PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.


M. Draghiscesco, in a brochure entitled _Le Problème du Déterminisme Social_ and in a book following it a year later, _Du Rôle de l'Individu dans le Déterminisme Social_, has presented a statement of the relation of sociology and psychology that in any case throws into strong relief the problems involved in the relations of these sciences.

In his earlier work M. Draghiscesco is occupied with the difference which he conceives to exist between the social sciences and the positivistic natural sciences. These latter, according to him, serve to prophesy the future through a study of the past. The past yields them the facts which in their uniformity and invariability reveal the laws that determine the necessary succession of events in the future. To this group of sciences biology must belong, and if the individual is to be defined and analyzed by a physiology and a psychology dependent upon physiology, and a sociology that follows the same lead, the determinism of the social sciences will be that of biology.

Against this the author makes a vigorous protest. The basis of this protest is that the events of consciousness cannot be predicated, because they spring from a source which lies higher than that of natural phenomena. In the first place he finds that the phenomena of consciousness are of a totally different character. They are to a large degree rational and teleological in their structure, while the natural phenomena are mechanical. From this he goes on to discuss the nature of the relation of the body and consciousness. The hypothesis that consciousness is an epiphenomenon is rejected because of the evident efficacy of consciousness in our conduct, while the parallel doctrines of materialism and spiritualism are impaled upon their metaphysical contradictions and implications.

The alternative that the author substitutes for these hypotheses is that of society, or a general social consciousness (it is impossible to determine just which of these he has in mind), which is the matrix out
of which individual consciousness arises. Social relationships are real, objective, and according to the author the source of all states of consciousness which lie above the barest sensation and impulse. Instead therefore of a brain with its epiphenomenon of consciousness, that is but the shadow of a reality, there stands the social plexus which is not only there as a web and woof of facts but is after all the very stuff of consciousness. The simpler unreflective phases of consciousness would thus be dependent upon the physiological determinism of the physical body, while the higher processes out of which the conscious individual arises would arise out of and be dependent upon the social complex and its determinism, a determinism which is teleological while the former is mechanical. The author brings into this discussion the problem of the inheritance of acquired traits, coming to the conclusion that only those traits can be handed down which arise out of permanent conditions in the environment, and which will continue to have the same value for descendent forms that they had for those parent forms in which the variation arose. He concludes from this that conditions so unstable and variant as those of the social environment cannot possibly be the ground for the inheritance of the acquired traits of conscious life. Thus there appears another type of inheritance in the social world through which acquired characteristics are handed down by the way of social institutions. The basis for inheritance in the biological world is that the results of development have been so assimilated into the texture of the biological matter, that the child-form brings its characteristics fully determined with it into the world; while in the social world the form comes as nearly as possible as a white page with no characteristics as yet inscribed upon it, but ready for the determination of its social environment through education and training. Thus a capital distinction between the two worlds is made, which seems to M. Draghicesco of the greatest moment.

As I have indicated, there is an entire lack of analysis of this dependence upon the social environment. At one time the author implies that the social complex is an antecedent objective environment existing before the consciousness of which it is the substratum in some sense. At another he implies that there is a general social consciousness out of which the individual consciousness arises. While seeming to reject Wundt's position that this social consciousness must appear in that of individuals, he nowhere discusses adequately this assumption, nor its relation to a theory of cognitive consciousness.

Add to this that the author assumes that the events in the world of
consciousness may result from causation without any fixed or recur-
rent series, and finally that, following the steps of Tarde, he suggests
that the social world is but young in comparison with the physical;
that the countless ages requisite to account for the building up of the
solar system and the surface of one of its planets have resulted through
continuous evolution in an almost unvarying course of events; that
the social world is by comparison but in an age of chaos, comparable
to the early nebular stage of the solar system; that the scientists who
should have speculated in the beginnings of the nebular period could
not have possibly predicted the coming events within the system as
they can now predict with certainty an eclipse; and we see that a
great variety of considerations on entirely different logical levels are
brought forward. At one point he suggests that a coming period is
conceivable when such an evolution shall have taken place within the
social world, that a complete integration of society will take place, so
that the processes of law and method will have completely passed into
the consciousness of mankind and all its actions will be determined, as
are the mechanical events of the physical world. At another point he
implies that the initiative of consciousness makes any such result an
impossibility.

When we turn to M. Draghiscesco's book on the rôle of the indi-
vidual in social determinism, we find a more detailed effort to prove
the identification of sociology and psychology, which is the ultimate
thesis of his brochure. He again insists that the physical world can-
not be the ground for the explanation of consciousness because of the
extreme complexity of the conscious content. For the author the
physical world is extremely simple, made up of series which are ever
recurring without exception, offering no variety on the one hand nor
any principle of synthesis on the other. Variety and synthetic activity
are accepted as the conditions of our personal consciousness, and the
infinite variety of the physical world and its syntheses are somewhat
contemptuously dismissed as quite inadequate to the awakening of
human reflective consciousness while they may suffice for the stimula-
tion of the life processes of lower animal forms. It is then to the
social environment that we must look for the conditions under which
reflection can appear.

The social processes, furthermore, run parallel with the psycho-
logical. The whole social evolution is a process of integration, and
this integration has its two phases which answer directly to the two
demands of reflective consciousness. All history shows society con-
tinually sweeping more and more communities into each other, while
this very process of increasing the extent of society involves a differ-
entiation of new social functions and a more profound organization
than could have existed in any of the smaller communities. This
movement is so continuous and incessant that no limit can be put to it
except the final integration of the race, though step by step with this
spread of community-life must go increased depth and intensity of
social consciousness. Here, then, we have the continual occurrence
of new and unceasing synthesis.

If we examine the processes of consciousness and the social
processes more in detail we find that perception is expressed in terms
of modern psychology as a form of suggestion, that association of
ideas comes back to the processes of attention and repetition, and that
attention is but the subjective expression of the prestige, the authority
with which some element in the environment commands us, while
repetition is an affair of education if we take education in its largest
sense. But suggestion and prestige, authority and education can
only be conceived from the social point of view. Advancing to im-
agination, it is to be identified with invention, and abstraction with
the operation of social control through laws and customs, while volun-
tary activity finds its great and at bottom only expression in what M.
Draghiscesco defines as the genius. The genius is the individual who
gives expression to the new law and through his identification with his
environment on the one side, and his initiative on the other, impresses
the idea upon the community, and raises the mass up to it, so that the
idea becomes a part of the consciousness of the whole society. These
social laws are inculcated on the younger generation through all the
social institutions. The changes that take place must do so through
the genius who makes advance possible, who is the social will. Ad-
vance is necessary because of the very process of continued social
integration which involves ceaseless absorption of new content and as
ceaseless new organization. The conclusion of the whole matter is
that psychology is but applied pedagogy, the statement in terms of the
individual process of the operations by which society controls its mem-
bers and takes the steps in advance which a necessary social integra-
tion involves. Thus sociology and psychology become identified,
being but the same science looking out upon the same field through
different windows.

It seems to the reviewer a matter of no great importance that a com-
plete parallelism can be traced between consciousness and any environ-
ment which it knows. Knowledge is universally recognized as con-
structive, so that such a parallelism between the process and the product
is but to be expected. Surely just what M. Draghiscesco abuses the physiological psychologist for doing is what he has done with no better warrant as a social psychologist. The psychologist has pointed out that the physical world is made up of our representations, that its laws are but the associations of our ideas, and that its objects have the unity of our synthetic apperception. If it were conceivable that a consciousness could derive a power of synthesis from the syntheses which affect it through its environment, certainly these could be found in the world of physical science. James Mill deduced the association of ideas from the succession of events in physical nature about us. If the social stimulus can command our attention, certainly the physical has exerted this authority for still longer periods, and its objects have given forth the suggestions which native impulses have responded to in naïve perception. Natural law certainly presents classical instances of abstraction, and who shall draw the line between impulse and the will? There is, however, a problem brought out here which deserves a more profound analysis than is granted it by M. Draghiscesco. It is the problem of the relation of the individual with whom psychology deals to the process of that consciousness as a whole. On the one side this is peculiarly a problem of social psychology, for the question at once arises as to whether the individual with whom the psychologist deals is the same as the individual of the sociologist. Our author insists that they are the same and that the sciences are but one science.

There is one point of view from which the social object seems essentially different from that of physical perception. The other selves stand upon a different basis from that of physical objects. Physical objects are merely objects of perception, while the other selves are perceiving subjects as well as perceived objects. The question arises whether this difference has any significance for the process of cognition. I take it that it is the feeling of this difference which lies behind the position of the author that the social consciousness stands upon a higher plane than that of physical consciousness, and provides the mechanism of cognition itself. His assumption is that reflective, representational consciousness is essentially a social consciousness.

Stated in somewhat different terms the position is this: cognition is essentially a synthetic process which involves an organizing self, but this self arises only in so far as other selves, the alii, appear in consciousness. Professor Baldwin in his Mental Development has described, perhaps, as satisfactorily as any psychologist, the process by which the child's own personality arises out of the differentiation of a
general social consciousness into an ego and alii. And these other selves are accepted as subjects like unto the knowing subject, and therefore unlike the known object. This fact from the standpoint of ethics is of capital importance. As Kant has stated it, these other selves cannot be mere means as are the physical objects. They must be recognized as ends. Has the fact a like importance for the psychology of cognition?

If we turn to immediate consciousness we find no direct evidence of a peculiar cognitive value inhering in our social perceptions in comparison with the physical perceptions. One is quite as real as the other. From the psychological point of view the question becomes this: does introspection present the knowing self to the knower, as a social content implying necessarily other selves, while the known physical object is subject to analysis into states that must be referred to this self? If this were the case, we might indeed deduce the whole cognitive process out of a consciousness which was primarily social and secondarily physical. But the fact is that this self which our introspection reveals is the so-called empirical self, and is just as much a construct as the physical object. A constructing self never appears as the object of introspection. He can no more be got on to the dissecting table than Kant's transcendental ego. It is true that we cannot construct empirical selves without constructing other selves. It is equally true that we cannot construct our physical bodies as objects without constructing other physical objects, and it is a piece of Berkeleyan idealism to refer the consciousness of physical objects to the consciousness of the empirical self, giving precedence in reality to the latter over the former. It is hard to see that psychology as an analysis of reflective consciousness is essentially social in its character.

There is another attitude of the author which bears more or less directly on this question. He assumes that the physical sciences give us a fixed theory of nature that does not change, that is not subject to the constant reconstructions which social theories undergo. The assumption is a groundless one. It would be difficult for social theory to change much more rapidly or more fundamentally than has the theory of matter within the last half century. The fact is that our attitude toward physical theory is exactly the same as that toward social theory. Every new hypothesis brings with it a radical change of such a character that it would have been impossible for the scientist to have predicted the new hypothesis from the fullest possible knowledge of the world under the old. From a Ptolemaic point of view one could never have argued to or predicted the Copernican. And it is
the essence not only of Pragmatism but of most of the other modern philosophical doctrines of knowledge, to call this scientific knowledge as really teleological as that of the social sciences. The point that needs to be emphasized is that reflective consciousness, when it meets an essential difficulty and forms an hypothesis to solve this problem, has just the same attitude toward its social theories as that which it holds towards physical theories, and vice versa. The whole body of knowledge is open to reconstruction.

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To discover what truth there is in lying seems to be the object of M. Paulhan's artistic, suggestive, and paradoxical study of simulation — its protean variations with different types of character, its commanding rôle in the complexities of social life, and its final sublimation as a sociological and philosophical principle.

The author begins by drawing a fundamental distinction between two types of character. Under the first belong those who conceal, or inhibit, their real disposition. Under the second belong those who pretend to express traits, ideas, sentiments, etc., which they do not really have. The former are negative; they dissimulate. The latter are positive; they simulate. Both tendencies may exist in the same character. All degrees of preponderance of one or the other may be noted in different characters, and even, in some instances, in the same character.

The first type the author discusses at length in Part I. under the head of 'Feigned Indifference.' A brief review cannot do justice to the skill with which the author penetrates this mask and illuminates the interior with his keen and brilliant analysis. Feigned indifference is a form of self-protection. Given, on the one hand, a self characterized by great sensitiveness, endowed with capacities for deep affection and reflective thought, a self in whom la vie intérieure predominates with its natural inhibitions of overt action; and given, on the other hand, a harsh or niggardly environment, a crude, unsympathetic milieu; and you have conditions favorable to the development of feigned indifference, of assumed coldness and reserve. Frequently the mask does not persist as a mask. By usage it clings closer and closer to the features and ends by becoming a part of the real character — a persona. The character insensibly tends to become what it dissimulates.