at times when they are not useful, but are positively in the way? It seems to me to be perfectly clear that this does sometimes occur; and not sometimes only, but very commonly. The cases in which true ideas occur at times when they are useful, are, perhaps, far *more* numerous; but, if we look at men in general, the cases in which true ideas occur, at times when they are not useful, do surely make up positively a very large number. Is it not the case that men do sometimes dwell on their faults and blemishes, when it is *not* useful for them to do so? when they would much better be thinking of something



else? Is it not the case that they are often unable to get their minds away from a true idea, when it is harmful for them to dwell on it? Still more commonly, does it not happen that they waste their time in acquiring pieces of information which are no use to them, though perhaps very useful to other people? All this seems to me to be undeniable—just as undeniable as what Professor James himself has said; and, if this is so, then, in one sense of the words, it is plainly not true that all, or nearly all, our true ideas are useful. *In one sense of the words.* For if I have the idea that  $2 + 2 = 4$  on one day, and then have it again the next, I may certainly, in a sense, call the idea I have on one day *one* idea, and the idea I have on the next *another*. I have had two ideas that  $2 + 2 = 4$ , and not one only. Or if two different persons both think that I have faults, there have been two ideas of this truth and not one only. And in asking whether *all* our true ideas are useful, we might mean to ask whether *both* of these ideas were useful and not merely whether one of them was. In this sense, then, it is plainly not true that *all* our true ideas are useful. It is not true, that is, that every true idea is useful, *whenever it occurs.*

In one sense, then, it is plainly not true that all our true ideas are useful. But there still remains a perfectly legitimate sense in which it might be true. It might be meant, that is, not that every *occurrence* of a true idea is useful, but that every true idea is useful on at least one of the occasions when it occurs. But is this, in fact, the case? It seems to me almost as plain that it is not, as that the other was not. We have seen that true ideas are not by any means always useful on every occasion when they occur; though most that do occur many times over and to many different people are, no doubt, useful on some of these occasions. But there seems to be an immense number of true ideas, which occur but once and to one person, and never again either to him or to anyone else. I may, for instance, idly count the number of dots on the back of a card,

and arrive at a true idea of their number ; and yet, perhaps, I may never think of their number again, nor anybody else ever know it. We are all, it seems to me, constantly noticing trivial details, and getting true ideas about them, of which we never think again, and which nobody else ever gets. And is it quite certain that all these true ideas are useful ? It seems to me perfectly clear, on the contrary, that many of them are not. Just as clear as it is that many men sometimes waste their time in acquiring information, which is useful to others but not to them, surely it is clear that they sometimes waste their time in acquiring information which is useful to nobody at all, because nobody else ever acquires it. I do not say that it is never useful idly to count the number of dots on the back of a card. Plainly it is sometimes useful to be idle, and one idle employment may often be as good as another. But surely it is true that men *sometimes* do these things, when their time would have been better employed otherwise ? Surely they sometimes get into the habit of attending to trivial truths, which it is as great a disadvantage that they should attend to as that they should constantly be thinking of their own thoughts and blemishes ? I cannot see my way to deny that this is so ; and therefore I cannot see my way to assert positively that all our true ideas are useful, even so much as on *one* occasion. It seems to me that there are many true ideas which occur but once, and which are not useful when they do occur. And if this be so, then it is plainly not true that *all* our true ideas are useful in any sense at all.

These seem to me to be the most obvious objections to the assertion that all our true ideas are useful. It is clear, we saw to begin with, that true ideas, which are sometimes useful, *would* not be useful at all times. And it seemed almost equally clear that they do sometimes occur at times when they are not useful. Our true ideas, therefore, are not useful at every time when they actually occur. But in just this sense in which it is so clear that true ideas, which are sometimes useful,

nevertheless sometimes occur at times when they are not, it seems pretty plain that true ideas, which occur but once, are, some of them, not useful. If an idea, which is sometimes useful, does sometimes occur to a man at a time when it is irrelevant and in the way, why should not an idea, which occurs but once, occur at a time when it is irrelevant and in the way? It seems hardly possible to doubt that this does sometimes happen. But, if this be so, then it is not true that all our true ideas are useful, even so much as on one occasion. It is not true that none of our ideas are true, except those which are useful.

But now, what are we to say of the converse proposition—the proposition that all those among our ideas, which are useful, are true? That we never have a useful idea, which is not true?

I confess the matter seems to me equally clear here. The assertion should mean that every idea, which is at any time useful, is true; that no idea, which is not true, is ever useful. And it seems hardly possible to doubt that this assertion is false. It is, in the first place, commonly held that it is sometimes right positively to deceive another person. In war, for instance, it is held that one army is justified in trying to give the enemy a false idea as to where it will be at a given time. Such a false idea is sometimes given, and it seems to me quite clear that it is sometimes useful. In such a case, no doubt, it may be said that the false idea is useful to the party who have given it, but not useful to those who actually believe in it. And the question whether it is useful on the whole will depend upon the question which side it is desirable should win. But it seems to me unquestionable that the false idea is sometimes useful on the whole. Take, for instance, the case of a party of savages, who wish to make a night attack and massacre a party of Europeans, but are deceived as to the position in which the Europeans are encamped. It is surely plain that such a false idea is sometimes useful on the whole.

But quite apart from the question whether deception is ever justifiable, it is not very difficult to think of cases where a false idea, not produced by deception, is plainly useful—and useful, not merely on the whole, but to the person who has it as well. A man often thinks that his watch is right, when, in fact, it is slow, and his false idea may cause him to miss his train. And in such cases, no doubt, his false idea is *generally* disadvantageous. But, in a particular case, the train which he would have caught but for his false idea may be destroyed in a railway accident, or something may suddenly occur at home, which renders it much more useful that he should be there, than it would have been for him to catch his train. Do such cases never occur? And is not the false idea sometimes useful in some of them? It seems to me perfectly clear that it is *sometimes* useful for a man to think his watch is right when it is wrong. And such instances would be sufficient to show that it is not the case that every idea of ours, which is ever useful, is a true idea. But let us take cases, not, like these, of an idea, which occurs but a few times or to one man, but of ideas which have occurred to many men at many times. It seems to me very difficult to be sure that the belief in an eternal hell has not been often useful to many men, and yet it may be doubted whether this idea is true. And so, too, with the belief in a happy life after death, or the belief in the existence of a God; it is, I think, very difficult to be sure that these beliefs have not been, and are not still, often useful, and yet it may be doubted whether they are true. These beliefs, of course, are matters of controversy. Some men believe that they are both useful and true; and others, again, that they are neither. And I do not think we are justified in giving them as certain instances of beliefs, which are not true, but, nevertheless, have often been useful. But there is a view that these beliefs, though not true, have, nevertheless, been often useful; and this view seems to me to deserve respect, especially since, as we have

seen, some beliefs, which are not true, certainly are sometimes useful. Are we justified in asserting positively that it is false? Is it perfectly certain that beliefs, which have often been useful to many men, may not, nevertheless, be untrue? Is it perfectly certain that beliefs, which are not true, have not often been useful to many men? The certainty may at least be doubted, and in any case it seems certain that some beliefs, which are not true, are, nevertheless, sometimes useful.

For these reasons, it seems to me almost certain that *both* the assertions which I have been considering are false. It is almost certainly false that all our true ideas are useful, and almost certainly false that all our useful ideas are true. But I have only urged what seem to me to be the most obvious objections to these two statements; I have not tried to sustain these objections by elaborate arguments, and I have omitted elaborate argument, partly because of a reason which I now wish to state. The fact is, I am not at all sure that Professor James would not himself admit that both these statements are false. I think it is quite possible he would admit that they are, and would say that he never meant either to assert or to imply the contrary. He complains that some of the critics of Pragmatism are unwilling to read any but the silliest of possible meanings into the statements of Pragmatists; and, perhaps, he would say that this is the case here. I certainly hope that he would. I certainly hope he would say that these statements, to which I have objected, are silly. For it does seem to me intensely silly to say that we can verify all our true ideas; intensely silly to say that every one of our true ideas is at some time useful; intensely silly to say that every idea which is ever useful is true. I hope Professor James would admit all these things to be silly, for if he and other Pragmatists would admit even as much as this, I think a good deal would be gained. But it by no means follows that because a philosopher would admit

a view to be silly, when it is definitely put before him, he has not himself been constantly holding and implying that very view. He may quite sincerely protest that he never has either held or implied it, and yet he may all the time have been not only implying it but holding it—vaguely, perhaps, but really. A man may assure us, quite sincerely, that he is not angry; he may really think that he is not, and yet we may be able to judge quite certainly from what he says that he really is angry. He may assure us quite sincerely that he never meant anything to our discredit by what he said—that he was not thinking of anything in the least discreditable to us, and yet it may be plain from his words that he was actually condemning us very severely. And so with a philosopher. He may protest, quite angrily, when a view is put before him in other words than his own, that he never either meant or implied any such thing, and yet it may be possible to judge, from what he says, that this very view, wrapped up in other words, was not only held by him but was precisely what made his thoughts seem to him to be interesting and important. Certainly he may quite often imply a given thing which, at another time, he denies. Unless it were possible for a philosopher to do this, there would be very little inconsistency in philosophy, and surely everyone will admit that *other* philosophers are very often inconsistent. And so in this case, even if Professor James would say that he never meant to imply the things to which I have been objecting, yet in the case of two of these things, I cannot help thinking that he does actually imply them—nay more, that he is frequently actually vaguely thinking of them, and that his theory of truth owes its interest, in very great part, to the fact that he is implying them. In the case of the two views that all our true ideas are useful, and that all our useful ideas are true, I think this is so, and I do not mean merely that his *words* imply them. A man's *words* may often imply a thing, when he himself is in no way, however vaguely,

thinking either of that thing or of anything which implies it ; he may simply have expressed himself unfortunately. But in the case of the two views that all our true ideas are useful, and all our useful ideas true, I do not think this is so with Professor James. I think that his thoughts seem interesting to him and others, largely because he is thinking, not merely of words, but of things which imply these two views, in the very form in which I have objected to them. And I wish now to give some reasons for thinking this.

Professor James certainly wishes to assert that there is *some* connection between truth and utility. And the connection which I have suggested that he has vaguely before his mind is this: that every true idea is, at some time or other, useful, and conversely that every idea, which is ever useful, is true. And I have urged that there are obvious objections to both these views. But now, supposing Professor James does not mean to assert either of these two things, what else can he mean to assert? What else can he mean, that would account for the interest and importance he seems to attach to his assertion of connection between truth and utility? Let us consider the alternatives.

And, first of all, he might mean that *most* of our true ideas are useful, and *most* of our useful ideas true. He might mean that most of our true ideas are useful at some time or other ; and even that most of them are useful, whenever they actually occur. And he might mean, moreover, that if we consider the whole range of ideas, which are useful to us, we shall find that by far the greater number of them are true ones ; that true ideas are far more often useful to us, than those which are not true. And all this, I think, may be readily admitted to be true. If this were all that he meant, I do not think that anyone would be very anxious to dispute it. But is it conceivable that this is *all* that he means? Is it conceivable that he should have been so anxious to insist upon this admitted commonplace? Is it conceivable that he should have been offering us this, and

nothing more, as a theory of what truth means, and a theory worth making a fuss about, and being proud of? It seems to me quite inconceivable that this should have been *all* that he meant. He must have had something more than this in his mind. But, if so, what more?

In the passage which I quoted at the beginning, as showing that he does mean to assert that *all* useful ideas are true, he immediately goes on to assert a qualification, which must now be noticed. "The true," he says, "is only the expedient in the way of our thinking" (p. 222). But, he immediately adds: "Expedient in the long run, and on the whole, of course; for what meets expediently all the experience in sight won't necessarily meet all further experiences equally satisfactorily." Here, therefore, we have something else that he might mean. What is expedient *in the long run*, he means to say, is true. And what exactly does this mean? It seems to mean that an idea, which is not true, may be expedient *for some time*. That is to say, it may occur *once*, and be expedient then; and again, and be expedient then; and so on, over a considerable period. But (Professor James seems to prophesy) if it is not true, there will come a time, when it will cease to be expedient. If it occurs again and again over a long *enough* period, there will at last, if it is not true, come a time when it will (for once at least) fail to be useful, and will (perhaps he means) *never* be useful again. This is, I think, what Professor James means in this passage. He means, I think, that though an idea, which is not true, may for some time be repeatedly expedient, there will at last come a time when its occurrence will, perhaps, *never* be expedient again, certainly will, for a time, not be *generally* expedient. And this is a view which, it seems to me, may possibly be true. It is certainly possible that a time may come, in the far future, when ideas, which are not true, will hardly ever, if ever, be expedient. And this is all that Professor James seems here positively to mean. He seems to mean that, if you take time *enough*, false ideas will some day



cease to be expedient. And it is very difficult to be sure that this is not true ; since it is very difficult to prophesy as to what may happen in the far future. I am sure I hope that this prophesy will come true. But in the meantime (Professor James seems to admit) ideas, which are not true, may, for an indefinitely long time, again and again be expedient. And is it conceivable that a theory, which admits this, is *all* that he has meant to assert ? Is it conceivable that what interests him, in his theory of truth, is merely the belief that, some day or other, false ideas will cease to be expedient ? "In the long run, *of course*," he says, as if this were what he had meant all along. But I think it is quite plain that this is *not* all that he has meant. This may be one thing which he is anxious to assert, but it certainly does not explain the whole of his interest in his theory of truth.

And, in fact, there is quite a different theory which he seems plainly to have in his mind in other places. When Professor James says, "in the long run, *of course*," he implies that ideas which are expedient only for a *short* run, are very often not true. But in what he says elsewhere he asserts the very opposite of this. He says elsewhere that a belief is true "*so long as* to believe it is profitable to our lives" (p. 75). That is to say, a belief will be true, *so long as* it is useful, even if it is *not* useful in the long run ! This is certainly quite a different theory ; and, strictly speaking, it implies that an idea, which is useful even *on one occasion*, will be true. But perhaps this is only a verbal implication. I think very likely that here Professor James was only thinking of ideas, which can be said *to have a run*, though only a comparatively short one—of ideas, that is, which are expedient, not merely on one occasion, but *for some time*. That is to say, the theory which he now suggests, is that ideas, which occur again and again, perhaps to one man only, perhaps to several different people, over some space of time are, if they are expedient on most occasions within that space of time, true. This is a view which he is,

I think, really anxious to assert; and, if it were true, it would, I think, be important. And it is difficult to find instances which show, with certainty, that it is false. I believe that it is false; but it is difficult to prove it, because, in the case of some ideas it is so difficult to be certain that they ever were useful, and in the case of others so difficult to be certain that they are not true. A belief such as I spoke of before—the belief in eternal hell—is an instance. I think this belief has been, for a long time, useful, and that yet it is false. But it is, perhaps, arguable that it never has been useful; and many people, on the other hand, would still assert that it is true. It cannot, therefore, perhaps, fairly be used as an instance of a belief, which is certainly not true, and yet has for some time been useful. But whether this view that all beliefs, which are expedient for some time, are true, be true or false; can it be all that Professor James means to assert? Can it constitute the whole of what interests him in his theory of truth?

I do not think it can. I think it is plain that he has in his mind something more than *any* of these alternatives, or than all of them taken together. And I think so partly for the following reason. He speaks from the outset as if he intended to tell us what *distinguishes* true ideas from those which are not true; to tell us, that is to say, not merely of some property which belongs to all our true ideas; nor yet merely of some property which belongs to none but true ideas; but of some property which satisfies *both* these requirements at once—which both belongs to all our true ideas, and *also* belongs to none but true ones. Truth, he says to begin with, means the agreement of our ideas with reality; and he adds “as falsity their disagreement.” And he explains that he is going to tell us what property it is that is meant by these words “agreement with reality.” So again in the next passage which I quoted: “True ideas,” he says “are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate and verify.” But, he also adds, “False ideas are those that we cannot.” And no one, I think, could

possibly speak in this way, who had not in his head the intention of telling us what property it is which *distinguishes* true ideas from those which are not true, and which, therefore, not only belongs to all ideas which are true, but also to none that are not true. And that he has this idea in his head, and thinks that the property of being "useful" or "paying" is such a property, is again clearly shown by a later passage. "Our account of truth" he says (p. 218) "is an account of truths in the plural, of processes of leading, realised *in rebus*, and having only this quality in common, that they *pay*." *Only* this quality in common! If this be so, the quality must obviously be one, which is *not* shared by any ideas which are *not* true; for, if true ideas have any quality in common at all, they must have at least one such quality, which is *not* shared by those which are *not* true. Plainly, therefore, Professor James is intending to tell us of a property which belongs both to *all* true ideas and *only* to true ideas. And this property, he says, is that of "paying." But now let us suppose that he means by "paying," not "paying *once* at least," but, according to the alternations he suggests, "paying in the long run" or "paying for some time." Can he possibly have supposed that these were properties which belonged *both* to all true ideas *and also* to none but true ones? They may, perhaps, be properties which belong to *none but* true ones. I doubt, as I have said, whether the latter does; but still it is difficult to prove the opposite. But even if we granted that they belong to *none but* true ones, surely it is only too obvious that they do *not* fulfil the other requirement—that they do *not* belong to nearly all true ones. Can anyone suppose that *all* our true ideas pay "in the long run" or repeatedly for some time? Surely it is plain that an enormous number do not, for the simple reason that an enormous number of them *have no run at all*, either long or short, but occur but once, and never recur. I believe truly that a certain book is on a particular shelf about 10.15 p.m. on December 21st, 1907; and this true belief serves me well and

helps me to find it. But the belief that that book is there at that particular time occurs to no one else, and never again to me. Surely there are thousands of useful true beliefs which, like this, are useful but once, and never occur again; and it would, therefore, be preposterous to say that every true idea is useful "in the long run" or repeatedly for some time. If, therefore, we supposed Professor James to mean that "paying in the long run" or "paying repeatedly over a considerable period" were properties which belonged to all true ideas and to none but true ones, we should be supposing him to mean something still more monstrous than if we supposed him to mean that "paying at least once" was such a property.

To sum up then:

I think there is no doubt that Professor James' interest in "the pragmatist theory of truth" is largely due to the fact that he thinks it tells us what distinguishes true ideas from those which are not true. And he thinks the distinction is that true ideas "pay," and false ones don't. The most natural interpretation of this view is: That every true idea pays at least once; and that every idea, which pays at least once, is true. These were the propositions I considered first, and I gave reasons for thinking that *both* are false. But Professor James suggested elsewhere that what he means by "paying" is "paying in the long run." And here it seems possibly true that all ideas which "pay in the long run" are true; but it is certainly false that all our true ideas "pay in the long run," if by this be meant anything more than "pay at least once." Again, he suggested that what he meant by paying was "paying for some time." And here, again, even if it is true (and it seems very doubtful) that all ideas which pay for some time are true, it is certainly false that all our true ideas pay for some time, if by this be meant anything more than that they pay "at least once."

This, I think, is the simplest and most obvious objection to Professor James' "instrumental" view of truth—the view

that truth is what "works," "pays," is "useful." He seems certainly to have in his mind the idea that this theory tells us what distinguishes true ideas from false ones, and to be interested in it mainly for this reason. He has vaguely in his mind that he has told us of some property which belongs to all true ideas and to none but true ones; and that this property is that of "paying." And the objection is, that, whatever we understand by "paying," whether "paying at least once," or "paying in the long run," or "paying for some time," it seems certain that none of these properties will satisfy *both* requirements. As regards the first, that of "paying at least once," it seems almost certain that it satisfies *neither*: it is neither true that all our true ideas "pay at least once," nor yet that every idea which pays at least once, is true. On the contrary, many true ideas never pay at all; and many ideas, which are not true, do pay on at least one occasion. And as regards the others, "paying in the long run" and "paying for some time," even if these do belong to none but true ideas (and even this seems very doubtful), they certainly neither of them satisfy the *other* requirement—neither of them belong to *all* our true ideas. For, in order that either of them may belong to an idea, that idea must pay at least once; and, as we have seen, many true ideas do not pay even once, and cannot, therefore, pay either in the long run or for some time. And, moreover, many true ideas, which do pay on one occasion, seem to pay on one occasion and one only.

And, if Professor James does not mean to assert any of these things, what is there left for him to mean? There is left in the first place, the theory that *most* of our true ideas do pay; and that *most* of the ideas which pay are true. This seems to me to be true, and, indeed, to be all that is certainly true in what he says. But is it conceivable that this is all he has meant? Obviously, these assertions tell us of no property at all which belongs to all true ideas, and to none but true ones; and, moreover, it seems impossible that he should have

been so anxious to assert this generally admitted commonplace. What a very different complexion his whole discussion would have worn, had he merely asserted this—this quite clearly, and nothing but this, while admitting openly that many true ideas do not pay, and that many, which do pay, are not true!

And, besides this commonplace, there is only left for him to mean two one-sided and doubtful assertions to the effect that certain properties belong to none but true ideas. There is the assertion that all ideas which pay in the long run are true, and the assertion that all ideas which pay for some considerable time are true. And as to the first, it *may* be true; but it may also be doubted, and Professor James gives us no reason at all for thinking that it is true. Assuming that religious ideas have been useful in the past, is it quite certain that they may not permanently continue to be useful, even though they are false? That, in short, even though they are not true, they nevertheless will be useful, not only for a time, but in the long run? And as for the assertion that all ideas, which pay for a considerable time, are true, this is obviously more doubtful still. Whether certain religious ideas will or will not be useful in the long run, it seems difficult to doubt that many of them have been useful for a considerable time. And why should we be told dogmatically that all of these are true? This, it seems to me, is by far the most interesting assertion, which is left for Professor James to make, when we have rejected the theory that the property of being useful belongs to *all* true ideas, as well as to none but true ones. But he has given no reason for asserting it. He seems, in fact, to base it merely upon the general untenable theory, that utility belongs to *all* true ideas, and to none but true ones; that this is what truth means.

These, then, seem to me the plainest and most obvious objections to what Professor James says about the connection between truth and utility. And there are only two further points, in what he says under this head, that I wish to notice.

In the first place, we have hitherto been considering only whether it is true, as a matter of empirical fact, that all our true ideas are useful, and those which are not true, never. Professor James seems, at least, to mean that, *as a matter of fact*, this is so; and I have only urged hitherto that *as a matter of fact*, it is not so. But, as we have seen, he also asserts something more than this—he also asserts that this property of utility is the *only* one which belongs to all our true ideas. And this further assertion cannot possibly be true, if, as I have urged, there are many true ideas, which do not possess this property; or if, as I have urged, many ideas, which do possess it, are nevertheless not true. The objections already considered are, then, sufficient to overthrow this further assertion also. If there are any true ideas, which are not useful, or if any, which are useful, are not true, it cannot be the case that utility is the *only* property which true ideas have in common. There must be some property, other than utility, which is common to all true ideas; and a correct theory as to what property it is that does belong to all true ideas, and to none but true ones, is still to seek. The empirical objections, hitherto given, are then sufficient objections to this further assertion also; but they are not the only objections to it. There is another and still more serious objection to the assertion that utility is the *only* property which all true ideas have in common. For this assertion does not *merely* imply that, as a matter of fact, all our true ideas and none but true ideas are useful. It does, indeed, imply this; and therefore the fact that these empirical assertions are not true is sufficient to refute it. But it also implies something more. If utility were the *only* property which all true ideas had in common, it would follow not merely that all true ideas are useful, but also that any idea, which was useful, *would* be true, *no matter what other properties it might have or might fail to have*. There can, I think, be no doubt that Professor James does frequently speak as if this were the case; and there is an independent and still

more serious objection to this implication. Even if it were true (as it is not) that all our true ideas and none but true ideas are, as a matter of fact, useful, we should still have a strong reason to object to the statement that any idea, which was useful, *would* be true. For it implies that if such an idea, as mine that Professor James exists, and has certain thoughts, *were* useful, this idea would be true, *even if* no such person as Professor James ever did exist. It implies that, if the idea that I had the seven of diamonds in my hand at cards last night, *were* useful, this idea would be true, even if, in fact, I did not have that card in my hand. And we can, I think, see quite plainly that this is not the case. With regard to some kinds of ideas, at all events—ideas with regard to the existence of other people, or with regard to past experiences of our own—it seems quite plain that they would not be true, unless they “agreed with reality” in some other sense than that which Professor James declares to be the only one in which true ideas must agree with it. Even if my idea that Professor James exists were to “agree with reality,” in the sense that, owing to it, I handled *other* realities better than I should have done without it, it would, I think, plainly not be true, unless Professor James really did exist—unless *he* were a reality. And this, I think, is one of the two most serious objections to what he seems to hold about the connection of truth with utility. He seems to hold that any idea, which was useful, *would* be true, *no matter what other properties it might fail to have*. And with regard to some ideas, at all events, it seems plain that they cannot be true, *unless* they have the property that what they believe to exist, really does or did exist. Beliefs in the existence of other people might be useful to me, even if I alone existed; but, nevertheless, in such a case, they would not be true.

And there is only one other point, in what Professor James says in connection with the “instrumental” view of truth, upon which I wish to remark. We have seen that he seems



sometimes to hold that beliefs are true, *so long as* they are "profitable to our lives." And this implies, as we have seen, the doubtful proposition that any belief, which is useful for some length of time, is true. But this is not all that it implies. It also implies that beliefs are true *only* so long as they are profitable. Nor does Professor James appear to mean by this that they *occur*, only so long as they are profitable. He seems to hold, on the contrary, that beliefs, which are profitable for some time, do sometimes finally occur at a time when they are not profitable. He implies, therefore, that a belief, which occurs at several different times, may be true at some of the times at which it occurs, and yet untrue at others. I think there is no doubt that this view is what he is sometimes thinking of. And this, we see, constitutes a quite new view as to the connection between truth and utility—a view quite different from any that we have hitherto considered. This view asserts not that every true idea is useful at some time, or in the long run, or for a considerable period; but that the truth of an idea may come and go, as its utility comes and goes. It admits that one and the same idea sometimes occurs at times when it is useful, and sometimes at times when it is not; but it maintains that this same idea is true, at those times when it is useful, and not true, at those when it is not. And the fact that Professor James seems to suggest this view constitutes, I think, a second most serious objection to what he says about the connection of truth and utility. It seems so obvious that utility is a property which comes and goes—which belongs to a given idea at one time, and does not belong to it at another, that anyone who says that the true is the useful naturally seems not to be overlooking this obvious fact, but to be suggesting that truth is a property which comes and goes in the same way. It is, in this way, I think, that the "instrumental" view of truth is connected with the view that truth is "mutable." Professor James does, I think, imply that truth

is mutable in just this sense—namely, that one and the same idea may be true at some of the times at which it occurs, and not true at others, and this is the view which I have next to consider.

(II) Professor James seems to hold, generally, that “truth” is mutable. And by this he seems sometimes to mean that an idea which, when it occurs at one time, is true, *may*, when it occurs at another time, not be true. He seems to hold that one and the same idea *may* be true at one time and false at another. That it *may* be, for I do not suppose he means that all ideas do actually undergo this change from true to false. Many true ideas seem to occur but once, and, if so, they, at least, will not actually be true at one time and false at another, though, even with regard to these, perhaps Professor James means to maintain that they *might* be false at another time, if they were to occur at it. But I am not sure that he even means to maintain this with regard to *all* our true ideas. Perhaps he does not mean to say, with regard to *all* of them, even that they *can* change from true to false. He speaks, generally, indeed, as if truth were mutable; but, in one passage, he seems to insist that there is a certain class of true ideas, none of which are mutable in this respect. “*Relations among purely mental ideas*,” he says (p. 209), “form another sphere where true and false beliefs obtain, and here the beliefs are absolute or unconditional. When they are true they bear the name either of definitions or of principles. It is either a principle or a definition that 1 and 1 make 2, that 2 and 1 make 3, and so on; that white differs less from grey than it does from black; that when the cause begins to act the effect also commences. Such propositions hold of all possible ‘ones,’ of all conceivable ‘whites,’ ‘greys,’ and ‘causes.’ The objects here are mental objects. Their relations are perceptually obvious at a glance, and no sense-verification is necessary. Moreover, once true, always true, of those same mental objects. Truth here has an ‘eternal’ character. If

you can find a concrete thing anywhere that is 'one' or 'white' or 'grey' or an 'effect,' then your principles will everlastingly apply to it." Professor James does seem here to hold that there are true ideas, which once true, are always true. Perhaps, then, he does not hold that *all* true ideas are mutable. Perhaps he does not even hold that all true ideas, *except* ideas of this kind, are so. But he does seem to hold at least that *many* of our true ideas are mutable. And even this proposition seems to me to be disputable. It seems to me that there is a sense in which it is the case with *every* true idea that, if once true, it is always true. That is to say, that every idea, which is true once, *would* be true at any other time at which it were to occur; and that every idea which does occur more than once, if true once, *is* true at every time at which it does occur. There seems to me, I say, to be *a sense* in which this is so. And this seems to me to be the sense in which it is most commonly and most naturally maintained that all truths are "immutable." Professor James seems to me to mean to deny it, even in this sense. He seems to me constantly to speak as if there were *no* sense in which *all* truths are immutable. And I only wish to point out what seems to me to be the plainest and most obvious objection to such language.

And, first of all, there is one doctrine, which he seems to connect with this of his that "truths are mutable," with regard to which I fully agree with him. He seems very anxious to insist that reality is mutable: that it does change, and that it is not irrational to hope that in the future it will be different from and much better than it is now. And this seems to me to be quite undeniable. It seems to me quite certain that I do have ideas at one time which I did not have at another; that change, therefore, does really occur. It seems to me quite certain that in the future many things will be different from what they are now: and I see no reason to think that they may not be much better. There is much misery in the world now; and I think

it is quite possible that some day there will really be much less. This view that *reality* is mutable, that *facts* do change, that some things have properties at one time which they do not have at other times, seems to me certainly true. And so far, therefore, as Professor James merely means to assert this obvious fact, I have no objection to his view. Some philosophers, I think, have really implied the denial of this fact. All those who deny the reality of time do seem to me to imply that nothing really changes or can change—that, in fact, reality is wholly immutable. And so far as Professor James is merely protesting against this view, I should, therefore, agree with him.

But I think it is quite plain that he does not mean *merely* this, when he says that truth is mutable. No one would choose this way of expressing himself if he merely meant to say that *some* things are mutable. Truth, Professor James has told us, is a property of certain of our ideas. And those of our ideas, which are true or false, are certainly only a part of the Universe. Other things in the Universe might, therefore, change, even if our ideas never changed in respect of this property. And our ideas themselves do undoubtedly change in some respects. A given idea exists in my mind at one moment and does not exist in it at another. At one moment it is in my mind and not in somebody else's, and at another in somebody else's and not in mine. I sometimes think of the truth that twice two are four when I am in one mood, and sometimes when I am in another. I sometimes think of it in connection with one set of ideas and sometimes in connection with another set. Ideas, then, are constantly changing in some respects. They come and go; and at one time they stand in a given relation to other things or ideas, to which at another time they do not stand in that relation. In this sense, any given idea may certainly have a property at one time which it has not got at another time. All this seems obvious; and all this cannot be admitted, without admitting that reality is mutable—that *some*

things change. But obviously it does not seem to follow from this that there is *no* respect in which ideas are immutable. It does not seem to follow that because ideas, and other things, change some of their properties, they necessarily change that one which we are considering—namely, "truth." It does not follow that a given idea, which has the property of truth at one time, ever exists at any other time without having that property. And yet that this *does* happen seems to be part of what is meant by saying that truth is mutable. Plainly, therefore, to say this is to say something quite different from saying that *some* things are mutable. Even, therefore, if we admit that *some* things are mutable, it is still open to consider whether truth is so. And this is what I want now to consider. Is it the case that an idea which exists at one time, and is true then, ever exists at any other time, without being true? Is it the case that any idea ever changes from true to false? That it has the property of being true on one of the occasions when it exists, and that it has *not* this property, but that of being false instead, on some other occasion when it exists?

In order to answer this question clearly, it is, I think, necessary to make still another distinction. It does certainly seem to be true, *in a sense*, that a given idea may be true on one occasion and false on another. We constantly speak as if there were cases in which a given thing was true on one occasion and false on another; and I think it cannot be denied that, when we so speak, we are often expressing in a perfectly proper and legitimate manner something which is undeniably true. It is true now, I might say, that I am in this room; but to-morrow this will not be true. It is true now that men are often very miserable; but perhaps in some future state of society this will not be true. These are perfectly natural forms of expression, and what they express is something which certainly may be true. And yet what they do apparently assert is that something or other, which is true at one time, will not, or *perhaps* will not, be true at another. We con-

stantly use such expressions, which imply that what is true at one time is not true at another; and it is certainly legitimate to use them. And hence, I think, we must admit that, *in a sense*, it is true that a thing may be true at one time which is not true at another; in that sense, namely, in which we use these expressions. And it is, I think, also plain that these things, which may be true at one time and false at another, may, *in a sense*, be ideas? We might even say: The idea that I am in this room, is true now; but to-morrow it will not be true. We might say this without any strain on language. In any ordinary book—indeed, in any philosophical book, where the subject we are at present discussing was not being expressly discussed—such expressions do, I think, constantly occur. And we should pass them, without any objection. We should at once understand what they meant, and treat them as perfectly natural expressions of things undeniably true. We must, then, I think, admit that, *in a sense*, an idea may be true at one time, and false at another. The question is: In what sense? What is the truth for which these perfectly legitimate expressions stand?

It seems to me that in all these cases, so far as we are not merely talking of *facts*, but of true *ideas*, that the “idea” which we truly say to be true at one time and false at another, is merely the idea of a *sentence*—that is, of certain *words*. And we do undoubtedly call *words* “true.” The words “I am at a meeting of the Aristotelian Society” are true, if I use them now; but, if I used the same words to-morrow, they would not be true. The words “George III. is king of England” were true in 1800, but they are not true now. That is to say, a given set of words may undoubtedly be true at one time, and false at another; and since we may have ideas of words as well as of other things, we may, in this sense, say the same of certain of our “ideas”: we may say that some of our “ideas” (namely those of words) are true at one time and not true at another.

But is it conceivable that Professor James *merely* meant to assert that the same *words* are sometimes true at one time and false at another? Can this be *all* he means by saying that truth is mutable? I do not think it can possibly be so. No one, I think, in definitely discussing the mutability of truth, could say that true ideas were mutable, and yet mean (although he did not say so) that this proposition applied *solely* to ideas of words. Professor James must, I think, have been sometimes thinking that *other* ideas, and not merely ideas of words, do sometimes change from true to false. And this is the proposition which I am concerned to dispute. It seems to me that if we mean by an idea, not merely the idea of certain words, but the kind of idea which words express, it is very doubtful whether such an idea ever changes from true to false—whether any such idea is ever true at one time and false at another.

And plainly, in the first place, the mere fact that the same set of words, as in the instances I have given, really are true at one time and false at another, does not afford any presumption that anything which they stand for is true at one time and false at another. For the same words may obviously be used in different senses at different times; and hence though the same words, which formerly expressed a truth, may cease to express one, that may be because they now express a *different* idea, and not because the idea which they formerly expressed has ceased to be true. And that, in instances such as I have given, the words used *do* change their meaning according to the time at which they are uttered or thought of, is, I think, evident. If I use now the words "I am in this room," these words certainly express (among other things) the idea that my being in this room is contemporary with my present use of the words; and if I were to use the same words to-morrow, they would express the idea that my being in this room was contemporary with the use of them *then*. And since my use of them then would not be the same fact as my use of

them now, they would certainly then express a different idea from that which they express now. And in general, whenever we use the present tense in its primary sense, it seems to me plain that we do mean something different by it, each time we use it. We always mean (among other things) to express the idea that a given event is contemporary with our actual use of it; and since our actual use of it on one occasion is always a different fact from our actual use of it on another, we express by it a different idea each time we use it. And similarly with the past and future tenses. If anybody had said in 1807 "Napoleon is dead," he would certainly have meant by these words something different from what I mean by them when I use them now. He would have meant that Napoleon's death occurred at a time previous to *his* use of those words; and this would not have been true. But in this fact there is nothing to show that if he *had* meant by them what I mean now, his idea would not have been as true then as mine is now. And so, if I say "It will rain to-morrow," these words have a different meaning to-day from what they would have if I used them to-morrow. What we mean by "to-morrow" is obviously a different day, when we use the word on one day, from what we mean by it when we use it on another. But in this there is nothing to show that if the idea, which I *now* mean by "It will rain to-morrow," *were* to occur again to-morrow, it would not be true then, if it is true now. All this is surely very obvious. But, if we take account of it, and if we concentrate our attention not on the words but on what is meant by them, is it so certain that what we mean by them on any one occasion ever changes from true to false? If there were to occur to me to-morrow the very same idea which I now express by the words "I am in this room," is it certain that this idea would not be as true then as it is now? It is perhaps true that the *whole* of what I mean by such a phrase as this never does recur. But part of it does, and that a part which is true. Part of what I mean is certainly identical



with part of what I should mean to-morrow by saying "I *was* in that room last night." And this part would be as true then, as it is now. And is there *any* part, which, if it were to recur at any time, would *not* then be true, though it is true now? In the case of all ideas or parts of ideas, which ever do actually recur, can we find a single instance of one, which is plainly true at one of the times when it occurs, and yet not true at another? I cannot think of any such instance. And on the other hand this very proposition that any idea (other than mere words) which is true once, would be true at any time, seems to me to be one of those truths of which Professor James has spoken as having an "eternal," "absolute," "unconditional" character—as being "perceptually obvious at a glance" and needing "no sense-verification." Just as we know that, if a particular colour differs more from black than from grey at one time, the same colour would differ more from black than from grey at any time, so, it seems to me, we can see that, if a particular idea is true at one time, the same idea would be true at any time.

It seems to me, then, that if we mean by an idea, not mere words, but the kind of idea which words express, any idea, which is true at one time when it occurs, *would* be true at any time when it were to occur; and that this is so, even though it is an idea, which refers to facts which are mutable. My being in this room is a fact which is now, but which certainly has not been at every time and will not be at every time. And the words "I *am* in this room," though they express a truth now, would not have expressed one if I had used them yesterday, and will not, if I use them to-morrow. But if we consider the idea which these words *now* express—namely, the idea of the connection of my being in this room with this particular time—it seems to me evident that anybody who had thought of that connection at any time in the past, would have been thinking truly, and that anybody who were to think of it at any time in the future would be thinking truly. This seems

to me to be the sense in which truths are immutable—in which *no* idea can change from true to false. And I think Professor James means to deny of truths generally, if not of all truths, that they are immutable even in this sense. If he does not mean this there seems nothing left for him to mean, when he says that truths are mutable, except (1) that some *facts* are mutable, and (2) that the same *words* may be true at one time and false at another. And it seems to me impossible that he could speak as he does, if he meant *nothing more* than these two things. I believe, therefore, that he is really thinking that ideas which have been once true (*ideas*, and not merely words) do sometimes afterwards become false: that the very same idea is at one time true and at another false. But he certainly gives no instance which shows that this does ever occur. And how far does he mean his principle to carry him? Does he hold that the idea that Julius Cæsar was murdered in the Senate-House, though true now, may, at some future time cease to be true, if it should be more profitable to the lives of future generations to believe that he died in his bed? Things like this are what his words seem to imply; and, even if he does hold that truths like this are *not* mutable, he never tries to tell us to what kinds of truths he would limit mutability, nor how they differ from such as this.

(III) Finally, there remains the view that “to an unascertainable extent our truths are man-made products.” And the only point I want to make about this view may be put very briefly.

It is noticeable that all the instances which Professor James gives of the ways in which, according to him, “our truths” are “made” are instances of ways in which our *beliefs* come into existence. In many of these ways, it would seem, false beliefs sometimes come into existence as well as true ones; and I take it Professor James does not always wish to deny this. False beliefs, I think he would say, are just as much “man-made products” as true ones: it is sufficient for his purpose if true beliefs do come into existence in the ways he mentions. And

the only point which seems to be illustrated by all these instances, is that in all of them the existence of a true belief does depend in some way or other upon the previous existence of something in some man's mind. They are all of them cases in which we may truly say: This man would not have had just that belief, had not some man previously had such and such experiences, or interests, or purposes. In some cases they are instances of ways in which the existence of a particular belief in a man depends upon *his own* previous experiences or interests or volitions. But this does not seem to be the case in all. Professor James seems also anxious to illustrate the point that one man's beliefs often depend upon the previous experiences or interests or volitions of *other* men. And, as I say, the only point which seems to be definitely illustrated in all cases is that the existence of a true belief does depend, *in some way or other*, upon something which has previously existed in some man's mind. Almost any kind of dependence, it would seem, is sufficient to illustrate Professor James' point.

And as regards this general thesis that almost all our beliefs, true as well as false, depend, in some way or other, upon what has previously been in some human mind, it will, I think, be readily admitted. It is a commonplace, which, so far as I know, hardly anyone would deny. If this is all that is to be meant by saying that our true beliefs are "man-made," it must, I think, be admitted that almost all, if not quite all, really are man-made. And this is all that Professor James' instances seem to me, in fact, to show.

But is this all that Professor James means, when he says that *our truths* are man-made? Is it conceivable that he only means to insist upon this undeniable, and generally admitted, commonplace? It seems to me quite plain that this is not all that he means. I think he certainly means to suggest that, from the fact that we "make" our true beliefs, something *else* follows. And I think it is not hard to see one thing more which he does mean. I think he certainly means to suggest

that we not only make our true beliefs, but also that we *make them true*. At least as much as this is certainly naturally suggested by his words. No one would persistently say that we make *our truths*, unless he meant, at least, not merely that we make our true beliefs, but also that we make them true; unless he meant not merely that the existence of our true beliefs, but also that their *truth*, depended upon human conditions. This, it seems to me, is one consequence which Professor James means us to draw from the commonplace that the *existence* of our true beliefs depends upon human conditions. But does this consequence, in fact, follow from that commonplace? From the fact that we make our true beliefs, does it follow that we *make them true*?

*In one sense*, undoubtedly, even this does follow. If we say (as we may say) that no belief can be true, unless it exists, then it follows that, in a sense, the truth of a belief must always depend upon any conditions upon which its existence depends. If, therefore, the occurrence of a belief depends upon human conditions, so, too, must its truth. If the belief had never existed, it would never have been true; and therefore its truth must, in a sense, depend upon human conditions in exactly the same degree in which its existence depends upon them. This is obvious. But is this all that is meant? Is this all that would be suggested to us by telling us that we make our beliefs true?

It is easy to see that it is not. I may have the belief that it will rain to-morrow. And I may have "made" myself have this belief. It may be the case that I should not have had it, but for peculiarities in my past experiences, in my interests and my volitions. It may be the case that I should not have had it, but for a deliberate attempt to consider the question whether it will rain or not. This may easily happen. And certainly this particular belief of mine would not have been true, unless it existed. Its truth, therefore, depends, in a sense, upon any conditions upon which its existence depends. And this belief

may be true. It will be true, if it does rain to-morrow. But, in spite of all these reasons, would anyone think of saying that, in case it is true, I had *made* it true? Would anyone say that I had had any hand *at all* in making it true? Plainly no one would. We should say that I had a hand in making it true, if and only if I had a hand in *making the rain fall*. In every case in which we believe in the existence of anything, past or future, we should say that we had helped to make the belief true, if and only if we had helped to cause the existence of the fact which, in that belief, we believed did exist or would exist. Surely this is plain. I may believe that the sun will rise to-morrow. And I may have had a hand in "making" this belief; certainly it often depends for its existence upon what has been previously in my mind. And if the sun does rise, my belief will have been true. I have, therefore, had a hand in making a true belief. But would anyone say that, therefore, I had a hand in *making this belief true*? Certainly no one would. No one would say that anything had contributed to make this belief true, except those conditions (whatever they may be) which contributed to making the sun actually rise.

It is plain, then, that by "making a belief true," we mean something quite different from what Professor James means by "making" that belief. Conditions which have a hand in making a given true belief, may (it appears) have no hand at all in making it true; and conditions which have a hand in making it true may have no hand at all in making *it*. Certainly this is how we use the words. We should never say that we had made a belief true, merely because we had made the belief. But now, which of these two things does Professor James mean? Does he mean *merely* the accepted commonplace that we make our true beliefs, in the sense that almost all of them depend for their existence on what has been previously in some human mind? Or does he mean also that we *make them true*—that their truth also depends on what has been previously in some human mind?

I cannot help thinking that he has the latter, and not only the former, in his mind. But, then, what does this involve? If his instances of "truth-making" are to be anything to the purpose, it should mean that, whenever I have a hand in causing one of my own beliefs, I always have to that extent a hand in making it true. That, therefore, I have a hand in actually making the sun rise, the wind blow, and the rain fall, whenever I cause my beliefs in these things. Nay, more, it should mean that, whenever I "make" a true belief about the past, I must have had a hand in making this true. And if so, then certainly I must have had a hand in causing the French Revolution, in causing my father's birth, in making Professor James write this book. Certainly he implies that some man or other must have helped in causing almost every event, in which any man ever truly believed. That it was we who made the planets revolve round the sun, who made the Alps rise, and the floor of the Pacific sink—all these things, and others like them, seem to be involved. And it is these consequences which seem to me to justify a doubt whether, in fact, "our truths are to an unascertainable extent man-made." That some of our truths are man-made—indeed, a great many—I fully admit. We certainly do make some of our beliefs true. The Secretary probably had a belief that I should write this paper, and I have made his belief true by writing it. Men certainly have the power to alter the world to a certain extent; and, so far as they do this, they certainly "make true" any beliefs, which are beliefs in the occurrence of these alterations. But I can see no reason for supposing that they "make true" *nearly* all those of their beliefs which are true. And certainly the only reason which Professor James seems to give for believing this—namely, that the *existence* of almost all their beliefs depends on them—seems to be no reason for it at all. For unquestionably a man does not "make true" *nearly* every belief whose *existence* depends on him; and,

if so, the question which of their beliefs and how many, men do "make true," must be settled by quite other considerations.

In conclusion, I wish to sum up what seems to me to be the most important points about this "pragmatist theory of truth," as Professor James represents it. It seems to me that, in what he says about it, he has in his mind some things which are true and others which are false; and I wish to tabulate separately the principal ones which I take to be true, and the principal ones which I take to be false. The true ones seem to me to be these:—

That *most* of our true beliefs are useful to us; and that *most* of the beliefs that are useful to us are true.

That the world really does change in some respects; that facts exist at one time, which didn't and won't exist at others; and that hence the world may be better at some future time than it is now or has been in the past.

That the very same words may be true at one time and false at another—that they may express a truth at one time and a falsehood at another.

That the existence of *most*, if not all, of our beliefs, true as well as false, does depend upon previous events in our mental history; that we should never have had the particular beliefs we do have, had not our previous mental history been such as it was.

That the truth, and not merely the existence, of *some* of our beliefs, does depend upon us. That we really do make some alterations in the world, and that hence we do help to "make true" all those of our beliefs which are beliefs in the existence of these alterations.

To all of these propositions I have no objection to offer. And they seem to me to be generally admitted commonplaces. A certain class of philosophers do, indeed, imply the denial of

every one of them—namely, those philosophers who deny the reality of time. And I think that part of Professor James' object is to protest against the views of these philosophers. All of these propositions do constitute a protest against such views; and so far they might be all that Professor James meant to assert. But I do not think that anyone, fairly reading through what he says, could get the impression that these things, and nothing more, were what he had in his mind. What gives colour and interest to what he says seems to be obviously something quite different. And, if we try to find out what exactly the chief things are which give his discussion its colour and interest, it seems to me we may distinguish that what he has in his mind, wrapped up in more or less ambiguous language, are the following propositions, to all of which I have tried to urge what seem to me the most obvious objections:—

That utility is a property which distinguishes true beliefs from those which are not true: that, therefore, *all* true beliefs are useful, and *all* beliefs, which are useful, are true—by "utility" being sometimes meant "utility on at least one occasion," sometimes "utility in the long run," sometimes "utility for some length of time."

That all beliefs which are useful for some length of time are true.

That utility is the *only* property which all true beliefs have in common: that, therefore, *if* it were useful to me to believe in Professor James' existence, this belief *would* be true, even if he didn't exist; and that, *if* it were not useful to me to believe this, the belief *would* be false, even if he did.

That the beliefs, which we express by words, and not merely the words themselves, may be true at one time and *not* true at another; and that this is a general rule, though perhaps there may be some exceptions.

That, whenever the *existence* of a belief depends to some extent on us, then also the *truth* of that belief depends to some



extent on us; in the sense in which this implies, that, when the existence of my belief that a shower will fall depends upon me, then, if this belief is true, I must have had a hand in making the shower fall: that, therefore, men must have had a hand in making to exist almost every fact which they ever believe to exist.

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#### IV.—THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT : AN INDUCTIVE ENQUIRY.

By A. CALDECOTT.

Preliminary.—I. The Dominant Element.—II. The Organising of Other Elements.—III. The Process of Formation.—IV. (a) The Importance of Joy ; (b) The James-Lange Theory ; (c) Final Stability.—Conclusion.

THIS is a study of a small group of thirty-four autobiographies of Wesley's early Methodist Preachers.\* They offer good material in several ways : they were men of our own kin ; they lived at a period which enables us to reconstruct their environment ; they were men capable of self-observation ; they were able to describe their observations ; and in some important points there is corroboration of what they record. The fewness of the cases sets the value of the enquiry within narrow limits ; but I think psychological enquiry to-day needs quality rather than quantity in its data.†

At the outset let me say that though these young men describe unusually intense emotionality they were not of ill-balanced nervous systems : they all lived vigorously, and most of them continued laborious pursuits until advanced old age ; they were not fretting under disappointments or depressed with the *ennui* of

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\* Collected by T. Jackson, published by John Mason, 14, City Road, London, 1846.

† The distribution of the cases is as follows :—Yorkshire, ten ; other northern counties, four ; London and neighbourhood, three ; Midlands, four ; South-west, three ; Cornwall, three ; Wales, two ; Scotland, three ; Ireland, two. As to stations in life, thirteen belonged to the employer class, all in a small way of business ; amongst the others were a printer, three weavers, a china factory worker, a mason, a carpenter, a baker, a miner, an agricultural labourer, and two private soldiers (in Flanders campaigns).

prematurely worn-out single emotions, the "sorrows of youth"; nor were they of melancholy temperament, apt to cherish sadness and gloom, averse to cheerfulness and joy; they struggled against the sadness they experienced in the first stage they describe, with an irresistible conviction that it need not be there, if only joy could be obtained.

In this paper I make no reference to the Objects of their religious beliefs or knowledge other than seems occasionally indispensable in order to secure that our attention is directed to the kind of Emotion described. Certain beliefs were operative in the men; their objective validity is not here in question.

On the point of nomenclature I agree with Mr. Shand that English usage favours our keeping "Emotion" for the simple forms and using "Sentiment" for the more complex. The word "Passion" I eschew for this purpose: Jonathan Edwards, *circa* 1750, reports the common use then to be that the Passions are "those more sudden inclinations whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, and the mind more overpowered and less in its own command": we cannot now use the term as equivalent to the French *passion* without going against the general custom of literature. The defect in the use of "sentiment" lies in its undoubted tendency to suggest refinement or delicacy rather than strength; as sentiments may be of every intensity, it becomes necessary sometimes to prefix an adjective to guard against this bias.

## I.

The Religious sentiment appears in these cases to possess as a peculiar feature an innerness and centrality which makes it fundamental and indispensable to those into whose experience it comes. Referring here for clearness to the Object of the sentiment, we find these men speaking of its emergence only in connexion with the bringing of the whole of self into view: each seems to have set himself before himself for judgment, asking, what am I worth in totality, integrally? and to have

passed unreserved judgment of worthlessness. In each of them this is done by reference to the thought of an Omniscient Being before whom he conceived himself as standing: that clear reference to Infinity and Perfection, which most students of history of Religion agree is its specific feature. "Self-knowledge," Newman has said, "is the root of all real religious knowledge"; and the reference to the Infinite is at the root of self-knowledge. Man after man in this group tells us this as fact of experience. When the self is thus touched at the core, the emotion which arises at once dominates the situation: the misery evoked is new in intensity, and perhaps also in quality; it bites into the mind, the distress is "exquisite," no other emotion can countervail it, consolation is unattainable—"I must seek (relief) till I find it or die in the search," says one.

Fear is a constituent; but the elementary fear of suffering, the dread of the torments of Punishment, is referred to less frequently than might be supposed. More prominent is the misery of self-reproach here and now;—"I was a monster," one says—the wretchedness in being the proper object of displeasure to one who has unquestioned right to be displeased: nothing will be so just as that such offenders should be cast off, reprobate. A few cases record some attempts at self-justification: a proud and turbulent Yorkshire boy adopts an attitude of defiance—"I found enmity in my heart rising against the sovereignty, holiness, and justice of the Author of my being, so that before I was ten years old, had it been in my power, I would have overturned God's throne and put down the Judge of all the Earth." But in the majority of cases there is neither repining nor resentment, even in the acuteness of misery: the depth of the woe lies in the approval of the entire rightness of the judgment over against them. "I wish I were dead: if God pleases to save me, it is his infinite mercy; if he damns my soul, be it so, he is righteous and just." It should be added that the group contains a few cases in which the emotion above

described is replaced by the emotion of love; a Somersetshire boy considers that his first effective desire was "to do the will of God and go to Heaven"; a Yorkshire printer's first experience was "delight in God."

The emotion of self-distress is recorded as awakening, as we should expect, an intense desire for relief. This relief is sought in vain by these men in self-vindication and the emotion of self-respect, and quite in vain do they resort to other emotions, though they make desperate attempts in that direction. In the limited field open to young men of their education and social opportunity they had recourse to love of amusements, to pleasures of social intercourse, to the moral sentiment which discharge of their duties in life might evoke: in vain; these all pale before the consuming emotion of distress which occupies them and from which they cannot escape. They all find it indispensable to make a great transfer: to abandon self-regard altogether and to decide to entrust their case wholly into the hands of Him before whom they conceive themselves to stand condemned. This decision is arrived at when there comes into their experience a feeling that there is directed towards them a love which will—for a reason they assign—so countervail the judgment of condemnation as to replace it and become the dominant attitude towards them. The belief in such a love, however arrived at, does actually awaken in them a responsive love which explodes the emotional situation by its powerful energy, dispossessing, for the moment at least, all other emotions from their influence. "Overwhelmed with the presence of God" is the expression of a Scotchman after a resistance unusually prolonged, and at the outset of a fifty years' ministry. "My heart with a kind, sweet struggle melted into the hands of God" says, not a mediæval Spaniard, but a Yorkshire clothier of the eighteenth century. (This is in striking contrast with the mode of Carlyle's "spiritual new-birth," attained by assertion of himself as a Child of Freedom, when "my whole Me stood up in native

God-created majesty and with emphasis recorded its indignation and defiance" of opposing forces.)

The evidence offered by these cases to the presence in religious sentiment of a central constituent emotion is, I think, clear. Though not men of wide range of emotional life, at least not in its more refined ranges, they were men of vigorous and varied feelings and might well have passed lives of considerable value in the enjoyment of these. But they had tried other emotions and express in uncompromising terms their experience of the insufficiency of all others when once the sense of worthlessness and condemnation was aroused and the sense of love responding to a love which they deemed to come from above had entered their experience.

The mark of domination was upon this religious love: When once experienced there is no manner of doubt that in comparison with all else in their emotional life it was beyond price to these men.

## II.

Nearly all of them record sufficient of the advance of their religious life to enable us to trace some features of the formation of the full religious "sentiment," in the sense of a systemic emotion. We see the dominance of the central emotion, and then we watch it as it engages in the task of dealing with the others. Some of them it opposes as inconsistent with itself: upon the baser desires it acts as a thorough cathartic, and many of them express the deepest gratitude for its beneficent action on their character in this respect; lying, gambling, drunkenness, indulgence in some cruel forms of sport then too prevalent, profanity, and the like, are specified. But some had been upright and moral, and they refrain from exaggerated condemnation of their past: "I was never openly wicked," says one; "my conscience was tender, and I was kept from every appearance of evil, so far as I knew," says another: these placed their gratitude simply for what they conceived it to be due, namely, for the purification of their central and inner selves as judged

by the exalted standard which had come into their minds. Fear is quite overcome, and Anxiety ; Anger and Pride are subdued in some evidently passionate and turbulent natures—"when I looked for those inward risings of anger, pride, and self-will, which, like dry tinder, were formerly ready to catch fire at any provocation, I found them not ; but, on the contrary, I found meekness, humility, and resignation." Hatred and animosities died down : "in our family nothing but discord, jealousy, and ill will were there ; peace had for some time left our dwelling . . . but when (the change he describes) spread its benign influences over us, our jars ceased, peace returned, and harmony and love reigned in our whole family," is written by a Huddersfield man. Ambition was transformed into strong desire to be of some small service in the new cause.

And the central emotion proceeds to draw together the other emotions, and to establish a control over them : the records show especially the presence in great intensity of a Gratitude which finds incessant expression both generally and for innumerable small events which are regarded as tokens of favour ; a prevailing Hopefulness of temper ; a deep and evidently sincere Humility ; a firm and stimulating sense of Confidence and Trust ; and a permanent feeling of Respect, Reverence, and Awe. The other "sentiments" are brought into articulate connexion : men who had lost confidence in the Moral virtues find them again in vigorous exercise in a subordinate capacity. The Intellectual Sentiment, the love of truth and knowledge, is won over : it is, indeed, at its height for them only in the contemplation of the supreme truth which they place at the base of all their beliefs ; independent employment of it becomes comparatively indifferent. But in relation to that, and in subservience to that main employment, some of these men had very considerable share of the enjoyments attached to the intellectual life.

The æsthetic sentiment expressed itself in them in certain important forms, but only in such as were congenial with the

system. There was appreciation of the poetical and rhetorical force of the Bible; of the new Hymnody which expressed the sentiments of the movement in which they were sharing; and an ability to see and to admire the nobility and grace which beautified the lives and characters of the frequently rude and illiterate people to whom they ministered. To the attractions of the Fine Arts they were insensible, for the most part; their imagery and visions were expressed in verbal forms, and were derived from the Old Testament and the Apocalypse of St. John; and they found time neither for much direct admiration of External Nature, nor for the enjoyment of the representation of spiritual things in forms of earth.

Their Social sentiments were, however, strong, and these were thoroughly organised. The sex-affection was brought into harmony; several of those who married after they had come under the domination of the religious emotion record how for them affinity in this respect was the primary factor amongst the attractions which led to their choice, and how—unlike their great leader—they secured whole-hearted and unbroken attachments for life. But their religious emotion in itself acted strongly in evoking social sentiment; almost concomitant with the attainment of peace for self arose the desire to lead others into the same happiness; the newly-awakened love extended itself in concern for the welfare of others. Whilst struggling for his own security a Scotchman declares that “everything, the nearest and dearest connexions on earth, became entirely and totally indifferent to me when they stood in opposition”: afterwards, immediately, “my views and pursuits were directed to the glory of God, the salvation of my own soul, and the souls of others.” Affections for wife, children, parents, brothers and sisters, and neighbours, are brought into support. One of them, a Durham farmer’s son, yearned for a moment for “a sweet solitude when he need see friends and companions no more”: but this was later, when urged to become a preacher. In the other cases there is no



record of a tendency to rest satisfied with the emotion of self; no inclination towards the solitary peace which seems to be a prime character of the Hindu attainment of victory. And in these cases we see the specific central feature of the emotion at work. These men were indifferent to the political and social situation of their time, and the schemes for forwarding human progress by reformations of that kind. Their emotion interested them in a reformation of society by a reconstitution of it as a religious fellowship, based on this very feature, the actual sharing of spiritual privileges by the society, and the potential capacity for the privileges which they held to lie in the natures of all outside it. To work for and in such a society became to them the main occupation of their lives.

Besides the organising of other emotions and sentiments into one system we can trace in these cases the influence of this emotion over the other ranges of mental life. I have spoken of intellectual sentiment. Under its influence intellectual activity was quickened for the instrumental purpose for which they required it. In the field which interested them their thinking was vigorous, in some cases notably so, especially considering the limited range of the education which they had received. They acquired familiarity with the Bible; they were conversant with human nature on the sides which concerned them; they developed oratorical power, sometimes, perhaps, wholly serious, more often not lacking in the seasoning of wit and humour, epigram, and metaphor and parable. And some of them record considerable wrestlings with fundamental problems, though, as a rule, they accepted the solutions of these which were included in the teachings of Wesley. One of them of better school education than the others became editor of the *Arminian Magazine*; another, a printer who had always liked reading, was also brought into editorial work. But it was in the exercise of intellect in preaching and in conversation that all were principally engaged, and in these they became, in different degrees, leaders among people of

whom even the rank and file were not likely to be the dullards of the towns and villages of England at that time.

In regard to the Will, most of the records show evidence that these were men of considerable force of will. In most of them the transformation of their character was not accomplished without an exercise of volition which left a vivid impression in their memory: one speaks of being "constrained to acquiesce," *i.e.*, though there was constraint he experiences something conational which he designates acquiescence, and that he then said, "I will hold fast if I can." Another, "I ventured . . . and claimed my interest": another, "I had not only to believe, but to hold fast my confidence." "Anyone may believe, if he will" is the generalisation of another. As time went on we see will brought into complete consilience; its decisions have become more and more in accord with the requirements of the religious desire: obedience becomes habitual. And the influence is highly sthenic. The evidence shows an uprising of energy which is very striking; of course, it may be only that mental energies are now ordained in a singularly efficient way, but it seems as if a new intensity is conferred, that the surplus of healthy activity of which Fouillée speaks was present. Certain it is that plain tradesmen, mechanics, and labourers became moral and spiritual forces acting powerfully on other minds.

### III.

This organisation of the emotions into religious sentiment, and the further control over the whole character, proceeded in varying courses even in this small selection of cases. In two-thirds of the cases a series of vicissitudes after the first victory is recorded before a final harmony is won.\* Old emotions resume their force, in detachment or in opposition:

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\* The most frequent ages for the first clear experience of relief and satisfaction is between twenty and twenty-five; in only three of them when younger than twenty, in only four when older than twenty-five.

“Foolish desires began to arise again, which formerly seemed to be dead”; there are returns to love of amusement, to contentment with moral satisfactions, less frequently lapses into the coarser habits of the past. And sometimes the central emotion itself is reduced, even to temporary disappearance: satisfaction fails, and only desire remains; in a few cases even that fades away and periods of emptiness have to be lived through. Sometimes this is taken in callousness, but more frequently there is an undercurrent of poignant regret, which becomes intolerable torture; the “aching void” of Cowper is no rhetorical figure for them. These vicissitudes continue for periods of all lengths: five, six, seven years; one records a single lapse which lasted five years; another, a Dorsetshire soldier, one of twenty years. With some, a settlement came after they accepted appointment as travelling preachers, but others record dire irruptions of darkness, even in the midst of their labours. But over one-third record a prompt achievement and a clear current through the rest of life: the clearest case of this is a Cornish carpenter, but it is notable that the change in his case did not come till he was nearly thirty years old.

These vicissitudes I take to have been due principally to the emotions themselves. In all the cases except six there is no hint whatever that there was any change in the Object of belief, or in the strength of the belief on its intellectual side, which could account for the lapses; the same doctrines were before their minds, and the fact that some record the intervention of intellectual doubtings, or assign considerable importance to fresh presentations of doctrine, sets in relief the absence of such reference in the other cases. The “fixed idea” of Ribot seems to have continued, but the mind has ceased to grapple it to itself; it floats off into the region of intellect, its affective side has faded. Removed to this distance the sense of the loss of feeling in comparison with the memory of past joy is the source of the regret, which, either acutely or massively, makes the period of darkness wretched. There is “no comfort

in anything." (*Cf.* J. S. Mill's experience when without any change in the object of his deepest desires he passed through months of emotional dryness and gloom.) The sense of coldness which comes only upon those who have been in the sunshine, who know that the sun is shining still, but not for them, is the coldness of quenched emotion. These men continued their ordinary life, attended meetings, associated with the faithful, but all seemed hard and remote; "not one comfortable hope for seven years" says the Dorset soldier. In the extinction of the once victorious emotion, the old miserable sense of unworth and just condemnation revived with increased vehemence; some nearly lost the balance of their minds as Cowper did; but sanity was preserved, though some of them in their dark periods speak of misery and distress approaching near to despair, and moving them to contemplate suicide. This inability of the religious sentiment to maintain its hold of the field, even after a very striking and impressive victory, is a fact of great significance. If in the sentiment, complex as we see it to be, the numerous constituents were of anything like equal influence, we should hardly expect to see retreat from the field of victory so complete: it would be most improbable that there would not be one or other constituent, or group of constituents, retaining occupation of at least a part of the field.\* The obvious inference seems to be that at this stage the sentiment was far from being constituted as a system: the central emotion was not yet in command. If we may rely upon the law of decline in emotional life, as expressed by

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\* One of the most reflective of these men considered that the prolonged conflict was natural and beneficial. Although he had persuaded himself that there was no opposing emotion which he was unwilling to give up, yet he judged that these had to become as "gall and wormwood" to him, to be such as to make him "sick" of them, and that only so could the building be on a sure foundation in his nature. The necessity of a long and painful "digging deep" was not found in the majority of cases, as the records show, however.

Höffding,\* "Repetition has a different effect upon (single) emotions and upon sentiment: it weakens one and feeds the other," we have in the decline and even suspensions here recorded evidence that there is a central factor which is single, the religious emotion proper which is the affective side of the sense of the Infinite. And it would seem that it is true for even this central emotion that fixity of tenure is secured only when supporters, ministers, and allies are obtained from among the other emotions. But on this I am not quite satisfied: it seems to me that it would be reasonable to expect that what had touched the central fibres of the soul might be exempt from the law of decline altogether. In notes of other records than those of this group I have evidence pointing to this; but here I can only note that in these thirty-four cases vicissitudes and even loss appear in twenty cases, and in twelve of them with extreme severity. And this suggests either that the central emotion is subject to the common law, or else that in these cases true centrality was not reached till a later stage of their experience.

That there were these vicissitudes in the full sentiment as a complex whole is, of course, quite intelligible: and their occurrence supports the conception of a "sentiment" as not only a simultaneous unification, but a successive system also. This is admirably expounded by Mr. Shand.† Sentiment or passion is "an organised succession of emotions and desires," and he gives us a subtly worked-out genealogy of Love as the master-sentiment. The few cases I am examining do not enable me to see how far his account is in its detail confirmed or paralleled in the case of the religious sentiment; but I have found nothing which prevents my carefully reserving his genealogy for use in more extended enquiries at some future time.

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\* *Outlines of Psychology*, VI, E.

† *Mind*, October, 1907.

## IV.

Of the emotions taken up and organised in the full religious sentiment, I agree with Mr. Shand in his insistence on the great importance of the emotion, Joy. The religious sentiment of these men invariably included it. It was not always secured at the outset, by any means, and great perplexity and trouble vexed them because of its delaying. In different degrees, some speak of "ecstasies" of joyfulness; while some were regarded by their friends as serious men, but none as melancholy: "sober, but not sad," is said of one. These were not like Butler or Johnson or the father of Carlyle—"Man's face he did not fear; but God he always feared"—but men of cheer and happiness, in the expression of which lay much of their attractive power. And even in their passage through their dark valley we can detect continual recurrences of joy which yielded them encouragements and kept them in readiness for a revival sooner or later. And the importance of joy is confirmed by the effects upon them of the counter-emotion of sorrow during these periods of suspended peace of mind.

The marked presence of joy in the religious sentiment confirms the "law of Conservation," I cannot but think; the simplest explanation of its presence is that it corresponds to the health of the whole mental nature. It is an index that life is proceeding in an anabolic direction, and that there is, indeed, a surplus of vitality. In these cases we see a joy unequalled, so far as they can testify, by any other which they knew: some of them had tried other sources, not a few being men of warm nature and strong natural passions and affections, and high moral tone. But now they found, as one of them says, not only occasional ecstasy, but a fund of "solid happiness." And this is what would be appropriate to men who were, as they were, at a high level of strenuous efficiency and mental health.

I have looked into these cases to see whether anything is to be gleaned which will throw light on the James-Lange theory of emotionality, viz., that emotion does not arise till after reflective influence has brought organic sensations, including sensori-motor sensations, into consciousness. Of course, no new light is to be looked for if my contention be correct that the specific feature of religious sentiment is an inner emotion: if this is so, the contact of the central factor with the affective side of organic sensations will be indirect, mediated through the outer ranges of emotion: the joy, grief, anxiety, hope, and the like. But when we look at the full sentiment as a system in which the outer emotions are included, we might expect some information in these reports as to what is the situation for the organic sensations. Here and there something is told us which we can use. A Wiltshire man relates that on a distressing failure (to pray) "I felt as if cold water ran through every vein"; here we clearly find an organic sensation entering. A Scotchman found that his health had suffered, and had some weeks of illness. And here, too, doubtless, the organic sensations counted for something as components of his total mental state. But in each case the narrative is so written that it is quite plain that the subjects of these experiences would have been astonished to hear that these sensations were primary and essential, and, in order of time, prior to the inner features of their experience. The one narrates quite simply that he tried (to pray), and on the failure the sensation he so vividly describes occurred. The other that he had been "paying very little attention to his body," and realised what had been going on only when weakness was advanced far. Of course, these were not skilled observers. I state the effect of their experience upon their memory. But the narratives are almost destitute of references to bodily occurrences: neither as possible incitements to emotion nor as expressions of it did there seem to them to be anything remarkable to narrate. The phenomena closely connected with physiological changes which

have frequently attended "Revivals" and pseudo-Mystic experiences are conspicuously absent. What changes of this kind there were did not catch the attention of these men, and as their emotionality was of high intensity and considerable complexity, the failure of organic sensations to win their notice has a certain force against the James-Lange theory. But the fewness of the instances, and the negative character of the records in this respect, justifies no more than a slight attention.

One last reflection. So far as this small group of cases goes the final *stability* of the Religious sentiment is uniformly exhibited. This does not prove more than its capacity for stability, of course, as the cases are not only few, but they are selected partly on this very ground; these men were the men of fidelity who were selected by the discerning eye of the great founder of Methodism and who justified his selection and are entered on the roll of those who were faithful helpers in the cause. Still, it is of value to learn how stable the sentiment can become. Acquired after initial conflict, tested by a more or less severe course of vicissitudes in many cases, it settled into a stability which was simply complete. Under its influence they devoted themselves to the propagation of the beliefs which they held, the inspiration of the sentiment which dominated themselves. They worked by night and by day for periods of thirty, forty, even fifty years, in circumstances in which encouraging results had frequently but little balance over fierce opposition and bitter disappointments. And after their strenuous labours were concluded by physical decline many of them lived long evenings of life in gradually diminished service; they all closed in serenity. At the age of seventy-nine one says, "As for the enemy, I know not what has become of him." After fifty-five years of hard service another says, "I stand amazed at the goodness of God towards me." These were the men who were regarded as "enthusiasts" by the grave moralists who filled most of the ministries of the eighteenth century; but it was an enthusiasm which had the quality of lasting.



The fact of this final stability of the sentiment, accompanied, indeed, with increase of intensity in some cases, further confirms the view of the structure of the sentiment. Whilst the central emotion was single it seems to have been subject to the law of decline, but when it had secured controlling power and the system was constituted there was no further fading due to recurrence or constancy. There was here no Rasselas intolerably satiated in his Happy Valley. These were not the floating emotions of such religious "Revivals" as gave serious concern in New England about that time, and drew from Jonathan Edwards the profound and beautiful, though somewhat irregular, study of the subject which is given in his treatise on "The Religious Affections."\* He saw that emotionality which is not comprehensively organised, and which does no organising but remains detached from thought and will, falls subject to the law of decline, incapable of attaining that "fixedness of strength" which he required in the experiences which he could welcome and approve. With these men, as life proceeded, emotionality was sustained to the end of long careers. And, indeed, it increased, becoming diffusive, until it extended itself from association with its original objects, though remaining perfectly faithful to them, and invested all men and all things with its tones. This is explained if my contentions are right: that the sentiment included an inner factor which touched the very centre of the mental nature; that this central emotion had succeeded in acquiring control over the other emotions, both singly and as sentiments, and in completely organising them; and that it was by these means associated with the attainment of an intellectual "fixed idea," and with the principal activities of the mind. Dr. Shadworth Hodgson speaks of "the formation of a consistent Character . . . a character in which all the constituent parts or elements are in harmony with one another."† It

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\* *The Religious Affections*, Part 1, § 3, and Part V, § 1.

† *Fact, Idea, and Emotion*, in the Society's Proceedings, 1906-7.

seems, perhaps, an exaggerated claim to make, but the records of these lives as autobiographical are confirmed by testimony of contemporaries—"This man," said Dr. Priestley of a Yorkshire stonemason who is in my group and is recorded to have been of slender abilities and education, "must do good, for he aims at nothing else." Their natures may not have been of a complicated kind, but the native passions of young Yorkshiremen, Scotchmen, and Cornishmen in the rough days of the early eighteenth century were neither weak nor undeveloped. Yet we see in them that an emotional system was formed with its own inner harmony and in vital connexion with the other ranges of mental life. After the days of conflict and vicissitude had passed, we see neither unrest nor morbidity, but stability and the concreteness of efficiency and health and well-being.

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## V.—THE IDEA OF TOTALITY.

*By* SHADWORTH H. HODGSON.

I SHOULD like to say at the outset, that this paper was written and its title announced, before our President's admirable Address was delivered, or the subject of it made known. Important agreements between that Address and the present paper, agreements which I for one recognise with pleasure, will, I hope, become as plainly apparent to my hearers, as, doubtless, the important disagreements will be, to which the difference of our respective methods gives rise.

Philosophy at the present day, notwithstanding its antiquity, has no unity, and therefore no definite status in the intellectual world; we have, instead, a bundle of attempts at philosophising. It is the affinity of the various subject-matters which it treats, the various questions to which it seeks answers, that gives it whatever unity it possesses. At whatever point, and in whatever subject-matter, positive science reaches the end of its tether, and neither seeks to go, nor indeed can go farther, but ends with a question, there and at that point philosophy begins. There are, or at any rate may be, as many philosophies as there are positive sciences incomplete in the sense that their own ultimate bases, their own postulates and axioms, are unaccounted for and unexplained. What is the remedy, if any, for the resulting disunion of philosophy, a disunion preventing its organisation as a single pursuit?

In my opinion, philosophy will attain, but will only then attain, its special, characteristic, and universally recognised place and function among all the pursuits which together compose the intellectual world, when its votaries, however widely they may differ upon minor matters, and whatever

department of it may be their particular care, shall have perceived and agreed upon the necessity of the three following points:—First, that its purpose is to understand so far as possible the Universe in which as men we find or seem to find ourselves; Second, that for this purpose it examines the subjective aspect of the Universe, that is to say, examines our consciousness, our awareness, or the knowledge we have of it; and Third, that it begins by simply analysing that consciousness, awareness, or knowledge, not only without making, but also by being careful to exclude, assumptions which are not warranted by the analysis itself. Briefly stated, philosophy is that study which is based on the analysis of experience in its totality, without assumptions, and taken strictly as experience, that is, as awareness, or knowledge of the objects which we seem to be aware of.

This contention you may say is merely an individual's private opinion and speculation. Well, I am quite content that it should be so taken. Indeed, I see that it must be so taken until it is accepted. Till then, there are as many philosophies as there are philosophers; or rather as many as there are fundamental and unwarranted assumptions made by enquirers of different temperaments and dispositions. For the three points stated are no philosophy of mine; they are no philosophy at all; they are simply the preliminary of any organised philosophy, adopting provisionally common-sense ideas and terms for its expression; a preliminary of philosophy necessary, indeed, to its successful cultivation, and justified as necessary by the history and development of the various divergent philosophies, and particular departments of philosophical thought, wherever such have existed, down to the present day, but not imposing any restriction, or prescribing any foregone conclusion, implicit or explicit, upon the experience analysed, but on the contrary guarding against such foregone conclusions in endeavouring to exclude all initial and unwarranted assumptions, and leaving conclusions to be

reached, if reached at all, by the consensus of the analyses instituted by independent enquirers, each into his own carefully scrutinised experience.

And this philosophical consensus is specially difficult to attain, far more difficult than a consensus in any positive science, because it must be ultimately based on what is immediate in the consciousness of individuals, while at the same time the immediacy of an individual's consciousness is something not shared by, or communicable to, any other individual, nor capable of making part of the immediacy of any other individual's consciousness. An individual's consciousness is immediately objective to itself, consciousness being a self-objectifying process, objectifying its own contents. But an individual's consciousness and all its parts, that is, all its immediate contents or objects, are only mediately known or knowable by other individuals; that is to say, as objects of their consciousness they are only mediately known. No state of consciousness is immediately known in more than one consciousness. When, for instance, the sun shines out from behind a cloud, I have the visual sensation of light, an immediate experience; but this, my immediate experience, is only a mediate object of your experience, supposing you to be standing by, just as your immediate experience of the same light is but a mediate object of mine. The two sensations, yours and mine, in their immediacy are incommunicable; neither of us can experience both, still less can either of us compare them as immediate experiences. It is only by relating our ideas of them to our ideas of other objects that either of us can think of our immediate sensations as the same in kind.

Now since all our philosophical knowledge must be based upon immediately known experiences; since immediate experiences are our only ultimate evidence for anything whatever, including our belief in ourselves as individual Subjects of the experiences, as well as our belief in common real

Objects of them (such as the sun and its light in the above instance), the truth of all mediate knowledge being inferential, depending for its proof solely upon self-evident, that is, immediately evident data; it follows that a consensus of individuals, in analysing each his own immediate, unshared, and in its immediacy incommunicable experience, must be something exceptionally difficult of attainment. And this is just what we find to be the case.

But here a few more words are requisite in elucidation. The very term *immediacy* is ambiguous. It means one thing in application to consciousness as a Knowing, and quite another thing in application to consciousness (that same consciousness) as an Existent. And this latter distinction itself is one not usually drawn or attended to; indeed, I doubt whether it is drawn explicitly and as a fundamental distinction in all experience, by anyone but myself; and it is certainly one not easy to keep in view, even when it has once been clearly drawn and its necessity perceived. Immediacy in application to consciousness as a Knowing means the self-evidence of any single empirical presentation (*e.g.*, a visual sensation) including its inseparable elements, if any, and is opposed to the mediate character of more complex contents of consciousness, for the union of the several components of which into a single content some mediating fact or reason is required (*e.g.*, the perception of what we call a material solid object). *Immediacy* here expresses the self-objectifying character of consciousness. But the same term, *immediacy*, in application to consciousness as an Existent, means that incommunicable vivacity or *awareness* which is the essential characteristic of consciousness itself, whatever its contents as a Knowing may be, and expresses the fact that there is no medium required between consciousness and its proximate real condition, or what is commonly called its Subject, whatever may be the nature of that Subject or Real Condition. It is an immediacy which needs no further link to bind together consciousness and its proximate real

condition into one single or individual Conscious Being. A conscious being consists of consciousness and its proximate real condition in intimate union.

It is plain, I think, that these two senses of the term *immediacy* in consciousness (as a knowing and as an existent) are very different, that the presence of the one kind of immediacy by no means implies the presence of the other. Mediate as well as immediate contents or objects of consciousness as a knowing may be actual presentations in the existent consciousness of an individual conscious being, and in that sense be incommunicable to any other individual. And again, contents or objects of consciousness as a knowing, once distinguished and named either as immediate or mediate contents of an individual's experience, may be dropped out of view, detached as it were from the actual current of his existent consciousness, and lose thereby that immediacy in the second sense, that incommunicable vivacity, which is the characteristic of consciousness as an existent. They thus and in that state become representations or ideas, capable of recall by memory into the stream of an individual's consciousness as an existent, the precise meaning of this recall being the evocation of their exact, or apparently exact, similars in point of kind, with perception at once of the similarity and of the numerical difference due to the difference of the times of their occurrence in the stream of his existent consciousness. And the immediate presentation or presentative awareness which the individual then has of them, as representations or ideas, gives him the means of verifying or correcting them, that is, of ascertaining by further analysis their true nature as cognitions, and their agreement or disagreement as cognitions with one another.

Yet, different as the two kinds of immediacy are, the presence of both is requisite in those experiences which, if anything, are to be the foundation of philosophy; and this would be the case even if philosophy were confined to a single individual, and no consensus of individuals were sought for or

suggested as included in its purpose. It is because the experience of an individual gives him undeniable evidence of the existence of other individuals similar to himself, that he seeks to establish a consensus between his own views and theirs regarding that universe which his own experience also tells him is the common object of them all. This consensus he seeks to establish by comparing the ideas or representations which he has of the contents, whether mediate or immediate, of his own consciousness as a knowing, with the ideas or representations which other individuals have of the contents, whether mediate or immediate, each of his own consciousness as a knowing. And the means for this comparison consist, primarily and chiefly, in speech or diagram, which are objects or actions simultaneously perceived or perceivable by the several individuals concerned, as objects common to all, or as actions passing between them, and which express and recall, by association, for each individual, the ideas or representations to which in his own experience he has attached them. It is thus those ideas or representations spoken of in the preceding paragraph as detached or detachable from the current of an individual's consciousness as an existent, but also as capable of recall into it by memory, that become the common object-matter of discussion and controversy in philosophy. And these it is which each individual has to bring over and over again into the immediacy of his own presentative existent consciousness, and therein to test or correct by repeated analysis, while at the same time he endeavours so to distinguish, analyse, and describe them, as to lead other individuals to distinguish, analyse, and describe them as he does, by bringing them into the steady light of their own presentative consciousness.

The seeking for a consensus is no peculiar characteristic of philosophy; it is part and parcel of our inherited nature as human beings. And the means for establishing it are essentially the same in all cases. The mother teaching, and the child seated on her knee and learning, to speak articulately, to attach



names to things, to connect written letters with vocal sounds, and so on, are instances of the establishing of a consensus between them. Common objects, simultaneously perceived as common to both parties, are the only means whereby in any case the consensus can be effected. The difference in the case of establishing a consensus in philosophy is, that here the agreement sought for is an agreement between the ideas, analyses of ideas, perceived or inferred relations of the components of ideas, which make part of the experience of one individual on the one hand, and on the other hand the ideas, analyses, components, and relations, which make part of the experience of other individuals, while there is no idea or component of an idea, or relation between either, perceived as common by all individuals, and admitted by all to begin with, which can serve as the criterion of the sameness or difference, in kind, of the remaining ideas, components, or relations of ideas with each other. For here the objects of sensation, perceived in common and simultaneously, which served as the means, and therefore as the criteria of a consensus in pre-philosophic thinking, make default; inasmuch as the true nature of those objects is knowable only by means of the ideas we form of them, while these ideas are among the very objects concerning the sameness or difference of which, in different individuals, a consensus is sought by philosophy.

Now, as objects belonging to the immediate presentative consciousness of each individual as an existent consciousness, ideas in their immediacy are just as incommunicable as sensations are. And the difference between arriving at a consensus in philosophy and arriving at a consensus in pre-philosophic thinking is just this, that in the former there is no commonly admitted object behind the ideas, or which, as ideas or components or relations of ideas, they are admitted to represent, as there is in the case of some sensations at any rate; but the ideas themselves and their contents raise this very question,—whether there is any such object, and if any, of what sort it is,

or what idea or thought we are justified in entertaining concerning it.

## II.

In fact the question, what the idea of Totality means when applied to the Universe, or in what sense it is implied in the idea of the Universe itself, which is that which gives it importance as a philosophical question, is thus opened. I may seem to have been somewhat long in coming to the direct discussion of the proposed topic; but I think that, without some such analytical remarks as the foregoing, the true place and function of the idea of totality in philosophy could hardly be appreciated. In these remarks I have, of course, gone beyond what I called at the outset the preliminary of philosophy, and have entered by analysis upon the domain of philosophy itself. The confusion which results from failing to distinguish the two senses of *immediacy* in consciousness results ultimately from failing to draw the ultimate analytical distinction upon which the former depends; I mean the distinction between certain inseparables in the philosophical analysis of consciousness itself, namely, its content as a knowing, and the fact or process of its existence as a consciousness having that content. The usual course is to consider consciousness, undistinguished into these inseparables (which we may call its subjective and objective *aspects*) as the property or attribute of a Subject, and thence, and on that assumption, to proceed to enquire what and how much of the knowledge which it seems to give us of Objects is contributed by the Subject, and what and how much, if anything, is contributed by the Objects, of which it seems to give us a knowledge.

So much it is necessary to say at present of the contrast between these two methods of philosophising. But there are terms in great number current in philosophy, and I think Totality is one of them, which are ambiguous for a reason very similar to that which makes the term Immediacy ambiguous;

I mean inattention to another philosophical distinction, though this is one far more generally admitted, and in some shape agreed on, the distinction between Percept and Concept, or more strictly between purely perceptual data and the shape which they assume in thinking or conceiving them. This is not a distinction between two *aspects* of consciousness irrespective of any other difference in it, that is, irrespective of what its other contents, save only this difference of aspects, may be. It is a distinction between two kinds of contents, both kinds being contents of consciousness as a knowing, one of which kinds is alleged by one school of philosophy, and the other by another school, to be necessary as a component or prior *conditio cognoscendi* of the other kind. Strict Experientialists, basing themselves upon analysis, maintain that purely perceptual data are necessary as a prior *conditio cognoscendi* of conceptions; strict Idealists, basing themselves upon the assumption that thought is an agency, maintain that conceptions are necessary as a prior *conditio cognoscendi* of purely perceptual data.

Strictly Idealism therefore stands on a basis closely similar to that upon which what I have called above the usual method of philosophising stands, of one school of which method (the Kantian) it is, as is well known, the offspring. The point in which it differs is this, that, instead of assuming a Subject, of which consciousness is the property, it assumes an Agency in one mode of consciousness, namely Thought, which is productive of all contents thought of, including what are called purely perceptual data. The two assumptions are alike, and in my opinion alike fallacious, in this, that they both lay at the basis of philosophy an hypothesis concerning the *genesis* of consciousness, without distinguishing its genesis from its content, but nevertheless taking the hypothesis (that of an agent or an agency) as something already known; although it is only from the content of consciousness that the evidence for any hypothesis can be drawn, whether that hypothesis be the

hypothesis of an agent, as in assuming a Subject, or that of an agency, as in assuming Thought. The only true method, as strict Experientialists must maintain, is to analyse those contents of consciousness which give us our ideas of agents in the one case, of agency in the other. For this is necessary before we can be warranted in assuming any Being or Action in which those ideas are involved, as explanatory of anything else, whether being or action, whether object, process, or event.

The consequence of the assumption made by the strict Idealists is, that it compels them to treat concepts, which are shapes or forms taken by contents of consciousness in thought, as efficient causes, and therefore as explanations, at once of the nature and the genesis of the particulars to which as concepts they are applicable. And if concepts have this nature, at once explanatory and efficient, then what other account of the Universe *can* be given than this which *must* be given, namely, that it is one creative, rational, and all-inclusive Concept? And that is the theory of strict Idealism, which follows inevitably and directly from its original assumption. But then that assumption is—an assumption; not warranted by the analysis of experience; a fine theory, but a German figment; and I may add, a fine specimen of anthropomorphism.

In philosophising we are of necessity thinking, and thinking by means of concepts, conceiving being a necessary part of the thinking process. But this does not show that thinking produces the content as well as the logical form of its own concepts. The specific nature or quality of a content of consciousness, as distinguished from its existence, genesis, or occurrence in consciousness, is incapable of being accounted for by any cause or real condition, but must be taken as an ultimate datum of experience, inseparable from any empirical moment or content of consciousness whatever; which is a fact I have repeatedly endeavoured to lead my readers to recognise as I do. And it is a fact which entirely upsets the notion, that logical forms can be the producers of purely perceptual data, seeing

that in these data there are inseparable ingredients, namely, their specific qualities, which as such cannot be thought of as produced by any cause or real condition whatever. In the content of consciousness as a Knowing there are inseparable elements, distinguishable though inseparable from one another, which must be taken as ultimate data, not produced but presupposed by any and every process of thinking or conceiving. And Thought itself as an empirically known process is of necessity analysable into contents containing elements not producible by itself, or by the logical forms which belong to it as a conscious process dealing with those contents or their elements. Strict Experientialists must therefore conceive purely perceptual data not only as distinct in kind from the forms which they assume in logical thought, but also as a necessary prior *conditio cognoscendi*, or pre-supposition, of those logical forms. Logical thinking is in fact a conscious action aiming at what is commonly called *understanding*, that is, bringing into more and more consistent order, data of consciousness which as data are purely perceptual. So far from creating percepts, the function of thought is to understand and interpret them.

### III.

Now the ambiguity in the idea of Totality, which I have spoken of above as due to inattention to the philosophical distinction between Percept and Concept, arises in the following way. The purely logical idea, or concept, of Totality implies completeness, limitation, and finitude, since thinking proceeds only by limitation of contents of consciousness in thought. The concept of Totality is the conception of a Relation, and the term expressing it is a relative term; a Whole is relative to the Parts included in it, and the Parts are relative to the Whole in which they are included. But neither the concept nor the term expressing it gives any indication as to whether there are or are not perceptual data beyond those which are included in any Whole which may at any time be conceived, that is, taken as

the object of a conception in which completeness, limitation, and finitude are implied. Hence the ambiguity of the idea of Totality or of a Whole, namely according as we take it as admitting or as denying the possibility of perceptual data which as perceptual are incomplete, unlimited, and infinite. Consequently the term Whole is ambiguous, inasmuch as it has two senses, one signifying infinity, the other finitude, in the object to which the term is applied. The confusion therefore is great, which in philosophy results when we apply the idea and the term Whole to all contents of consciousness indiscriminately, that is, without considering that there are or may be elements in the perceptual data of consciousness to which they are entirely inapplicable, if and when they are taken in the purely logical sense which implies completeness, limitation, and finitude.

Now it is in the former sense, and not in the latter or purely logical sense, that the idea of Totality is implied in thinking of the Universe, or in speaking of the Universe as a Whole. When we try to conceive it in the strict sense of completeness implied by the purely logical conception, we fail; its perceptual content refuses, as it were, to be confined by any concept which implies the completeness, limitation, and finitude of its object. We cannot as a fact conceive the Universe as a Whole in the latter sense, the sense required by the purely logical idea or concept of Totality, without thereby conceiving it as a finite part of the Universe thought of as a Whole in the former sense, that is, as including perceptual data which are incomplete, unlimited, and infinite. The facts of perception, which are the pre-supposition and supply the content of concepts, dominate our thinking. When we try to think of them as they are, we have of necessity to think of them as we find them, not as we make them by thinking of them; that is, we have to think of them as they are given in perception; and in all perception there are certain elements, one of which is universally present, which as given are given as exceeding the percepts in which they are co-elements, that

is, as given elements which we find, in thinking of them, to be in contrast with the completeness of purely logical concepts, and name, in consequence of that contrast, incomplete, unlimited, and infinite. I speak of what are called the formal elements of perception, Time-duration and Spatial-extension. These are given as continua, into which all difference and therefore all limitation is introduced by their co-element of sense or feeling, without destroying their own specific nature as continua. And it is the continuity of these formal elements of perceptual data which both enables and compels us to think of the Universe as a Whole, that is, as a single all-inclusive Object, all the parts of which are in continuity with each other, while at the same time, as a Whole, it is incomplete, unlimited, and infinite. The Universe, of which we find ourselves a finite part, is to us a Whole in virtue of its continuity with our actual experience, but a Whole which no human thought can grasp, that is, conceive as complete, limited, and finite. We have to think of it, as we perceive it, from within; that is to say, as perceived from a present moment of Time and from a central position in Space, with both of which percepts it is continuous, and in respect to both of which it is infinite.

But besides time duration and spatial-extension, which are known as the formal elements of perceptual data, there are others, as already mentioned, equally essential to those data, and equally independent of logical thinking; I mean the specific qualities of feeling, whether of sensation or of emotion, the nature of which as specific qualities, distinguished from their existence, genesis, or occurrence in consciousness, has to be taken by us, in all cases, as an ultimate datum, an element in experience not capable of being accounted for. Now, owing to this unaccountability in the nature of specific feelings, which nevertheless we experience as actual data, we cannot deny the possibility of the existence of specific qualities of feeling, besides those of which we, as human beings, have actual

experience—qualities entirely unimaginable by us in their specific nature, and existing in numbers to which we as human beings can assign no limit.

And not only in infinite time or in infinite time and space together may there be such specific qualities of feeling, alike unimaginable and innumerable by us, but also there may be other formal elements besides the two actually given elements, time-duration, and spatial-extension ; for these also, as ultimate data, have the same unaccountability as specific feelings have, so far as their specific nature or quality is concerned. And just as time-duration and spatial-extension are compatible with one another in being, both at once, formal elements in one and the same perceptual object, so both alike may be compatible with other formal elements which, though unimaginable by us in their specific nature, may be the co-elements of specific feelings which by us are also specifically unimaginable.

When we think of the Universe in the way which I have now endeavoured, however feebly, to depict, how infinitesimal must all our human knowledge of it appear, compared to a knowledge in which all that we have to think of as merely possibilities should be objects actually and positively known. By this, of course, I do not mean that certain specific imaginations, which we can only imagine as possibilities, should be known positively as realities. My meaning is, that a world or worlds specifically unimaginable by us, but yet continuous with that world which is by us imaginable, and in virtue of that continuity making part along with our imaginable world of the same infinite Universe, should be the object of an infinite knowledge, that is, a knowledge adequate indeed to its infinite object, but which we can only think of as escaping, like its infinite object, all possibility of human comprehension. Of such a knowledge every individual human consciousness would be an infinitesimal object, completely known and comprehended. But no human consciousness could pretend to know, either *how* such a knowledge was possible, or *what* were



the modes of its knowing process, any more than it can pretend to know *how* the Universe itself is possible, or *how* those specific natures or qualities are possible, which are the ultimate data of its own knowledge. Both the Universe and these ultimate data must by us be taken simply as facts, of which we can give no account. And it must be remembered, that in philosophy we are employed in the examination of our own knowledge, and do not begin by assuming that this examination must perforce end, if the right course of enquiry is followed, in an adequate knowledge of the nature of the Universe. Once let a man be convinced that the idea of Infinity, whether of Time only or of Time and Space together, is involved in every attempt which he makes to give a complete account of anything whatever, and he will at once see the futility of supposing that he can frame a theory of the Universe which explains its origin. He cannot represent in thought its beginning to be. Infinity precludes explanation. And Infinity is involved in the content of man's consciousness as a knowing, which is his only evidence of Being or of Existence.

#### IV.

We are thus brought back to the distinction between the two *aspects* of consciousness, the subjective and the objective, which was dwelt upon in the first Section of this paper. If the veil of Infinity, it may be argued, is drawn over the origin of the Universe by essential elements inseparable from man's knowledge of it, does not this compel him to think of the parts, so of necessity hidden from him, as Realities which have a nature of their own entirely out of relation with his modes of consciousness? Are they not what Kant called Things-in-themselves? Not so, the reply must be. Those hidden parts of the Universe are not thought of, nor can they be thought of, as out of relation to human modes of consciousness, seeing that these latter supply the only ground for man's thinking of them at all. Kant's other term for

them, *Noumena*, was far preferable, though that also was faulty, in failing to indicate their perceptual, uncausable, and therefore, to man, inexplicable nature. Man cannot but think of Being or of Existence as an Object of some consciousness, whether his own or another's, and consequently of Reality in all its kinds, and of Infinity, as objective features of Being and of Existence, as they would be perceived by an infinite consciousness, supposed to be adequate to their apprehension. It is only through the idea of perceivability that we arrive at the idea of Being. We can readily frame the idea of Realities which transcend man's powers of perceiving them; but we cannot frame the idea of Realities which in their own nature, or *a parte rei*, are unperceivable. The thought of an Existent unperceivable in its own nature would contradict our sole ultimate evidence for Existence, namely, perceivability, and in thinking or trying to think of it as in its own nature unperceivable we should *ipso facto* think it non-existent.

It is at this point in our thinking of the Universe that my distinction between consciousness as a knowing and that same consciousness as an existent seems to me to throw light upon our thought. It saves us from the fallacy of imagining that the Universe depends for its existence upon the existence of our consciousness, while at the same time we recognise that modes of our consciousness are our only evidence either for its existence or for its nature. The evidence is one thing, the existent made evident is another. Our consciousness as a knowing is the subjective aspect of all that we think of as existent, that is, of the Universe, including our consciousness itself. But then, as itself an existent, we have perforce to think of it as dependent upon the totality of that Universe, of which, as an existent, it is an infinitesimal portion. Its own two aspects, as a knowing and as an existent, place it in a double relation to the Universe which it reveals; as a knowing, it is its opposite and to us its subjective aspect, its

evidence, or *conditio cognoscendi*; as an existent, it is its conditionate, depending for its own genesis upon its efficient agency. The *Ego* itself has this double relation. In the order of knowledge, "We" are objects before we are subjects; in the order of existence "We" are subjects before we are objects.

Now, if we apply this distinction of aspects, found within our own consciousness, to the Universe which is the object known or knowable by its means, and also known as conditioning the existence of that consciousness which is the knowledge of it, what we find is this. The Universe taken as a knowable or known object is *ipso facto* distinguished from our consciousness which is a knowledge of it, and that in both aspects of the latter; distinguished from its knowing aspect as its object, from its existent aspect as its producer or real condition. But the *how*, the *reason*, the *possibility*, the *modus operandi*, in the case of both relations, is unknown to us, and apparently undiscoverable by us. It is here that we are at the end of our tether,—as before in positive science, so here in philosophy,—and yet here that we must be content to acknowledge that these relations are facts of experience which we cannot avoid experiencing, facts, therefore, which are evidence of what we are fain to call a Power in the Universe forcing the experience upon us, without imagining the idea of Power to be an explanation of either of the relations. Plato's idea of Power (*δύναμις*) as the characteristic of Reality or Real Being in its fullest sense (*τὸ ὄντως εἶναι*), which I quoted in my paper of last Session—*Fact, Idea, and Emotion*\*—is thus justified. It is justified, as I there remarked, not as an explanation, but as an alternative characterisation of Being, expressing the unavoidable nature of our experience of Being, as the Object of Consciousness.

Many years ago I concluded an article devoted to questions like the present with the words "The curtain is the picture,"

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\* *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, vol. vii, N.S., p. 133.

alluding to a well-known classical story, and meaning that the curtain of consciousness was itself the real picture, in front of which it seemed to hang as a real curtain. But ever since I ventured on that Idealistic over-statement I have been unlearning it. The truth contained in Idealism, for some truth I think it contains, is, not that consciousness is the only real Being, but that it is our only evidence of real Being, though, when it is evidence of a reality which is not-consciousness, it is mediate and inferential, not immediate in the first of the two senses of immediacy, distinguished above in Section I, that is, as applied to consciousness as a knowing. The fact that such an inference is consciousness does not militate with its own truth, namely, with the reality of its own inferred object, as something which is not-consciousness. This it is, in my opinion, which oversteps and overstates the truth in strict Idealism, namely, its denial that anything which is not-consciousness can be real.

Now the content of consciousness as a Knowing furnishes the proof, that there is real Being beyond its means of positive and actual apprehension, though it can render that idea intelligible, and indeed non-contradictory, only by thinking of the real and transcendent Being (transcendent, be it understood, to human modes of positively knowing, not to consciousness generally) as the Object of a Consciousness as infinite and eternal as itself. In other words, that which is true in the Idealistic doctrine implies the truth of Realism. Consciousness, generalised in thought, shares the infinity and eternity of Being which is its object, but Being contains, what Consciousness does not, something for which man has no other terms than such terms as Power, Agency, Efficiency.

But is not then, it may be asked, the Reality which man indicates by such terms as power, agency, efficiency, is not this Reality, after all, a veritable *Thing-in-itself*, an unknowable Reality? By no means. It must still be thought of as an Object of consciousness generalised, of an infinite and eternal

consciousness. Terms like power, agency, efficiency, are terms denoting what may, perhaps, be called the formal element in man's thinking of Objectivity, as distinguished from any positive content of that thought. They denote what is to him ultimate and inexplicable, namely, the *fact that existents exist, that events occur*. And as expressions for *this fact* they are not capable of further analysis. The knowledge or awareness that existents exist, or that events occur, can be analysed as a process of consciousness. Simply as a process, abstracting from its content, it is analysable into its two aspects, subjective and objective; and it does not exist as a process of consciousness until both aspects are contained in it; it is an objectifying process, and its least possible content is what we call an empirical state of consciousness. But the objective aspect, taken apart from its subjective aspect, the mere *fact* of it, the fact of its objectivity, cannot be analysed farther. It is what we call its *Being*.

Consciousness here contains, human consciousness contains, what abstract Being does not, namely, a distinction within its own awareness of Being, a perception of the two opposite aspects involved alike (as we cannot but think, in consequence of this distinction) in Being and in Consciousness, in Objectivity and in Subjectivity. But we can no more say what this objective *aspect*, the abstract *fact that existents exist, or events occur*, is in itself or *per se*, than we can say what any ultimate *element* in knowledge, that is, what feeling, or time-duration, or space-extension, is *per se*. Except so far as Power and Being may be held to be equivalent or alternative terms, one of them expressing dynamically what the other expresses statically (for which see my paper, *Fact, Idea, and Emotion*, above referred to), we cannot give to them, or to any of these abstractions, alternative, or in any way equivalent, and therefore so far explanatory names. They none of them exist except as inseparable aspects or elements of (philosophically speaking) concrete or empirical wholes, *empirical* meaning in philosophy

whatever has distinguishable, though often also inseparable features. It is with concrete or empirical wholes that our experience begins; and owing to the fact, discovered by analysing experience, of the inseparability, first of its two aspects, and secondly of the elements in its simplest objects, it is with a concrete or empirical whole, in the same philosophical sense, that is, not with an abstraction, that our philosophy must end. But whether man can ever frame a positive idea of the concrete or empirical whole with which he sees that his philosophy must end, this, I think, it will now be evident, is quite another question.

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## VI.—IMPRESSIONS AND IDEAS—THE PROBLEM OF IDEALISM.

*By* H. WILDON CARR.

BY impressions and ideas I intend simply to discuss the view of experience which has been made familiar by the philosophy of Hume. It is sometimes described as psychological idealism. It is not Hume's philosophy, but the ground of his philosophy. Impressions and ideas as a description of experience was not a theory of experience that he invented, but was simply accepted by him as undeniable fact, the analysandum of philosophy. The outcome of his philosophy was scepticism. He did not hold, as so many have held and hold, that a resulting scepticism is sufficient to discredit the data on which it is based. He did not pose sceptical questions as a dilemma demanding solution or as a challenge to future philosophers to overcome. He accepted the sceptical conclusion as the final word in philosophy. I propose to use the words impressions and ideas in the meaning that Hume gave to them, and in that meaning only. It is because he gave to these terms a quite unambiguous meaning that I use them as the title of this paper. Hume held that all our knowledge consists of impressions and ideas, the ideas differing from the impressions in the degree of their liveliness and also in the fact that the impressions are original and ultimate, matter of fact, the fact alone being known, the reason why they arise or the cause or causes of them being unknown, while the ideas are in every case derived, being more or less faint, more or less persistent, survivals or copies of impressions. *Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*. Impressions and ideas are not mere sensations, they are perceptions. Hume calls them the perceptions of the mind, meaning by mind

nothing more than the collection or sum total of the perceptions. All reasoning is about ideas. Impressions are not reasoned about, they are matter of fact. Ideas may contradict one another and so be false. They may be derived from a different impression from that which they seem, or are imagined, to be derived from, and therefore false. A square circle or a round square may be taken as illustrations of the former; the qualification contradicts the thing qualified, the words have meaning, but the idea is self-contradictory. The idea of a vacuum is Hume's instance of the latter. He denies that we have or can have the idea of a vacuum, because it is impossible that there can be an impression of a vacuum. Entirely empty space would not yield the impression vacuum; it would simply be an absence of any impression, and without an impression there cannot be an idea. The idea which we call a vacuum is derived from the impression of distance between points or surfaces. The whole of experience is simply made up of impressions and the ideas which are derived from them. Knowledge is the association of ideas with impressions and with ideas. The problems of philosophy are the problems of the association of ideas. Hume sought to set forth the true nature of association, and to build on it a complete science of human nature. His method of explaining the passions, the meaning of good and evil, the meaning of vice and virtue, was to discover the impressions which gave rise to the ideas and the nature of the association of those ideas.

It is comparatively easy to criticise any system of philosophy, and exceedingly difficult to construct one. This fact is so obvious and commonplace that I think it does not often occur to anyone to seek a reason for it, and least of all to find that reason in the nature of philosophy itself, in the fact that no perfect philosophical system is possible, that the last word is a question and not an answer. If it be not so, there is no reason that I can see why destructive criticism should be easier than systematic construction.



Scepticism may be not merely the mental attitude that the philosopher must adopt toward the problem of knowledge and existence at the outset of his enquiry, but also the conclusion of that enquiry. There is nothing contradictory in asserting that it is so, and, if it be not so, it is quite as strange as it is discouraging that no one of the many perfect systems that have been constructed by master thinkers has been able to withstand destructive criticism. Is there anything contradictory in supposing that there are questions we can and must ask that admit of no answer, or rather that cannot be satisfied with any answer that it is possible to give? Is it not common experience that there are such questions? Time and space are familiar examples. I suppose every human being who has thought at all has puzzled himself with the attempt to think a beginning in time, and has discovered that it is as impossible to think a beginning as it is to deny it, the experience of the actual present moment demanding both assertion and denial. A similar difficulty occurs in the attempt to think a limit to space. Ordinary thinking is full of paradoxes. It is the recognition of the fact that unanswerable questions, unanswerable not in the sense that the answers are unknown to us, but that no answers are possible, are the end of all metaphysical enquiry that I call scepticism. Scepticism is not merely a critical and destructive attitude toward attempts to systematise philosophy. It is itself a definite and positive philosophical position. It may as well as any other position be the basis of a constructive philosophy. If the final truth be that we know nothing, this finality is the result of a logical process, and this process and its result will constitute a system of philosophy. I hold that scepticism is the final attitude that we must adopt toward the ultimate questions of knowledge and existence, but, as a final attitude, I admit that no amount of negative or destructive criticism will justify it. Like every other holder of a philosophical position, the sceptic must, paradoxical though it

seem, give a reason for the faith that is in him. Hume represents to me this position in philosophy. Scepticism was not his attitude toward the problems of philosophy, but a definite philosophical doctrine. Little attention has been paid to the constructive part of his philosophy. He is thought of as the philosopher who aroused Kant from dogmatic slumber, as the propounder of the chief dilemma that modern philosophy has had to meet, but hardly at all as a systematic philosopher. Impressions and ideas, perceptions with no independent perceiver and nothing independent perceived, perceptions that succeed one another devoid of force, arising and perishing we know not how or why, that by their succession make up experience, seem an impossible material for a constructive philosophy. Yet nothing could be further from Hume's own view of the effect of his analysis. So far from making constructive philosophy impossible, he regarded the disappearance of the ideas of substance, cause, power, etc., as positive gain, clearing hindrances and stumbling blocks out of the path of philosophy, and rendering the task of construction easy. The far greater portion of the *Treatise* and of the *Enquiry* are taken up with constructive philosophy. The purpose of each philosophical work was to present a complete science of human nature, a moral philosophy. The second and third of the three books into which the *Treatise of Human Nature* is divided, and the portions of the *Enquiry* that correspond to these are not, I imagine, often read for their own sake, but only for the light they throw on the analysis of the first part. It is not my purpose to prove that this neglect is unjustified, nor do I claim for these portions intrinsic philosophical value, I simply call attention to them to show that scepticism did not prevent Hume from writing a constructive philosophy.

The scepticism of Hume is not directed against the plain man's notion of reality and truth, but against philosophical explanations of experience: "I have long entertained a sus-

picion with regard to the decisions of philosophers upon all subjects, and found in myself a greater inclination to dispute than to assent to their conclusions" (Essay XVIII). Hume's philosophy is not addressed to students, but to the general reader. It asks no previous training, has no scholastic style, or scientific terminology. The words "impressions" and "ideas" are taken from common usage without any reference to their etymological significance or any attempt to give them a scientific definition, yet I doubt if anyone has ever expressed his meaning so unmistakably. If his philosophy leaves a dilemma it is not due to confusion of language.

Surprising and startling as the analysis of experience into impressions and ideas may appear at first acquaintance to the plain man, it does, nevertheless, satisfy the requirements both of common sense and of psychology. Reality is ordinary common-sense reality, and also it is nothing but a perception. When we ask whether a statement is true, whether an event did happen, the answer we require, the only answer that will satisfy us, is an impression. Yet an impression is a perception, and nothing else but a perception. A perception, on the other hand, is usually thought of by us as not real at all, but as a mere subjective qualification of reality, an adjective, true only if it gives knowledge of something independently real, untrue or deceptive if it refers to nothing beyond itself. Yet it is impossible to deny or to question the reality of the impression. The impression is the answer to every question concerning actual reality. We may ask of an impression what causes it, but the only answer possible is another impression, and that is not an answer, it merely tells us, as a fact, what impression preceded, but reveals no necessary connection. If we ask the question what causes impressions themselves to arise, we can give no answer, not only because we do not know, but because there are no terms in experience in which an answer can be embodied. The answer to such a question must be a perception, the reality of a perception is experience,

and this final reality we distinguish as an impression. An impression is not, besides being an impression, also something else which is not an impression, nor is it a necessary connection with any other impression, nor can it in any way contain another impression. Experience is a succession, time process is its very essence. Every impression is an event separated from every other event by being before or after.

When we assert that there is no answer possible to the question, "What causes?" we mean on empirical grounds. Empiricism is, in fact, the theory that this question does not admit of an answer. The alternative to Hume's view, the answer that he would have admitted to be an answer if it could have been justified, was the theory of innate ideas. This was not only a discredited doctrine, but practically was overthrown by Locke and Berkeley. To answer Hume, we must conceive causality without succession, experience without time process. On empirical principles cause is as unjustifiable as substance. Hume accounted for the idea of it by a theory of association. It was not a true idea, for it originated in no impression, it merely expressed the customary expectation that resulted from the experience of constant conjunction and invariable sequence. In experience we discover nothing, and there is nothing to discover but impressions, these impressions are reality, their succession is experience. Ideas are the record of impressions, and, by their combination or association, make up a representation of reality. Impressions are matter of fact. They do not present a dual nature. An impression precedes duality, it is not further analysable, it does not fall apart into content and existence, into subject and object, into appearance and reality, nor even into reality and awareness of reality. We do not reason about matters of fact, they are final. We reason about ideas. Impressions succeed one another in experience, their occurrence is their existence, and is our knowledge of that existence. An impression does not cease to be real when it ceases to be present. Impressions may pass

beyond recall (far the greater number do), may be forgotten and have left no direct trace in any surviving idea, but the reality is not affected. The reality of my first impression of the Alps, for instance, does not lie in the present perception that I do or do not remember it, but is quite unaffected by that remembrance. The reality of the assassination of Julius Cæsar as a past event is not the impression that I imagine I should have experienced if I could transport myself to the time and place, but the actual impressions which were experienced on that occasion. Impressions are real whether they are yours or mine, or even if they are experienced by lower conscious creatures. I experience only my own impressions, past impressions of mine and other people's impressions are known to me by ideas, and for the formation of these ideas I am dependent on my particular experienced impressions. Reality or matter of fact, as represented by ideas, is the subject of reasoning, and reasoning is an association of ideas. Reasoning as to past events or future anticipations is the association we name cause and effect.

Impressions are our ordinary experience of reality. No one can experience an impression and doubt its reality, and also all doubts as to the meaning or intention of any idea are satisfied if the impression giving rise to it can be produced. We have then in the impression a reality we cannot doubt, because it is simple, direct, immediate experience. It is independent in the sense that it is in the time series, succeeding and succeeded by other impressions, which have no power to affect it, and independent also in the sense that it is incommunicable. My impression is not your impression, and your impression is not my impression, yet each is equally real. Ultimate reality is this and nothing more. There is not only no place for substance and cause, but no apparent reason why they should arise even as mistaken ideas. There is no impression of them. It is sometimes claimed that cause is an internal impression, but an internal impression, whether it be consciousness of self,

of power, or of will, is no more able than an external impression to exhibit the relation of necessary connection with another impression which is essential to the idea of cause. If cause be an internal impression it is separated as event and as fact from every other impression, and therefore from the impression called the effect. The relation is simply one of observed sequence. If then there are no ideas but those derived from a previous impression, what are these ideas of substance and cause. They arise from and express a belief which, however practically useful, cannot be theoretically justified, the belief that there is a real world independent of experience. I leave my room with the fire burning in the grate, I return an hour or two later and find the fire burnt out. No impressions, my own or anyone else's, connect those two impressions, yet I think of the room in my absence and the fire left burning in it as actually existent. I believe that I might have been there, and should have then experienced certain impressions, yet as there are no impressions, clearly there is no reality. To justify my belief I form the idea of independent reality and call it substance when I wish to express the existence of what is not experienced, cause when I wish to express its power to produce impressions. It is impossible to justify these ideas, if to justify them I must produce the impression from which they are derived, because, as in the case of the vacuum, they express an absence of impressions, and absence of impressions cannot give rise to ideas. How then can I explain the belief, which no reasoning will shake, that the two impressions, the fire burning and the fire out, were connected by an existence which was not an experience. Hume explained the belief by a theory of the association of ideas. The scepticism, which is the final outcome of his philosophy, follows from his empirical principles. Reality is experience, experience consists of impressions, and impressions give rise to ideas. Our practical beliefs take a form that our philosophical analysis cannot validate.

The point with which I am particularly concerned in this analysis of experience into impressions and ideas is not the analysis itself, which may or may not be exhaustive, but the thorough recognition of the principle that underlies it, the principle that all reality is experience. This is the root principle of idealism, and is perhaps more widely accepted than any other metaphysical principle. Its acceptance is not universal, but it is not confined to systems that are classed as idealist. The non-psychical is a distinction that falls within experience. Reality means experience, actual or possible, and has no other meaning. This is not stated by Hume as a proposition, it is an underlying fact involved in his analysis. Reality, independent of impressions and ideas, is meaningless. It must be an idea for us to be able to think it, and an idea is formed from an impression. We cannot, in fact, give meaning to the "is" that expresses existence or reality, independently of impressions and ideas, and these are psychical elements of experience. The recognition of this principle that reality is experience is the basis of all idealist theories, their justification and *raison d'être*. The impossibility of qualifying the fact that reality is experience, as, for instance, by adding the qualification "for us men" or "for conscious beings," or by distinguishing an unknowable thing-in-itself, is the logical ground of idealism. The principle of idealism appears to me to be undeniable, and its conclusion unconvincing. This it is that seems to compel me to adopt the scepticism of Hume as a final and definite philosophical position. I will endeavour to justify this, but in doing so I want it to be understood that I am in no sense attempting either in what I have already said, or in what follows, to expound Hume, but merely to express my own thoughts on the subject of Hume's philosophy. I am trying to explain simply what Hume's scepticism means to me. I hope I have not either misrepresented or failed to appreciate Hume, but I have used him merely as a text to set forth my own thoughts. The difficulty I am trying to express is one that I find in

some form in every philosophy. To put my view briefly, I think Hume's analysis of experience into impressions and ideas drives us into idealism, or at least leaves us only two alternatives, idealism and scepticism. I think the premises of idealism are undeniable, I know no direct logical argument by which they are refuted. Idealism pressed to its conclusion involves solipsism, and solipsism is not only incredible, but contradictory and absurd.

I am now speaking of idealism in the widest sense in which that term is employed. It is sometimes restricted to the view that reality is rational, that thought is reality, and that logical process is agency, and this view is opposed by many who yet do not deny that reality is psychical. There are in experience other than rational elements, there are feelings as well as thoughts, and these irrational elements cannot be resolved into thought. The term idealism is sometimes used exclusively to denote the doctrine that all reality is thought. Also it is sometimes identified with the theory that attributes agency to thought. I am not concerned with these narrower meanings, I am speaking of the idealism which is contrasted with materialism and with popular thought. I mean the theory that all reality is experience, that there is nothing but impressions and ideas, that impressions and ideas are not only all that we know, but all that there is. It is the argument that you cannot infer a reality independent of experience or consciousness, for the very inference contradicts the independence, and is with its content already within experience.

How, then, shall we express the distinction, which everyone acknowledges, between knowledge of somewhat, and the somewhat that is known? The attempt to express this distinction and to bring its differences into unity without destroying unity or difference seems to me the fundamental problem of metaphysics. The distinctions, matter and form, particular and universal, content and existence, appearance and reality, actual and possible, logical and alogical, have all been brought forward



by various systems to solve this problem of thought and reality. They cover the same ground as the distinction impressions and ideas, inasmuch as they are an analysis of the whole of experience, though they do not coincide with that distinction. Impressions are not matter without form, and ideas are not form without matter. Impressions are not particular only, and ideas universal only. Impressions are not existences without content, nor are they purely actual or purely allogical elements of experience. The philosophical movement represented by these various pairs of terms may be described as the endeavour to explain how reality can be thought of and practically regarded as outside and independent of experience while known to be within it. The notable instance of this difficulty is the Kantian theory of the thing-in-itself. The matter of experience, the manifold of sense, is nothing until clothed with the form it receives from the categories of the understanding, but absolute nothing it cannot be thought to be, so the formless matter is thought to exist, but is unknowable. This unsatisfactory solution gave way before the criticism of the post-Kantian idealism which reached its logical conclusion in the absolute idealism of Hegel. I have never been able to see any logical fallacy in idealism, nor particularly in that extreme form of it which many regard as a refutation of it—solipsism. It may be incredible, it may be absurd, but it is not illogical. If we hold that experience is impressions and ideas, distinguish these in what way we will, and that experience is the ultimate universal all-inclusive reality, it seems to me that we are logically driven to solipsism. I do not suggest that there is any possible way in which solipsism can be accepted as a theory of knowledge. It is a *reductio ad absurdum*. It involves the contradictory conclusion that we know everything and also that we know nothing. What we know at the moment of knowing it is for solipsism all reality, and at the same time all reality consists in the knowing independently of which is no reality and therefore nothing to know. Solipsism

has never been treated otherwise than as an absurdity, and the inherent nature of the absurdity has sufficed as a reason for getting rid of it without examination. I have never met with an attempt to refute solipsism by a direct logical answer. I wish to know if there is one, and if there is any way of avoiding the solipsist conclusion, while admitting the idealist premisses. The postulate "reality cannot contradict itself" may be a reason for rejecting solipsism, but does not meet my requirements unless it can be shown that idealism is not involved in the overthrow. To suppose that it is a sufficient answer to say that no one has believed or can believe it, is to fail to appreciate my difficulty, for if it were possible to believe it, this problem would have no place, the problem, namely, that we are logically driven to admit what it is impossible to believe. Idealism involves us in this dilemma, its premisses cannot be denied, and its conclusion cannot be admitted.

Absolute idealism, any form of idealism that finds reality in an absolute experience, is identical with solipsism in so far as the content of its conception of ultimate reality is concerned. It conceives reality as an absolute experience in which knowing and being, content and existence, are one. The solipsist declares that this absolute experience is my present personal actual experience. I who know am what I know. Now I maintain that the argument upon which such a proposition is based is identically the same as the argument that lies at the basis of idealism. In every sense in which it is true that all reality is impressions and ideas, it is true that all impressions and ideas are my immediate experience. If the inference from impressions and ideas to reality that is not experience is invalid because the inference is experience and the thing inferred but a content of the inference, it is equally true that my inference that there are other persons than myself is but a content of my inference and a part of my experience. The differences that distinguish the various systems of idealism are not differences in the basis, but

differences of theory as to the nature of the inference from knowledge to reality. Immediate knowledge is the knower's own state of consciousness, whether it be a presentation, an idea, a sensation, an emotion, or any other name for a psychological state. Whether I know an external world or not, my immediate knowledge is an experience, a state of consciousness. The problem then is, how if all knowledge is a state of consciousness I can be aware of anything outside that state? If all my knowledge is my presentation, must not my presentation be all knowledge? Inference cannot pierce the veil of subjectivity in which I am confined, for the reality inferred and the inference are but part of the veil. Is it not an illusion to call it a veil, and vain to try to imagine a reality behind it? This is not how an idealist argues, he merely draws the conclusion that the nature of reality is ideal, mental, or spiritual, that in knowledge of being, spirit greets spirit. The inferred reality, he argues, cannot be of a nature other than the nature of the inferring subject. I am not seeking to disprove the idealist position. I simply ask how can there be any valid inference at all, whatever be the character of the independent reality inferred? I cannot know reality, what I know is knowledge. The reality is my knowledge and not independent of it. Once allow that the knower is in relation to somewhat entirely independent of experience, once allow that there are facts, that we may be aware of them, and that this awareness does not constitute them or affect their independent nature, it is then indifferent whether the facts are ideal or not in their nature, the whole basis of idealism is gone. I cannot find that any system of idealism has attempted to refute solipsism. It is satisfied to point out its absurdity and pass on to the question of the nature of independent reality. If it is true that knowledge consists in states of consciousness which are, as such, facts, data of a science of psychology, complete in themselves, impressions and ideas, it must follow that there is no reality outside them,

material or spiritual, no world, that is to say, that can be of the slightest consequence to us, whether it exists or not. All reality is knowledge, and I am the only knower, and my own existence is my own perception. You to whom I am addressing the argument are my presentation or perception or idea or whatever psychological term best describes the experience. My belief that I am not the world, my behaviour in the world that I constitute, are my own state of consciousness. I need not press an absurdity which is apparent as soon as stated. All agree that solipsism is an absurdity, and most people are content to say that if idealism does lead to this, it simply follows that idealism is not true. However much I agree with this it does not content me. The conclusion prevents me from accepting idealism as true, but it does nothing to destroy the force of the idealist argument, or to enable me to detect in it a logical fallacy. I can only say this conclusion is one that I cannot resist nor yet believe, and it seems to leave only scepticism as an alternative. I do not expect idealists to agree that their theory leads to solipsism, but how do they avoid the conclusion ?

It seems to me that there are two difficulties, quite different in kind, that confront the idealist. The first is the theoretical difficulty that I have already noticed, how to account for or explain the nature of external existence if it is admitted that it must be inferred from the closed circle of psychical states. The second is a practical difficulty, to understand how, as a matter of fact, an inference, by the hypothesis the reverse of obvious, is universally made by every conscious individual, and particularly how the human infant, who presumably must start fair, comes to make the ordinary mistake of developed consciousness. I am not concerned in this paper with any particular system of idealism, nor with any particular theory, but I may illustrate the first of these difficulties by referring to the theory of intersubjective intercourse. This theory explains how a world of independent

reality might arise and be constituted out of purely ideal elements. Briefly stated, the theory is that several subjects, let us say ten men, have each a perception of the sun, intersubjective intercourse is all that is needed to convert for each subject his particular perception into a common object independent of each perception. It does not seem to me that even two subjects are necessary to the theory, the varying states of one subject might suffice. The difficulty of such a theory from the point of view which I am now taking lies in its assumption that a subject may know an independent subject, or that one subjective state may know an independent subjective state. If this be not rightly called an assumption, it, at least, will be allowed that an idealist sees no difficulty in the idea of independence, so long as it is an independent ideality and not reality. I mean that an idealist usually holds that the problem how an ideal subject can know a real object, is solved by the theory that the real object is ideal. Idealism is generally identified with this view of the nature of reality. If we grant that a conscious subject may know and intercommunicate with another conscious subject, then I admit nothing more is needed for a perfect ideal construction. But a subject's knowledge of another subject, a subject's knowledge of a past state of his own consciousness, is altogether contained in a present state of consciousness, the reality is represented as outside of that state, but outside of that state there is nothing. If the fact that knowledge is a state of consciousness qualifies the matter known, then it follows that independent reality cannot be known, whether we suppose it to be ideal or to be material. If it be argued that independent reality is known, and is by that fact proved to be ideal, not material, I fail to see any force in the argument, it may as easily be one as the other. The main difficulty, and to my mind the real problem of idealism, is to give the reason why all mankind are not idealists. Whatever the idealist holds about the nature of reality, it is to him inconceivable that the plain man's view of the reality

of the common sense world can be true. The things and qualities that to common sense appear to exist independently of consciousness are states of consciousness. The content we put into the imagination of the external world is ideal, even its independence and existence, so far as they are known, are ideal, and in any sense that they may be conceived to exist as unknowable simply count as nothing. There is no *esse* but *percipi* and *percipere*. Why, then, is not everyone an idealist? It is almost safe to assert that no one is who has not undergone a course of study in philosophy. Even a philosopher only gives an intellectual assent, in practical life he thinks as other men. "I take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and an internal world."\* What is the plain man's view? The plain man does not think that knowledge confines him to his own subjective state. He recognises that pleasures, pains, emotions, passions, desires, volitions, are subjective states. He also recognises that sensations, perceptions, presentations, ideas, thoughts, are subjective states. But there is this difference: the former he regards as purely subjective, the latter as not merely subjective, but as the means of his awareness, as the nature that enables him to be aware of objects of independent reality, independent in an absolute sense. He thinks that there are other conscious beings who may know him, not indeed, as he knows himself by direct experience, but as he really is, and that these other conscious beings do not constitute his reality or condition it by their knowledge. He qualifies his knowledge as human knowledge, as limited to the powers and faculties of a human being, but it is the knowledge and not the reality that is so qualified. He thinks that he is directly and immediately aware of an independent reality that is not himself, nor his knowledge, and he does not think that this independent reality is inferred from

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\* Hume's *Treatise, Scepticism with Regard to the Senses*.

another fact, the conscious state that is knowledge. And yet a moment's reflection must convince anyone capable of reflecting that all experience consists of impressions and ideas, that these are perceptions, and perceptions are simply states of consciousness.

If the common sense view of the reality of the external world is an illusion, there is a problem more difficult even than this of its universal prevalence, and this is to explain how it does or how it can arise. I suppose no philosopher or psychologist holds that the infant beginning experience makes this mistake of developed consciousness. Direct knowledge of an infant consciousness is, of course, unattainable, but clearly it would be fatal to this whole standpoint to admit the possibility that experience could arise in a conscious individual with the vast illusion that we name the common sense world ready formed. The first conscious state cannot refer to or imagine anything outside itself, or doubt or dispute the simple identity of its state of consciousness. At what stage of its experience and why does an infant begin to think that it knows a world independent of knowledge, and reject the simple and obvious truth that its impressions and ideas are its own conscious state? Why is there never an exception? In early infancy this great illusion arises, and an infant's first experience must be free from any illusion. This difficulty seems to me inherent in psychological idealism. In saying this I am not thinking of the logical conclusion of idealism. I am not asking why does not every infant remain what it must be at the first, a solipsist. I merely say that if we allow no more to idealism, than, let us say, the subjective nature of the secondary qualities of matter, it is a real difficulty to understand how the mistake of thinking that these exist outside the consciousness arises. An infant's first moment of consciousness cannot contain an assumption or an inference. There must be a moment when this assumption or inference is made, yet it is impossible to understand why or how it should

be made. Elaborate theories have been put forward to account for what I submit is in its nature unaccountable. If it is difficult to justify the inference in developed experience, it is impossible to understand how it can spring up, as it appears to do, ready formed, in an experience handicapped by no prejudices. It is not an ordinary illusion, a mistake that riper experience corrects, it is an illusion about the nature of experience itself.

I hope I have made my difficulty plain, even if, as is more than likely, I have failed to impress anyone with its importance. There are several lines of philosophical thought that are in agreement with my argument, at any rate so far as it points out the profoundly unsatisfactory character of idealism, and which do not ignore the problem that gives rise to idealism. I will now refer briefly to some of these, not with the intention of criticising any particular theory, but merely that I may point out as distinctly as I am able where they seem to me to fail to solve this problem.

The philosophy of Mr. Shadworth Hodgson is the only one of present philosophies that seems to me to follow the strictly empirical method of Hume, and to take up the problem of philosophy as he presented it. It is one of the features that makes Mr. Hodgson's philosophy attractive to me, that in reading it I feel the same charm of directness and simplicity that I feel in reading Hume. I certainly owe more to Mr. Hodgson than to any other philosopher of to-day. He has not tried to turn the position by appealing to *a priori* conditions or by endeavouring to transcend experience. His philosophy rests on an analysis of experience without assumptions. This analysis reveals an order of being which conditions and is not conditioned by the order of knowing. The problem that I have been writing about is quite clearly exposed in Mr. Hodgson's writings, and it is always directly met. If this philosophy brought conviction to me I should have in it a solution of my problem. It does take up the challenge



of Hume to produce the impression which gives rise to the idea of independent being. It does not, like idealism, treat the independence of the order of being as a contradictory appearance. I am not going even briefly to offer any criticism of Mr. Hodgson's philosophy, but I cannot illustrate the subject of this paper better than by saying that one reason for my belief that my problem is insoluble is that I do not find that Mr. Hodgson has solved it. By this I mean that I can find no flaw in his method, I simply remain unconvinced by the result. To point out the actual arguments or conclusions with which I disagree would involve me in rather lengthy statement and criticism, and would take me away from my purpose, but I may indicate the nature of my disagreement, and at the same time illustrate my problem by stating it in the form of a dilemma. Mr. Hodgson sets out with the proposition that the analysis of experience must be without assumptions, and the reason he gives is that an assumption in the premisses must appear in the conclusion. I agree that this is undeniable. It seems to me, however, to involve with it this other proposition, equally undeniable, that whatever we find in the conclusion must have been present in the premisses. If, then, the conclusion of my analysis of experience be that there are two orders, an order of knowing and an independent order of being, this conclusion cannot follow from any analysis of consciousness purely as a knowing. If there is nothing but knowing, or consciousness as knowing in the premisses, then there can be nothing but knowing in the conclusion. And, conversely, if there be two independent orders in the conclusion, it follows that these must both have been present in the consciousness analysed.

There is another solution of an entirely different kind, and that is the one offered by pragmatism. The pragmatist solution is curiously like one form of Hume's sceptical doctrine, and the problem I have been discussing may seem to be just that problem which has found expression in the controversy between

intellectualism and pragmatism. "After all," I may imagine the pragmatist to urge, "would success in solving your intellectual dilemma to your intellectual satisfaction be any use at all? The ideal knowledge of the intellectualist is quite useless knowledge. May not the very fact that it is useless be the reason of its failure? Thinking is a small and quite subordinate part of experience. Truth, which is its ideal, does not stand apart from practical life in pristine purity and unapproachable majesty. Truth is simply what works. Axioms are practical postulates." So far as this implies that knowledge of real existence in any absolute sense is for us an impossibility, and that for practical life we must content ourselves with a much more modest requirement, it agrees almost exactly with the conclusion I call scepticism. But so far as it is offered, and it is offered, as a sufficient solution of the metaphysical problem of knowledge and existence, it can only make appeal to that very intellect which it professes to subordinate. The question, "What is truth?" is a purely logical one. Apart from its logical significance I can discover in it no meaning at all. Therefore, however subordinate my intellectual experience is to my non-intellectual experience, it is idle to seek a solution in the latter. The proffered solution is consequently not only not a solution, but does not touch the difficulty. The non-intellectual is within experience, and whatever we name it, whether we call it practical, human, or voluntary, it is only by ceasing to be non-intellectual and by becoming a logical distinction that it is known to us at all. The intellectualist, unless he be a Hegelian, does not claim that all reality is logical, and the pragmatist is an idealist to the extent that he holds that all reality is experience. It seems to me impossible to give any non-intellectual meaning to truth. Truth is a logical term which qualifies knowledge, not reality. To a realist, to anyone who holds that being is not in any sense conditioned by knowing, the pragmatist view that truth is a human product must appear to be simple nonsense. To an idealist, whatever be

his view of the nature of the relation of knowing and being, to conceive truth as a practical postulate is not merely to subordinate the intellectual to the practical, but to destroy the logical ideal, to destroy in fact the very ideal of knowledge itself.

In the writings of Mr. G. E. Moore we have, on the other hand, a clear, distinct, and absolute rejection of idealism. I shall conclude with a short reference to his paper on "The Refutation of Idealism."\* It deals with this very problem, and endeavours to meet the main idealist contention, and to refute it by direct logical argument. I will try to show why it fails to meet the particular difficulty I have tried to explain in this paper, but I may as well acknowledge that Mr. Moore almost persuades me. His argument is forcible as well as attractive, and if I could accept a world of simple ultimate reals with absolute position in space and an absolute process in time, and regard knowing as an ultimate and purely external relation of awareness, making no difference to the facts, it would end my scepticism. Very much of Mr. Moore's paper is in agreement with the view I have put forward. He agrees that solipsism is the logical outcome of idealism, and I also find the admission that absolute scepticism is reasonable, though he treats both positions as incredible. The argument of his paper, however effective it may be, against some forms of modern idealism, such as those, for instance, which posit an absolute experience, seems to me to fail to meet a simple and pure empiricism such as Hume's. Mr. Moore says that the proposition *esse* is *percipi*, which is the idealist proposition that he wishes to refute, can have only three meanings, either it is a tautology, or it declares *esse* to be a part of *percipi*, or that wherever there is *esse* there is *percipi*, and he argues that in each of these meanings it is false. But it seems to me that the true and obvious intention of the pro-

position has slipped away behind this apparently exhaustive analysis. The obvious intention of the proposition as Berkeley used it and as Hume used it was to deny the existence of independent unperceived or unexperienced reality. Positively, it declared the ultimate universal to be consciousness or experience, not substance or matter or being. Now how does Mr. Moore meet this view and refute it? I am not proposing to follow his argument with close criticism. I am only trying to indicate where and why it fails to grip. He criticises the idealist distinction between content and existence, the what and the that, and argues that the content is not a content of a perception, but is the reality perceived, the *esse* as distinct from the *percipi*, an independent ultimate reality perceived. Consciousness is the identity of all perceptions, independent reality constitutes their difference. The sensations green and yellow I understand him to mean are as sensations identical; what makes them different is not a sense content, not a part of experience, not a state of consciousness at all, but the ultimate independent real entities green and yellow that we are made aware of in the sensation. The consciousness which is the identity may be distinguished and recognised; it has itself a distinct what, but we must look attentively for it, it is as it were diaphanous, but it is not nothing in separation from the entity cognised. I hope I am not misunderstanding him, but it seems to me that his argument as a logical refutation fails, not because this analysis is untrue, it may or may not be true, but because he imports a view into idealism which idealists cannot, without stultification, accept. This view is that idealists identify content with *esse*, and in the proposition *esse* is *percipi* affirm that it is also something else, *percipi*. But to idealists *esse* is *percipi* is a self-evident proposition. It would be a pure tautology if nobody held a different view. In the sense in which the idealist holds it, it cannot be refuted because an unperceived reality cannot be brought to his consciousness without making

him thereby perceive it. A refutation in this sense is, therefore, clearly impossible. What is more important is to see whether Mr. Moore's own view is free from that difficulty which drives us logically into idealism. That difficulty appears to me to be that knowing is the only path to being, and knowing is itself a complete conscious state which includes being as its content. Mr. Moore's view, then, I understand to be that *percipi, percipere*, consciousness, knowing, constitute an unique relation, the best description of which is the word awareness. This relation is easily separable from the independent facts, which are denied in any true sense to be its content, the main difficulty in such separation being what he describes as the transparency of the consciousness. The perception blue is an awareness of blue, blue not being a content of the perception as the idealist holds. The perception might, therefore, I suppose, be qualified independently of the entity perceived; it might, for instance, without logical contradiction, be a green or any other coloured perception, and at the same time be a perception of blue. I intend this not to suggest an absurdity, but to make clear the independence of the perception and the somewhat perceived. And on this I will confine myself to one single observation, and that is, if this be allowed to be a true account and a right analysis of those perceptions which Hume named impressions, can it possibly explain our ideas? What are those ideas, concepts, mental images, thoughts, which are not usually described as awarenesses? Is it possible to think of their content as an independent *esse*? It seems to me, at least, a very difficult view. If the difficulty with regard to our sensations and immediate perceptions be, following Mr. Moore's metaphor, the transparency of the consciousness, surely in the case of concepts and ideas the case is reversed, and the difficulty is the opaqueness of the consciousness and the diaphanous character of the reality.

In conclusion, I will add one personal note. I am one of those to whom philosophy is purely an intellectual interest.

I find that nature has formed me to think and judge, as well as to feel and act. I have no philosophical system of my own to defend nor any interest, direct or indirect, in the triumph of any particular formula, or the prevalence of any set of ideas. The scepticism which seems to me to be the conclusion of the whole matter is not a total scepticism, for it admits the reality of experience, and leaves the practical issues of life unaffected, but as a philosophical scepticism it is absolute. It accepts impressions and ideas, but as to what reality is besides being an impression or idea, it rejects alike the theories of realism and idealism, and holds that as likely as not nothing exists. It may sound a desolating conclusion, but, after all, it is what the idealist conclusion appears to the realist to be, and what the realist conclusion appears to the idealist to be. I accept it as I think Hume did, literally.

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## VII.—ON THE CONCEPT OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL LEVELS.

By T. PERCY NUNN.

It has become a commonplace remark that the rapid development of the positive science of psychology has profoundly affected the course of recent philosophical studies. This influence seems, for example, to be transforming the logician ever more completely into an epistemologist. From this point of view, Professor Baldwin's *Thought and Things* exhibits merely the fuller outcome of a tendency sufficiently obvious in Mr. Bradley's *Principles of Logic*.

It seems important to maintain at the outset of our discussion that, although there is a close relation between this change in the conception of the functions and scope of logic and the recent appearance of a new voluntarist speculative system, yet the two movements are by no means to be identified with one another. They are to be thought of rather as results of the simultaneous "psychologising" of parallel branches of philosophical inquiry.

The traditional logic has always presented itself in the external form, though not always in the spirit of the Aristotelian doctrine, which is usually recognised to have been largely controlled by its author's general metaphysical views. For him, the concepts which form the subject-matter of knowledge were actually entities *in rebus*: the process of knowledge was merely a series of incidents in which these entities were successively revealed to the inquirer. It was possible to regulate the succession of these incidents—to show that, if the method of demonstration is to yield valid results, it must be made to work upon first principles previously disengaged by the soul's faculty of understanding from the particular sensa-

tions that "persist" in it. But these references to the faculties of understanding and science (contrasted with opinion and reasoning which are liable to error) contained the only psychological distinctions which it was necessary to make for the purpose either of a complete theory of demonstration or of a normative doctrine. For example, Aristotle attached no psychological significance to the distinctions between the possible, the contingent, and the necessary; for him the "mode" was simply a constituent element of the objective material which constituted the data of the knowledge process, or of the equally objective material which formed its goal. When the work of Descartes and his successors had brought into clear relief the notion that knowledge consists in conscious states, conceived either atomically or as modifications of a "thinking substance,"—existences which may or may not bear witness to other realities beyond them—logic passed under the control of a new metaphysical view, but was not yet "psychological." As long as knowledge could be regarded as the special product of the activity of an intellectual "faculty," functioning independently of the mind's other faculties, or as long as it was held to consist in the formation of constellations of atomic ideas, so long was it possible to take as the whole subject-matter of logic the determination of the general relations between one piece of knowledge and others, and to exclude from it almost entirely any reference to mental elements of a non-intellectual character. But now that knowledge and feeling and will are recognised to be distinguishable yet not separable features of a continuous individual experience, it seems no longer permissible to the logician to assume that an account may be given of the processes of knowledge in terms of the cognitive elements of experience alone. *Prima facie*, the history of the mind's intellectual elements will be involved in that of its impulsive and emotional elements, so that, even if it is true that abstraction from these elements is legitimate in certain circumstances, the precise nature of



these circumstances must be determined. It is not sufficient to reply that the problem here indicated falls within the province of the psychologist, and that the logician need not concern himself with it. The problem demands an analysis of conscious processes, not from the morphological point of view, but from a point of view which seeks to determine their *value* with reference to the acquirement of knowledge. Thus it will occur and must be faced in the course of an inquiry which includes the whole range of knowledge processes in its scope. The history of logic seems to mark it out as the discipline that must accept the responsibilities of such an inquiry.

It has been maintained by Dr. Schiller before this Society that logic is *never* entitled to make abstraction from the "psychological conditions of thinking."\* My present point is that even if his contention is sound it does not inevitably lead to the pragmatist position in philosophy—though, of course, a pragmatist is fully entitled to claim the result as a support to that position. It is still possible—despite a pungent footnote in Dr. Schiller's recent interesting pamphlet†—to adopt the "realist" view that there is a universe of objects "subsisting" or existing in independence of the "static knower," and at the same time to accept the psychological account of the knowledge-process as a history of the manner and order in which these objects come to be known. Thus, the following delineation of the nature of the epistemological problem, as it presents itself to me in its positive (as opposed to its metaphysical) aspects, has been written with a strong realist prejudice, which I have deliberately allowed to influence my exposition, even though my argument is in the main independent of the particular psychological idiom in which it is expressed. It will readily be seen that I have followed this course, in order, if possible, to

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\* *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1905-6, pp. 224 *et seq.*

† *Plato or Protagoras*, 1908, p. 17.

justify my contention that the acceptance of a thorough-going psychological account of the process of knowledge does not close the way to a realist interpretation of experience as a whole. It may, I hope, even appear that realism is entitled to the presumption in its favour as a metaphysic that would follow from a demonstration of its efficiency as a scientific method.

## I.

There can be little doubt that the epistemologist who would give an account of his subject in harmony with modern theories of experience must take as his analytical unit the conative process.\* In a paper read before the Society last year† I ventured to suggest that this notion is an instrument of fundamental importance for the analysis of animal behaviour throughout its whole range; that it gives us a formula in which we may express the *final* character which some good modern observers read into the behaviour even of the lowliest organisms. A series of acts of behaviour, at any biological level, is not merely a succession; it breaks up into parts which form real unities of ends and means: such a unity is a conative process. Conation is a real and positive thing, though one conative process is to be distinguished from another only by its contents. At some undetermined, perhaps indeterminable, biological level, these contents become, in part at least, *conscious* contents. It can hardly be doubted that conative processes from this stage upwards move to their ends, partly at least, by means that are not, even conceivably, capable of reduction to the physiological terms that may have sufficed to describe them before. When the human level is reached, these means consist in the subject's *knowledge*, infra-perceptual, perceptual and conceptual, of the other entities of the universe. The initiation of a conative

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\* For me, as for so many of my generation, Professor Stout's writings have been the fountain head of ideas on this subject.

† "On Causal Explanation," *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1906-7, p. 80.

process is determined (in general) by the subject's entrance into the cognitive relation with one or more of these entities or "objects of knowledge," provided that this is accompanied by the appearance of other conscious contents of the "affective"\* type—emotion, desire, pleasure, tension, etc. It is in these affective elements that the "conative force" is felt to reside, which determines the succession of the cognitive elements within the process. Thus we may think of a certain process as consisting, on its conscious side, of a succession or train of cognitive elements supported and directed from moment to moment by the accompanying affective current.

Psychological development, it would appear, can be expressed entirely in terms of conative process. It will consist—(1) in the increased length of span and richness of content that comes with the admission and development of ideational elements; and (2) in a progressive systematising of conative processes into more complex wholes. In the young child conative processes are relatively sporadic and isolated, as well as short lived and poor in content; his mental advance is shown most conspicuously in a gradual co-ordination and sub-ordination of these processes that may eventually cover almost the whole of his individuality. Thus when the adult stage is reached, his mental contents will have consolidated for the greater part into structural systems enjoying relatively complete autonomy within the empire of the mind as a whole, yet capable on occasion of entering into still wider combination under the hegemony of some arch-system.

This progressive systematisation of conative processes has two aspects—the development, on the one hand, of the mind's cognitive elements, on the other of its affective elements. But though distinguishable as aspects, these are inseparable in fact. Here we have a point of the utmost importance, vital, it seems

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\* I use the terms "cognitive" and "affective" as convenient, because familiar, means of distinguishing important types of conscious content.

to me, to an adequate epistemological theory. Thus as the cognitive content of a simple conative process becomes fuller and richer, its affective content shows corresponding changes in character, though these will not necessarily be so great as to make it impossible to describe the emotion or appetite by the same name in both cases. The affective aspect presented by a child engaged in a new game or by a philosopher following a new argument may both be indicated with sufficient accuracy by the term "delight," though it can hardly be maintained that the difference between the cognitive contents of the two conative processes leaves their affective contents identical. So when conative processes become organised into a structural system it seems evident that the condition of mutual determination between the cognitive and affective aspects of the system still holds good. One cannot have a self-identical "love" directed in one case towards astronomy, in another towards bridge—or even towards geology. In other words, it seems inevitable that the product of organisation on the affective side should be a function of the product of organisation on the intellectual side and *vice versa*.

But though this remains true, yet there is a great convenience in separating the two aspects of mental development—in regarding them as parallel instead of interpenetrative. And an important difference between the character of the affective and cognitive elements makes this abstraction easy. The objects of the latter are originally material things and their doings—objects with which all subjects might conceivably, and many actually do, have cognitive dealings. Even when the objects are of a conceptual character, they have been formed originally by abstraction from "sense-data," and easily gain credit for an independence of any particular knower similar to that attributed to material things. But it is otherwise with the affective elements. It is notorious that the same "external object" may provoke entirely different affective reactions in different individuals: the bad lead of a player at cards may

fill his partner with rage and his opponents with exultation, while a spectator sees it with indifference or amusement. The fact that the false lead was an external event capable of being described or repeated, and so of becoming an object of cognition to sympathetic friends for years after, while the emotional aspects of the transaction were different in the case of each individual and evanescent in all, makes it almost inevitable that the object of cognition should be thought of as lying outside *all* the knowers, and the several affective accompaniments of the cognition as lying each within the psychical boundaries of *one* of them. Conviction of the identity of affective states occurring in different individuals must necessarily be a matter of faith and not of sight. It follows that even if the same degree of the same kind of boredom drove A and B from the same dull book to the same musical comedy, few people would admit that the two persons were actuated by the "same" emotion, using "same" in the sense given to it when it was said in the former example that the "same" event was the cause of different emotions.

This is the difference between the cognitive and the affective aspects of experience that I spoke of as making abstraction of one from the other easy. In the case of any well-developed and strongly individualised conative system, it is possible to specify in the form of a detailed programme the objects of the cognitive elements of the system. These will, in many cases, be of such a character that even when isolated from their affective context they present all the features of a system—there is not only a number of objective elements accessible to all and the same for all; these are, in addition, organised in a continuous nexus of relations having objectivity in the same sense as the elements they relate. It is clear that we have in the various sciences the typical cognitive systems of this kind—systems so complete as to be apparently self-contained and self-supporting—yet, really (if this sketch of their genesis is well-founded), comparable

only with the continuous articulated skeleton of an animal body from which the warm pulsating tissues it supported have been dissected away. On the other hand, the affective elements will in this case be also sufficiently rich and continuous to be thought of as constituting independent systems. Such affective systems—which will, like the single emotion, be regarded as lying wholly *within* the limits of the individual—form the “passions” or “sentiments” whose nature has recently been analysed so admirably by Mr. Shand.

## II.

The foregoing section purports to give in briefest outline an account of the constitution and genesis of the various systems which a psychological examination of the adult seems to disclose. Wherever we find such an individual in possession of a relatively large and well-organised mass of knowledge, we are in the presence of one of those mental systems at an advanced stage of its development. It may be “practical” knowledge, say, of the butter trade, or of golf, or of the procedure of the House of Commons, or it may be the “pure” knowledge of the historian, of the literary critic, of the man of science or the mathematician; in each case we are dealing with a system of impulsive, emotional and intellectual elements that has been produced by the gradual synthesis of conative processes springing up originally in relative independence of, and isolation from, one another. As we have seen, uninstructed common-sense draws a sharp line of demarcation between different classes of these elements, referring some (such as perceptions) to an external world, and assigning to others (such as “feelings” and, perhaps, “recollections”) a somewhat ill-defined status within the “mind” of the individual. Traditional psychology seeks to clarify this view and render it precise by the concept of a succession of “states of consciousness.” Some of these actually *are* the emotions and other feelings which we have spoken of as the affective elements; other states of

consciousness are "thoughts" which *are* not the objects of cognition, but *know* these objects. It appears to me to be certain that this conception of states of consciousness, even in the form (which Professor James has made classic) of a "stream of consciousness," is merely the fundamental methodological postulate of particular psychological systems. It is necessary to the very existence of a special science that its phenomena shall, however varied, be conceived as so many particular cases of one universal phenomenon. Thus the best psychology of the last century started with the concept of a continuous mind tissue, every element of which represented some definite element of experience. Since the only experience that psychology is concerned with is individual experience, it followed that each individual must have his own mind tissue, which in some sense lay *within* him as opposed to the world without. As I have already pointed out, this concept seems to lead inevitably to a fundamental distinction between parts of the tissue. Some parts *are* the "affections of the mind"—my feeling of a toothache *is* the toothache, my emotion of anger *is* the anger; other parts of the tissue are knowledges of objects of some kind or another, but they are not identical with these objects. These knowledges, regarded as parts of the "stream of consciousness," are (I submit) simply an expression of the methodological necessity of which I have spoken. Just as physics, in order that its characteristic method may apply throughout the whole physical province, finds itself compelled to attribute many observed phenomena to the fictive movements of "concealed masses," so a thoroughgoing psychology, whose characteristic method is to explain a certain class of phenomena in terms of "states of consciousness" must assume these quasi-substantial entities to exist throughout the whole psychical province. It is true that there are motives, other than the purely methodological one, which have operated here, just as in the parallel case of physics. As long as the act of perception could be regarded as simply reading off the truth

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about a part of the individual's environment, so long it was unnecessary to think of the percept as a *tertium quid* between the subject and the object; but when it became well known that perception was liable to serious errors, not the result of mere carelessness, then the hypothesis (in some form or another) that perceptions are due to "impressions" upon a "mind" which is to be distinguished from the *ego* or subjective principle became natural and easy. Nevertheless, it can hardly be maintained that this hypothesis gives so convincing an explanation of erroneous perception that it would have been adopted, in the absence of the methodological motive, as the fundamental assumption of empirical psychology. It suffers, indeed, from one considerable drawback, for which its notable methodological advantages alone could compensate. Common-sense holds no more firmly to its belief in a real external world than it does to its belief in a real self, the permanent centre of individual experience, which, in some way that it is contented to leave obscure, "has" the feelings and the knowledge, even the errors which go to make up that experience. But the system of psychological exposition which we are considering is committed to the task of describing the whole of individual experience in terms of two ultimates only—the real material world and real "states of consciousness." If it is thorough-going it is compelled, therefore, to outrage common-sense by dissolving the central reality of the reflective plain man—the continuous core which runs through each universe of individual experience, and so unifies it—into a mere succession of Thoughts each "knowing and including thus the Thoughts which went before," and so "appropriating them."\*

If I am right in my contention that the "stream of consciousness" of the modern psychologist is, strictly speaking, not the one datum, nor even one of the data which he must accept and deal with, but is an expression of the methodological

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\* James, *Prin. of Psych.*, i, p. 339.



postulate that demands that all the data of a special science shall be regarded as having an identical general character, then it may be rejected by anyone who holds that it has become a hindrance rather than an aid to progress. I venture to think that, for the purposes of many investigations at any rate, this point has, perhaps, actually been reached. It seems to me probable that even upon the purely scientific, as distinguished from the metaphysical, level, the realist doctrine which takes as ultimate data a psychic monad opposed to a universe of independent objects, promises at least equal fruitfulness. As a metaphysic, aiming at a determination of the absolute values of experience, it may have theoretical difficulties (such as those concerning error) which the subjectivism of the voluntarist escapes; but upon the scientific plane it appears to be at least an equally efficient instrument of psychological analysis and description. Compared with its rival, it has the great advantage of according more closely, over the greater part of the ground, with the deliverances of common-sense; in other words, it demands as a concession to methodological needs a smaller amount of manipulation of the data.

Thus, upon the realist hypothesis, the methodological postulate requires merely that the affective elements of experience shall be regarded, equally with the cognitive, as being cases in which the persistent psychic centre comes into relation with certain independent objects that either are not restricted, or are restricted only *per accidens* to connection with a particular centre. This view will not, of course, prevent realism from recognising the importance of the sub-permanent body of affective elements that makes up so much of the "empirical *ego*," though its account of the nature of this *ego* will differ fundamentally from the concept of a "succession of momentary *I*s," adopted by Dr. Schiller from Professor James. Of this account it may be maintained that it is quite as "economical" as Professor James's, while it has the advantage of postulating in the persistent psychic centre an explanatory element which

is not only demanded by common-sense but is also regarded as indispensable by many psychologists of authority, who yet rely in the main upon "states of consciousness" as the ultimate psychological terms. These circumstances seem to afford good ground for the suggestion that the "mind," or "stream of consciousness," rather than the "static knower," against which Dr. Schiller argues, should be offered as a victim to the razor of Occam.\*

Returning to the concept of conative systems, with which the former section was concerned, it will, I hope, be recognised that, in the account given of their genesis, we may suppose ourselves to be concerned in each case with the progressive synthesis of *objects*, some having the cognitive-coefficient, others the affective-coefficient. It is true that this synthesis is not a real but a psychological synthesis; that is, it is constituted by the relation of the objects to a definite psychic centre. It is true, also, that its form at any moment, together with the whole history of its development, appears to be conditioned in part by the inherited and acquired peculiarities of the body with which the psychic centre is connected. Nevertheless, there is so much identity between these idiosyncratic conditions, in the case, at any rate, of individuals belonging to the same race, that it is possible to abstract from the fact that the objects are presented to a psychic centre, and to regard the various stages in the development of a mental system as if they were real forms of synthesis of the objects themselves. Thus, for example, it is possible, as Dr. Caldecott's recent paper seems to show, to predict at least a normal course of development of the religious system in the case of Englishmen brought up in a given spiritual environment.

This last truth is established by the experiences of teacher and scholar at every stage of instruction from the Kindergarten to the University. The universal assumption that in every

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\* *Plato and Protagoras*, p. 15, footnote.

“subject” a common programme of instruction may be given to the whole of the children in a class, or students in a lecture-room, is based upon the fact that conative synthesis will in every case follow substantially the same course. Moreover, the modern practice of teaching—especially when compared with the practice of former times—bears witness to the accuracy of our description of the way in which mental systems are constituted. It has become a commonplace of pedagogy that a subject is not to be regarded merely as an assemblage of facts to be successively assimilated in due logical order. It is recognised, moreover, that the order of assimilation is not to be determined merely by considerations of difficulty, so that certain easier items of the programme may be administered at ten years of age, some harder ones not until fourteen, while others yet again are so indigestible that they must be reserved until the University age. In distinction from these views, which have both been operative in the near past, it is held, with increasing frequency and increasing conviction, that there are two principles regulative of sound exposition. The first is that a systematic treatment based upon the internal relations between the elements of the subject-matter is to be the *terminus ad quem* of instruction, not the *terminus a quo*; in other words, there must be a progressive systematisation of the relevant conative processes of the pupil. The second is that at each stage of instruction the choice of subject-matter to be offered for assimilation must be determined by the character of the natural motives for intellectual effort which may be expected to be present in the pupil’s mind; in other words, there is an affective synthesis relevant to each stage of cognitive synthesis; or rather, at each stage of its development the system presents us with a definite synthesis of objects bearing respectively the cognitive and affective coefficients. Thus, the curriculum of instruction in any subject, however detailed it may be, is only a partial record of the growth of the corresponding system. It represents only

those (cognitive) parts of the developing objective system which are capable of isolation and preservation in the symbolic medium of language. These must, at every stage, be supplemented by the affective elements whose existence they imply just as a given skeleton implies a definite clothing of living tissue.

### III.

The special value for epistemology of this mode of describing the genesis of mental systems lies in the way in which it enables us to conceive the parallelism that is generally admitted to exist between the growth of knowledge in the race and its growth in the individual. This parallelism is sometimes stated in the form of the maxim that the intellectual development of the individual repeats (or recapitulates) that of the race. It can hardly be maintained that this maxim is a generalisation from experience: it is rather an extension, justified on *a priori* grounds, into psychical territory of a truth that holds good in a very limited way of the development of the physical organism. Many writers have criticised the principle,\* pointing out how erroneous it is if it be taken to imply (as it often is) that a profitable comparison can be instituted between the whole mind of a twentieth century boy at a given age and the whole mind of a man at some previous epoch. It is obvious that although it may be possible to recognise certain childish elements in the mind, say, of a Homeric chieftain, his passions, his vices and his virtues were never anything but those of a man.

But if we take the view that what is commonly called the "mind" of an individual is essentially a mass of objects (distinguished either by the cognitive or by the affective coefficient) organised into conative systems which exhibit at one time various degrees of synthesis, it becomes possible to give to the principle a perfectly valid interpretation. The secular development of any of the great and well individualised departments

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\* *E.g.*, Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophers*.

of knowledge—such as one of the special sciences—comes under the formula which we have found to express its development in the “mind” of the individual. It begins with sporadic conative processes relatively isolated and relatively short-lived. It advances by a progressive systematising of these processes expressing itself in a gradual fusion of their cognitive contents into a definite doctrine and a definite “method,” and a parallel fusion of the affective elements into a “sentiment.” At a sufficiently high stage of development both these aspects of the synthetic process present themselves as well organised systems with a well defined and distinct individuality. The only important differences between this secular organisation of a conative system, and the organisation within the psychical limits of an individual lies in the fact that the successive stages of the systematisation are relative to different psychic centres. But if we accept the view that we are considering a synthesis of elements everywhere and unequivocally objective this difference ceases, as far as the epistemologist is concerned, to be relevant. Finally it should be noted that in general a conative system at any stage constitutes only part of the “mind” in which its development is proceeding, and that the degree of conative synthesis present in that part is relatively independent of the degree present in other parts of the mind. Thus it was quite possible for that part of the mind of a Plantagenet which was in direct conative continuity with the mathematical system in the mind of a Gauss to exhibit the low degree of synthesis that characterises the mind of a child as a whole, while at the same time the degree of synthesis represented by his statecraft might fall little, if at all, short of that possessed by the similar system in the mind of Bismarck.

We can draw from this doctrine a conclusion for epistemology similar to the pedagogical conclusion which we draw at the end of the last section. The history of any of the special departments of knowledge is more than a record of the order in which the “facts” constituting the body of know-

ledge in question successively came to light. At each step in the development of the subject the "discoveries" were merely the cognitive elements of an objective system implying a definite affective complement. The cognitive elements taken by themselves constitute as it were a palaeontological record from which the epistemologist must reconstruct at each stage the whole living structure which it implies.

#### IV.

To exhibit in anything like detail the application of this doctrine would obviously be a long task. It may, nevertheless, be convenient to illustrate it by a very brief reference to the stages of synthesis which can be distinguished with more or less clearness in the evolution of some of the sciences. You will, perhaps, allow me to make this reference still briefer by assuming the results of a former paper in which I tried to show that the scientific process consists essentially in the erection upon a factual basis of a "secondary construction." I sought at the same time to make it clear that the character of the secondary construction was conditioned largely by the character of the impulse which motived the elaboration of the primary facts. Thus it was possible to compare the true scientific secondary constructions with forms which simulate them, but are determined by other motives than the proper scientific spirit. In making these comparisons I was dealing in each case with secondary constructions—such as those connected with a complete doctrine of "magic" or with a theocratic cosmology—which claim validity over a very wide factual range. They represent, that is, something like the terminal stages of the conative systems to which they belong. It remains here, therefore, merely to indicate with the utmost brevity what I take to be the earlier stages of the synthesis of conative processes that has led to the great structures of science.

We find the earliest beginnings of these structures, undoubtedly, in the conative processes initiated by intuition of the striking, the beautiful and the novel. Science is the child of wonder. The obliteration of the sun in the eclipse, the annual miracle of the germination of seeds, "the straight staff bent in a pool," such objects and a thousand more awaken the curiosity which is the germ of systematic scientific inquiry. The intellectual enterprises to which they lead immediately will be scientific in promise rather than in performance, simply because they will at first be relatively isolated and relatively short-lived, and will, in short, be continued only as long as wonder and curiosity sustain them. On the other hand, they will be genuinely scientific, even though "explanation" (as it is prone to do at this stage) takes an animistic form, provided that primacy is retained within the system by the facts which constitute the basis of the secondary construction.

The second moment in the evolution of the scientific system is reached when naive curiosity and wonder enter into the wider affective aspect of conative systems aiming at practical control over nature in the material interests of man. The stars are made to divide man's times and seasons, to determine his position on the earth, and to guide his movements on the sea; a rudimentary science of agriculture springs up; the phenomena of refraction are utilised to furnish the short-sighted man with his spectacles and the astronomer with his telescope. It is easy to recognise in this stage a notable advance in the degree of conative synthesis. Practical mastery over any department of nature, however limited, involves a considerable amount of subordination of minor efforts to the one end. For example, it will in most cases involve the application of exact methods of determination of phenomena—the invention of instruments of precision, the mathematical treatment of the results of measurement.

This is the stage in which the sciences begin to take on

their own special complexions. By the popular mind, indeed, science is generally conceived in this form as the beneficent fairy exercising the magic of her wand to aid man in his upward struggle. But it must be regarded as in reality only an intermediate stage in the genesis of the true scientific system. Essentially it consists, as we have seen, in the study of a succession of problems of practical interest. It is evident that, as the number of these increases, they will be mapped out into provinces, within each of which a particular method, or type of method, will be constantly used. In this way a degree of synthesis is reached higher than that of the individual problem. But this widening of the area of systematisation, which is at first merely an expression of the effort to make practical control more complete, inevitably leads to a modification of the affective side of the system, a shifting of emphasis which causes the completeness of the organisation of the system to become itself the objective of the whole process. Here we have reached the terminal stage in the evolution of science, the stage in which the affective elements which characterised the earlier levels enter into a still more complex system—the disinterested “passion” which aims at extending and perfecting the theoretical sway of some system of ideas over the province of primary facts which it claims to rule.

## V.

These, then, are, as I read them, the three characteristic moments in the development of the conative systems which we call the sciences. I think that the evolution of mathematics could be described in much the same terms. Moreover, I venture to believe that phases closely analogous to these will be found in the development of all the great knowledge-processes, whether they are “pure” like history, or have essentially a reference to practice (in the widest sense) like religion.



Instead, however, of inquiring how far our formula would need modification to apply in other cases, I propose to conclude by considering briefly the relations of certain logical concepts, traditionally of great importance, to the concept of epistemological levels which I have tried to define.

In the paper already alluded to I have contended that the inductive or "inverse deductive" method is not the prerogative of investigations which are scientific in the narrow sense of the term. It is exhibited, for example, in the "magic" of primitive races, and in pre-scientific cosmological inquiries dominated by theological prepossessions. At every epistemological level, in fact, attempts to reach knowledge (whether valid or not) exhibit a rhythm, the alternate phases of which may generally be recognised as having respectively an inductive and deductive character.\* These phases will present different appearances at different epistemological levels, or even at the same level in different contexts. Thus, at the "wonder" level of the scientific system the inductive moment will be the mere apprehension of the striking sequence *as* a sequence, the recognition of a definite connexion between universal meanings; the deductive moment will be little more than the expectation of the recurrence of later members of the sequence on the reappearance of earlier members. At the intermediate or "utilitarian" level the inductive phase will often be of the character which Whewell called "colligation," the intuition of a mathematical law or other relation ruling among the data; the deductive phase will be represented by the "verification" of the induction, and by its practical application. At the highest, the properly scientific level, the new feature of the inductive moment is the search for ultimate "causes," that is, for concepts capable of reducing the widest ranges of phenomena to unity and intelligibility, while the special character of the

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\* This truth, in some of its aspects, has been well brought out by Rey, *L'Energetique et le Mécanisme*, Paris, 1908.

deductive moment is the attempt to organise the whole body of determined truths under these concepts. Lastly, it should be noted that the rhythm of phases is exhibited in the knowledge system as a whole, as well as in the parts. Thus, the earlier levels in any system may be described as constituting the phase of *discovery*, and the higher levels the phase of *organisation* of discoveries already made. Euclid's *Elements*, Newton's *Principia*, Clerk Maxwell's *Electricity and Magnetism* may be cited as examples of scientific work bearing, on the whole, this relation to preceding inquiries.

It cannot be disputed, I think, that the traditional treatment of induction and deduction has suffered greatly from the fact that they have been regarded as alternative, or, at least, as different ways of reaching truths, instead of being viewed as (generally) related phases in one knowledge-process. I venture to suggest that the further treatment of these phases, from the functional point of view instead of the formal, would throw much light on the nature of knowledge. Thus, the admission that the precise form and value of the deductive phase must vary with the epistemological level under consideration would, I believe, resolve many apparent contradictions between the views of eminent logicians upon such matters as definition and the syllogism. It must suffice here to indicate the existence of such corollaries from the doctrines that I have tried to set before you, and, as a last word, to reiterate its main contention in a new form: Logic, regarded as the study of the processes which subserve the conquest of truth, may require to presuppose certain results of a "theory of objects" (such as the relations between classes, and other parts of symbolic logic), but it cannot achieve its special aim without becoming frankly epistemological in character: that is, without considering the process of acquirement of knowledge as it takes place under definite psychological conditions. An examination of these conditions shows that the cognitive process is in every case only an aspect of the development of a conative

system, and that its character cannot be understood apart from the affective aspect exhibited by the system at the same level. The cognitive aspect takes on at higher levels of the conative synthesis a systematic character that enables it to be considered in increasing detachment from the affective aspect. The true value, however, of any logical laws that may be reached from a study of such cases can be perceived only if they are constantly regarded as merely the terminal forms of what is essentially a developmental process.

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VIII.—THE RELATION OF SUBJECT AND OBJECT  
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF PSYCHO-  
LOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

By G. DAWES HICKS.

MORE than twenty years ago, in reviewing Sully's *Outlines of Psychology*, Adamson laid emphasis, in his clear and forcible way, upon the imperative necessity, for a fruitful treatment of special psychological problems, of a preliminary determination of the distinguishing nature of the facts with which the psychologist had to deal. He pointed out that there were special grounds of difficulty in taking the first steps in psychology, and that such initial difficulties could not be evaded "without the most disastrous consequences to the body of the exposition." Whilst, in the objective sciences, the materials contemplated were all of a kind capable of being presented as objects to a cognitive mind, in psychology one of the main questions that required to be handled *in limine* was whether mental facts could be legitimately viewed as objects, whether, that is to say, the modes through which knowing and feeling are realised in the life of the individual subject could rightly be regarded as presenting the same formal aspect, aspect as known fact, to an observer as external facts offer to him when percipient. This closely-reasoned plea for a more resolute attempt on the part of psychologists to concentrate attention upon the fundamental problems of principle and method is certainly quite as relevant to the condition of psychology at the present day as to its condition twenty years ago. The plea has, indeed, only recently been reinforced. The chief stress of Mr. H. A. Prichard's able criticism of "the psychologist's attitude towards knowledge"\*

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\* *Mind*, N.S., xvi, p. 27.

centres round the very point which Adamson pressed in the review to which I am referring. So far as the writings of the two psychologists specially selected by Mr. Prichard for consideration are concerned, his criticism often, I think, miscarries, and from the conclusions he draws at the end of his article I dissent as strongly as Adamson would have done. But there can scarcely be any doubt about the extreme importance of the central issue raised, or about the unfortunate avoidance of it by most of those engaged in psychological inquiry. Can the knowledge of an object be properly treated as though it were itself an object? Can the process of knowing be dealt with as though it were one special kind of the processes which through it are known? Such, I take it, is the problem that Mr. Prichard desires to see faced, and, although I differ profoundly from what appears to be his view, that psychology as a science must collapse if the answer to these questions be in the negative, he does seem to me to have done good service in forcing them once more to the front.

It is not necessary here to restate Mr. Prichard's argument in support of the negative answer; at various points of our inquiry that argument will receive confirmation. Briefly, however, the case seems to me to stand thus. There is a characteristic of the mental life which altogether precludes the appearance of its modes of being as objects "in the sense in which any reality which is not an act of knowing or a knowing subject is an object." Each phase or mode of consciousness is related to a subject as a way in which that subject is aware or conscious. This peculiarity—the distinctive peculiarity—of mental states gives to them an unique double-sided aspect, whilst facts, for example, of outer observation exhibit, in contrast thereto, a singleness of aspect that admits of being presented to a knowing mind. Otherwise expressed, in every mental fact a duality of nature is involved,—on the one hand, an act of apprehending, and, on the other hand, a content apprehended. These two distinguishable, but inseparable,

aspects form an indissoluble unity; there is no having a content apart from an act of apprehending, there is no occurrence of an act of apprehending apart from a content apprehended. When, now, the attempt is made to look upon a mental state as an object, what usually happens is that the mental state is treated as though it consisted alone of the content, and is thereby deprived of the very feature which entitles it to be described as mental. It is taken to be a fact *in* mind rather than a fact *of* mind; it is tacitly assumed to be an independent entity on its own account, and the mind is regarded as though it were but the vacant stage on which such entities play their respective parts. For there is nothing in "mental states" so conceived which would enable *them* to compose a mind, and still less anything in them that would enable the observing subject to contemplate them as constituting *his* mind. In other words, whatever else the mind may be, it certainly is not a mere aggregate of objects.\*

It follows from the position reached by the above argument, and Mr. Prichard succeeds, I think, in making the consequence clear, that no truly scientific account of the history and growth of the mental life is possible except in connection with, and as part of, the more general study to which the name philosophy is given. It may quite well be that the acceptance of "any special view of the *ultimate* nature of knowledge" is not, for

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\* Mr. Prichard remarks very truly that "upon no view can knowledge itself be an object in the same sense in which anything else can be an object." In illustration of this, and of what I have said in the text, Rickert's suggestive book (*Der Gegenstand der Erkenntnis*, 2te Aufl., 1904, p. 11 *sqq.*) may be cited. Rickert distinguishes three different significations of the term object: (a) the external world of space-extendedness outside my body, (b) the whole of what exists independently of my mental life, (c) the content of my consciousness as distinct from the consciousness that is aware of such content. Objects in the third sense (*immanent* objects, as he calls them) are "my ideas, perceptions, feelings, and volitions, over against which stands the subject, that is believed to perceive the perceptions, feel the feelings, and will the volitions."

the psychologist, "indispensably necessary"; but the psychologist can no more ignore the problem of the nature of knowledge than a geologist can ignore the problem of the nature of the rocks, of which he undertakes to trace the gradual formation. A matter of indifference to psychology it cannot be whether the data of knowledge are taken to be purely mental elements or features of a reality independent of the knowing mind, whether the standpoint from which the individual mind is regarded be that of subjective idealism or of critical realism. It is not to the purpose to argue that "if the subjective idealist can continue to make his theory work, however illogically, in ordinary life or in chemistry and physiology, he can equally make it work in psychology."\* That argument is not to the purpose, because the analogy suggested does not in truth hold. Ordinary life and the physical sciences proceed upon assumptions formed independently of speculative thinking; psychology does not. For the subjective idealist, it is no doubt a matter of some concern to be assured that his theory will "work" in each and every field of experience, but for ordinary life and the physical sciences the workability or otherwise of the theory in question is a matter of no concern. Psychology, however, stands not in this respect on the same level as ordinary life and the physical sciences. As regards it, the point in dispute is not whether the subjective idealist can make his theory work in psychology, but whether the psychologist who works with the theory of subjective idealism is not misinterpreting and misconstruing the facts of the mental life. So far as I can see, this is a question which can never be decided by the test of mere workability. Both the theories mentioned will, in a certain sense, work, and it may perchance be arguable that for convenience of exposition and simplicity of statement, the advantage is on the side of subjective idealism, or, so far as that goes, even that on the ground of convenience and simplicity

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\* Professor G. F. Stout in *Mind*, N.S., xvi, p. 238.

materialism is preferable to either. But it is futile to contend that the account given of the evolution of mind will not be vitally affected by the general theory upon which that account is based. In other words, I cannot discover any "psychological point of view" which is or can be independent, after the manner in which a chemical or physiological point of view is independent, of philosophical theory. The abstraction which renders the latter possible, is precisely the abstraction which every psychologist who writes a treatise begins by assuring us is, from the necessity of the case, precluded in dealing with the subject matter of his science.

Still, there is another side to the position maintained by Mr. Prichard upon which he does not dwell. If the psychologist is wrong in supposing that he can leave on one side considerations which are usually regarded as belonging to the theory of knowledge, it requires no less to be maintained that the epistemologist will fall into error should he exclude from his purview considerations that are in character psychological. "That cannot be true in epistemology," says Stumpf, "which is false in psychology," and the validity of the dictum must at any rate be acknowledged by the thinker who holds that psychology is an integral part of philosophical investigation. For such a contention means, if it means anything at all, that the several branches of philosophy are interdependent, and that consequently any arbitrary severance of the epistemological from the psychological line of inquiry is bound to throw the former on the wrong track. However vitiating may be the consequences of confusing questions of nature and of genesis, we ought not, on that account, to cherish the hope of obtaining any complete answer to the former question without the help that can be derived from researches bearing upon the latter. It cannot be a matter of indifference to epistemology which factors in cognition are original or primary, and which derivative or secondary; it cannot be to it a matter of indifference whether the sharp antitheses characteristic of mature experience are or



are not characteristic of experience at all stages of its development. Let it suffice to refer to the Kantian analysis of knowledge for an illustration of what I mean. The absolute distinction which Kant instituted between sense and thought, between matter and form, between *a priori* and *a posteriori* elements, ceases, it is not too much to say, to retain significance in the light of what has now been ascertained concerning the evolution and history of mind.

The subject of the following paper was in part suggested by Mr. Prichard's article. With his epistemological view of the nature of knowledge, I find myself in very general agreement. With some, at least, of the objections he urges against certain presuppositions, widely current in recent psychological writings, I am also in sympathy. Notwithstanding the arguments which have been put forward in favour of the use of avowed fictions in psychology, so long and so far as they work, I recognise as he does that that cannot be true in psychology which is false in epistemology. But there we part. When he proceeds to lay down the proposition that the outcome of his criticism is to reinstate the old doctrine of faculties, and, if I correctly understand him, to foreclose the right of regarding the growth and development of cognition as a legitimate problem, I can no longer follow him. On the contrary, I believe the theory of knowledge which Mr. Prichard is concerned to maintain will never yield all the result it is capable of doing so long as it is kept apart from the consideration of knowing as a process which occurs under natural conditions, and which, at successive stages of mental evolution exhibits very varying and changing characteristics. Relinquishment of the doctrine that consciousness gradually constructs the world it apprehends seems to me very far indeed from carrying with it the implication, which I imagine it is sometimes thought to carry, that consciousness has had no history, that in all its manifestations it can only be described as an unique and not further explicable fact of awareness. Granted that knowledge "presupposes a

reality which is and is not itself knowledge, as that which is to be known"; granted that knowledge is "essentially discovery, *i.e.*, the finding of what already is"; and then the inquiry into the ways in which knowledge so understood is realised in individual minds instead of becoming superfluous, at once assumes the position of a specifically defined and clearly demarcated branch of research, the results of which will be indispensable for any thorough treatment of the epistemological problem. Mr. Prichard rightly insists that the latter problem takes its start from the subject-object relation involved in knowledge. I propose, then, to support the thesis just advanced by considering how the subject-object relation has gradually come into clear and distinct recognition in conscious experience, and the light which that development throws upon the nature and significance of the relation itself. But before proceeding directly to my theme, I want to linger for a while over the general topic I have just been touching upon.

## I.

A writer in the *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*\* has tried to dispose of Mr. Prichard's main contentions by reverting to a definition of psychology, which in his opinion, whilst sufficiently distinguishing its territory from that of the other special sciences, at the same time effectually excludes the possibility of any conflict between psychological theory and the results to which reflection upon the subject-object relation involved in knowledge may lead. This writer's mode of securing for psychology a province of its own, independent of any considerations of an epistemological kind, is an old and familiar one; by first making it a subject for comment, I can, perhaps, clear the ground for the discussion I have here in view.

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\* Richard Herbertz: "Die angeblich falsche Wissenstheorie der Psychologie," *Z. f. Psychol.*, Bd. xlvi, S. 275.

Psychology, according to the doctrine in question, has nothing whatever to do with the relation of the contents apprehended to real objects. The psychologist, it is contended, deals with "psychical events as such," and these may be further described as the series of conscious states or real occurrences in the life of an individual mind—processes taking place at a definite time and connected in definite ways with other psychical events of like nature. The business of psychology is to study the relations of interconnection which these psychical events exhibit, to ascertain the laws of coexistence and sequence which they exemplify. In contrast therewith, it may be said to be the function of epistemology to consider psychical events not as they are in themselves, but as significant, as ideas of something, as symbolic or representative of a world of facts. With what justification do we pass beyond our subjective states? On what ground, if any, can the validity of our belief in the independent existence of things and other minds be rested? How are we to interpret that "reference" to reality which the act of knowing always involves?—such are some of the ways in which the problem of epistemology may, from this point of view, be framed. Mental states, then, are our data in both these fields of investigation; but whilst psychology, so long as it sticks to its own last, does not seek to go beyond the inner world of the subject, epistemology has to do entirely with the leap which either appears to be made or is made from the subjective sphere to a reality that is independent of our subjectivity.

To a large extent this position practically coincides with that which Mr. Prichard thinks he finds in the "current psychology" he criticises, but not wholly so, and in any case it is here stated with a definiteness which leaves no doubt as to its precise meaning. I shall endeavour to show that it is a position which is not only untenable in itself but a position which leads to consequences of a peculiarly pernicious kind.

It is, I say, untenable in itself. And it is so, because the

division of labour it institutes would, if strictly adhered to, render each of the two sciences concerned altogether impossible.

A science of psychology would not be possible. For "psychical events as such" are not only non-entities, but generalities to which no intelligible significance can be attached. Every psychical event is a state in and through which something or somewhat is cognised or experienced, and if we abstract from that which in and through the psychical state is cognised or experienced, we simply have no means of characterising or describing what is supposed to be left. Considered as mere events, if they ever could be so considered, psychical states would be for us at least all on the same level: states of perceiving, imagining, thinking, desiring, would exhibit no marks by which we could distinguish them; in short, we should have on our hands a characterless series of happenings, in respect to which it is difficult to see what can be implied by the qualification "psychical." Moreover, what are called the laws of psychical occurrences, those, for example, of association or of attention, express invariably a relation not between "psychical events as such" but between features experienced by means of psychical states. "To talk of an association between psychical particulars is," in Mr. Bradley's emphatic language, "to utter mere nonsense." The consideration of mental processes as facts that occur under natural conditions, in respect to which there may be discovered uniformity of structure and succession, cannot, then, be undertaken without reference at every turn to the character of that of which there is awareness in and through such processes. If experienced content apart from experiencing process is an absurdity, certainly experiencing process apart from experienced content is so no less.

A theory of knowledge would not be possible. For to set out from psychical events as our sole data is either to beg the whole question as to the so-called "reference to reality," which a theory of knowledge is required to justify, or else to condemn

to futility any such attempt at justification from the very start. (a) Is it meant that our data are psychical events as actual occurrences, as existing facts, in the real world? Then we are assuming that *some* existing realities are certainly known, and that so far as *they* are concerned the passage from knowledge to reality has somehow been already effected. Then, in their case, at least, there is no open question as to whether our belief in what is other than knowledge is or is not well founded: their existence, at any rate, is positively assured. But if we can know that *these* are existing realities and not mere appearances, why should it be supposed that, for our knowledge of other existing realities, a special kind of justification is required? What peculiar virtue is there in the knowledge of a psychical event that is absent from the knowledge of a table, or a tree, or a mountain? The knowledge *of* a psychical event is no more identical with the psychical event itself than the knowledge *of* a tree is identical with the tree. Just as little in the one instance as in the other can you get rid of the antithesis between knowledge and the known, and if the antithesis creates an unique problem with respect to the latter, that problem is no bit less acute with respect to the former. In any sense in which existing psychical states may be taken as data for the theory of knowledge, existing stones or hills or planets may likewise be taken, and, whichever be selected, the task will be to show not how we can pass from knowledge to reality, but how we can pass from the knowledge of one kind of real fact to knowledge of another kind of real fact. (b) Is it meant that our data are simply psychical events as known,—that is to say, elements of knowledge as contrasted with, and distinct from, reality? Then, no doubt, the passage from knowledge to reality has yet to be made, but we are assuming a severance between the two at the start which obviously no subsequent intellectual effort will enable us to bridge over. Then, we are assuming that knowledge and reality are two mutually exclusive spheres, and since with the former we begin, with the former we must necessarily

end. But if what is known is knowledge and not reality,\* then knowledge *of* a reality which knows is just as much precluded as knowledge *of* any other reality; indeed, to speak of "*my* knowledge," as though "I" were a real owner of knowledge, is, in that case, a very obvious and curious contradiction. For, upon the supposition here in question, I do not own knowledge; knowledge owns me. Like everybody and everything else, I, too, am a part of knowledge, and to stumble over the problem how I can transcend myself is to be perplexed by a gratuitously invented bugbear. I must get *into* myself before I can get *out* of myself, and that, according to the view before us, is just what I never succeed in doing. It is not solipsism to which a contention of this sort leads, but rather an idealism of the most absolute type—an idealism more "absolute" than Hegel or his followers dreamed of. Nor can I see that the contention justifies scepticism; it seems to me rather to justify credulity. The distinction between truth and error being abolished—since merely as constituents of "experience" they stand on equal footing,—the reason for doubting vanishes, and the sceptic has no ground left on which to erect his batteries.

I say, further, that the position we are considering, when accepted as a working hypothesis in psychology, leads to consequences which are, to use Adamson's term, disastrous to any clear exposition of psychological facts. Understood literally, a science of "psychical states as such" is, as I have tried to show, impossible. There is and can be no such science. The definition derives whatever plausibility it possesses from a woeful confusion which, in large measure, it has been the means of perpetuating. On the one hand, by "psychical state" is meant a modification or passing condition of the mind, a mode or way of being conscious. So conceived, the psychical

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\* "I cannot know reality," says Mr. Carr (*see* p. 127 of this vol.), "what I know is knowledge. The reality is my knowledge and not independent of it."

state is the mind at a determinate moment of time; it forms part, that is to say, of the actual structure of the mental life as an existent reality. It is a state of awareness, and as such it ought to be described not as a state *of* which there is awareness, but as a state *in and through* which there is awareness. On the other hand, however, by "psychical state" is meant a "fact immediately experienced within a single soul," such fact being considered "merely as an event which happens." So conceived, sense-qualities, ideas, concepts, and so forth, are straightway described as psychical states, and the transition is at once effected to the momentous assertion that "the formed world—for example, as it exists for me in space, or, again, your mind to me," although it may be "more than an event in my mind," yet certainly "*is* an event in my mind," and that "it is only from this latter point of view that psychology considers it."\* In other words, the conscious subject is supposed to reach, at least, a level of intellectual insight at which he becomes aware that what he calls his "ideas" or "presentations" are at once objects *and* psychical states. I question, however, whether, except it be under the influence of a metaphysical theory, any self-conscious mind ever does make this identification.† And I would further insist that a very ordinary line of reflection should, in any case, suffice to guard against it. For whatever metaphysical theory may be in the background, there is no escaping the palpable fact that objects apprehended are not psychical in *the* sense in which states or processes of apprehending are psychical. I hear, for example, a loud shrill sound. It may conceivably be maintained that the *esse* of that sound is *percipi*. But even if that contention be granted, there is not the smallest reason for identifying the sound with the hearing. The hearing

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\* *Cp. Psychology of the Moral Self*, by Professor Bosanquet, p. 5.

† I leave out of account here, as not necessary for the above argument, the mind that has not attained to self-consciousness. *Cp.*, however, what is said later on, p. 202.

undoubtedly is psychical in the sense that it is a mode of apprehending, but it neither is, nor gives forth, a sound, be it loud, shrill, or of any other quality; the sound is the object apprehended, and, so far as we can discover, it neither is, nor possesses, the capacity of hearing, or of apprehending. Beyond the bare circumstance of occupying time, there is hardly a feature which these two have in common. So again, the object of a visual perception, say a red rose, is sensuously apprehended, stands, so to speak, over against the act of sense-perceiving. But the act of perceiving the rose cannot likewise be *sensuously* apprehended; the red colour can, but certainly the perception of the red colour cannot, be *seen*. Even, therefore, on the supposition that the perception of the red colour can itself be apprehended as an object, there is, I should have thought, no denying that the mode of apprehending it is altogether different from the mode of apprehending the red colour. And throughout self-conscious experience a similar antithesis holds.\* Now, it is only when this antithesis is ignored, it is only when these two factors which are characteristically distinguishable are illegitimately identified, that the conception of psychology as being exclusively concerned with psychical events and the laws of their interconnection becomes so much as workable. What, however, we then get is that mechanical and artificial treatment of the mental life, which, under the title of "presentationism,"

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\* It is worth while here, perhaps, calling attention to an ambiguity of language which constantly tends to conceal the distinction upon which I am insisting. Facts, in order to possess psychological import, it is often insisted, must have a place *in* someone's consciousness. And, in identical terms, it would be said that psychical states or processes must have a place *in* someone's consciousness. But surely it is evident that the phrase "in consciousness" need not, and in ordinary usage does not, mean in the first case what it means in the second. In the latter, it is a bad way of saying that psychical states are modes of consciousness as an existent; in the former, it only signifies this for the subjective idealist, for others it is a bad way of saying, not that the facts are modes of consciousness as an existent, but that they are apprehended or cognised by consciousness as a knowing, to use Mr. Hodgson's term.



has been so effectively criticised by Professor Ward. I think, indeed, that Professor Ward's criticism does not go far enough; for he is disposed to admit the adequacy of presentationism so far as the theory of presentations itself is concerned.\* To me the vitiating influence of the doctrine seems apparent all along the line,—in the analysis of cognitive experience no less surely than in the analysis of feeling and conation,—and I venture to urge that the general position of psychology can never be satisfactory until it has once for all been discarded. By reason of the false assumption on which it proceeds, the whole problem in respect to the growth of knowledge is wrongly conceived, and in consequence perversely solved. Instead of to trace the way in which apprehension of objective reality is gradually *acquired*, the problem is supposed to be to exhibit the way in which the objects of knowledge are gradually *put together* out of mental elements; instead of to discern what is there, the work of the mind is supposed to be to *create* what would otherwise not be there; instead of an inquiry into the way in which a conscious mind *comes to be aware* of the world of fact, we find ourselves embarked upon an inquiry into the way in which a conscious mind mysteriously *makes* for itself a world of fact. And in the fulfilment of this task, the peculiar and unique characteristic of cognition is allowed to fade completely from view. The act of cognising and the object cognised having been thus so fused and blended together as to disguise the distinction between them, there remains nothing for it but to tolerate the intrusion of one or the other of two equally embarrassing conceptions. Either "sensations" and "ideas" will be endowed with what Professor Dewey has described as the curious property of "surveying their own entrails," or else there will be posited, implicitly if not explicitly, a mind or soul other than and underlying, so to speak, the psychical states that obstinately refuse to be treated *both* as states of mind *and* as qualities of

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\* *Mind*, N.S., ii, p. 80.

objects. Whichever alternative be adopted, the situation becomes a hopeless one ; if the former, we have on our hands a notion which cannot be made so much as intelligible ; if the latter, we saddle ourselves with a discredited metaphysical entity,—a mind divorced from its own modes of being.

## II.

After this preliminary preparing of the way, I pass now to the main subject of my paper. And I take, as my point of departure, the following passage from Hamilton's *Metaphysics*. "In the phenomena of Cognition," Hamilton writes, "consciousness distinguishes an object known from the subject knowing. This object may be of two kinds:—It may either be the quality of something different from the ego ; or it may be a modification of the ego or subject itself. In the former case, the object is given as something different from the perceiving subject. In the latter case, the object is given as really identical with the conscious ego, but still consciousness distinguishes it from the ego,—it projects, as it were, this subjective phenomenon from itself,—views it at a distance,—in a word, objectifies it." Such discrimination or objectification, he adds, is "the quality which constitutes the essential peculiarity of Cognition."\*

The view expressed by Hamilton in these terms has been substantially followed by a large number of psychological authorities. Cognition is usually defined as "the being aware of an object." There is thus brought at once to the front a crucial problem which meets us at the threshold of any attempt to deal with cognitive experience from the point of view of mental evolution. Are we entitled to assume that the relation of subject and object, which is said to be the characteristic feature of cognition, is psychologically ultimate and

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\* *Lectures on Metaphysics*, ii, p. 432. [I have abbreviated the passage somewhat.]

primordial in character? Or, if not, shall we be driven to regard cognition as derivative in the sense that such history as it may have behind it will be of the nature of "feeling,"—that mode of consciousness which Hamilton describes as "subjectively subjective." These alternatives are frequently taken to be exhaustive, but we may see reason for thinking that neither of them is tenable.

1. I think a variety of considerations compel us to answer the first question in the negative. Discussion of the question has always laboured under the impediment that is due to the woeful ambiguity of the term "object." But if meanwhile, in accordance with the passage just quoted from Hamilton, we understand by "object" that which stands over against the act of knowing, and is distinguished therefrom as either belonging to or implying an independent order of fact, the psychological grounds for pronouncing an experience for which such a distinction is even in the vaguest degree possible a derivative experience are well nigh overwhelming. The opposite view is, however, by no means obsolete, and was very emphatically expressed by Hamilton himself. I state it in Hamilton's words. "We may," he says, "lay it down as an undisputed truth, that consciousness gives, as an ultimate fact, a primitive duality: a knowledge of the ego in relation and contrast to the non-ego; and a knowledge of the non-ego in relation and contrast to the ego. The ego and non-ego are, thus, given in an original synthesis."\* For my part, I am unable to frame the remotest conception of what a duality of this sort could signify for a consciousness that is without the aid of a variety of connecting and interpreting thoughts obviously beyond the range of the primitive mind. There is no such elementary simplicity about the contrast here specified as to render it at all probable that the recognition of it is to be ascribed to a simple unique function of mind, and the positing

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\* *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 292.

of such a function, by way of explanation, illustrates the doctrine of faculties in, what Mr. Bradley calls, its worst form. Even admitting that there can be a direct intuitive apprehension of features which are in fact objective, the assumption of a direct intuitive apprehension of their objective character would not be thereby in the least justified. That the one position should be so often imagined to carry with it the other is largely traceable, I think, to a treacherous source of error. Appeal is frequently made to the intrusive, impressed, given character of what is apprehended in sense-perception, and since these marks are thought to be the invariable concomitants of directly perceived contents, the inference is readily drawn that such contents must from the outset be recognised as objective. But there is here a confusion between two essentially different points of view,—the point of view of the observing psychologist and the point of view of the subject whose experience he is trying to observe. For the observing psychologist, contemplating consciousness from the outside, having before him, so to speak, as an external spectator, both the object and the apprehension of the object, the determined, produced, given character of the latter will naturally appear to be the most noteworthy feature about it. The so-called presentation will be looked upon as a response of the subject to the operation of mechanical causes. For the subject itself, however, all these features are purely extraneous; they form no part of its experience. In this sense of the word “given” it cannot signify anything the recognition of which would not already imply the consciousness of objectivity; such “givenness” cannot, therefore, legitimately be spoken of as though it were the original messenger of objectivity to the primitive mind. A negative answer to our question is further supported by the obvious consideration that the awareness of objectivity is no fixed and unalterable aspect of our experience, but is constantly undergoing change and transformation. Even in the mature mental life there are moments (moments, for

example, of reverie, or of waking from a deep sleep,) when what is apprehended, a colour or a sound, is barely characterised as objective. The familiar experience of being so absorbed in a piece of music or in a scene of natural beauty as for the time being to escape from the contrast of self and not self is another illustration in point. Again, the contents of the various orders of sense-presentation differ enormously with respect to the clearness and distinctness of the so-called "objective reference." Motor and tactual presentations, and visual presentations, which are habitually and constantly had in conjunction with motor and tactual experiences, have come to be regarded as pre-eminently objective, auditory presentations less so, those of taste and smell much less so, whilst the so-called organic sensations are not ordinarily thought to be objective at all. Once more, in cases of violent physical pain, the subject-object form of consciousness may be almost, if not entirely, obliterated; the awareness of self quite as much as the awareness of the not-self is banished; the felt pain usurps the whole field. In the light, then, of these, and similar considerations, it is difficult to see how the conclusion can be avoided, that however important, however necessary, for knowledge, the distinction between subject and object may be, the recognition of that distinction comes about gradually, and is not present in the earlier stages of the mental life.

(a) The most serious attempt to withstand this conclusion is that made by those psychologists who insist upon treating the content apprehended as "psychical" in character, and, at the same time, upon definitely separating it from the act or process of apprehending. The main stress of their argument turns almost entirely upon the significance assigned to the term "object," which is used, in this connection, as equivalent to the content apprehended. Every care is taken to indicate that by "object" is meant "psychical object," and that, therefore, no predicate which refers to a real independent order of facts need be assumed at the outset to characterise "objects" as thus

understood. When the inquiry is further pressed as to what then does characterise "psychical objects," the answer appears to be that the characteristics in question fall under two quite distinct heads. On the one hand, they are "presented to" the subject, and may hence be called, adopting the Herbartian phraseology, "presentations"; they are "objects" in the sense that they are directly apprehended through the direction upon them of the subject's apprehending activity. They are thus opposed in a certain fashion,—doubtless, at first, in a very crude and obscure fashion,—by the subject to himself. On the other hand, they exhibit a number of properties which form the foundation of the much later reference involved in the presentations of mature experience to a trans-subjective world of fact. There are qualitative differences among them, and their qualities vary independently of variations in the apprehending activity, or attention, of the subject; above all, their coming and going is not dependent upon the subject's apprehending activity.

Any psychological doctrine worked out with such care and thoroughness as this has been in Professor Ward's *Encyclopædia* article claims respectful treatment. A summary criticism is hardly entitled to a hearing. I can here, however, only indicate some of the reasons that lead me to think the analysis I have briefly sketched cannot be sustained. In the first place, the separation, which appears to be made, of a presentation from the presentative activity on the one hand, and from the real thing of which it is the presentation on the other, seems to me an unjustifiable separation. The moment that separation is effected, the presentation comes inevitably to occupy the position of a *tertium quid*; it "at once acquires," to use Adamson's words, "a quasi-substantive existence," and, in consequence, there will be attached to it "the same characteristics by which we describe to ourselves the mode of existence of things."\* To this objection it will not do to reply, as Pro-

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\* *Development of Modern Philosophy*, ii, p. 173.

fessor Stout does, that the terms "presentations" or "objects" are simply employed "to indicate things in so far as they are apprehended by individual minds."\* Anyone who tried consistently to put that interpretation upon these terms would very soon find himself in difficulties. For instance, presentations (there being included under that head "sensations, perceptions, intuitions, concepts, notions") are expressly declared to be "mental facts," capable of being attended to, and of being reproduced and associated together; sensations are repeatedly described as "impressions," and consciousness is said to "receive impressions"; the "primordial factor in materiality" is held to be due to "the projection of a subjectively determined reaction to that action of a not-self on which sense-impressions depend"; and other expressions, of like import, frequently occur. As a matter of fact, we know from Professor Ward's other writings that in his view much at least of what is psychologically objective is epistemologically subjective. The "objects" of any individual experience, no less than its acts, its memories, its aims and interests, "in their concreteness are like those of no other." "*The sun as trans-subjective object is not L's sun or M's sun.*" "Apart from L or M, their respective non-Ego's,—non-L, non-M,—are non-existent, and their respective suns in like manner."† Surely, then, we are intended to understand that L's presentation of the sun and M's presentation of the sun, when actually apprehended by each of them respectively, are existent, and, as existences, are distinct from the existence of *the sun as trans-subjective object*. Now, the point of the objection I am urging is that the separate existence thus ascribed to the presentation is no more than a fictitious existence conferred upon it as the result of a false abstraction of our own. If the act of perceiving does not itself produce an object whose *esse* is *percipi*, much less

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\* *Mind*, N.S., xvi, p. 238.

† *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, vol. ii, p. 170, *sqq.*

ground is there for assuming that a mental object is already in existence prior to the act of perceiving and upon which that act can be directed. In the second place, I think the view under consideration inverts the true order of what takes place in the growth of conscious experience. A thinking, reflective mind may no doubt come to regard what are here called "presentations" as independent objects, although it is another question whether that ever is, as a matter of fact, the right way of regarding them. By means of reflection, we no doubt do come to distinguish the content apprehended from the act of apprehension, and again the former from the real thing to which it is said, ambiguously enough, to refer, and, with or without justification, we do tend to individualise the content apprehended and to assign to it a separate, independent existence of its own. But this seems to me a complicated result of developed thought, only possible on the basis of a distinct and definite conception of a world of independent and inter-related things. There is no presentation, that can be thus regarded as distinct and separate, where there is no experience of a world of distinct and separate things. I am not, of course, charging any psychologist with the absurdity of supposing that the primitive subject is aware of a presentation as such. But it does seem to be implied in the view I am criticising that since presentations are, as a matter of fact, objects, they come to be recognised as objects, and that then, on the basis of such recognition, advance is made to a conception of trans-subjective realities as objects. Now, apart from the question as to whether presentations are, as a matter of fact, objects, my contention here is that the order of genesis in conscious experience is, in truth, precisely the opposite of that just indicated. We first get our meaning of the term "object" from the conception of things as independent realities, and then, without warrant, as I think, we transfer the notion of "object" thus obtained to presentations, which in consequence assume the position for us of distinct and separate entities. In



other words, neither consciousness nor attention is rightly conceived as an inner eye, the objects of which are presentations furnished to the mind. It is only by reflection, a process to which we attain, that we can make any so-called presentation for itself an object of contemplation. In the third place, I note the special difficulties in which the theory is involved with reference to the rudimentary stages of consciousness. The true way, Professor Ward insists, to represent the condition of a primitive mind is not to attempt to reproduce its experience, but "to describe such experience as a scientific psychologist would do if we could imagine him a spectator of it." "The infant who is delighted by a bright colour does not of course conceive himself as face to face with an object; but neither does he conceive the colour as a subjective affection. We are bound to describe his state of mind truthfully, but that is no reason for abandoning terms which have no counterpart in his consciousness, when these terms are only used to depict that consciousness to us."\* To me this argument seems to miss the point, at all events of those who contend it is largely through the attempt to conceive consciousness from the point of view of a spectator that the temptation to describe presentations as objects arises. For the primitive mind, as Professor Ward fully recognises, sense-qualities are not definite, isolated, individualised features. Definiteness, isolation, individuality on the part of what is perceived are not originally "given"; they come about gradually in experience, and it may be safely asserted that a single sense-quality—a colour, a sound and so on,—is never the content of a rudimentary consciousness. But, whilst the description of presentations as originally objects accommodates itself easily to that mode of viewing the inner life according to which isolated sense-presentations are regarded as being the units out of whose aggregations the more complicated mental structures are formed,—a view which,

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\* *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., XX, 41b.

as Professor Ward says, has no real psychological foundation,—one is at a loss to understand what the term “object” can denote as applied to what he himself describes as the crudely differentiated presentations of primitive apprehension.

(b) I refer briefly to another way of withstanding the contention that the subject-object relation is derivative and not primordial. The objection may be pressed, that, in supporting the contention, I have been guilty of neglecting a distinction, upon the importance of which I shall myself have occasion to insist,—the distinction, namely, between a relation which, as a matter of fact, does hold, and the recognition of that relation as a relation. The argument, accordingly, is that, whilst the *recognition* of the relation between subject and object is doubtless acquired, the *fact* of that relationship is nevertheless original and primitive. I do not think this argument can be sustained. If all that be meant is that neither the existence nor the nature of an object is constituted by its being recognised as an object, then not only do I concede the point, but beg leave to describe this paper as a modest attempt to vindicate its truth. If, again, the intention be to maintain that between a primitive consciousness and a real object there does subsist, as a matter of fact, a relation, then this, too, I agree, is undeniable. But if it be further implied, as I presume it is implied, that the relation just mentioned is identical in character with the relation subsisting between a developed self-conscious mind and an object, then, as I do not admit the alleged identity, I dispute the validity of the argument which implies it. The argument assumes that “relations are not grounded in the nature of their terms,” and it cannot, therefore, be fairly used against a view which does not proceed on that assumption. Granting, then, that the character of a relation is dependent on the nature of each of the related factors, it follows that the relation between a self-conscious mind and its object is not identical in character with the relation between a mind that is not self-conscious and its object, even

supposing the object to be, as a matter of fact, in both cases the same. "Relativ," says Riehl, "ist nicht das Sein der Objecte, sondern ihr Objectsein." Whilst allowing to the full that a relation between two terms is not affected by the recognition of the relation, when those terms are both objects, or elements of objects, I think the case is essentially otherwise when one term of the relation is a self-conscious subject. Then the fact of self-consciousness is that which specially characterises the relation. As Mr. Russell, who himself ably supports the doctrine of "external relations," puts it, "the peculiarity of the cognitive relation lies in this, that one term of the relation is nothing but an awareness of the other term—an awareness which may be either that of presentation or that of judgment." "This," he adds, "makes the relation more essential, more intimate, than any other; for the relatedness seems to form part of the very nature of one of the related terms, namely, of the psychological term."\* It is true, Mr. Russell goes on to remark that "cognition is not awareness of a cognitive relation to an object, but only of an object." But if "the relatedness forms part of the very nature of the psychological term," can it be seriously maintained that a difference so vital in mind as that between mere awareness of features which are, in fact, objective, and awareness of an object as an object in no way affects such relatedness? The two relations, then, are, I submit, characteristically different, and from a psychological point of view it is in every way advisable to reserve the title "subject-object relation" for the latter.

2. If consciousness does not start by intuitively apprehending what it experiences as objects, much less does it start as solipsist by intuitively apprehending what it experiences as subjective modes of its own being.† From mere consciousness to

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\* *Mind*, N.S. vol. xiii, p. 510.

† Dr. Ward writes, "we may be quite sure that his faithful dog is as little of a solipsist as the noble savage whom he accompanies." I am

self-consciousness is a far cry ; the mental act whereby a subject makes his inner life a matter of contemplation, as forming his own individuality, is certainly of extreme complexity, and would be impossible except by the aid of those mental activities which are instrumental also in acquiring knowledge of the outer world. " We might," as Professor Hobhouse happily puts it, " be subjects of knowledge, and remain such to the ding of doom, without ever being aware of the fact." To become aware of a state or activity of the inner life is much more than to be in that state or to exercise that activity. The former involves recognition on the part of the individual of his own permanent being as contrasted with the transitory modes of apprehending, and the recognition by a subject of such transitory modes of apprehending as *his* is no more intuitive or immediate than the recognition by him of objective qualities as objective. Mental states as existences are doubtless in more intimate connection with the subject than the existing objects of external nature, for the former are modes of his own being, but as contents apprehended by him they have no priority over the contents of sense perception. When he tries to observe inner facts after the fashion in which he observes outer facts, the circumstance that the facts are inner lends no additional certainty to the resulting cognition. In and through the process of apprehending he can be no more protected from error in regard to what forms part of his consciousness as an existent reality than in regard to what lies beyond his consciousness. It is not necessary for the existence of any of our states of consciousness that we should observe them ; we may be conscious *in* them without in the least being conscious *of* them, the ways in which we are conscious are not at the same time the facts of which we are conscious ; and when we do

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using above the term "solipsist" in the same sense. But it may, I suppose, be argued that a solipsist need not be aware that he is a solipsist. On this point I shall have a word to say later, *see* p. 202.

acquire the capacity of self-observation, of recognising the ways in which we are conscious as *our* ways of being conscious, we bring to bear upon what we observe (often, I think, detrimentally, so far as the accuracy of such observation is concerned), general notions and interpreting ideas which have been developed in the process of observing external things. There is, then, no stage of conscious life when a primitive mind has to make the transition from awareness of its own subjective modes of being to awareness of what is other than they; recognition of his own existence on the part of a finite subject is not a condition prior to the contrast between inner and outer, but a consequence of that contrast,—a contrast which itself presupposes a considerable amount of preceding mental evolution.

With the substance of what has just been said, most modern psychologists would, I believe, find no occasion of quarrel, although they might with my way of saying it; opinions, however, diverge, when its bearing upon the second of our two questions falls to be considered. Is that form of conscious life which precedes cognition, in the sense already indicated, rightly described as “feeling”? I am aware, of course, that those who take this view do not use the term “feeling” as equivalent to the aspect of pleasure or pain. “I take feeling,” says Mr. Bradley, “in the sense of the immediate unity of a finite psychical centre. It means for me, first, the general condition before distinctions and relations have been developed, and where as yet neither any subject nor object exists. And it means, in the second place, anything which is present at any stage of mental life, in so far as that is only present and simply is.”\* But when we inquire more closely into the exact significance of “feeling,” as thus understood, it becomes evident, I think, that what is supposed essentially to characterise the experiences of which it is taken to be a compendious title, are largely such features as characterise pleasure and pain in

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\* *Appearance and Reality*, p. 459.

the mature consciousness. I quote again from Mr. Bradley: "Feeling I use for experience, or if you will for knowledge, so far as that experience or knowledge does not imply an object, and I should myself give as a very obvious instance a simple pain or pleasure, or again those elements of our Cœnesthesia to which we do not attend."\* In other words, primitive experience is supposed to consist entirely of a felt mass, similar in character to that which is thought to underlie experience at every subsequent stage; as psychical states, sense-qualities are supposed to be "felt" before they are "referred to" objects. An original sensuous *ἄπειρον*, psychical in character, which in some mysterious way is felt, and out of which, through articulation, knowledge of intelligible fact emerges, is a notion, I confess, which I have vainly struggled to grasp; it strikes me rather as a conundrum than as the solution of a problem. Not all that Mr. Bradley has to say about the continuity of the felt reality with what lies beyond enables me to see how the theory that the subject's direct way of contact with reality is solely through the limited aperture of momentary feeling differs essentially from subjective idealism. But the point upon which I desire here to lay stress is this. It is unquestionably true that the qualitative definiteness and distinctness which in mature experience we assign to sense-contents is a very varying one, that while we find it prominent in visual and auditory presentations, it is less and less prominent as we descend the scale, until when we come to the so-called organic sensations, it seems hardly possible to distinguish a qualitative content that shall be describable in terms other than those descriptive of pleasure or pain. It is no less true that as we work downwards from the higher to the lower forms of conscious life, qualitative definiteness and distinctness in sense-contents of any kind must be regarded as gradually giving way to confusedness and absence of individuality. Equally indisputable is it that these latter are

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\* *Mind*, N.S., vol. x, 1901, p. 445.

characteristics especially of pleasure and pain. But it by no means follows that increasing indistinctness of a sense-content merges that content into mere feeling. Far from it. Feeling has positive characteristics which we are not justified in attributing to presentations, however indistinct they may be. In mature experience, feeling is subjective in a special and unique sense, in the sense, namely, that it gives to self-consciousness its peculiarly personal tone or colour. Now, if recognition of the distinction between subjective and objective be, as I have argued, derivative and not primary, we cannot assume this characteristic of feeling to be original. But it points back, nevertheless, to some prior characteristic, from which in the course of time it was developed. So again, presentations, even in their crudest form, have characteristics which we are not justified in attributing to feeling. The primitive subject does not distinguish the act of perceiving from the content perceived or recognise the objective character of the latter. Yet what comes to be recognised as objective must still even before such recognition be different in character from what comes to be recognised as exclusively subjective. Cognition and feeling seem equally entitled to be considered as having their direct antecedents in the elementary consciousness.

It may, however, well be questioned whether any one of the terms, cognition, feeling, or striving, can be fitly applied to the primitive conscious life. These terms are generalities which roughly and imperfectly indicate three lines along which consciousness develops, each of which acquires a certain independence of the other. But as we go back in the course of mental evolution these differences become less and less marked ; in the earlier stages of conscious life, cognition, feeling, and striving are undoubtedly much more closely connected, much more interdependent, than they appear to be when we consider their mature developments. This does not mean that if these approach one another so nearly as hardly to be distinguishable, they become identical, or that if we descend

far enough we shall reach a condition of psychical existence, the states of which might be appropriately described by one of the three terms alone. What we are entitled to assume in the case of the rudimentary consciousness is that, whilst its modes of being would be wrongly designated by any one of these general titles, they contain in themselves the roots from which the three diverging stems take their rise. In the primitive consciousness there must be the germs of those lines of activity through which later distinct sense-contents are apprehended, feelings experienced, and definite movements executed.

### III.

Our discussion so far has yielded two main positive results. In the first place, the most distinctive characteristic of mature experience, the antithesis, namely, between subject and object, has evinced itself as a secondary characteristic,—a characteristic, that is to say, which has been gradually developed from an experience of a rudimentary type, in which it was not contained. And, in the second place, as regards the rudimentary consciousness, we have been led to the conclusion that, although it is not capable of distinguishing its acts of apprehension from the content apprehended, it is from the first an apprehending activity, and is not rightly described as consisting of mere “feeling.” It becomes, then, the central problem of the psychology of cognition to ascertain the conditions upon which the origin of the distinction between subject and object depends, and to trace its growth in the history of mind. Obviously, in such an investigation, a regressive method of procedure must be employed. Seeing we have no means of obtaining direct knowledge of the constituents of an elementary experience, we can but resort to the more hazardous method of inference, and, reasoning backwards from the complex facts of our mature apprehension of an object, endeavour to gain some conception of what the prior stages must have been.



Following this method, I proceed to consider the factors involved in our ordinary objective experience with a view to determining how their presence there has come about.

Let us start from what Avenarius calls the natural conception of the world (*der natürliche Weltbegriff*), the point of view of so-called common-sense. Avenarius depicts that point of view in some such way as this. As a thinking, feeling, being, aware of myself, I find that I am in the midst of an environment which is composed of various elements that stand to one another in manifold relations of dependence. To that environment my fellow men belong, who talk and act as I do; who answer my questions as I do theirs, who act upon the environment as I do, and express as I do with words the grounds and reasons of their actions. It never occurs to me to doubt that they are beings like myself, and that I also am a being like them. This spatial world is apprehended by me as an existing, familiar, continuous reality, constantly before me in my thoughts, and constantly exhibiting features of an apparently identical character. Or, if I take any specific part of it, say a tree in my neighbour's garden, I apprehend the form of the tree with its trunk, and branches, and leaves, its growth, its change of colour in the autumn,—in fact, its various spatial and temporal relations. Here, then, I have an example of what it is usual to call an object. What are the features involved in my apprehension of it? The tree is apprehended by me as a real thing, external to the stream of my own inner life,<sup>(1)</sup> independent of that life, permanent or having existence beyond the moment of my apprehension,<sup>(2)</sup> identical, or retaining a certain unity of structure,<sup>(3)</sup> which is characterised by the possession of qualities, and forming part of an interconnected system of real things.<sup>(4)</sup> This enumeration of features brings prominently before us the comparatively small share which sensation pure and simple has in the perception of an object. None of these features can be said to be immediately "given" by sense; they are all of them additions to the strictly sensory elements of the content

perceived, and relatively to these sensory elements they are known by means of thoughts or conceptions. We are working our way back to a consideration of the nature of the purely sensory data; meanwhile, I confine attention to the features I have enumerated.

(a) The tree is regarded by me as real or actual. What do I imply by thus assigning to it the character of reality or actuality? Certainly I have in view no abstract or metaphysical significance of the term real. I am calling the object real in antithesis or opposition to what I have in some way come to regard as unreal. And that antithesis is not far to seek. I can imagine or recall another tree not in my present environment, and, however distinct and clear that representation may be, it would, in contrast to the object before me, be unhesitatingly described as unreal. In colour, in form, in general appearance, even in vividness, the contents of the two acts of apprehension may be alike, but usually I have no doubt about what I call the reality of the one and the unreality of the other. Manifestly, then, unless I were capable of representing to myself in idea contents such as are furnished in direct sense-perception, there could be for me no opposition between reality and ideality; the word real would have for me no meaning. This characteristic of the object apprehended implies, therefore, a correlative characteristic on the part of the apprehending mind,—a capacity of recognising a distinction which certainly the primitive mind would not possess.

In a former paper, read before this Society,\* I tried to show how recognition of the distinction here in question may be conceived to have originally come about. I pointed out that when an act of apprehension takes place in connection with stimulation of a sense organ, there must be present a mass of corporeal feeling which in normal circumstances may be wholly, and certainly is largely, absent when a content identical

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\* *Proceedings*, N.S., vol. i, p. 200.

in kind is ideally represented in imagination. This difference, I think, furnishes the basis for such recognition, and I am further of opinion that it plays no insignificant part in mature sense-perception. Other criteria there are then, of course, in abundance. If I am in doubt about the reality of the tree, the simple solution is to apply the test of touch. But in the vast majority of cases I am not in doubt, and it is this unhesitating certainty that needs accounting for.

I am bordering, however, here upon an extremely difficult question. Retention or revival must be taken to be an absolute condition in the development of the mental life. We can offer no psychological explanation of it; we have simply to accept it as an ultimate fact. The far-reaching significance of this admission has scarcely received the attention it deserves. A certain continuity of being, a certain power of somehow retaining or reviving past experience,—that must be assumed to be a fundamental characteristic of conscious activity. Without this power even the most rudimentary development in mind would be altogether precluded. But, although we cannot unravel the essential conditions on which revival depends,—for I do not think that the physical analogies suggested, for example, by Hering, carry us far,—there is a crucial problem in regard to the fact of revival which psychology cannot leave on one side. What is the nature of the representation or image (if we may employ that term) of which the subject is aware in imagination and memory? If we maintain, as I am about to do, that in sense-perception we are directly discriminating features of a real thing, how are we to interpret the content when no real thing is actually before us? In a recent article, Professor Stout has attacked with some severity the doctrine of what he calls “representative contents.” By this he means that “new way of ideas” against which Reid battled with such persistence. I raise no voice in defence of the doctrine; *μη γένοιτο*. If by “content” be intended a “peculiar kind of entity” that “intervenes between reality and

the knower," if it implies that "we cannot know the things themselves but only their appearances," I welcome Professor Stout's emphatic rejection of the notion.\* But, as Professor Stout is well aware, this is not the only sense in which the term "content" has been used. Even in respect to sense-perception, we are bound, I think, at the peril of confusion, to distinguish that aspect of the thing which we perceive and the thing in all the fullness of its concrete reality. It is not a distinction, this, of two existences. What we perceive is the real thing, but it is the real thing with many of its features, so to speak, obliterated; it is so much of the real thing as is *aufgefasst* by our act of perceiving. This, then,—“the thing,” to use Professor Stout's own phraseology, “in so far as it is apprehended by a knowing mind”—is what for convenience may be called the “content”; and if we resist converting it into an enigmatical entity on its own account, if we recognise that it is not to be found anywhere except in an act of apprehension, from which, indeed, it may be distinguished but never separated, if we think of it as that which arises through the act of attending to an object, then the conception of “content,” whilst doing violence to no realistic theory of knowledge, indicates a characteristic of cognition, which psychology must, in some form or another, take note of. Now, apply what has just been said to the case of memory. Just as little in regard to memory as in regard to sense-perception are we compelled to assume that the “content” is a ghostly entity which is first there and which is then, in some mysterious way, apprehended. Here, again, it is the known aspect of an object which in this

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\* I cannot, I confess, reconcile Professor Stout's attitude in the article referred to with what he has written elsewhere. In the former he speaks of “the enigmatical entities called appearances which appear.” Elsewhere he has maintained that we are perfectly justified “in regarding sensible appearances as having an existence and positive nature of their own, distinct from material things and their attributes,” and in supposing that “the sensible appearance is itself something that appears.” (*Proceedings of British Academy*, vol. ii, 1905.)

case, however, is not actually being, but has been, perceived. In some way, which it is true we cannot yet explain, specific acts of apprehension may recur; what has once been discriminated in an object may in and through such recurring acts of apprehension be retained, and in and through such acts the content is, as we say, "reproduced." There is no psychical Hades in which shades of former objects are housed for the purpose of making their appearance at irregular intervals on the field of consciousness; there are no "images" stored up in some sub-psychical cellar, out of which they can be summoned at will. We need, for the solution of our problem, no mythology of that sort. Rather have we to do with a case of what may be called the "economy of consciousness"; owing to the fact that *acts* of apprehension are capable of being revived, the work of discrimination, once accomplished, need not be constantly repeated in all its details: in an act of memory, discrimination may proceed on a basis, already prepared, by what has gone before. The so-called "memory-image" is, then, just as little as the percept a construction made up of psychical material; it is not something that serves as a substitute for the real object. Memory *is* the act of representing the real object, and the unreality we ascribe to its content is no more than the unreality that is characteristic of any content considered in abstraction from the object. The analysis, therefore, affords no ground whatever for supposing that in revival what we have before us is mental material which stands in the way of the physical material we conceive ourselves to apprehend.\*

(b) The tree is regarded by me as possessing a mode of existence independent of my momentary act of apprehension. I assign to it a certain measure of permanent being. Were

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\* No doubt we do ordinarily regard the "memory-image" as in a sense subjective, but that is a sense of the term subjective, which in no way conflicts with what I have said above (see my paper in *Proceedings*, N.S., vi, p. 342).

I in doubt about its reality, one of the ways in which I should seek to allay my doubt would be by applying experimental tests to satisfy myself of its permanence and its independence of my act of apprehending. Here, again, from the point of view of genesis, there is involved a corresponding development in the apprehension of what is subjective. For a subject who was unable to recognise the act of apprehending as a transitory momentary phase of his own inner life, which relatively to it is permanent, it would be impossible to effect that distinction between the act of apprehending and the object apprehended which is implied in recognising the latter as permanent and independent. I do not mean that the former recognition in its completeness must precede the latter. Rather what I am concerned to insist upon is that the development must be conceived as strictly correlative, that recognition of the distinction on each side must pass through successive stages from the relatively obscure to the relatively clear, from the relatively confused to the relatively distinct. What I want specially to emphasise is that we are concerned here with a two-fold development, and that the one is inconceivable apart from the other.

Any inquiry into the early stages of the individual's conception of himself as permanent would lead us too far afield. Undoubtedly, in the first instance it is as the natural centre of bodily activities and bodily affections that the self is apprehended. The primitive self is the "embodied self." But all the same, the recognition of permanence depends upon characteristics of the mental life itself, and is essentially a mental process. Numerous circumstances combine to enable both the permanence of the self and the permanence of the object to become facts of experience. Practically, they centre round the profound difference observable in what may be called the general order of sense experiences. Sense-presentations fall readily into two well marked and contrasted groups,—those that are variable and those that are relatively uniform and constant.

The former are obviously those dependent on extra-organic stimulation, the latter those which result from more or less exclusively bodily conditions. Characteristic presentations resulting from the body are those accompanying movement of the limbs, and they are relatively regular as compared with the presentations which come about as their consequence. The body also is the centre of reference for the peculiar experiences which we group under the head of feeling. Sensuous feeling is localised in the body, and the evidence of language justifies us in saying that primitive peoples even localised emotions and passions in the body. It is interesting to note that, in regard to bodily experience, a marked change takes place in the course of development. In our mature mental life, we think of the extra-organic world as the constant, as that over against which our perceiving is variable. For the primitive mind, on the other hand, the constant and invariable would furnish rather the foundation for the consciousness of self, whilst experience of the not-self would be experience of that which breaks in, so to speak, with no constant dependence on the preceding bodily presentations. But, amongst the presentations thus breaking in, a decided difference would soon become apparent. Some would be continually repeated, and repetition of what would appear to the individual to be the same content, in opposition to the temporal difference in the act of apprehending, would in itself furnish a strong motive for assigning to the content apprehended a mode of permanent existence independent of the apprehending mind.

Too much stress has, I think, in this connection, been laid upon "intersubjective intercourse." Beyond question, so soon as the conception of minds other than the individual's own has been formed, a new and highly significant characteristic comes to be attributed to the objects of perception. They are then looked upon as the common objects of all minds, and thereby, of course, recognition of their permanence and independence would be vastly strengthened. But certainly the primitive

subject can have no intuitive apprehension of other minds. That knowledge can only be reached by the help of just those experiences which bring about recognition of the independent and permanent existence of things.

(c) The tree is regarded by me as, in contrast to myself, outer or external. What are the psychological factors involved in ascribing the mark of externality to that which is perceived? The key to the solution of this question is to be found in the peculiarities of the bodily experiences. The characteristic presentations resulting from the body are, as already noted, those accompanying movement, and they, practically without exception, go along with experiences that are dependent, in varying degrees, upon resistance to movement. Experience of resisted movements lies at the foundation of the determination of things apprehended as external, and this experience involves, further, when it reaches anything like connectedness, that network of relations which we call space. No other meaning can be given to apprehension of space or extendedness from the point of view of the rudimentary consciousness than experience of resisted movement; extendedness *is* the extended resisting. We habitually depict space to ourselves through the aid of visual presentations. The visual picture of space contains, however, much more than what can be said to be, in any sense, immediately apprehended. Our mature experience of space is complex and derivative. A comparison of visual and tactual experiences of extendedness would reveal that, in our ordinary apprehension of space, elements are involved which cannot be called perceptive. Space, indeed, never ceases to have the most intimate relation to perception, but that the apprehension of its general characteristics implies the exercise of reflective thinking can scarcely be questioned. The essential condition of the more primitive experience, however, is a combination of presentations in the groups designated as tactual and motor. Any mode of experience in which several presentations can be apprehended simultaneously as distinct presentations will



necessarily furnish a ground for the development here in view. On this account the organ of vision has come pre-eminently to be regarded as the organ of space perception; but in the more elementary experience of touch there is also the possibility afforded of gradually attaining to the apprehension of a number of distinct presentations at one and the same time. Mechanically and automatically contacts on different parts of the skin are so conjoined with groups of motor presentations that even prior to the life of definite consciousness a basis would be furnished for the perception of space.

Extendedness, the space-character of objects, is, then, the feature upon which recognition of them as external or outer essentially depends. Here, too, however, there is to be discerned a parallel advance in the consciousness of self. For in resistance to movement is to be found at least one important aspect of a whole set of facts in and through which recognition of its own existence on the part of any subject becomes possible. In tracing the genesis of space-perception, psychologists have often made the mistake of supposing that we must start with purely non-spatial, purely qualitative, psychical elements, and show how from them the representation of quantitative extensity emerges. And, thereby, an insoluble problem has been created, rather than a perfectly intelligible problem solved. What we understand by qualitative intensity can have its peculiar meaning only in antithesis to quantitative extendedness, and the latter can by no means be regarded as either logically or psychologically posterior to the former. In dim and crude form, at the beginning, the opposing characteristics of non-extendedness, —of psychical being, and of extendedness,—of physical being, must come into recognition together. Apprehension of self as an inner mode of existence is only possible in contrast with and parallel to apprehension of an outer mode of existence, characterised by space-extendedness.

The analysis, then, supplies no warrant for the doctrine that space is a mere form of perception. We get from the analysis

no support for the view of the merely subjective or phenomenal character of space. Space appears as in no sense a special component of experience introduced or imposed by the finite mind. Rather are we led to reverse the Kantian argument and to insist that instead of the finite mind being the condition of the possibility of space, space is the condition of the possibility of a finite mind. Space is as real as the finite mind itself is real; the finite mind only comes to be aware of itself, or to be itself, at all, in so far as the distinction marked by space and its absence is realised by it.

(*d*) The tree is regarded by me as possessing a certain unity and identity amidst the variety of its modes of appearance. Its qualities,—figure, position, solidity, colour and the rest,—are changing and variable: different sense-organs are involved in their apprehension, and yet they are regarded by me as qualities of one and the same thing. I inquire not now into the ultimate meaning of the term quality—a conception difficult enough to render intelligible from a metaphysical point of view. It is sufficient here to interpret the statement just made in an empirical fashion as signifying that a thing may be apprehended by us in a number of ways. Each of the qualities we ascribe to the thing is a way in which that thing appears to us. The thing is thus conceived as having a unity—an identity—of its own, and a mode of existence relative to, but distinguishable from, its ways of appearing.

Here, again, there is to be discerned a corresponding advance in the subject's awareness of its own inner life. Unless the subject had come vaguely, at least, to conceive of itself as a unity amidst the variety of its changing modes of activity, were it unable to recognise those modes of activity as modes of its own identical being, then it would, I imagine, be impossible for it to form the corresponding conception of a unity and identity of the external thing, as opposed to the variety of the thing's qualities. As before, the advance on each side is correlative with that on the other; they are strictly parallel lines of development.

(e) I tend to regard the tree as the cause, or real condition, of my apprehension of it. Be it observed, however, that in thus thinking of our perceptions as products of some external agency, we do not in ordinary experience postulate any unknown or unknowable thing-in-itself as the source from which the supposed impression comes. We remain throughout on a strictly empirical level; it is the known objects of ordinary perception that we take to be the things which give rise, through stimulation of the sense-organs, to our sense-apprehension of them. I leave on one side, at present, the question as to the metaphysical justification, or want of justification, of this inference on our part, and direct attention merely to the correlative conception respecting the inner life, in conjunction with which the inference referred to comes to be made. Although certainly obscure and confused at first, although in no sense either an intuitive or an original feature of conscious experience, the conception the subject comes to form of himself as agent is sufficiently easy of formation to bring it into play long before the said subject possesses the means of acquiring an adequate notion either of the inner life as such or of what he calls himself within that life. The animism of primitive reflection,—an animism which has left traces of itself in the habits of thought prevalent amongst us, is sufficient evidence, if evidence were needed, of the strictly correlative character of the conceptions of force or power in nature and of effort or activity originating from ourselves.

(f) Finally, I regard the tree as part of an interdependent totality of things, that mutually influence one another. I assign to the real object a mode of existence independent of my perception of it, and yet I recognise that, although independent of my perception, it is nevertheless connected with other things, and is liable to change or alteration in consequence of its variable relations with those other things. Once more, there are to be discerned here also features in our inner development which correspond to this further notion we form of the real perceived

world. In the progress of experience, our inner life begins to exhibit to us systematic order and connection. We come to relate the several parts of it to the unity of the conscious self, and to recognise the way in which those parts stand in relation with one another. We experience in our own life those relations of fact which, rightly or wrongly, we express by the abstract terms, cause and effect, productive agency and produced consequent. Correlatively therewith, we interpret the outer world after similar fashion, and, just as we come to recognise a reality in our inner life extending beyond its present phase, and related to that present phase, in the manner of a cause or determining agency, so likewise we come to conceive of the real world as a system whose transitory appearances to us are the net result for the moment of the relations in which real things, in all their variety, stand to one another. We come to refer each apprehended content not merely to a single isolated real cause, but generally to the wider whole which is thought of as, so to speak, the background and ultimate condition, of what we sensuously perceive. And so the conception we form of any single object extends in all its features beyond the content of the present perception; however far abstracting thought may go in breaking up experienced reality into separate things, we never wholly lose sight of their essential relatedness, we never wholly come to regard such things as things in themselves.

In what way, then, it may now be asked, does this brief and imperfect sketch of the derivative factors involved in the apprehension of an object bear upon the epistemological problem? I am very far, of course, from suggesting that a psychological investigation of cognition should be decisive of the question as to the nature and validity of knowledge. But that our theory of knowledge shall not conflict with what can be psychologically established in regard to the mode in which knowing, as a process of mind, comes about, is, I submit, a legitimate requirement.

It will scarcely be disputed that the results of the foregoing

investigation are thoroughly compatible with the view that, step by step, we are attaining to a knowledge of the universe as it actually is, a universe which is there to be known, and which is not dependent, so far as its existence or nature is concerned, upon the mind that knows it. A contrast between the content known and the actual reality we are, no doubt, psychologically constrained to admit, and this may be said to be, in a sense, the old contrast between the phenomenal and the real. But the difference implied by the contrast need indicate no more than the difference between a fragmentary and partial aspect of the real and the real in its concrete richness and fullness,—a difference, in other words, between reality as it is but incompletely and as it might be completely known. The contents of the thoughts or conceptions we have been considering, by the aid of which a conscious subject attains to a knowledge both of his own inner life and of an independent order of fact, have been gradually formed by a long series of processes of discrimination. The range and delicacy of such processes increase with each new exercise. On the presupposition that what is being discriminated is already there awaiting discrimination, these processes are explicable. And, in truth, whatever a man's epistemological convictions may be, he can make but little headway as a psychologist without assuming the individual mind to be living in an environment, and the environment to be more or less of the nature it has been found to be by ordinary intelligence.

On the other hand, I do not see how it can be maintained that the theory of subjective idealism is consistent with the facts yielded by our psychological inquiry. So far from consciousness starting with an awareness of subjective states and advancing thence to an awareness of what it takes to be objective, there would seem to be stronger grounds psychologically for exactly the opposite contention.\* Nor do I think

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\* "The consciousness of objects," says Dr. Caird, "is prior in time to self-consciousness." I need not now point out the modifications this statement requires in order to render it psychologically accurate.

it can be seriously questioned that the argument for subjective idealism, as it has generally been presented, does assume the truth of what may not unfairly be called the Cartesian position, that the subject is directly, immediately, aware of his own states of consciousness as *his*, or as, in other words, *subjective*. "With any content of my consciousness," says Volkelt, in what is probably the most careful modern work written from the point of view in question, "I am likewise aware of this that there is given an absolutely self-evidencing knowledge of what is taking place in my consciousness."\* But why go further in search of proof, when Mr. Carr, in his paper read to our Society this session, states the case with an explicitness which leaves nothing to be desired? "At what stage of its experience and why," asks Mr. Carr, "does an infant begin to think that it knows a world independent of knowledge, and reject the simple and obvious truth that its impressions and ideas are its own conscious state? Why is there never an exception? In early infancy this great illusion arises, and an infant's first experience must be free from any illusion."† About this difficulty, which Mr. Carr confesses seems to him "inherent in psychological idealism," enough has already been said. It is sufficient now to emphasize the fact that the picture here drawn of a psychological infant, "handicapped by no prejudices" and undeceived about its own states of consciousness, is utterly out of keeping with the account psychology itself has to offer of the infant mind.

It may, however, be contended that the subjective idealist is not bound to make the assumption I have mentioned. He might argue, it may be said, that, whilst there is no immediate, direct awareness of subjective states as subjective, yet there is no immediate, direct awareness of anything save that which is, as a

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\* *Erfahrung und Denken*, p. 54.

† See present vol. of *Proceedings*, p. 131.

matter of fact, subjective. The "great illusion" that we are directly aware of features which are not subjective, and the truth about those subjective states, at all events, which we do regard as subjective, grow up, he might contend, in consciousness together; we come to know the latter in their real nature in virtue of making, at the same time, a gigantic mistake about the former. The subjective idealist who argued thus would certainly be giving his case away, for, on such premisses, he would have no tenable ground to offer for dismissing one of these inferences as false, and accepting the other as sound. With that, however, I am not now concerned.\* The point of importance here is, whether subjective idealism, interpreted even in the way just indicated, would be consistent with the psychological facts we have before us. The answer, it seems to me, must still be in the negative. For those facts clearly imply that the distinction between the content apprehended, and the state of apprehending, to which, as we have seen, consciousness gradually attains, could not be drawn without the actual presence of that which is neither a subjective event nor any part of a subjective event. A mind, in the development of whose experience no foreign element played a part, could never come to be aware of itself, could never attain to self-consciousness.

#### IV.

We have been working backwards from the more developed to the less developed forms of cognition, and have been eliminating one by one the factors which we have seen reason for thinking are secondary and derivative. Pursuing this course, we seem to arrive at length at an elementary condition of consciousness in which there would be but obscure and confused awareness of sense qualities, barely and imperfectly discriminated, and not apprehended as belonging either to an independent world of fact or to the modes of the subject's

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\* Cf. what has been said above, p. 169.

inner life. The term "immediate experience" has often been used as descriptive of the contents of such primitive apprehension, the intention being especially to lay stress upon the absence of any features involving processes of inference. Hegel, for example, in the *Phänomenologie*, begins his account of the mental life with a treatment of what he calls *sinnliche Gewissheit*, meaning thereby a stage of experience prior to that denoted by the term *Wahrnehmung*. At the stage in question, a sense content simply *is* and is apprehended as simply *there*; it is not referred to a reality independent of the self, it is not identified with the self; there is no conscious comparison of it with other contents, there is no relating it to other contents through ideas of likeness and difference. We have here, in short, the mere awareness of a sense quality, vague and chaotic in form, wanting in all those characteristics that later give to the content apprehended definiteness of nature and precision of outline.

So far, this conception of "immediate experience" does not differ in any essential particular from the view we have been led to take of the primitive consciousness. With certain consequences, however, that are sometimes supposed to follow from the conception,—such consequences, for instance, as are embodied in the modern doctrine of "sentience," our view is not in accord. In respect, then, to the problem that remains over for us,—the nature, namely, of the purely sensory elements of an apprehended content—I have two theses to support. No valid reason can, I contend, be given for maintaining either (1) that the purely sensory elements of the earliest, or, indeed, for a matter of that, of any later, stage of experience are psychical in character, or (2) that there is any *generic* distinction between the so-called "immediate" apprehension of a sense quality and the apprehension of a sense quality when that sense quality is interpreted or "mediated" by thought.

1. With reference to the first point, I can bring out what I wish to urge by briefly noticing an argument which is often



advanced as decisive of the question. That sense qualities are physical and not mental can only be asserted, so many psychologists would say, by one who leaves out of account what is in truth the crux of the whole matter,—the fact, namely, of sense-impression. There is, they would insist, no getting rid of the obvious fact that perception comes about through stimulation of the organs of sense, or that, in the end, the purely sensory elements of perception must be reactions of the subject upon affection from without. "It is quite inconceivable," declares Lotze, "that we could receive an impression from the world outside with the shaping of which our own nature had nothing to do." And the ground on which Lotze bases that contention is the following:—Wherever between two facts A and B of whatever kind there occurs an event which we will call the influence of A upon B, such influence never consists in a constituent element or state,  $\alpha$ , separating itself from A, passing over to B, and, without undergoing any change, attaching itself to B, to become one of its states. What does happen is that, given a relation C between A and B,  $\alpha$  becomes the cause of B evolving out of its own nature, and as part of itself, its new state  $\beta$ . So that the form of the effect  $\beta$  can never be independent of the nature of that whose state it is; the same relation C, which obtained between A and B, will, as between A and B<sup>1</sup>, produce in B<sup>1</sup> a new effect  $\beta^1$ , quite distinct from  $\beta$ . Apply this, then, to the operation of real things upon a conscious mind that apprehends them. Suppose an external object A operating on the mind B, and giving rise in B to  $\beta$ , in this case a sensation. How is it possible to escape the admission that  $\beta$  may contain in it elements of B which will prevent our ever being certain that it conveys an accurate representation of A?

I answer, the argument is only valid on an assumption which throughout we have been seeing reason for rejecting,—the assumption, namely, that a mind or consciousness is an object standing to the objects of its experience in a relation similar to

that in which they stand to one another. Certainly the lesson of the Critical Philosophy has been learnt to little purpose, if it has not made manifest the inherent contradiction involved in the attempt at viewing mental states as at once modes of apprehending objects and effects arising from the action of those objects. I appeal here, once more, to the work, far too much neglected, of that acute thinker, Avenarius. Avenarius points out that when we take into account the whole of the circumstances connected with the perception of an object, we are enabled to distinguish in its regard three different relations of dependence: (*a*) that between the fact A and the perception of A; (*b*) that between the fact A and the nervous system; and (*c*) that between the nervous system and the perception of A. The only one of these which we are justified in designating a causal relation is the second (*b*). No doubt when an act of visual perception occurs, there has likewise occurred a certain definite stimulation of the sensory organ, a physical impression, to use the current phrase, has been made upon the organ of sense. No doubt, also, this impression sets up a certain physical change or disturbance in the optic nerve, which change or disturbance is conveyed to the cerebral centre, with which the optic nerve is connected. But neither the impression nor the cerebral change resulting therefrom forms the content, or any part of the content, that is apprehended by the subject. The subject apprehends neither the impression nor the cerebral change, but (let us say) the sense-quality green. Nor can I discover any ground for the common belief that the impression or nervous change produces the green which the subject is apprehending. What, on the other hand, it does give rise to, in some way we cannot yet explain, is a specific mode or state of consciousness, in and through which the green is discriminated in that which either has come, or in the course of mental evolution will come, to be apprehended as objective reality. The impression, whatever be its exact physiological nature, is a physical fact; the green, however, is not *that* physical fact, but

*another*, apprehended through and by means of the mental process which, in some way, the former physical fact conditions or calls forth. The green, therefore, is neither an impression nor a mental state; it is that which is apprehended in consequence of the impression and through the mental state to which the impression gives rise. In the light of this analysis, Lotze's argument ceases to have plausibility. Locke rested the doctrine of the subjectivity of our ideas of secondary qualities upon the alleged fact that these ideas were impressions produced in us by "the impulse of insensible particles of matter of peculiar figures and bulks, and in different degrees and modifications of their motions." If, however, a state of consciousness is not an impression, and if, further, a state of consciousness is not to be identified with the content which through it is apprehended, and which likewise is not an impression, then the whole case for denying that such a sense-quality as green is a veritable feature of physical reality breaks down.

2. The Kantian doctrine that sense and thought are in nature essentially distinct has found its way, under one form or another, into much current psychology. And certainly, were one compelled to allow that sense-presentations and their images are explicable without any exercise of discriminative activity on the part of the mind, it would not be possible, in respect to sense apprehension and thought, to insist upon a fundamental identity of process. Were we justified in opposing, as is popularly done, sense-presentations, as so much received material upon which thinking is exercised, to thinking as an activity which finds occasion for its exercise in such material, then we should doubtless be precluded from regarding as even a legitimate problem the attempt to trace the evolution of the higher mental processes from the lower.\* But if, in order to interpret the fact of sense-presentation itself, we are obliged to assume that what appears to us, from the later position we

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\* Cf. Mr. Pritchard's article, already alluded to, pp. 52-3.

occupy, as an isolated fact upon which thinking may be exercised, has only gradually come to be thus recognised, through a long series of discriminative acts, if the apprehension of even the crudest, most indefinite, sense-content to which the name presentation can be assigned, really involves an act of discrimination similar in kind, however differing in degree, from the discrimination involved in the apprehension of a content relatively clear and distinct, then the problem just indicated is not only a legitimate problem, but a problem which the facts of the mental life force upon us.

When once the notion of sense-presentations as "impressions" or "affections of the mind" has been got rid of, the motive that principally weighed with Kant in conceiving of thought as a unique function disappears. So long as that notion is retained, some form of psychological atomism is well-nigh inevitable. For "impressions," as Hume and Kant rightly saw, must be in themselves isolated and disconnected; and, from his point of view, Hume was perfectly justified in holding that each "perception," as it comes and goes, is a "distinct existence." From that point of view, sense-presentations could be related to one another only in an external manner. And Hume recognised no less clearly than Kant that isolated impressions, whether they be called "perceptions" or "sensations," or by whatsoever other name, are in no way equivalent to knowledge, that the elements of an object known are combined and related in a fashion not explicable from the nature of mere impressions. "Did our perceptions," writes Hume, "either inhere in something simple and individual, or did the mind perceive some real connection among them, there would be no difficulty in the case." In this remarkable passage, the alternative lines of reflection along which a solution of the problem that baffled Hume himself is to be sought are virtually suggested.

The first alternative may be said to have been that taken by Kant. Synthesis, combination of the manifold,—the

fundamental feature in knowledge—could not be “given” as impressions were “given”; it was essentially a contribution of the mind to that which was known. The act of combining or relating, of conferring upon the content of what was in itself a mere subjective affection the fixity and universality characteristic of an object, was an act of thought. By “object,” Kant means that element in the perceived content which, as opposed to the merely empirical data of intuition, constituted, in his view, its universal or necessary aspect. However it might be, then, with regard to the given sensory elements, there were obviously present in the very structure of an object features of the utmost importance that were pre-eminently of a mental character. The nature of the object was dependent upon the knowing mind. No sooner was that conclusion reached, than the further step to the later idealism followed almost as a matter of course. For, after all, the “given” character of the sensory elements signified for Kant no more than that the individual concrete subject could not be conceived as productive of the matter offered to him in experience. In that respect, however, the matter did not really differ from the intelligible form, seeing that the latter also was no product of the *individual* mind. Since, therefore, both form and matter were *in this sense* “given,” what ground was there for assuming them to be given by different means? Nay, the difficulties confronting such an assumption were insuperable. For how was it to be tolerated that, after having interpreted the being of objects as dependent upon mind, their sensory constituents should be ascribed to the action of “objects,” whose being did not depend upon mind? The conversion of Kant’s conception of a synthetic unity of apperception into the conception of an Absolute Self-consciousness seemed to be a logical necessity.

Yet closer inspection reveals a serious flaw in the reasoning by which the latter position was reached. The reasoning assumes in the premisses what is rejected in the

conclusion. A synthetic unity of apperception had been postulated in order that the matter of sense, in itself unrelated, might be brought into relation, and thus enter into the constitution of an object. But in the transition to idealism, the Kantian view of the two different sources of the matter and the form of knowledge had been abandoned, and, accordingly, the unrelated elements of sense turn out to be pure fictions. "An unrelated sensation," as Green is never weary of insisting, "cannot amount to a fact," and "is in truth a phrase that represents no reality." Since, then, isolated "impressions" are nowhere to be met with, it will not do to base the argument in favour of "a spiritual principle in nature" upon the necessity of overcoming such isolation. First to pulverise the universe into a manifold of independent elements in order to demonstrate the need of a principle of synthesis, and then, having secured the principle of synthesis, to turn round upon the independent elements and discard them as sheer impossibilities, is certainly a precarious way of establishing the truth of a philosophical theory! Only on the assumption that there are "impressions" to relate, is the argument that traces relations to an unique activity of thought valid; only on the assumption that relations are traceable to an unique activity of thought is Green's argument for idealism permissible. The doctrine that relations are constituted by thought appears, therefore, to rest on dubious foundations. That thinking is, in one of its aspects, a process of synthesis, does not, in the least, entitle us to assert that in whatever exhibits relatedness thought factors must be contained. As a matter of fact, the analytic activity of thought is a necessary precondition and correlative of its synthetic activity. It requires both the analytic and the synthetic procedure of thought to enable us to arrive, in mature experience, at that discrimination of definite individual things with which we are prone to imagine experience begins. The crude indeterminate mass of primitive perception is gradually broken up; what is

originally confusedly apprehended as in conjunction becomes sundered into distinct and separate objects. *Then*, no doubt, it is possible for our abstracting intelligence to regard such objects more or less apart from their relations, and, at the same time, to represent to ourselves the process of thinking as the activity by means of which these apparently isolated objects are "brought into" connection with one another, through such ideas of relation as those of causality and the like. That *is* how relations come to be recognised as relations. But neither psychological, nor, so far as I can discover, any other, considerations warrant the conclusion that relations only subsist in so far as they are recognised.

I turn to the second alternative suggested in the passage quoted from Hume. Can it be maintained that the mind does "perceive some real connection" between the facts of its experience, a connection, that is, which actually subsists between the facts themselves, and which is not imposed upon them by the act of apprehension? The only serious obstacle that blocked the way to this position was again the view of sensations as "impressions." For, whilst impressions cannot be intrinsically related, things in nature may be, and if in and through the process of apprehension the qualities of things are discriminated, there is no reason for supposing that their relations cannot similarly be discriminated. Indeed, one may go further and insist that there could not be discrimination at all unless there were relation among the facts discriminated. Even the most rudimentary discrimination of a quality implies that in the content itself differences are present, and that the quality in question is distinguished, however dimly, from the rest of the content. The apprehension of a quality and of its relations are, it may be said, two sides of one and the same act. As we have seen, a content of apprehension can never be simple in character, and this means, in other words, that it must be a whole consisting of related parts. 'But is a relation anything,'

it will be asked, 'apart from the mind which conceives the relation, which holds together the two related terms and apprehends how they are related?' Yes, I reply; the presence in the content of such relations as difference, resemblance, coexistence, and the like, by no means necessitates the separation of the abstract conceptions of difference, likeness, coexistence, etc., from the facts that are different, or like, or coexistent. A and B, elements in a complex content, may be apprehended together, and, in being thus apprehended, exhibit, for example, a certain difference. The difference, however, need not be apprehended as a feature distinct from A and B; it may be an aspect of the whole AB. To discriminate A from B at all implies doubtless the exercise of an activity similar in kind to that which renders possible the later formation of the abstract idea of the relation in which A and B stand to one another; but it does not imply the apprehension from the beginning of the abstract idea as distinct from the related facts, or that the relatedness itself is due to application of the abstract idea to otherwise unrelated elements. It is our inveterate habit of construing the development of cognition in a mechanical fashion that leads us to view the compared elements of a content as presented in their definiteness, independently of any discriminating activity, and so as requiring a new and special act of mind to bring about relatedness. If, however, we avoid that tendency, if we construe the act of apprehension as from the outset an act of discriminating, then we shall find reason for reverting the Kantian procedure, and instead of deriving concrete relatedness from general notions of relation, endeavour rather to show how, from the former, the latter are gradually evolved.\* In tracing

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\* Interesting light, I think, is thrown upon the rudimentary mode of apprehending relatedness by such researches as those of Meinong and Ehrenfels upon what the former calls *fundirte Inhalte* and the latter *Gestaltqualitäten*.



the conditions upon which recognition of the distinction between subject and object depends, we have, in fact, been exhibiting the way in which from the originally complex wholes of primitive experience, ideas of relation by degrees emerge, and enable us to attain to increasingly accurate knowledge of the world of fact. But it is because they express what we have found in the world of fact that they enable us to do so ; not because we project them into the world of fact.

I conclude, then, that neither the matter nor the form of what is experienced can be shown to be due to the fact of experiencing, and that the theory according to which objects apprehended are either wholly or in part mental constructs is devoid of logical justification. I have tried to indicate how a perfectly intelligible account of knowledge is possible upon the view that physical nature is no less real than the conscious minds who are gradually attaining to a more and more adequate discrimination of its manifold contents. The conception of physical nature which thus emerges is, indeed, strikingly different from the conception of a bare realm of mechanism such as may be framed from the standpoint of abstract dynamics. The mechanism no doubt is there, but the real physical world is not a mere world of mechanism. It requires the qualities of things to fill it out; everywhere in it we find qualitative differences playing around and depending upon quantitative configurations of matter. And, if we are not justified in assigning all the qualitative differences of nature to consciousness, neither are we justified in assigning them to quantitative changes of a purely mechanical kind. They are there in their own right, and we can as little explain their genesis by resort to mechanical as by resort to mental agency. Physical nature, as thus constituted, forms an environment within which conscious minds find scope for growth and development; the life of mind is no less integral a part of the inter-related system of reality than the objects which it apprehends. I find it helpful to try to conceive of processes of consciousness as

connected with certain configurations of matter in space somewhat after the manner in which physical qualities, such as green or blue, are thus connected. We know not what ultimately the mode of connection is in either case, but the analogy at least suggests the futility of trying to explain matter in terms of mind or mind in terms of matter.

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## IX.—THE NATURE OF MENTAL ACTIVITY.

A SYMPOSIUM BY S. ALEXANDER, JAMES WARD, CARVETH  
READ, and G. F. STOUT.

1.—*By* S. ALEXANDER.

THERE are two questions which may be intended when we are asked what is the consciousness of activity. We may mean what is it to be conscious of activity as distinguished from passivity. Or we may mean simply and generally what is the consciousness of performing any mental process whatever, supposing we have such a consciousness of activity. The second interpretation of the question is not, perhaps, the more natural or usual one. We speak rather of mental *process* in this sense than of mental activity. On the other hand, we commonly do speak of acts of hearing, perceiving, inference, and it is not strained to speak of a sensory action or an act of sensation. Activity in this sense is mental function in general. Both the narrower and the wider question are psychological. But the distinction of activity and passivity is in a great degree one of detail. The question of the consciousness of mental activity in general is more fundamental, though it is difficult or even impossible to keep this question altogether separate from metaphysics or theory of knowledge. But it is the more interesting to me, and I shall devote the larger part of my remarks to it. In part of what I say I do not know how far I am or am not merely painfully trying to realise for myself what my teachers have said already. Two of them follow me in this discussion. But I prefer not to divert the discussion from the subject itself by any direct examination of their published statements.

Let me begin with the narrower question, which prepares the way for the other. You may seek to explain activity, in its distinction from passivity, in two different ways, both of which I have entertained in turns and have come to regard as erroneous. You may describe it in terms of the muscular movements and strains, and other bodily actions in which mental activity like that of active attention, or inference, or desire, finds expression. In my own case, mental activity, especially in thinking, is accompanied by marked movements of the eyes, which are apt to change their position with each change of the thought, and whose movements, in fact, I use as a means of directing thought in different directions and controlling it. Now, these and the like movements appear to me highly significant, because when you try to describe mental activity in words you inevitably, as I shall point out later, tend to be aware also of its connection with certain portions of the organism. But they are not mental activity itself, but only physical movements belonging to a specially privileged external thing. This is one error I have learned to avoid. The second is this. You may describe activity in terms of your ideas—you may say that it is the consciousness of the expansion of an idea against a limit and the like. Here again I acknowledge the significance of the analysis. But it must be understood that ideas in this account of the matter must be regarded as themselves “psychical events” or processes. In other words, the expansion in question is not a mere development of the contents of my mind. If this were so, you could not distinguish the consciousness of your own activity from that of an external physical activity, say, of a shot tearing a lion’s shoulder. I used at one time, naively perhaps, to consider that whenever you had ideas ABC replaced continuously by ABCD that that was also the only experience of activity that you could have. But I see now that this is impossible, and that the activity lies not in the changing presentations, but in the process of transition itself from ABC

to ABCD. I should not, indeed, myself speak of a psychical event ABC developing into another ABCD, because that seems to imply that you do have psychical events which psychically are different in quality according to the character of their content, as if the perception of a tree were different in quality from that of a rose, and I shall give reasons hereafter for repudiating any such notion altogether. But quite apart from the propriety of speaking of psychical events as described in terms of their contents, what I have said is enough to show that the consciousness of activity must be found in some change of direction of the mental process itself. As mental process always has reference to certain objects (or, if you like to call them so, presentations) you may study the mental process indirectly by studying the object, and so may delude yourself into the belief that the mental process is itself a presentation, something you can reflect on as if it were distinguished from yourself.

Various attempts have been made to describe in detail the precise character of the difference between active and passive mental process. Activity has been called the self-realisation of an idea, as an idea—or it has been said that you have activity when one mental process is the outcome of previous mental process. The first statement applies very clearly to cases like desire or the effort of recollection. It does not apply so clearly to a simple case like that of the sight of bright sunshine which drives me out to enjoy it; there is an “idea” present here of something to bask in, but though I am conscious of bodily activity, I feel myself mentally passive rather than mentally active. The second description applies directly to the active working out of an interest, and it makes clear the reason for the passivity of such experiences as an interesting sensation or a sudden flash of inspiration, but it does not apply equally well to the passivity of reverie, where process is the outcome of previous process, and yet no activity is felt. Perhaps I shall do best to describe shortly what, as helped by these analyses, I think

I discover in my own feeling of activity—*e.g.*, in desire, or trying to remember, or in inference. My mind begins to move in certain directions, *e.g.*, towards the forgotten name, but is not able to reach its end. It needs for success to be reinforced by connected processes in the mind, in virtue of which the resistance is overcome. The initial indeterminateness of movement is followed by a victorious and definite movement. There appears thus to be present in my consciousness of activity not merely an incipient or nascent movement (and an "idea" as such appears to me on its mental side nothing but such a nascent movement), which becomes fulfilled, but a complexity of other tendencies. When an incipient movement of itself passes into definite action, I do not feel activity. But the more I call in the help of reinforcing tendencies, the more I do feel active. Hence the feeling of activity, which tends to go with the working out of an interest, which has not become purely spontaneous. At the same time there is another feature present, which is perhaps the most important and is itself related to the complexity of the experience. The more complex the group of tendencies, the more are alternative actions possible, and hence in the higher kinds of activity the consciousness that the action pursued is selected. On the other hand, the more self-contained a mental process is, the more it can be taken by itself, as in surrendering oneself to the pleasure of a warm bath, or indulging in a train of consecutive ideas, or taking in a sensation, the more passive I feel. Passivity seems to go with determinate direction, or, to use a convenient technical word, with univocal direction of my mind, and activity with a mental determination which admits more or less clearly apprehended alternatives, it goes with equivocal direction. Hence it is that activity and passivity are so curiously mingled in our experiences: as they are in desire which is eminently purposive, fixed upon its end to the exclusion of other and distracting suggestions, and at the same time blind and enforced; or, in the kind of inference in which, as we say, the conclusion is forced upon us, where we feel

passive in so far as we are constrained by the object which admits no alternative course, and yet intensely active so far as it is we ourselves who, in virtue of the sum of various tendencies which make up our interest, arrive at the result. Hence, too, we can readily understand why there is no clear demarcation in our experience between passive and active processes.

Whether this account of the distinction between activity and passivity is accurate or not, in both conditions there is activity in the wider sense, and I have been constantly using phrases which anticipate what I have to say about the nature of this process-consciousness, to which I now pass on. I can only describe mental activity in general in metaphorical terms, because of its extreme simplicity and its uniqueness. But the best term seems to me to be movement. In all my mental conditions, whether will, desire, inference, perception, sensation, I am aware of these movements, and these movements have what I must call direction and differ in direction. What happens in desire I have already indicated. When a whole interest is at work, my mind moves by several converging lines of tendency. As I pass from stage to stage of a train of ideas, I feel the change of direction from one thought to another. The simpler the condition the more difficult is the process to describe, but the process is there and verifiable. Sometimes I can only detect it through helping myself out by reference to my external movements. Thus I can verify that in enjoying a hot bath my mind goes on moving in the initial direction, and this direction is different from that of taking in a prolonged sound. Or I may be conscious in a sensation of the mental activity which is a suggestion of the name, as blue or yellow. Or, again, in perceptual process my activity is mental preparation for handling the object perceived, for responding to it in appropriate ways, anticipating the next stage in the action. Always I am conscious of moving from one point to another, which either may or may not be in the same direction.

In speaking thus of movement and change of direction, and I may add of rate of movement, I am of course obliged to use anticipatory terms derived from physical objects, describing not merely the mental activity as I am aware of it, but as it is connected with bodily processes which occur in the organism and more particularly in the brain. I make it clearer to myself by locating it in time or space in a picture of my brain. Tennyson says "as when a great thought strikes along the brain and flushes all the cheek." The second phrase describes only a consequence, but in all my thoughts, little or great and of all kinds, I verify the description that they strike along the brain. Now that I know what my brain is, I feel my thought occurring there, or, if not there, in some other part of my body. It is only as thus understood in connection with the bodily organism that I can say my mental activity is a movement with direction. But in this sense it is a movement, and does occur in time and space. In other words, my mental activity is always qualified by what, on the analogy of local signs, I must call signs of direction. When I change my thoughts from one topic to another, I have an experience which I can only compare to the shifting of the pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope when it is turned, and this experience is not the same as the movements of the eyes in which, with me, it is habitually expressed. Movements like these or like catching the breath, or the flushing of the cheek of which the poet speaks, may be present in various degrees, but these movements I can distinguish perfectly well from the movements, simple or complex, which I have described as mental, changing their direction with the subject matter, but always when made definite and explicit referred to the brain.

Now what makes one thought-process different from another is, I find, nothing but this difference of mental direction. It is not the object or content of the thought. When the object is different the direction of my activity is different, but the object has nothing to do with my mind. Moreover,

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I must go on to add that when I say I am conscious of this activity, I mean that the activity so described is consciousness, and that I can find nothing else in consciousness except these activities. I sympathise very much with the spirit of certain recent inquiries which result in the declaration that consciousness does not exist, but I think the doctrine erroneous. I have no doubt that the thing called my consciousness exists, and that it is mental activity. But it is not different in quality according as I am conscious of blue or green, or the sun or the Pythagorean theorem. These things are not consciousness, but things to which consciousness refers, upon which it is a kind of reaction. All these things are different according as they are colour, or figure, or the like, but my consciousness is one and the same thing working only in different directions.

The most difficult and interesting thing to determine upon this psychological borderland is the place of sensation. That sensation belongs to the objective side of what is called (I take the phrase as I find it) the subject-object relation, would be readily admitted. But my language conflicts with a view widely entertained that a sensation itself is still psychical, and not as I am maintaining by examples, physical. I cannot in my examination of experience separate the sensation of green from the perception of a green leaf, except in respect of complexity. If I resolutely divest my mind of the last traces of the figment of an inner sense, which represents the objects of experience in some supposed subjective condition, then I find in a sensation nothing but mental activity directed upon what is called the content of the sensation, which content is nowhere found except in the external object. It seemed to me at one time that we might describe consciousness as a sort of thrill, and sensations as qualitatively distinct thrills of consciousness. But this now seems to me an erroneous description. It is not the quality of consciousness that differs, but its coefficient of direction. Accordingly green, red, smell, hunger, and the like

are but objects, doubtless of an exceedingly simple sort, which it is the business of metaphysics to describe. But these sensations, as we know them, I mean as sensations of red, green, have no psychical character, red, green. There correspond to them of course on the side of the organism various specialised mental processes. But the mental process has no character in it of colour, or smell, or sound. It has only a direction which varies with the object that excites the conscious activity. Sensations then are, so far as they can be called psychical, nothing but the simplest signs of direction. But it is only their simplicity which gives them any special claim for consideration. To every object perceived, imagined, desired, and the like, there correspond more or less complicated signs of direction.

I will add two corollaries which will put the thesis I am explaining in a different way:—

(1) What I have called mental activity is, in the usual language of psychology, conation, and what I am saying is tantamount to the assertion that the conative side of "experience" is the only thing which is mental. As for pleasure and pain, I am content as at present advised to regard them as modalities of the conative process. My thesis then, founded as I think on self-description, is that consciousness is conation and nothing else.

It may be as well to add one or two verifications of this summary description. The first is the law of association, which merely means that when the mind starts moving along one of a set of connected directions it goes on to move along the others. The second is the influence of feeling upon the course of thoughts, as, for example, in the selective influence of prejudice, where the effect of the presence of the feeling is not to call up certain thoughts but to begin the appropriate movements. In constructive creation the common phrase that a man's mind has struck into a new line is more than metaphorical. The passion or interest with which the worker is

inspired seems to direct him into a new mental path, and it is mainly when the antecedent motions are concealed from him that he attributes his new thoughts to outside influences to which he is passive. My last instance shall be that of split-off consciousness. Where an organism for some reason or other ceases to work completely as a whole, certain stimuli may fail to produce the nervous changes which are the condition of mental activity and yet at the same time may very well excite activity or consciousness in connection with other portions of the same system.

(2) It follows, secondly, that all consciousness is self-consciousness. There is no difference between these two things as if besides consciousness there were also a consciousness of consciousness. That way madness lies, for there is no reason why you should stop at consciousness of consciousness and not go on to a consciousness of that. On the other hand, we certainly have a consciousness of self when we take self to be the whole thing, body and mind, taken together, a composite thing. The self as described contains not only my mental activity but the body in which that mental activity is located, and which it comes to be aware of in the same way as it is aware of all external things, and it may go on to include all the things about which we occupy our minds. But all this embodiment of the self is but the privileged thing with which our mental activity is connected. Other things through their intimacy of relation with this body may seem at times to enlarge the bounds of our personality; and the habitual objects of our thoughts and desires enter in the same way into our personality. But whether it is our body, or psychology, or politics, which we regard as the chief constituent of our personality, what makes the personality mental is never these things but the mental activities which have them for their objects. The conscious self is always the reaction of consciousness upon its objects. We never have a superadded consciousness of this conscious part of the self.

So far I have been following, as I think, observation. It is a matter of observation that consciousness is mental activity, and it is a matter of observation that such consciousness is located, however vaguely, in the body. What I now add goes beyond observation. I have been considering consciousness as a property of a certain highly developed organism. It consists of reaction, of course unique in kind, of this organism upon objects which affect it. It is strictly comparable to life, also a unique phenomenon. Life is a set of reactions, running, pouncing, digestion, breathing, and the rest, upon certain stimuli. It varies in its direction according to the stimulus and the part of the organism which is employed. But in so far as these functions are vital, we have to say that the body exhibits a new quality not found in lower material systems, and the new quality is life. Suppose, now, your living being is also a conscious one (I do not know where, if at all, the difference in organic structure between a conscious and a living organism is to be found, but suppose that it has a brain), such an organism exhibits not only life but a fresh form of reaction, which is consciousness, conditioned, of course, by the lower forms of reaction, just as life is conditioned by physical and chemical processes. Conscious process is thus simply a phenomenon found in certain organisms, a new quality of such structures, but as distinctive as life.

As I conceive the matter there are in the world among physical objects certain physical objects whose structure is so developed that certain of their functions are not purely physiological but are consciousness. These functions, which constitute consciousness, are situated in the brain or other part of the neural system. These conscious reactions upon other objects than consciousness itself are what we call the consciousness of these objects, which is the stirring into life of consciousness in connection with those objects. How much consciousness shall know of them depends on the organism of which it is a function

or—to vary the language—which uses it\* as an instrument. There is nothing in the nature of the case why a still higher organism should not exhibit an order of existence higher than mere consciousness and conditioned by it. The existence of consciousness as part of the life of the body is a fact revealed to consciousness through its more intimate relations with the body. I can thus find in consciousness nothing but a phenomenon, a part of the whole world of phenomena. There are psychical things in the world as well as physical. A psychical thing is mental activity. But I can find in it no mysterious indescribable activity such as Berkeley and some of his successors have found, but something definitely describable.

I have got on to the edge of metaphysics, just where what is called the theory of knowledge begins. But to go further would be to raise difficulties outside the psychological problem. I draw back, therefore, to psychology, in order to explain why in this discussion I made no difference between three things which are sometimes sharply distinguished, namely, activity itself, activity-consciousness and the consciousness of activity. As to the first of these phrases, it may be thought that consciousness may be an activity and yet there need not be a consciousness of it. This is really impossible. If consciousness is itself an activity and not merely dependent on some other activity (*e.g.*, physiological) that activity is conscious. The other distinction between activity-consciousness and consciousness of activity does not seem to me to possess the importance sometimes attached to it. It is convenient to distinguish an explicit from an undeveloped experience and you may designate the explicit consciousness by *of*. You may speak of change-consciousness and the consciousness of change, the latter being definite change. Consciousness of activity is nothing but the dim activity-consciousness standing out clear and

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\* This should have read "which it uses," but I leave the text unaltered because of Mr. Ward's subsequent reference.

distinct. On the other hand (and I suppose this is what is intended), if it is implied that I can yet be conscious of my mental activity in the same way as I am conscious of a bee, I believe the foregoing to have shown this to be erroneous. External things are related to consciousness which reacts upon them, but they *are* not consciousness. On the other hand, consciousness is not related to consciousness. I cannot attend to my attention as I attend to what I write. I can only when possessed by psychological interest contrive to make the different features in attention distinct. When I appear to turn a consciousness like desire or attention into an object like a bee it is only because I am considering it by help of the expression of it or the object (or content) of it. This might be expressed by saying that consciousness or mental activity can never be a presentation. I agree with this, but I think that the fact is improperly described. I should say simply that consciousness is not a physical thing.

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2.—By JAMES WARD.

I FIND in Professor Alexander's opening paper passages which embody all the main features of mental activity as I understand it, and yet his position and mine are, I fear, radically different. I agree that, though we distinguish between activity and passivity, activity in a certain wider sense pertains to all experience,—that activity, namely, which is implied in consciousness. I agree further that the conscious or mental activity is in itself one and the same, working only in different 'directions.' By this I mean that it is what we call attention widely understood, attention now to sensory presentations, now to motor, now to presentations, now to representations and so on. When this 'direction' is determined for me, I am said to be passive, when it is determined by me, I am said to be active. I admit that the two are so far inseparable, in that I can never wholly

determine the objects to which I attend; we have no experience of creative activity. But I should still hesitate to say that there is no clear demarcation between the two. I admit also that activity in the narrower sense is always conative, but I do not find that "consciousness is conative and nothing else." Nor can I see how Professor Alexander's previous exposition has led up to such a thesis. It is true that when attention is non-voluntarily determined the subject is never wholly indifferent and so the situation as either pleasurable or painful entails at once a conative attitude. But the receptive, affective, and reactive constituents of such a total *psychosis* are still distinct, and Professor Alexander has himself distinguished them.\* Finally I fully recognise "the extreme simplicity and uniqueness" of mental activity on which Professor Alexander also insists. But there we part.

"Because of this extreme simplicity and uniqueness," Professor Alexander continues, "I can only describe mental activity in general in metaphorical terms." I hold, on the contrary, that what is simple and unique can neither be described nor defined in *any* terms. We may indicate it and designate it; and since in any case it cannot be absolutely isolated, we may succeed in analysing more or less completely the complex in which it occurs, or the conditions on which it depends. And when, nevertheless, Professor Alexander tells us that mental activity is best described as "movement" it does not take long to see that the fitness of the simile is really due to the fact that he has in view precisely that kind of literal movement to which we have already metaphorically transferred the idea of activity. Movement pure and simple, mere change of position, is a kinematical concept and suggests neither activity nor passivity.

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\* The distinctness of the second, however, it must be allowed, Professor Alexander recognises in a very halting fashion, as "modalities of the conative process." But till Professor Alexander has explained himself further I can only take this to mean that affection and conation, though distinguishable, are not actually separable: this I admit.

Movement, in Newton's sense again, or momentum, implies complete inactivity or inertia, just as truly as does rest: only when there is some acceleration, some change, that is to say, either in rate or direction, do we talk of physical action. The history of this concept of physical causation, from the cruder anthropomorphism of pre-scientific thinking down to its dynamical interpretation in the present day, shows plainly that the notion of action was first imported into it from the sphere of conscious life and that it has been gradually but at length completely eliminated. I take it that nobody nowadays attributes activity to colliding bodies or to an electric discharge. We might as well say that the moon lights the sun as suppose that physical action throws any new light on mental activity.

It is true, however, that we talk freely of movements in connexion with mental activity and that in two senses, which Professor Alexander very properly distinguishes. There are certain literal movements connected with circulation, respiration and the like—determined probably through the sympathetic system of nerves—of which we are more or less dimly aware. But these we recognise as but the collateral consequences of mental activity. There are also other literal movements due to the so-called voluntary muscles, which are the direct outcome of mental activity, intentional movements. Still they are not themselves instances of mental activity but rather its effects, objects or end: in the language of Professor Alexander, they are the content upon which mental activity is directed. And this brings us to the second and metaphorical sense of movement, as when, for instance, we talk of movements of attention. The source of this figure is doubtless to be found partly in the pre-eminence as regards cognition which the sense of sight has attained for us: so we talk of the mind's eye, of the field and focus of consciousness. Partly it is to be found in the pre-eminence, as regards action, which belongs to the hand: so we talk of mental grasp, apprehending, comprehending, perceiving, conceiving, etc. But mental activity,



however strictly distinguished from its overt results, whether collateral or intended, is at any rate correlated to actual motions "in the organism and more particularly in the brain." And this fact seems to play hide and seek with us in a strange way throughout Professor Alexander's exposition: at any rate the transitions are so "kaleidoscopic" that I fail to see their logical connexion. If, nevertheless, I venture on a few remarks, I do so mainly in the hope of eliciting further explanations.

To begin them, in one place we find Professor Alexander saying: "always I am conscious of moving from one point to another." This seems to suggest the activity of attention as I should understand it, "my consciousness as one and the same thing working only in different directions," to use his own words. But alas! it seems there is here a double sense that keeps the promise to our ear and breaks it to our hope. For presently we find Professor Alexander saying: "Now that I know what my brain is, I feel my thought occurring there . . . It is only as thus understood that I can say my mental activity is a movement . . . But in this sense it *is* a movement and does occur in time and space." Why should what is felt as occurring in the body yield the experience of mental activity: what is it that singles out one kind of bodily occurrence as unique in this respect from the rest? The metaphorical sense of movement seems to have vanished and we have an objective physical movement, somehow apprehended as activity, in its stead. And yet this language would perhaps not seem so decisive\* if we did not interpret it in the light of what is said later of consciousness as "a property of the organism," as "a reaction of this organism upon objects which affect it," as "simply a phenomenon *found* in certain organisms," which use it "as an instrument," etc. There is much beside in the details of Professor Alexander's exposition which to me is hopelessly

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\* For in his second paragraph Professor Alexander has expressly rejected William James's view of activity as "an error he has learned to avoid."

bewildering, but it would take far more time than I can claim to dwell upon these. I trust I have said enough to indicate my main difficulty. Professor Alexander tells us he has got "to the edge of metaphysics, just where what is called the theory of knowledge begins," and there he decides to stop. In other words, he has led us into a bog and there he proposes to leave us.

Thus in Professor Alexander's world there are physical things and there are psychical things and there are "composite things"—"body and mind taken together." Apparently they are all phenomena, though in what sense this most ambiguous term is understood is not clear. It would seem that the Pythagorean theorem along with blue and green is a phenomenon, though whether like the latter it is to be handed over to metaphysics for description does not appear. On the whole, if 'phenomenon' implies degrees of reality—the superiority lies on the physical side. For not only does Professor Alexander sympathise—and I take it the sympathy is entirely intellectual—with the "spirit" that has recently got so far as to declare that the psychical things do not exist:\* he regards them as in any case but properties of certain physical objects whose structure is sufficiently developed. But how, if two things are "taken together," does one become the property or quality of the other? Well, of course they are only phenomena. And yet though phenomena and properties of objects, psychical things, *i.e.*, consciousnesses or mental activities, are not presentations. Naturally then we should expect to be told that they do not strictly admit of description, and Professor Alexander, as we have seen at the outset, practically said as much.

But yet he ends by saying that they are "definitely describ-

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\* A parallel case, I suppose, would be found in those physicists who sympathise with the hypothesis recently advanced that ions are only electric charges and that mass does not exist.

able.”\* Or, rather, he says this just as he reaches “the edge of metaphysics,” but immediately he has drawn back into psychology he unsays it again. “When I *appear* to turn a (moment of) consciousness, like desire or attention, into an object, like a bee, it is only because I am considering it by help of the expression of it or the object (or content) of it.” But the former is not “mental activity itself,” and the latter “has nothing to do with the mind.” So after all “I cannot attend to my attention as I attend to what I write.” Perhaps I am reading my own meaning into this when I say that I agree with it entirely; for I certainly cannot reconcile it with other statements that Professor Alexander has made, least of all with his saying that “consciousness is nothing but a phenomenon.”

Finally, I think that the advance from activity-consciousness—which, I suppose, is what Professor Alexander means by “mere consciousness”—to the consciousness of activity is much more than a convenient distinction.† In fact, the demand for a psychological account of this advance is precisely what Mr. Bradley has been urging these many years. And the very thorough and masterly exposition of his own view of it, in my opinion more than anything else, now requires and deserves examination. Professor Alexander refers to it somewhat incidentally, and so far as I follow his criticisms I agree

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\* At the same time, Professor Alexander animadvert on the mysterious indescribable activity which Berkeley and some of his successors are supposed to have found. Unfortunately, no references are given to Berkeley's works, and his deluded successes are not named. So far as I know, Berkeley never attempted to describe activity at all: he only insists that volition is the only activity of which we have any experience. Cf. *Works*, Fraser's edition, 1871, vol. i, pp. 170, 310.

† Don't talk of a consciousness of consciousness, says Professor Alexander, for that way madness lies, but he is prepared to entertain the idea of a higher organism that should “exhibit an order of existence higher than mere consciousness and conditioned by it.” “Consciousness of consciousness” is not a very exact expression, but otherwise why is one position more sane than the other?

entirely. To put it in my own way—in psychology, Mr. Bradley appears to be what I have called a presentationist. In his articles on the “Definition of Will,” for example, he starts from ideo-motor action, and talks of the self-realisation of an idea in a thoroughly Herbartian fashion, oblivious of the fact that if an idea verily is a self and shows its activity by expanding, invading, and what not, we have the whole problem of activity again on our hands. But presentation as a process implies the subject-object relation to which apparently Mr. Bradley confines the term consciousness. But he holds that there is a pre-relational stage of experience as feeling. What he has written on this topic strikes me, I confess, as obscure; but at the same time I feel strongly that obscurity must beset every attempt to penetrate beyond a consciousness in which relations are recognised, and ascertain how such a consciousness begins.\* But our only hope of success in such adventures lies, I think, in the principle of continuity. Experience in which there is neither subject nor object seems to me unmeaning; so likewise a feeling which no one feels. There can, of course, at first be no reflexion: the subject we must suppose, feels and acts, acts and feels, and there is, we must also suppose, a changing something that affects it when it feels and changes when it acts.†

But we cannot suppose that the subject at the outset has any so-called “internal perception” of itself or of its states; for that, it is abundantly evident, implies a long course of intellectual construction. Surely, however, the absence of self-consciousness is no proof of the absence of a self. Let us now

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\* Cf. the discussion, “Consciousness and Experience,” *Mind*, N.S., vol. ii, pp. 211 ff.

† It seems useless for the psychologist to debate the question as to which was first, the active or the passive phase: in fact, a sharp separation of the two is unwarranted, for we know nothing of either pure passivity or pure activity. Metaphysically we may say, *Am anfang war die That*, and that may incline us speculatively to insist on the logical priority of activity.

turn to an account which Mr. Bradley has given of feeling as he understands the term. "I take feeling," he says, "in the sense of the immediate unity of a finite psychical centre. It means for me, first, the general condition before distinctions and relations have been developed, and where as yet neither any subject nor object exists. And it means, in the second place, anything which is present at any stage of mental life, in so far as that is only present and simply is."\* But we have a right to ask: What gives a "mass of feeling" unity and a centre in the absence of a subject, and what exactly does "mental life" imply? Relations and distinctions do not constitute their terms or *fundamenta*, how, then, could they be developed in the absence of these? Elsewhere, in discussing unity, Mr. Bradley asks: "Why and how can we call it a relation, when it is not a relation actually for us?" He continues: "It would never do for us simply and without any explanation to fall back on the 'potential,' for that, if unexplained, is a mere attempt at compromise between 'is' and 'is not.' But if the 'potential' is used for that which actually is, and which under certain circumstances is not manifest, the 'potential' may cease to be a phrase and may become the solution of the problem." Two and two simply are not four, but they are the ground of putting two and two together. So mental activity that is "only present and simply is" is not the apprehension of an agent acting, but it is the ground that makes such apprehension possible and is besides its necessary presupposition.

Like Professor Alexander, Mr. Bradley regards mental activity as a phenomenon. Herein lies the radical difference between us. He asks: "What is the content of activity as it appears to the soul at first in distinction from what it is as it is . . . for the soul later on," and complains that he has "failed throughout to get an intelligible reply." It never occurs to him that he has possibly asked an unintelligible

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\* *Appearance and Reality*, p. 459.

question in assuming that all experience consists of appearances. I do not suppose that Mr. Bradley intended to lay any stress on the different language that he has employed in speaking of activity as it *appears* to the soul at first and activity as it *is* for the soul later on. But at any rate I think it would be more correct to transpose the terms. Later on, the subject of experience may have what we loosely call an internal perception of itself acting and feeling, but in this perception and distinct from its object the subject immediately acts and feels; and that it was true of its experience as long as that experience was entitled to the name. This percept we may call presentational, the immediate act of feeling we cannot. The phrase a "feeling of" is not, it is admitted, very exact. We may talk of an "apprehension of" with perfect propriety, but in immediate experience the subject, it seems to me, can only be said to feel and act. Later on, largely through intersubjective intercourse and reflexion, it may come not simply to be a self, not simply to act and feel, but to know itself as having acted and felt. "Wherever you meet a psychologist," says Mr. Bradley, who takes this experience as elementary, "you will find a man who has never made a serious attempt to decompose it or ever resolutely faced the question as to what it contains."\* "Wherever you meet a psychologist," I have replied, "who essays to resolve himself and his experiences wholly into content or phenomena, there you find a man who, because he can't see his own eyes, seems to think he hasn't any. Out of 'psychical machinery' he tries to develop its own presuppositions, and smuggles into it what is really distinct from it and is its own motive-power." The psychology I am trying to defend, Mr. Bradley calls a "preposterous psychology." That epithet, I reply, is more appropriate to a psychology that can only help itself along by means of metaphors that imply and presuppose the very fact it is trying to explain.

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\* *Appearance and Reality*, p. 116.

## 3.—By CARVETH READ.

IT is a paradox that consciousness and activity are the commonest things in the world, and the most familiar to all of us, and yet we cannot agree in describing them. It is another paradox that the commonest cause of misunderstanding has long been recognised to lie in the ambiguity of terms, and yet we make very little progress in agreeing upon definitions. Even if we sometimes seem to be agreed upon the use of an important word, presently a new interest awakens, or an old interest acquires new life; and then, if its adherents think it would be strengthened by using that word in another sense, they make no scruple about altering it: like that sort of Economist who hopes to add dignity to labour by calling it "capital." Something of this kind is at present the matter with "consciousness." For a good while this term, when used without qualification, has stood with many writers for the whole of noetic experience: here and there the more venturesome may have extended it to cover the supposed anoetic experience of man, or animals, or what-not; but for our present discussion we may leave them out. "Consciousness," as denoting all noetic experience, content, or matter, as well as form, has been a term in common use; but now Realism or, more particularly, perceptive Realism has come into favour; and it seems to be thought that the doctrines of perceptive Realism require for their effective statement such a limitation of the term "consciousness" as to exclude from it the content of experience altogether, or to admit as little as possible; so that it shall mean not much more than the form or process of experience. Strict limitation of it to form or process is difficult.

For my own part, whilst strongly sympathising with the new Realism, so far as it asserts the objectivity, stability, substantiality of the world as it is known to us, I see nothing in this doctrine incompatible with the use of the term "consciousness"

as equivalent to noetic experience, content and form. There is, in fact, no opposition between empirical Realism and Berkleyan Idealism. It seems to be supposed that consciousness must be the same thing as subjectivity; but it has been explained over and over again that Object and Subject stand for a distinction within consciousness; and this seems to me to be true. To say that the sky is consciousness is a paradox; but to say that the sky as known is not consciousness is a contradiction. Now, what is the sky except as it is known? Any object directly known, or that can be brought into the focus of attention, I call either a phenomenon or a representation. If it is perceived in space it is an object in the full sense of the term, or a phenomenon; if it is an image of such an object, and not in space (that is, not definitely modified by my own movements) it is a subjective object, or a representation. But all that region of experience which is never an object of direct attention, always a matter of marginal awareness, is not a phenomenon nor yet a representation; and this comprises all feeling and conation. There is also a kind of experience, namely, meaning, that clings to all objects and is normally marginal, but may usually, in some measure, be brought into focus if we have an interest in doing so; it can be brought into focus so far as it can be resolved into images. Phenomena, then, are objects in consciousness; but consciousness is not a phenomenon, for it is not in space; nor a representation, for it is not even in time. It has no ascertainable limits of any kind, and both space and time are constructions within it. The subjectivity of experience is equally profound and inexhaustible. There lie all the meaning and all the value of direct cognition. It responds to every modification of cognition. It is the commentary upon everything that is seen or thought of. And if we pause upon any object and call the meaning of it into the light of attention, our subjectivity is in no way impoverished, for this new object has its own meaning and its own value. To treat the known object or phenomenon as



something independent is a gratuitous surrender to common-sense and to the less intelligent students of physical science, who have never advanced a single argument to justify their naïve assumption on epistemological grounds. It is true that the world or the sky is not merely my consciousness; but everyone's who will look. It belongs to generic consciousness; and it may be asked what becomes of it if we do not look, or if we all fall asleep. Heaven knows. For me, as a matter of belief, it then has its own being, as it is not known to man. But so far from gaining objectivity under that condition, it is reduced to a bare idea. There certainly is no science of it. Where is the chemistry or the physics of any world but the waking world?

Prepositions are most confusing vocables: they are always trying to put asunder what God has joined together. We often hear that the world is present *to* consciousness, that it exists *for* consciousness. A sense of the inadequacy of merely human speech leads others to add the prepositions together, and to declare that it is present *to* and *for* consciousness. But all these phrases have the fault of separating consciousness as an abstraction from the actuality of experience. There are not two things, one of which can be *to* or *for* the other. There is only one thing, the known world. The least pernicious prepositions in this connection are *in* and *of*. One is tempted to speak of the content *of* consciousness; but consciousness is not a bag. I feel inclined, for this reason, to object to the word "content" in this use of it, and to urge that the phrase "matter of consciousness" is better. But, waiving that, I shall urge that what is sometimes called the "content of consciousness" is consciousness itself, and so are all the changes that occur in that content, the processes, and the laws or forms of them.

It is, I think, peculiarly difficult to reconcile any other view with physiological psychology, which treats conscious processes as functions of the neural system, more particularly

of the brain. For the best ascertained doctrine of that study is that there are localised areas in the brain, the excitement of which gives rise to the various kinds of sensations, that is, to "content." The simpler lines of communication between these areas, corresponding with the complication of sensations, may also be said to be known. But what it is in the brain that corresponds to the perception of objects in space, and to other important processes, such as reasoning and volition, may still be described as "clotted hypothesis." However, it is an indisputable deduction from this theory, so far as it goes, that the body itself is a phenomenon in consciousness—if consciousness is a phenomenon, the body is an epiphenomenon—; and that space is a consciousness-construction, so as to abolish any difficulty that may be raised to the conceiving of the sky as consciousness. Coleridge commented on the danger (in the direction of heresy) of saying that "God is everywhere": rather, he urged, we must declare that "all things are *present to God*." Now cut out the prepositional phrase with its illusory separativeness, and that is true of the world of every mind according to its capacity.

That sensations and sense-qualities are consciousness may be seen from this, that they are inseparable from feeling. Objective themselves, they are never known without this subjective reaction: which may be different, or similar, for different sensations, or for the same sensation at different times; but is never wanting. This variability of our feelings enables us to distinguish the sensation from them, but not to separate it from them. A similar connection holds between sensations and conation. And in this way we may interpret the "subject-object relation." It is not a relation between independent things, but corresponds with one of the contrasts of focal and marginal knowledge. In perception things are focal and ideas are marginal; in reflection ideas are focal and things are marginal; so that percepts and ideas may both be considered as objects; but both in the attitude of perception and of reflec-

tion, feeling and conation are marginal, and are always subjective. We cannot separate these elements of experience and call some of them consciousness and others not : consciousness and experience are identical.

Now, as to Activity, it seems to me to be, in its most general sense, the same thing as change of experience. All change of experience is activity of consciousness ; and we may say that activity of consciousness is measured by the number of distinguishable changes that occur in an unit of time. These changes are both objective and subjective. If I watch the traffic in Oxford Street, there is the procession of vehicles and of animals of various species, with their noises and odours ; the ideas they excite of how—

every man hath business and desires,  
Such as they are,

and the purposelessness of all their purposes ; and back of all this (as they say in America) there is a subjective crowd of feelings and impulses. The physical factors of this scene impress me with a sense of force, which makes me keep out of their way ; and at the same time I attribute them to causes. The causes lie beyond my present experience ; but can only be thought of as if I witnessed them. Under that condition they can be conceived very definitely as previous changes amongst similar objects ; but the force of them cannot be definitely conceived, except by identifying it with the causes of what is happening and to happen next. Hence the whole physical activity is reduced to changes, preceded by changes, and to be followed by others in a definite order.

Do the changes that meanwhile go on amongst my ideas and in the subjective crowd of feelings and conations require any other analysis ? They all seem to have their antecedents, though their relation to those antecedents is much less easily reducible to order under definite concepts than are events in the physical world. Some of them give an impression of force, such as the occasional conations involved in walking under

conditions that do not permit of an easy rhythm being established, turnings of the eyes or head, various impulses and inhibitions, and perhaps an effort to think of something else and far away. But in all this I find nothing but changes, antecedent changes, consequent changes, and the sensations of conation, which, some of them, obviously, are strain and pressure sensations easily localisable, whilst others have the same general character, though not so definitely localised. Throughout, the subjective activity is, like the physical, nothing but change of experience.

The consciousness of activity is, then, in the first place, a consciousness of this activity of consciousness in its totality. This is, for the most part, identical with the activity of consciousness, the content in all its processes. It is possible, indeed, to have an occasional awareness of such activity in a peculiar way, a momentary reflection of it, highly symbolic in presentation but rich in meaning, an epitome of experience, which I take to be one of the things that are sometimes indicated by the term "self-consciousness." But this momentary reflection enters, of course, as one change into the stream of changes; and its natural position is marginal; for if it reaches the centre of the stream the whole direction and character of the activity is diverted.

But "consciousness of activity" is naturally a narrower notion than "consciousness of the activity of consciousness": it means consciousness of self-activity—of the psycho-physical organism in thinking, observing, running; for, as a matter of experience, when I am running my mind runs; and when I am thinking my body thinks. It is true that when a man is running his mind may do a good deal besides running; and that when thinking he may sometimes almost forget that he has a body. But the attitude and behaviour of his body, its health or discomfort, influence all his thoughts, and it is the psycho-physical whole that constitutes himself, his individuality in relation to other individuals.

It may be said: "But, surely, all activity of consciousness is an activity of the psycho-physical organism, and, therefore, self-activity"; and there is a sense in which that is true. Still, metaphysics is an affair of distinctions; and good metaphysics draws the right distinctions. In this case we must distinguish within the activity of consciousness that region in which the self is relatively active from that in which it is relatively passive. The expanse of the sky or the traffic of the street are passive experiences, as near to the abstract physical as anything can be; but when I save myself at a crossing from the thunder of a brewer's wain, or reflect with scorn how all such trumpery is doomed to fly over the back side of the world, these are experiences of self-activity, or activities of the psycho-physical organism; and the poetical reflection on trumpery comes as near as anything can to the abstract mental. But no abstraction has real existence.

Consciousness of activity usually involves some effort and choice, as Professor Alexander has said; and although unable to identify it with conation, which seems to me to be a factor of the marginal content, I agree that conation is a character of it. Conation is not a presentation in the same sense that feeling is not, namely, in as much as it is marginal. But to separate conation from the matter of consciousness is possible only on condition of limiting such matter to objects (things and images); and excluding the meaning of them and the feelings and reactions they excite. Objects and presentations thus segregated, however, are entirely unknown; they have no significance and (strictly) no existence. Consciousness of activity is that portion of the activity of consciousness which is determined by interest in an end. This implies conation, and the liability of having to make an effort; but the activity bears no proportion to effort; for it includes cognition, which may be extensive and varied, in happy hours, with very little effort; and at other times (alas!), in spite of the utmost exertion, activity may be small.

Thus far I had written before receiving Professor Ward's paper. Having very few leisure hours in the week, I foresaw that if I should wait to begin my own paper until his came to hand, it would be impossible to get through my own task quickly enough to leave the next man a reasonable time for reflecting on the course of the discussion. It was fortunate that I did so; for otherwise I might have felt embarrassed to find much to say beyond the assenting to Professor Ward's criticisms. There is, however, one point at which he has agreed with Professor Alexander, which to me seems questionable, namely, whether conation is resolvable into strain sensations. He has not enlarged upon this; but it may not be erroneous to assume that he agrees with the views of Professor Stout in the *British Journal of Psychology* (July, 1906). Professor Stout there argues that if conation were identical with motor sensations, "the intensity of conation would be simply identical with the amount of motor sensation connected with it. But this is not so. Conation may be as strong in giving the finishing touch to a house of cards as in lifting a heavy weight." In every bodily action, however, there is a great deal more than conation, namely, the special adjustments required by it, which may call forth very different degrees of effort. Conation is distinguished from particular voluntary actions as being something common to them all. To abstract this common character is difficult: but so far as it can be done it appears to me to be probably true that the intensity of conation is proportionate to the motor sensations involved; or, more correctly, to the motor sensations and images; for, to the best of my judgment, "felt tendency" consists of the images or memory of former conations by which we anticipate the action now proposed. The difficulty of forming an opinion upon this point is due to the marginal position of the experience to be analysed; you can only watch it out of the corner of your eye. It is the same kind of difficulty as one finds in trying to discriminate qualities of pleasure.

The consciousness of activity, then, I take to be the consciousness of changes of experience so far as they are brought about by the interest of the psychophysical subject, or empirical self. In Psychology and Epistemology this is as far as I can get; but I had supposed that the Aristotelian Society was concerned in some measure with Ontology; and I should have been glad to hear its opinions upon the good old-fashioned doctrine that all activity is activity of the soul: a belief which, for my own part, I can neither verify nor relinquish.

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4.—By G. F. STOUT.

I AGREE substantially with Dr. Ward in his criticism of Professor Alexander's paper and Mr. Bradley's views, and the points which he urges seem to me sufficient as a basis of discussion without my attempting to add much new matter. I shall therefore only make one comment on Professor Alexander's general position. I fail to see the logical connexion between his statement that "consciousness," or mental activity, is nothing but a phenomenon and his positive account of the nature of consciousness. He seems to me first to concede everything that is meant in asserting that consciousness is not a phenomenon and then to make a complete change of front by affirming that it is nothing but a phenomenon. The term *phenomenon* may be taken in two senses. It may be taken to mean an appearance in distinction from that to which the appearance appears. Now, from this point of view, Professor Alexander clearly recognises that activity or consciousness is not phenomenal. It is, according to him, directed to objects, but is not itself an object; for there is "no consciousness of consciousness." In the second sense, a phenomenon is so called, inasmuch as it is regarded as the appearance of something other than itself. It comes before the mind as something to be interpreted by developing its implications and connexions within a

systematic order of inter-related elements. From this side, also, Professor Alexander virtually admits that consciousness is not phenomenal, as sensations and material things are. Sensations, he tells us, are known only as elements of these spatial and temporal complexes which we call physical objects. And, I presume, he would admit that physical objects are known only as belonging to the spatial and temporal context of the material world. But mental activity, he seems to say, is not an element in this systematic order of relations. It is not an object nor an element of objects, but quite disparate in nature from anything objective. Even though it is only found in connexion with living organisms at certain stages of organic development, yet it cannot, in Professor Alexander's view, be itself a constituent element of these organised bodies. For, if he said this, he would be regarding consciousness as one special item among others distinguished from the and related to red or as green or as red or green may be distinguished from and related to each other, or to the physical conditions on which they depend. But this is irreconcilable with his whole position and, in particular, with his statement that "*all* consciousness is self-consciousness." For this implies that consciousness is not a special objective item co-ordinate with others, but rather an inseparable aspect of all knowledge, whatever may be its special object. It cannot, then, be in this sense that consciousness is phenomenal. What then does Professor Alexander mean by a phenomenon?

Professor Read introduces what he has to say on activity by a discussion of the nature of consciousness. This part of his paper I find it difficult to follow. In the first place, it contains what looks like an explicit inconsistency. We are told that "what is sometimes called the 'content of consciousness' is consciousness itself"; and it is plain from the context that under "content of consciousness" Professor Read includes whatever is in any way known or thought of, so that he must regard "phenomena and representation" as contents of



consciousness, and therefore as identical with the consciousness of them. But in seemingly point blank contradiction to this position, we are also told that "consciousness is not a phenomenon, for it is not in space; nor a representation, for it is not even in time." I do not find the difficulty removed or even mitigated by the statement that there are other contents of consciousness besides phenomena and representations in space or time. For, if we adhere strictly to the identification of consciousness and its content, this only means that, besides these, there are other kinds of consciousness. Nor am I helped by the further statement that space and time are themselves contents of consciousness. For, abiding by the identification of consciousness and its content, all that can be logically deduced from this is that some consciousness forms part of other consciousness. It would seem that further explanation is required here.

Again, if I seek for Professor Read's positive reason for this identification, I find that he contents himself with alleging an inherent self-contradiction in any other view. "To say that the sky as known is not consciousness," he urges, is "a contradiction." But it is so only if we already assume that "being known" and being consciousness are indistinguishable. Everyone admits that *knowing* is consciousness. The real question is whether what is known is simply identical with the knowing of it. This seems to me no more self-evident than it is self-evident that bread as digested is simply identical with the digesting of it. Doubtless, there is essential correlation, but every relation must have two terms, and the fact that one term *a* enters into the relation is not distinguishable from the fact that the other term *b* enters into it.

Again, I do not find Professor Read's appeal to physiological psychology at all helpful. The psychological doctrine which he regards as especially important and relevant is that the body itself is a "phenomenon in consciousness." But, according to his own account of what a phenomenon is, this ought to mean

merely that the body is something known and known as existing in space. We scarcely need physiological psychology to inform us of this. And how can it strengthen Professor Read's argument? Apparently he is here resting his case on the assumption that what physiological psychology teaches is, not only that the body is known, but that it is known as being merely a complex of sensations, and the further assumption that sensations are mental existences inasmuch as they exist only in being experienced by an undivided mind, and again on the additional assumption that there is no possible distinction between sensations, so regarded, and the knowing of them. But all these suppositions are disputable, and two of them, the first and the last, appear to me to be false. Neither our own body nor any other body is known to us merely as a complex of sensations. The knowledge of material things includes, throughout its whole development, the thought-reference of a content derived from sensuous presentation to what Kant calls a "transcendental object." And even if we confine ourselves to mere sensations, yet the knowing of these sensations, involving, as it does, recognition, discrimination, identification, comparison, etc., seems to me distinguishable from the existence and qualities of the sensations which are recognised, discriminated, identified, or compared. I cannot, of course, discuss these large questions further in the present paper. What I wish to bring out is merely that Professor Read is making, consciously or unconsciously, highly disputable assumptions.

There is one view put forward by Professor Read in his preparatory remarks which has a specially obvious and direct bearing on the topic of our present discussion. I refer to his distinction between phenomena on the one hand, and feeling and conation on the other. According to Professor Read the difference is that phenomena are objects of direct attention, whereas we have only a marginal awareness of feeling and conation. I am not at all sure that our awareness of feeling

and conation always is marginal. Certainly this hardly seems to apply to my dissatisfaction with a toothache. But I waive this point in order to deal with another which seems more essentially relevant. The question I wish to raise is this. Supposing that feeling and conation were as definitely and directly objects of attention as "phenomena" are, would they cease to be subjective and themselves become phenomena? To me it seems clear that they would not. For there would still remain the ultimate distinction founded on the relation of Subject and Object. Being dissatisfied, attending, desiring, hoping, and fearing, all imply something with which we are dissatisfied, to which we attend, or which we desire, hope, or fear. This something is what we call the object of these processes, and the processes are contrasted with their objects as subjective. The distinction, as we know it, is quite independent of the special manner in which we may be supposed to know it.

Professor Read is comparatively brief in his direct treatment of Activity. I select for comment three points—his distinction between activity in general and self-activity; his view of the relation between activity and effort; and his view of the relation of activity to motor sensation. As regards the first point, he proposes to call all "change of experience" activity of consciousness. My objection to this is very simple. Whatever licence we may allow ourselves in the use of terms, we ought, at least, to refrain from applying them in such a way as to obliterate the very distinctions they are intended to express. But Professor Read's general activity would also include all that we mean by passivity. It is like proposing to include under the same term, *husband*—both husbands and wives. Unless we deliberately intend to confuse ourselves, we must confine the term *mental activity* to what Professor Read calls self-activity. When the "mind runs," it is *pro tanto* active; but when it is tossed in a blanket, it is *pro tanto* passive. Yet there may be the same amount of change in both cases.

As regards effort, Professor Read holds that "in spite of the utmost exertion, activity may be small." This can only mean that what we call unsuccessful activity is *pro tanto* not activity at all. I submit that this is a very inconvenient restriction of the use of the word, and not at all consonant with ordinary usage. Surely it is better to say that we are active in making an attempt, whether the attempt is successful or not,—that we are active in seeking, whether or not we succeed in finding. Activity is to be regarded as the presupposition of the distinction between success and failure.

Professor Read's view of the relation of motor sensation to conative consciousness seems to be as follows. By no means all motor sensation is felt as conation; but some of it is,—a vague residuum, difficult to isolate by abstract analysis. Now, I simply put one question. How are the muscle, joint, and tendon-sensations which are identical with or proportionate to conative consciousness distinguished from other muscle, joint, and tendon-sensations? The difference in their nature is far more marked than that between those connected with movements of the arm, leg, or scalp.

On what physiological conditions can the distinction be surmised to depend?

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5.—*Reply by S. ALEXANDER.*

MR. WARD'S fundamental difference from me on questions of theory of knowledge has led him to certain misapprehensions of my meaning. These I desire to correct, gratefully acknowledging criticisms which compel me to speak more accurately, though not to change my mind.

First of all, he objects, I declare mental activity to be simple and unique, and yet afterwards to be definitely describable. In calling mental activity, or consciousness, unique, I mean, that it possesses a character which we must accept as a new fact in

the universe, like redness or life. But as I may describe red as a colour, I may justifiably connect mental activity or process with process in general. And I may go on to describe other properties which I find out about it, and this I have attempted to do. The mere fact that we can say that mental activity has direction and has rate is enough to show it to be describable. Again, and this I lay stress on, though mental activity as such, as having the peculiar character of consciousness, can only be indicated, we have it occurring in various complexities: it is simple in sensation, more complex in perception, extremely complex in volition. And I take the object of Psychology to be to describe and distinguish these various grades of complexity.

Next, and this is my answer to his second charge, one of the properties I discover in mental process as such is that it has a definite place in space. Mr. Ward says that I first say it is only metaphorically movement, and then go on to say that it is literally a movement, and a movement to which I have transferred the idea of activity; and he then points to the history of physical activity as having got rid of this idea of activity. This is really quite a misapprehension. When I speak of physical movement I mean physical process as it occurs in the physical world without imputing to it activity, without any theory about it at all, and when I say that I feel mental activity occurring in connection with movement in my brain, I mean only that it occurs in that portion of space, and is experienced by me as occurring in my brain. I see no more difficulty in this than in a well-known proposition, that mind is situated at the synapses of the neurones; only of course I cannot discover this last by inspection, whereas I do discover by inspection that mental process is connected with some portion, however vaguely felt, of my brain. Mr. Ward asks, why should what is felt as occurring in the body yield the experience of mental activity? I venture to plead that we should never ask why should or should not things be so, we

should only ask if they are so, and if we find this is the case, make our account accordingly. To me the matter is one of fact, and I can find no mistake in my own description. I need not again allude to what I have already said: that in locating my mental activity in my brain I am using my acquired knowledge of brain, and not direct inspection. But apart from this, when I say that mental process is located in movements of the brain, I am saying no more than I say when I say that the tree under which I am writing is planted at the edge of the lawn. When, therefore, Mr. Ward accuses me of kaleidoscopic transitions (I forgive him this indulgence of his wit), he has not quite seen that I am trying to describe whatever I can find to say about my consciousness of activity without making any pre-suppositions of any sort. It is a further step, not of inspection but of theory founded upon it, when I go on to simplify by declaring not only that mental activity is found in the movements in the brain, but that it is essentially a movement in the brain with a new property of consciousness. There is no greater difficulty in this than in saying that a body has life. Life is not merely mechanical, and yet it is a property of something which is mechanical.

At every point that I come into conflict with Mr. Ward it is not upon psychological but upon epistemological ground. He complains of me that I have led the discussion to the edge of the bog and stopped there. Well, I had to stop somewhere, and I thought, and think, it all important to be so prepared by description of experience as to be able to find a path through the bog. This path I think I dimly see; I also think I see Mr. Ward out of the path. I wish that the hand I can offer him were not so weak, or that I had any hope of his accepting it. But I can hope to remove misapprehensions. In the first place I have used the unfortunate word phenomenon. I have made up my mind that I shall never use the word phenomenon again without carefully defining its meaning. How Mr. Stout can say that I describe the mind as if it were

not a phenomenon passes my comprehension. I have said that consciousness is a property of a certain sort of brain. How, then, can it be other than one thing among a number of other things? To suppose that mind to be a phenomenon must be an appearance to something else is to suppose that the only phenomena are physical things. But, in fact, I meant by the word almost nothing at all. When I speak of phenomena I only mean things which are or claim to be definitely verifiable or inferable facts, as opposed to something that is merely symbolical. Again, when I say that it is the business of Metaphysics to describe what sensations are, I mean only that it is its business to explain the difference between an object so far as it is sensed, or perceived, or imagined, or conceived. All these things—sensations, perceptions, conceptions—are for me objects and part of the real world. I was under the impression that many thinkers (and I thought Mr. Ward was one of them, probably mistakenly) do not regard mental activity as merely a natural fact, but as something on which in some way natural facts depend. In the next place, when I somewhat incautiously speak of mind as a thing, and also of the thing made up of body and mind, I do not mean that mind may exist apart from body; on the contrary, mind is the property of a certain kind of body. Next, Mr. Ward refuses to assent to my proposition, that the only things mental are conation and feeling. There is, he urges, a receptive constituent in the psychosis. Now, here I venture to repeat my description. I take green. There is, of course, a receptive attitude, but it is a conation, though a passive one. There is nothing in green, as green, which is mental. When I have the sensation green, my consciousness works in a particular direction, and that is all. As to feeling, I admit, of course, the incompleteness of my position. But feeling and willing stand on quite a different footing from presentation, and what I mean is, that if you want to know of what stuff the mind is made, you must look to conation; and at present it seems to me that pleasure and pain

belong to the stuff of mind, and that they are properties of conation like its direction.

But now, this being so, my epistemology at present is only this ; that the cognition of the external world is a reaction upon the external world in which mental activity, varying in direction and complexity, is evoked. Of course, you cannot have mental action without things to evoke it. Neither can an animal have life without air to breathe. But the relation of cognition is, I think, precisely of the class of organic reactions ; the only difference is in the terms of the relation. The reagent, which is conscious of the physical world, is the one which has the property of consciousness. I admit and insist that things are related to the mind, and the mind to things. But the relation is one of reaction. You cannot, therefore, say the physical things in any sense depend upon the mind. But now, when I have recognised that mind is one sort of thing among things, then I am prepared to see that its activity is of the same genus as physical activity. The naïve mind thinks physical process is one of conscious volition. We have got rid of that. But have we got rid of the fundamental fact of continuity in change ? This I find in its simplest form in mental activity. I find it also in physical process. And I believe that the same thing is true of all the so-called categories : they are found both in physical things and in mind, and are most easily recognisable in mind. At any rate, as regards the particular category of causality, I reject the teaching of Hume and accept that of Locke, and I may observe by the way that according to the description which I have given of mind, mind is nothing but that part of things which Locke calls Ideas of Reflection.

Of course, I know that in supporting the beliefs of the common mind I am guilty of the philosophical paradox of declaring that the mind which knows things is only one among the things which it knows (and the other things which possibly it never can know, but which other existences might know). This is the paradox to which Lady Welby, with her usual pene-



tration, has referred in the appended note.\* That it is no paradox at all is with me, at present, an intuition, and I am trying continually, without satisfying myself, to express it in terms which shall be convincing to others: I mean, which shall enable them to put themselves at my point of view and see with my eyes. All I can say at present is this. Here are two things, A and B; B is physical, A is also physical, but has mind. When B calls forth a mental reaction in A, A is conscious of B, and at the same time aware of itself. Let A be myself. I know things and am aware of myself. But myself is my awareness, the thing of which I am aware is not myself. To use a phrase which I have learned from Mr. Stout in conversation, the "of" in the phrase "I am aware of myself," is the "of"

\* Lady Welby sends to the meeting the following note:—

"On the occasion of the symposium on 'the Nature of Mental Activity,' I venture to suggest the need of a previous question, which I cannot discover to have been definitely asked with reference to modern knowledge, still less satisfactorily answered. The question is, Who or What is to consider and pronounce upon the subject? If we answer, Man, what, *in this context*, do we mean by 'Man'? Do we mean Some one able, for the purpose in hand, to dissociate himself entirely from the matter under consideration, so as to arrive at a trustworthy, because an impartial, judgment,—that of a third party? That is, assuming an attitude apart from mental activity, do we propose, as beings infra- or supra-mental, to discuss the nature of what, for present purposes, is other than ours? I imagine that various theories are to be criticised, and others formulated or adumbrated. Does this involve mental activity or no?

"There are, of course, many cases when what belongs to us, and can only in a secondary sense be identified with us, is and must be discussed by us. But how do we propose to discuss and decide on the *nature* of that which alone discusses and decides? Is there not something 'circular' in this process?

"It may be objected that, from this point of view, the psyche cannot discuss psychology. Well, everywhere there is surely needed some kind of ultimate reference or arbiter, some relatively independent critic? If so, this ought to be clearly defined, and named as distinct from, while including, 'mind.'

"For, as we are, does not our use of 'mind' throw us back into the same perplexity which the discussion is to remove? Do we not need a yet anonymous third factor: a speaker, in fact, who can detach himself from 'mind' in discussing its 'nature?'"

of apposition, as in Locke's phrase, "the idea of a sensation"; when I am aware of the tree, the "of" is the "of" of reference to something upon which I react. But just because there is awareness in A, B is said to be presented to A. Now A, the feeling, perceiving, thinking thing, talks; and it feels itself, and it knows B, and describes B by words. Afterwards, it applies to itself the words which it has first used about B, and then it is said to describe itself. It just puts into words the two parts of the world of which it is aware. But the things in the world are there independently of B's awareness of them, and for all I know there may be things in the world of which A never can be aware, for want of the means to respond to them. Mr. Ward thinks this notion as insane as the consciousness of consciousness. But the difference is this, that I cannot stop at two terms of the last series, and when I go on to three terms my head begins to spin. Carry me along to four or five terms and I am in Colney Hatch. I apprehend no such danger in forecasting another kind of being to whom my consciousness might lie open as a book, in the same way as life lies open to me, to my consciousness. I admit the strangeness of the conception, that things in the world should exist in their own right, and that yet there is one among them, my mind, which knows the others. But the strangeness disappears with familiarity. It is the business of mind to know itself and other things.

Of course, I am well aware of all the questions which are thus left over, to be settled by Metaphysics, or theory of knowledge. The problems of memory, of the existence of the past, of error, of imagination; how I can by dint of my mental activity call up in imagination objects which yet are not myself; how my memory brings before me things which have no present existence. I have no brief answer to these problems. If I had been required to answer them, I should not have undertaken the discussion. But I see no reason why in Philosophy, any more than in any other science, we should refrain from dealing with one portion of what we know to be true,

just because we have not complete comprehension of the whole. I recognise no difference of method between Philosophy and the other sciences. I see that we have scientific knowledge when we use the utmost effort to depersonalise ourselves so as accurately to reflect the things about us. We depersonalise ourselves in Philosophy by describing the facts we find in the whole of our experience, and not asking what must be, nor seeking for logical connection where we only find juxtaposition, try to confine ourselves to what we see.

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6.—*Reply by* CARVETH READ.

FIGURE to yourselves my astonishment at finding that a series of propositions that seemed to me self-evident may be regarded as altogether obscure by another mind that I had been accustomed to trust.

Phenomena and representations, I say, are contents of consciousness, and, therefore, identical with the consciousness of them. They all occur in space or time, or in both; and therefore consciousness is not a phenomenon, for it is not in space or time. On the contrary, space and time are constructions or arrangements of phenomena or representations in consciousness. This is intuitively clear. If it be objected that, at any rate, consciousness is the totality of related phenomena, together with the marginal commentary upon them, I reply that this is what I have said: all things are present in consciousness, for I certainly assume that there is no consciousness of nothing.

Whether the sky as known is consciousness? Again, the affirmative is self-evident to me. What is known is identical with the knowing of it so far as we can know it. It is quite useless to seek amongst phenomena for any simile for what is called the relation of consciousness to its object, because there

is no such relation ; there are not two terms. I see no analogy between the digesting of bread and the elaboration of cognitions.

My appeal to physiological Psychology was made in reply to Professor Alexander's position, that consciousness is " simply a phenomenon found in certain organisms " : on the contrary, I say, on the physiological theory the body is a phenomenon in consciousness. But I did not refer to Professor Alexander directly : knowing well what was in store for him. Professor Stout says my deduction is not good, because " the knowledge of material things includes, throughout its whole development, the thought-reference of a content derived from sensuous presentation, to what Kant calls ' a transcendental object. ' " But we must distinguish the knowledge of a thing as such from our knowledge of it in analysis. Physiological Psychology knows nothing of material things ; and I am justified in saying that it resolves the body as known into the rawest material of consciousness. A material thing as known is, in my opinion, referred to a transcendental object, but only by what I have called an " indicative or orectic judgment, " because the transcendental object is never a knowable term. I agree, of course, that the raw materials of sensation are very different from an elaborated phenomenon.

I also admit that the line between focal and marginal consciousness is far from clearly marked, and that in this connection toothache has often given me trouble. In fact, all pains give trouble to psychologists, as appears from their differences of opinion as to whether pain is feeling or sensation. I incline to regard it as sensation and as capable of being directly attended to. But whether feeling and conation would become phenomena if they were direct objects of attention, I do not know. The case reminds me of Poincaré's frequent assurances of what experience would be like if the world were entirely different from what it is. I have no courage for such excursions. But I may observe that, if we try to bring forward a conation so as to study it, it ceases to be the present conation ;

for that is now the effort to bring it forward ; and this effort is marginal.

All change of experience is activity of consciousness, because there is no such thing as passivity, just as there is physically no such thing as rest. But the couple—active, passive—is not thereby made useless: it has a relative application. I have shown this ; and have concluded that consciousness of activity is that portion of the activity of consciousness which is determined by interest in an end. That is what we mean by *our* activity. Interest in an end often excites great efforts (for example) to think ; yet the resulting activity, measured by changes in the ideational and sensuous content, may be small. I congratulate every Aristotelian who has not had this experience when trying to think of something to say.

Probably the intensity of conation is proportionate to the muscle sensations involved. In finishing a house of cards these sensations (I say "muscle" for brevity) are such as the fixing of the eyes, holding the breath, scalp-strain, circulation, etc. ; and there is not very much else ; for the limbs employed are small and their contractions slight. In a football scrimmage all these sensations are present, but they are completely masked by massive sensations from the whole of the trunk and limbs. That is to say, to the common footballer they are masked, but they cannot entirely escape the eye of the psychologist.



ABSTRACT OF THE MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY FOR THE  
TWENTY-NINTH SESSION.

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November 4th, 1907. Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, President, in the Chair.—The President delivered the opening address on “The Methods of Modern Logic and the Conception of Infinity.” The Hon. Bertrand Russell proposed, and Professor Dawes Hicks seconded, a vote of thanks to the President, which was carried unanimously.

December 2nd, 1907. Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson, V.P., in the Chair.—Professor R. Latta read a paper on “Purpose.” A discussion followed, in which the Chairman, and Professor Dawes Hicks, Mr. Carr, Dr. Caldecott, Mr. Dumville, Dr. Wolf, Mr. Rankin, and others took part, a criticism by Dr. Schiller was read, and Professor Latta replied.

January 6th, 1908. Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, V.P., in the Chair.—Mr. G. E. Moore read a paper on “Professor James’ ‘Pragmatism.’” A discussion followed, in which Dr. Dawes Hicks, Dr. Caldecott, Dr. Hodgson, Mr. Callen, Hon. Bertrand Russell, Sir Frederick Pollock, Mr. Benecke, Dr. Wolf, Mr. Dumville, Dr. Nunn, and others took part, and Mr. Moore replied.

February 3rd, 1908. Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson, V.P., in the Chair.—Dr. A. Caldecott read a paper on “The Religious Sentiment: an Inductive Enquiry.” A discussion followed, in which the Chairman and Professor Dawes Hicks, Mr. Boutwood, Mr. Shearman, Mr. Shand, Dr. Nunn, Mr. Dumville, Mr. Wm. Brown, and others took part, and Dr. Caldecott replied.

March 2nd, 1908. Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, V.P., in the Chair.—Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson read a paper on “The Idea of

Totality." A discussion followed, in which the Chairman, Mr. Benecke, Dr. Wolf, Mr. Carr, Mr. Shearman, Mr. Dumville, and others took part, and Dr. Hodgson replied.

April 6th, 1908. Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, V.P., in the Chair.—Mr. H. Wildon Carr read a paper on "Impressions and Ideas: the Problem of Idealism." A discussion followed, in which the Chairman, Dr. Shadworth Hodgson, Mr. Boutwood, Mr. Benecke, Dr. Wolf, Dr. Nunn, Mr. Dumville, Dr. Goldsbrough, and others took part, and Mr. Carr replied.

May 4th, 1908. Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson, V.P., in the Chair.—Dr. T. Percy Nunn read a paper on "The Concept of Epistemological Levels." A discussion followed, in which the Chairman, Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, Mr. Benecke, Mr. Carr, Mr. Shearman, Mr. Finberg, and others took part, and Dr. Nunn replied.

June 1st, 1908. Mr. G. E. Moore, V.P., in the Chair.—Dr. G. Dawes Hicks read a paper on "The Relation of Subject and Object from the Point of View of Psychological Development." The paper was followed by a discussion in which the Chairman, Dr. Hodgson, Mr. Shearman, Dr. Nunn, Dr. Wolf, Mr. Dumville, Mr. Carr, Dr. Goldsbrough, Miss Oakley, and others took part, and Dr. Dawes Hicks replied.

June 12th, 1908, at Trinity College, Cambridge, at 4.30 p.m. Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, V.P., in the Chair.—There were present, Professor G. F. Stout, Professor W. R. Sorley, Dr. G. R. T. Ross, Dr. A. Wolf, Mr. A. T. Shearman, Professor S. Alexander, Mr. H. W. Carr, Mr. Sydney Waterlow, Miss E. E. C. Jones, Mr. R. D. Hicks, Professor Carveth Read, Dr. Hubert Foston, Mr. Loveday, Mr. J. G. Vance, Mr. J. H. Richie, Mr. H. K. Anderson, Mr. A. S. D. Jones, Mr. Florian Cordon, Professor James Ward, Dr. J. L. Myers, Mr. E. W. Hobson, and Mr. H. J. J. Norton.

Professor S. Alexander, Professor James Ward, Professor Carveth Read, and Professor G. F. Stout, read papers on "The Nature of Mental Activity." A discussion followed, and the readers of the papers replied.

July 2nd, 1908. Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson, V.P., in the Chair.—  
The Report of the Executive Committee for the Twenty-Ninth Session was read.

“The Society has held nine ordinary meetings for the reading and discussion of papers, eight in London and one in Cambridge. The membership of the Society has increased during the Session. We have lost, by death, Mr. Pasco Daphne, an old and valued Member, who joined us in 1884. The following have joined the Society during the Session, Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, Mrs. Beer, Miss Alice Blundell, Mr. Wm. Brown, Mr. J. F. O. Coddington, Mr. William Gower, Miss E. S. Haldane, Miss M. V. Hughes, Mr. A. Maxwell, Miss Hilda D. Oakeley, Dr. G. R. T. Ross, Mr. W. G. Sleight, Mr. A. à B. Terrell, Mr. H. C. Thornton, Mr. Sydney S. P. Waterlow. The Society now numbers 77.”

The Financial Statement was read and adopted.

A ballot was taken for the election of the officers for the ensuing Session, and the following were elected unanimously: President, Professor Samuel Alexander; Vice-Presidents, Dr. G. Dawes Hicks, Mr. G. E. Moore, Professor W. R. Sorley; Treasurer, Dr. T. Percy Nunn; and Honorary Secretary, Mr. H. Wildon Carr.

Dr. G. F. Goldsbrough and Mr. A. T. Shearman were re-elected Auditors.

It was resolved, unanimously, “That the thanks of the Society be sent to the Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, for his services as President during the past Session.”

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT—29TH SESSION, 1907-1908.

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance brought forward from last Session .. ..	120 2 5	Royal Asiatic Society, for use of rooms .. ..	54 16 5
Members' subscriptions—		Harrison and Sons, printing—	
Present Session .. ..	66 3 0	"Proceedings," Vol. VII .. ..	16 12 10
Last Session .. ..	7 7 0	Proofs of Papers sent out, Notices of Meetings, etc. .. ..	
Next Session .. ..	1 1 0		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Sales of "Proceedings"—	74 11 0	Gratuity to Attendants .. ..	71 9 3
Six months to December 31, 1906 .. ..	15 1 7	Advertising .. ..	1 2 6
"    to June 30, 1907 .. ..	6 11 2	Balance in hand on Deposit at Interest .. ..	0 16 0
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Interest on Deposit Account .. ..	21 12 9		137 7 6
	2 17 1		
	<hr/>		
	£219 3 3		£219 3 3

(Signed) W. R. BOYCE GIBSON, Treasurer.      Audited and found correct—  
 (Signed) GILES F. GOLDSBROUGH } Auditors.  
 A. T. SHEARMAN }

## RULES OF THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY.

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### NAME.

I.—This Society shall be called “THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY FOR THE SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF PHILOSOPHY,” or, for a short title, “THE ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY.”

### OBJECTS.

II.—The object of this Society shall be the systematic study of Philosophy; 1st, as to its historic development; 2nd, as to its methods and problems.

### CONSTITUTION.

III.—This Society shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and Members. The Officers shall constitute an Executive Committee. Every Ex-President shall be a Vice-President.

### SUBSCRIPTION.

IV.—The annual subscription shall be one guinea, due at the first meeting in each session.

### ADMISSION OF MEMBERS.

V.—Any person desirous of becoming a member of the ARISTOTELIAN SOCIETY shall apply to the Secretary or other officer of the Society, who shall lay the application before the Executive Committee, and the Executive Committee, if they think fit, shall admit the candidate to membership.

## CORRESPONDING MEMBERS.

VI.—Foreigners may be elected as corresponding members of the Society. They shall be nominated by the Executive Committee, and notice having been given at one ordinary meeting, their nomination shall be voted upon at the next meeting, when two-thirds of the votes cast shall be required for their election. Corresponding members shall not be liable to the annual subscription, and shall not vote.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

VII.—The President, three Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be elected by ballot at the last meeting in each session. Should a vacancy occur at any other time, the Society shall ballot at the earliest meeting to fill such vacancy, notice having been given to all the members.

## SESSIONS AND MEETINGS.

VIII.—The ordinary meetings of the Society shall be on the first Monday in every month from November to June, unless otherwise ordered by the Committee. Such a course shall constitute a session. Special meetings may be ordered by resolution of the Society or shall be called by the President whenever requested in writing by four or more members.

## BUSINESS OF SESSIONS.

IX.—At the last meeting in each session the Executive Committee shall report and the Treasurer shall make a financial statement, and present his accounts audited by two members appointed by the Society at a previous meeting.

## BUSINESS OF MEETINGS.

X.—Except at the first meeting in each session, when the President or a Vice-President shall deliver an address, the study of Philosophy in both departments shall be pursued by means of discussion, so that every member may take an active part in the work of the Society.

## PROCEEDINGS.

XI.—The Executive Committee are entrusted with the care of publishing or providing for the publication of a selection of the papers read each session before the Society.

## BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS.

XII.—No resolution affecting the general conduct of the Society and not already provided for by Rule XIV shall be put unless notice has been given and the resolution read at the previous meeting, and unless a quorum of five members be present.

## VISITORS.

XIII.—Visitors may be introduced to the meetings by members.

## AMENDMENTS.

XIV.—Notices to amend these rules shall be in writing and must be signed by two members. Amendments must be announced at an ordinary meeting, and notice having been given to all the members, they shall be voted upon at the next ordinary meeting, when they shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the votes cast are in their favour.

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LIST OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS FOR THE  
THIRTIETH SESSION, 1908-1909.

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PRESIDENT.

SAMUEL ALEXANDER, M.A., LL.D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

- SHADWORTH H. HODGSON, M.A., LL.D. (President, 1880 to 1894).  
 BERNARD BOSANQUET, M.A., LL.D. (President, 1894 to 1898).  
 G. F. STOUT, M.A., LL.D. (President, 1899 to 1904).  
 REV. HASTINGS RASHDALL, M.A., D.C.L. (President, 1904 to 1907).  
 RIGHT HON. R. B. HALDANE, M.P., LL.D., F.R.S. (President, 1907 to  
 1908).  
 G. DAWES HICKS, M.A., Ph.D., Litt.D.  
 G. E. MOORE, M.A.  
 W. R. SORLEY, M.A., LL.D.

TREASURER.

T. PERCY NUNN, M.A., D.Sc.

HONORARY SECRETARY.

H. WILDON CARR, 22, Albemarle Street, W.

HONORARY AND CORRESPONDING MEMBERS.

Elected.

1899. Prof. J. MARK BALDWIN, Princetown, New Jersey.  
 1889. J. M. CATTELL, M.A., Ph.D., Garrison, New York.  
 1880. Prof. W. R. DUNSTAN, M.A., F.R.S., 30, Thurloe Square, S.W.  
 (elected hon. member 1900).  
 1891. M. H. DZIEWICKI, 11, Pijarska, Cracow, Austria.  
 1881. Hon. WILLIAM T. HARRIS, LL.D., Washington, United States.  
 1883. Prof. WILLIAM JAMES, M.D., Cambridge, Mass., United States.  
 1899. EDMUND MONTGOMERY, LL.D., Liendo Plantation, Hempstead, Texas.  
 1880. Prof. A. SENIER, M.D., Ph.D., Gurthard, Galway (elected hon.  
 member 1902).  
 1899. Prof. E. B. TITCHENER, Cornell University, United States.

## MEMBERS.

Elected.

1885. Prof. SAMUEL ALEXANDER, M.A., LL.D., *President*, 24, Brunswick Road, Withington, Manchester.
1908. Right Hon. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR, M.P., LL.D., F.R.S., 4, Carlton Gardens, Pall Mall, S.W.
1907. Mrs. BEER, M.A., 16, Shortlands Road, Shortlands, Kent.
1893. E. C. BENECKE, 182, Denmark Hill, S.E.
1906. Miss MARGARET BENSON, Tremans, Horsted Keynes, Sussex.
1907. Miss ALICE BLUNDELL, University Club for Ladies, 4, George Street, Hanover Square.
1888. H. W. BLUNT, M.A., 183, Woodstock Road, Oxford.
1886. Prof. BERNARD BOSANQUET, M.A., LL.D., *Vice-President*, The Heath Cottage, Oxshott.
1890. A. BOUTWOOD, Bledlow, Bucks.
1889. Prof. J. BROUGH, LL.M., University College, Aberystwyth.
1908. WILLIAM BROWN, M.A., 94, Talgarth Mansions, West Kensington.
1895. Mrs. SOPHIE BRYANT, D.Sc., Litt.D., 6, Eldon Road, Hampstead.
1883. S. H. BUTCHER, M.P., LL.D., 6, Tavistock Square, W.C.
1906. Prof. A. CALDECOTT, M.A., D.D., 1, Longton Avenue, Sydenham, S.E.
1906. Miss H. M. CAMERON, B.A., 39, Cheverton Road, Hornsey Rise.
1881. H. WILDON CARE, *Hon. Sec.*, Savile Club, 107, Piccadilly, W.
1907. J. F. O. CODDINGTON, M.A., The Training College, Sheffield.
1895. STANTON COIT, Ph.D., 30, Hyde Park Gate, S.W.
1896. E. T. DIXON, M.A., Racketts, Hythe, Hants.
1899. J. A. J. DREWETT, M.A., Wadham College, Oxford.
1906. B. DUMVILLE, M.A., 97, Leconfield Road, Canonbury, N.
1893. W. H. FAIRBROTHER, M.A., Lincoln College, Oxford.
1901. A. J. FINBERG, 1, Hilldrop Crescent, Camden Road, N.
1908. HUBERT FOSTON, M.A., D.Lit., Hathera, near Loughborough.
1897. Prof. W. R. BOYCE GIBSON, M.A., 9, Briardale Gardens, Platt's Lane, Hampstead.
1900. G. F. GOLDSBROUGH, M.D., Church Side, Herne Hill, S.E.
1906. Miss JANET A. GOURLAY, Kempshott Park, Basingstoke.
1908. WILLIAM GOWER, 36, Hopefield Avenue, W. Kilburn.
1905. Miss C. C. GRAVESON, The Training College, New Cross, S.E.
1883. Right Hon. R. B. HALDANE, M.P., LL.D., F.R.S., *Vice-President* 10, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.
1907. Miss ELIZABETH S. HALDANE, LL.D., Cloan Auchterwider, N.B.
1901. Mrs. HERZFELD, 106, Thirlestane Road, Edinburgh.
1890. Prof. G. DAWES HICKS, M.A., Ph.D., Litt.D., *Vice-President*, 9, Cranmer Road, Cambridge.
1902. Mrs. HICKS, 9, Cranmer Road, Cambridge.
1880. SHADWORTH H. HODGSON, M.A., LL.D., *Vice-President*, 45, Conduit Street, W.
1908. Miss M. V. HUGHES, 62, Elms Road, Clapham.

## Elected.

1896. Miss L. M. JACKSON, 29, Manchester Street, W.  
 1904. F. B. JEVONS, M.A., Litt.D., Bishop Hatfield's Hall, Durham.  
 1892. Miss E. E. CONSTANCE JONES, Girton College, Cambridge.  
 1896. FREDERICK KAIBEL, 27, Kensington Mansions, Earl's Court, S.W.  
 1881. A. F. LAKE, Wrangaton, Sundridge Avenue, Bromley.  
 1898. Prof. ROBERT LATTA, M.A., D.Phil., The College, Glasgow.  
 1897. Rev. JAMES LINDSAY, M.A., D.D., Springhill Terrace, Kilmarnock, N.B.  
 1906. Rev. G. MARGOLIOUTH, British Museum, W.C.  
 1907. A. MAXWELL, M.A., 56, Parliament Hill Mansions, N.W.  
 1899. J. LEWIS MCINTYRE, D.Sc., Abbotsville, Cults, N.R.  
 1889. R. E. MITCHESON, M.A., 11, Kensington Square, W.  
 1896. G. E. MOORE, M.A., *Vice-President*, 6, Pembroke Villas, The Green, Richmond.  
 1889. Prof. J. H. MUIRHEAD, M.A., LL.D., 1, York Road, Edgbaston.  
 1900. Rev. G. E. NEWSOM, M.A., King's College, London.  
 1900. R. G. NISBET, M.A., 6, Spring Gardens, North Kelvinside, Glasgow.  
 1904. T. PERCY NUNN, M.A., D.Sc., *Treasurer*, London Day Training College, Southampton Row, W.C.  
 1908. Miss HILDA D. OAKELEY, 15, Launceston Place, Kensington, W.  
 1903. Miss E. A. PEARSON, 129, Kennington Road, S.E.  
 1903. GEORGE CLAUS RANKIN, M.A., 2, Mitre Court Buildings, Temple, E.C.  
 1889. Rev. HASTINGS RASHDALL, M.A., D.C.L., *Vice-President*, 18, Longwall, Oxford.  
 1895. ARTHUR ROBINSON, M.A., 4, Pimlico, Durham.  
 1908. G. R. T. ROSS, D.Phil., Linden, Hillside Avenue, Bitterne Park, Southampton.  
 1896. Hon. B. A. W. RUSSELL, M.A., F.R.S., Lower Copse, Bagley Wood, Oxford.  
 1905. F. C. S. SCHILLEB, M.A., D.Sc., Corp. Chr. Coll., Oxford.  
 1892. ALEXANDER F. SHAND, M.A., 1, Edwardes Place, Kensington, W.  
 1901. A. T. SHEARMAN, M.A., D. Lit., 67, Cranfield Road, Brockley, S.E.  
 1907. W. G. SLEIGHT, M.A., 62, Harpenden Road, Wanstead Park, Essex.  
 1900. Prof. W. R. SORLEY, M.A., LL.D., *Vice-President*, St. Giles, Chesterton Lane, Cambridge.  
 1908. K. J. SPALDING, M.A., Balliol College, Oxford.  
 1901. GUSTAV SPILLER, 13, Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.  
 1888. G. JOHNSTONE STONEY, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., 30, Chepstow Crescent, Bayswater, W.  
 1887. Prof. G. F. STOUT, M.A., LL.D., *Vice-President*, Craigard, St. Andrews, N.B.  
 1904. FR. TAVANI, 72, Carlton Vale, N.W.  
 1907. A. & B. TERRELL, 11, Stone Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, W.C.  
 1907. H. CHOLMONDELEY THORNTON, B.A., Junior Conservative Club, 44, Albemarle Street, W.

Elected.

1900. Prof. C. B. UPTON, M.A., St. George's, Littlemore, near Oxford.
1886. FRAMJEE R. VICAJEE, High Court of Judicature, Bombay.
1902. JOSEPH WALKER, Pellercroft, Thongsbridge, Huddersfield.
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1907. Rev. H. H. WILLIAMS, M.A., Hertford College, Oxford.
1900. A. WOLF, M.A., D.Lit., Stafford House, Gayton Road, Harrow.







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