its details; but, if not, it would seem clear that the method of the work is too 'objective' (it is deductive), and that the terms of the discussion are used too loosely.

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La Psicologia Contemporanea. GUIDO VILLA. Turin, Fratelli Bocca, 1899. In 8vo. Pp. xvi+660.

The object of this volume, as explained by the author himself, is to give a clear account of the present condition of psychological studies in those countries where the scientific study of the mind is most in favor, as in Germany, in England, in the United States and in France (preface). The author apologizes for not having said much of his own country. He seems to believe that, thus far, the contributions of his countrymen to the advancement of scientific psychology have been scanty and insignificant. Signor Villa remarks that most of the Italian psychologists are, properly speaking, philosophers; that the dominant tendency in psychology is still that of the 'inner sense' which goes, with certain authors, as far as a purely spiritualistic conception of the mind. It is only a short time since works were being published on physiological psychology, like those of Sergi, De Sarlo, Buccola, Faggi. But, he concludes, the new psychologists, by going to the opposite extreme of the spiritualistic philosophers, seem to be coerced into such an intensity of materialistic beliefs as to lose the equilibrium of feeling required for dealing scientifically with the facts of mental life (pp. 78-79). This, with the exception of a few scattered references to books published in Italy on various psychological topics, is about all he says concerning the Italian psychologists, in a volume of more than 660 pages.

For such a shameful lack of enthusiasm over the work of the Italians in the field of psychology, Signor Villa has been very severely reprimanded by Professor Sergi. (*Il Pensiero Nuovo*, Vol. IV., 1899.) Sergi claims that Italy can stand comparison with any other country in regard to psychological work. As a proof, he recalls the fact that a laboratory of experimental psychology was founded at Reggio Emilia by Tamburini as far back as 1880, that psychological laboratories were soon after organized in the Universities of Naples, Rome and Turin, in connection, respectively, with the chairs of psychiatry, anthropology and physiology; that since 1879 the first work on physiological psychology was published in Italy by Sergi himself, the same work being later on translated into French by Ribot and Es-

pinas and published in Alcan series. Sergi further recalls the names of the most prominent contributors to the advancement of experimental and comparative psychology in Italy: Vignoli, Lombroso, Morselli, Buccola, Mantegazza, Mosso, Luciani, Tanzi, De Sanctis, Patrizi, De Sarlo, Ferri, Ferrero, Sighele.

We are willing to concede that Signor Villa has somewhat exaggerated the insignificance of the Italian contributions to scientific psychology, probably for the purpose of pleasing certain old caryatides who control the distribution of university chairs. We will also admit that it cannot be asserted, as Villa does, that the tendency still prevailing in Italy in the study of the mind is that of the 'inner sense.' This is only true in reference to a few men who teach psychology as a part of philosophy in some of the universities. These fossils, however, cannot be made to represent the whole movement of studies and research in psychology which is growing, outside of the philosophical faculties, chiefly in connection with the chairs of nervous diseases and physiology. But we cannot share Sergi's indignation at Villa's alleged lack of patriotism. There should be no 'chauvinisme' in a discussion of this kind. Nobody can deny that scientific psychology has found, even in Italy, a number of competent students. But we cannot seriously claim, as does Sergi, that Italy stands second to no other country in the line of psychological work. Psychology has not even gained in Italy a recognition as an independent 'natural science' in the university curriculum. It is still a branch of philosophy. Consequently, there cannot be specialists devoting their life to psychology alone. Occasional psychologists, however intelligent they may be, are recruited among physiologists, neurologists, anthropologists. Thus, psychological research appears to be a sort of by-work. There is absolutely no sign in Italy of a movement of psychological studies and researches comparable to that flourishing in Germany or in the United States. Partial attempts, scattered and isolated efforts, in a word, something which is undoubtedly growing, but is still very immature; this is the real condition of psychological studies in Italy to-day. The fact recalled by Sergi, that a psychological laboratory was founded in Italy in 1880, is not a conclusive argument. The important thing is not to have so-called laboratories, as a novelty imported from abroad through a sort of scientific snobbishness, but to have students who do nothing but psychological work and who make discoveries of new facts. What are, then, the original contributions made by Italian psychologists which can be said to mark a step onward in the building up of scientific psychology? Is there any Italian work

to be compared to those of Wundt, of James or of Ribot? Of course, I am speaking of purely psychological works. Golgi, Luciani, Mosso, Morselli—men of whom Italy is justly proud—cannot be considered as psychologists as long as physiology and psychiatry are to be looked upon as sciences totally distinct from psychology.

Signor Villa's book is a work of popularization. If advanced students and trained specialists have nothing to learn from Villa's résumés, beginners will find it a useful guide to the study of psychology. In the conditions now prevailing in Italy a book like this may undoubtedly help to arouse interest in psychological research, to extend the circle of psychological students, to bring the last results of experimental work abroad within the knowledge of a wider range of persons. Such a work had never been attempted in Italy. We are far from saying that Villa has succeeded in his difficult task. He is undoubtedly a conscientious worker, but sadly lacks the talent of distributing his subject-matter in the most convenient and suggestive form. The book is, therefore, full of unnecessary repetitions, it is heavy and cumbersome, its reading is tiring through prolixity and overabundance of 'historical stuff.' But, in spite of that, Villa's patient and truly meritorious effort deserves the warmest encouragement, and we cannot help declaring that Sergi has been utterly unjust in accusing Villa of ignoring the laboratory and of being a 'dilettante.' That Villa is fairly well informed of the results of experimental work and of the physiological facts bearing on psychological research is abundantly proved by his chapter on 'Psychological Methods,' and by the clear account which he gives of the recent discoveries in nervous histology by Golgi, Ramon y Cajal and others, in the chapter on 'Mind and Body,' one of the best in the whole book.

The following are the general headings of the chapters: Introduction; I., Historical Development of Psychology; II., Conception of Psychology; III., Mind and Body; IV., The Methods of Psychology; V., The Psychical Functions; VI., Consciousness; VII., Psychological Laws; Conclusion.

Signor Villa is thoroughly acquainted with German psychological literature, especially with Wundt's works. He gives, on the whole, one of the best résumés of Wundt's doctrines as unfolded in the three standard psychological works of the great German master and in all his monographs published in the '*Philosophische Studien*.' Especially worthy of notice is the résumé of Wundt's theory of Will (pp. 432-438); all the more so, as Wundt's theory of will is one of the most important elements of his interpretation of the facts of mental

life and cannot be found in a coherent and unique statement; but it is to be reconstructed from nearly all his works, and chiefly from the 'System der Philosophie,' the 'Grundzüge der Physiolog. Psychol.,' and the 'Grundriss der Psych.' Villa is also well acquainted with French and English literature. But he is a determined follower of Wundt's doctrines. Perhaps his admiration for that powerful intellect carries him too far beyond the limits of 'rationabile obsequium.' Wundt's doctrines are for him the alpha and the omega of psychology. He tenaciously clings to the presupposition of 'psychophysical parallelism,' but fails to understand that a provisional empirical assumption, justified only by the adoption of the 'natural science' standpoint in psychology, cannot be transformed into an imperative dogma without overstepping the boundaries of science and running into metaphysics. He says (p. 413) that there is an *absolute* difference between the physiological phenomenon and the psychical process. But, by emphasizing the hiatus between the causal series, by vigorously asserting the irreducible difference between the elementary facts of both series, he helps to accentuate what has always been the weakest point in Wundt's system—*i. e.*, the impossibility of conceiving a 'parallelism' where experience shows 'dependence' of one series (the psychological) upon the other (the physiological). Parallelism presupposes the independence of the two orders of fact. But what becomes of the psychical process if the nervous system disappears? The truth is that the assumption of a psychophysical parallelism, alleged to be a merely empirical statement of facts to be provisionally and uncritically accepted as the starting-point of scientific psychology, has resulted, in the end, in a desperate attempt to preserve, in a new and insidious form, the postulates of spiritualism. When disfigured through dogmatism and forced into the turbid region of metaphysics, the principle of psychophysical parallelism must necessarily end in a puzzling enigma. If, as Villa declares, the origin of the mental fact coincides with the origin of life on earth, so that the two series of facts—the mental and the vital—reveal their alleged parallelism throughout the whole animal series (p. 656); if we can explain the biological phenomenon as a result of highly complex chemical processes, which in turn may be traced back to the general laws of physics (p. 658); if, on the other hand, we cannot explain the elementary psychical fact as the result of the same physico-chemical agencies producing life (*ibid.*); then the origin of the mental fact remains unexplained as something which springs up *ex nihilo* while life, its concomitant, has definite antecedents. We cannot escape the 'impasse'

without prolonging the psychical series beyond the limen of life into the inorganic world, just as we prolong the biological series down to the lower plane of chemical processes. We must, in other words, attribute to the inorganic world some sort of unconscious mentality. Thus, when pressed too far, the principle of psychophysical parallelism leads directly to some new form of animism, hence to pure mysticism.

But this is not the place for discussing, in an episodical way, such momentous problems. We will simply add that Villa does not seem to be acquainted with recent American literature as well as with the German. Of Professor Baldwin's works, he seems to know only the 'Handbook' thoroughly. The brilliant studies on 'Child-Psychology' seem to be known to Villa only by the title (pp. 84, 89). He is ignorant of Professor Baldwin's most recent work 'Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development,' thus missing one of the most important contributions of American thought to the advancement of both psychology and sociology, a work which, together with 'Les Lois de l'Imitation,' by Tarde, marks a critical moment in the growth of social science. I have also noticed lack of exactness in biographical information regarding prominent American psychologists. For instance, he gives Professor Münsterberg (pp. 86, 125) as lecturing at Freiburg, and Professor Baldwin (p. 83) at Toronto. The ignorance of Tarde's and Baldwin's works accounts for the extreme vagueness and confusion we have noticed throughout the book in regard to the conception of social psychology and to the relationship of social psychology to sociology.

In conclusion, we will say that Signor Villa's book, taken all in all, is a conscientious work which, despite the author's most decided infatuations for certain deceptive Wundtian formulas, might become a very useful guide to beginners, if the author, in a new edition, would use the scissors freely in order to suppress all the unnecessary repetitions which make the book so voluminous in its present arrangement. A carefully prepared index would very greatly increase the usefulness of this work.

GUSTAVO TOSTI.

NEW YORK CITY.

The Elements of Sociology. FRANKLIN HENRY GIDDINGS. The Macmillan Co., New York and London, 1898.

This volume "is not an abridgment of the author's 'Principles of Sociology,' but is a new book." To the psychologist the most sig-