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"*

* *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

* 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

* 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.

* Richard Herbart: "Die angeblich falsche Wissenstheorie der Psychologie," *Z. f. Psychol.*, Bd. xlv, 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

* "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

* *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,"

* 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

* *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 percipient 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

* *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

* *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-

* *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

* *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,

* *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 psychical 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 psychical 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

* *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

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

* *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

* *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, independent of that life, permanent or having existence beyond the moment of my apprehension, identical, or retaining a certain unity of structure, which is characterised by the possession of qualities, and forming part of an interconnected system of real things. 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

* *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; *μὴ 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

* 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

* 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

* "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

* *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

* 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, α , 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, α becomes the cause of B evolving out of its own nature, and as part of itself, its new state β . So that the form of the effect β 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^1 , produce in B^1 a new effect β^1 , quite distinct from β . 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 β , in this case a sensation. How is it possible to escape the admission that β 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

* 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

* 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.