M I N D

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

OF

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY.

I.—PREFATORY WORDS.

THE first English journal devoted to Psychology and Philosophy, MIND appears in circumstances that call for some remark.

That no such journal should hitherto have existed is hardly surprising. Long as English inquiry has been turned on the things of mind, it has, till quite lately, been distinguished from the philosophical thought of other countries by what may be called its unprofessional character. Except in Scotland (and even there Hume was not a professor) few British thinkers have been public teachers with philosophy for the business of their lives. Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Hartley, the Mills did their philosophical work at the beginning or at the end or in the pauses of lives otherwise active, and addressed for the most part the common intelligence of their time. It may not have been ill for their fame; but their work itself is not what it otherwise might have been, and their manner of thinking has affected the whole character and standing of philosophical inquiry in England. If their work had been academic, it would probably have been much more sustained—better carried out when it did not lack comprehension, more comprehensive when it was well and carefully begun. The informality of their thought has undoubtedly prevented philosophy from obtaining the scientific consideration which it holds elsewhere. There has not been wanting in England

a generally diffused interest in the subject, such as is fed by discussions, more or less philosophical, mixed up with lighter literature in the pages of miscellaneous magazines; but of special interest, like that felt in mathematics or physics or chemistry by a multitude of active workers and a multitude of trained and continuous learners, there has hitherto been little. Even now the notion of a journal being founded to be taken up wholly with metaphysical subjects, as they are called, will little commend itself either to those who are in the habit of declaring with great confidence that there can be no science in such matters, or to those who would only play with them now and again.

The signs, notwithstanding, that mental science and philosophy have for some time past been cultivated with a more single-minded endeavour, and that the class of those who are specially interested is growing steadily larger, are neither few nor uncertain. Not only in the present generation have psychological works, conceived in the traditional spirit of English inquiry, been elaborated as never before: other works have been written with the object of bringing English thought into direct relation with the general philosophical movement of Europe; and in still others there has been developed a new spirit of large system. Whether the seats of academic instruction have yet been stirred to due activity is a question that will be considered in these pages; but it certainly can no longer be said, even by candid friends at home, that English inquirers and thinkers are not active in every field of philosophical effort, and it has been said abroad that, however it be with physical science, at least in psychology and philosophy the countrymen of Locke at present are leading the van. Not less significant is the voice that is heard from the foremost physical inquirers crying out for a wider and deeper comprehension of nature. The need is everywhere felt, as where in Germany some of the best philosophical work is being done by men like Helmholtz and Wundt who began their career as physiologists, but it has nowhere been more signally manifested than in England. The unity that belonged to human knowledge under the name of Philosophy, before the special sciences were, is now, when the sciences stand fast, again sought for under no other name than Philosophy. In such circumstances, the institution of a journal that should aim at giving expression to all new philosophical ideas and at making English readers acquainted with the progress of philosophical thought in other countries, cannot be regarded as inopportune. The time, at all events, has come for gauging the extent and depth of the interest professed in philosophy.

The projectors of the new journal had little doubt as to the form it should assume. However deeply impressed with the need for an organ that should leave the freest scope to general philosophical thinking, they were not prepared to be responsible for a publication that would display only or chiefly the speculative differences of individual thinkers. It might be a useful enterprise to bring even these to light, and, unless all general philosophy were excluded from the journal, they could in no case be concealed; but other work, still more pressing, stood waiting to be done. Philosophical thought in England has for the most part been based on psychology, when not wholly merged in it; and psychology, pursued as a positive science, ought to yield a continuous harvest of results, coherent among themselves and standing in relation with other results garnered in the scientific field. That psychology has not been unfruitful is the conviction of all those who continue to cultivate it upon the lines of the past—with new lights, it may be, but still upon the old tracks. Few, however, of its cultivators will deny that it has been far from as fruitful as could be wished, and even the most ardent must admit that it has by no means won the rank of an assured science in the common esteem.* Now, if there were a journal that set itself to record all advances in psychology, and gave encouragement to special researches by its readiness to publish them, the uncertainty hanging over the subject could hardly fail to be dispelled. Either psychology would in time pass with general consent into the company of the sciences, or the hollowness of its pretensions would be plainly revealed. Nothing less, in fact, is aimed at in the publication of *MIND* than to procure a decision of this question as to the scientific standing of psychology. Nor is the question less really submitted for judgment, because the projectors of the journal themselves think that the issue is not doubtful, and that the question remains pending chiefly from ignorance of the actual state of psychological inquiry and want of enlightenment as to the true conception of science.

The prospectus that has been issued tries to give a general idea of the width of field, or rather the variety of fields, whereon the psychologist is in these days called to range. Physiological investigation of the Nervous System in man and animals, by which mental science is brought into relation with

* The recent Royal Commission on Scientific Instruction and the Advancement of Science had no hesitation in limiting the scope of its inquiries to "the Sciences of Organic and Inorganic Nature, including . . . the Sciences of Number and Magnitude, together with those which depend on Observation and Experiment, but excluding the Mental and Moral Sciences."—(*Third Report*, p. vii.)

biology and the physical sciences generally; objective study of all natural expressions or products of mind like Language, and all abnormal or morbid phases up to Insanity; comparative study, again objective, of the manners and customs of Human Races as giving evidence of their mental characteristics, also of mind as exhibited by the lower Animals—such are some of the more obvious heads of inquiry which the psychologist must keep in view. No such statement, however, can come near to exhausting the matter of psychology. Whatever place may be claimed for it among the sciences in respect of its method, psychology in respect of its subject must stand for ever apart. Include Mind, as it may possibly be included, in the widest conception of Nature, and it is like one half of the whole facing all the rest. Oppose it, as more commonly it is opposed, to Nature, and again Mind is nothing less than one half of all that exists; nay, in a most serious sense, it extends to all that exists, because that which we call Nature, in all its aspects and all its departments, must have an expression in terms of thought or subjective experience. It is in this view that Psychology may be shown to pass inevitably into Philosophy, but let it suffice here to have merely suggested why, although all objective lines of inquiry bearing more or less directly on mind will in turn be pursued in these pages, the fundamental consideration of mind is and must be subjective. Whoever enters into this position is able, without abandoning the firm ground of the positive sciences, to put himself in relation with the philosophic thought of all time and is raised above the narrowing influences of modern specialism.

Theoretic psychology has its practical application, as a whole, in the balanced training and culture of the individual mind, while it deals separately with functions whose natural play stands greatly in need of regulation. Considering how much attention has been given to psychology in England, it is somewhat remarkable that so little reference has been made to Education, whether in view of the immense practical importance of the subject, or as a means of testing the truth of psychological theory. The more scientific doctrine of mind which, we are apt to boast, has always been sought after in England, has borne little educational fruit, compared with the speculative theories of mind that have grown in rank profusion on German soil. A true psychology ought unquestionably to admit of being turned to the educator's purpose, and in no direction has the new journal a more decided opening for effective work at the present time. To speak, in the same connection, of such subjects as Logic, *Æsthetics* and Ethics, may seem strange, but there is good reason for so doing.

The existence, in more or less developed form, of the three distinct bodies of doctrine so named, is a signal confirmation of the theoretic distinction of Knowing, Feeling and Willing which has established itself, not without difficulty, in modern psychology, while the doctrines themselves have an obvious relation to the different aspects of mental culture. The psychologist is drawn on almost perforce to consider how the natural action of mind may be controlled and perfected, and it should therefore surprise no one that in a psychological journal a prominent place is given to mental Nomology, as Hamilton used to call it. From a philosophical point of view it is of course needless to justify the consideration of the true, the beautiful and the good in a journal whose subject is Mind.

With reference to general Philosophy or Metaphysic proper, psychology may be viewed as a kind of common ground whereon thinkers of widely different schools may meet, and, if they do not forthwith agree, may at least have their differences plainly formulated, as a first step towards any agreement that is possible. The new journal should thus, while promoting psychological science, help also to compose that secular strife which scientific inquirers as well as popular writers are never weary of representing as the opprobrium of philosophy. Strife, no doubt, is wasteful, and cannot be too quickly allayed; but it is well there should be no mistake, so far as this particular charge against philosophy is concerned. The kind of agreement that is possible in the special branches of physical science, is not possible in the region of general philosophy. How should it be possible, when the conditions of verification are so utterly different? It is almost absurd to think of it even as desirable. Physical science itself, as it becomes general, grows to be contested: neither the word "science" nor the word "physical" has virtue to charm away the possibilities of dissension that generality enfolds. The larger conceptions and principles of physical inquiry are so notoriously under dispute at the present day that it is almost trivial to mention the fact—not wholly trivial, only because it is so apt to be forgotten when the question turns upon the credit of philosophical doctrines. To bring philosophical inquiries, as far as possible, to their psychological base, seems the most that can be done to procure agreement in a sphere of thought where there must always be the widest scope for difference of opinion. If at the same time it is remembered that even in psychology special results may cover or correspond to vast classes of such objective facts and relations as make the staple of the physical sciences, it need not be matter of wonder that philosophical differences are hard to surmount.

Before closing these remarks it may not be amiss to refer to one peculiar feature in the conduct of the journal, as it is meant to be carried out ; the more, because publicity is a necessary condition to the effective working of the plan. Books of any importance will be noticed on their first appearance, and a general idea will be given of their contents, without any pretence of critical appreciation. It should thus be possible to supply from quarter to quarter an approximately complete bibliographical record, which shall yet give real information not to be had from a bare list of titles. The farther task of critically examining the works of real importance it is desired to leave, as much as possible, to volunteers. Criticism on important books that is not founded upon leisurely study of them by men who read them naturally in the course of their own work, is worth little or nothing when it is not worth much less than nothing. Genuine readers of works bearing on the subjects covered by the Review are accordingly invited to send in critical notices of their own motion. The obvious objection that a volunteer critic is very likely to waste his pains because another may have anticipated him with a criticism on the same book, will be met by a simple expedient: more than one notice will without any hesitation be printed, if proceeding from competent hands. If two or more men, known to be fit judges, agree in commending or in condemning a book, the judgment will be only the more final. If they differ in their estimate, what more instructive to the general reader than to learn this difference and the grounds of it? The object, it may be said, is gained already by the concurrence of different journals. Hardly: for there are no journals at present that can, except occasionally, offer to their readers the kind of criticism which a special journal like MIND must constantly aim at furnishing. When a book has once had its general contents indicated on its appearance, criticism in a special journal should be directed straight to the new ideas in it with little or no formality of introduction and conclusion. The chances are that criticism of this cast from different pens would bear upon different ideas in the same work, and thus a reader might learn more from two or three short notes than by reading several formal notices that must all go over the same ground because they profess to deal with the whole book. On more than one of the works reviewed in the present number, notes of the kind suggested might well be offered by other critics.

EDITOR.