III.—THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

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§ 1. *Statement of the problem.* To know fully the nature of anything is to know how it has become ; how it changes ; what it does ; and what it is. We often interpret the last kind of knowledge so as to involve the other kinds ; but we must remember that a thing has, ordinarily, a distinguishable and common nature apart from its effects on other things, or theirs upon it. In this sense I have already tried to show what is a common transcendent judgment (MIND, No. 59, "The Antinomy of Thought"). I considered its nature apart from the question of its origin,—for this is a psychological question ; apart from the question of its validity,—for this is metaphysical. I regarded it not as *doing* anything for its object—as universalising or defining its object—but as incapable of such action. I considered it merely as it is—as a reality in consciousness—and sought to show, through a struggle with persistent contradictions, how we must interpret its nature so as to escape from them. Here, too, I shall only consider what consciousness is, and put aside all question of its origin. But we shall perhaps find, in distinction from the last case, that what it is cannot be separated from what it does—that it always affects its object, and that this affection belongs inseparably to its unique nature.

For the purpose of our enquiry, we must abstract consciousness from its union with other acts ; but our isolation of it can never become absolute. Were this possible, we should reach a thing-in-itself out of all relation to other things, and such a thing would have no nature left to investigate. The act of being conscious has a certain identity with other acts ; and also a difference from them. It is from the point of view of these relations that we have to consider consciousness ; and we shall find in comparing it with the transcendent judgment, that both its unique and common nature will best be brought to light.

§ 2. *The transcendent and immanent judgments.* I mean by a transcendent judgment, one that transcends what the subject judging is conscious of or one that transcends what is presented to its subject. I mean by an immanent judgment, one that judges what the subject judging is conscious

of or one that deals only with what is presented to its subject. About the reality of the first class of judgments there can be no question. We have clear instances of them in our judgments about the reality and contents of other minds. But the second class of judgments are called in question, for it seems "senseless" to affirm what is thus "given".¹ On ordinary occasions we should not, indeed, think of *expressing* such judgments; but expression in language is not necessary to constitute judgment. In philosophy, too, there arise occasions when we need to express these judgments, in order to study them;—and we can express them. I can affirm that two colours or sounds co-exist and are different from one another. But, even where they are unexpressed, we must still hold them to be implicitly present. Undoubtedly there is something present which makes all judgments impossible that are opposed to its silent affirmation. What is presented to me, that I cannot contradict. And when I express my relation to this presentation in a proposition, I recognise the unmistakable presence of a judgment. Do we then maintain that the character of my relation changed at the moment of expression, and that, from something else, language transformed it into a judgment? It would be hard to answer this question in the affirmative. But we need only admit for our present purpose that this judgment may occur, however artificial it seem. And, lastly, we shall feel less objection to regarding this something as a judgment, if we realise that it is an abstraction. In our ordinary concrete experience, it is a mere element of a larger judgment that deals not merely with what is presented, but that also transcends presentation—a complex judgment which is both immanent and transcendent. But when we isolate the immanent element—and this we shall come to see later—it becomes a judgment, and nothing less. We cannot get beneath judgment, nor resolve its act into simpler components.

§ 3. *If consciousness is a judgment, it is an immanent judgment.* We are convinced that consciousness is a kind of knowledge, and since all knowledge has the form of a judgment, it follows that consciousness is a judgment or complex of judgments. If it is a judgment, it can be no other than the immanent judgment. For all judgments either transcend consciousness in respect of their object, or find their objects in consciousness. But consciousness finds its object in itself, it cannot therefore be a transcendent

¹ F. H. Bradley. *The Principles of Logic*, p. 16.

judgment. It follows that if consciousness is a judgment, it is a judgment whose object is found in consciousness.

§ 4. *Consciousness indefinable in the ordinary sense.* If the hypothetical conclusion of the last paragraph be taken as a definition, it is open to the obvious criticism that it uses the term consciousness to explain the *differentia* of consciousness. The definition would be therefore circular. But it is recognised that, when we are dealing with the ultimate constituents of things, we cannot give correct definitions. A simple difference cannot be reduced to simpler differences : and a simple difference involves a simple quality. If, then, the act of being conscious is simple, we can only express what that is which makes it different from other acts by using the same term again or one that is synonymous. Thus we might have put our conclusion in the following form in which its circular character would not have been obvious : If consciousness is a judgment, it is an intuitive judgment. But were we called upon to explain intuitive, we should sooner or later be forced to use the term consciousness, because the act of being conscious is simple. Nothing, again, is commoner than to find explanations of judgment which conceal their own circular character by employment of synonymous terms. Thus, judgment we are told 'expresses' some relation, or 'refers' an ideal content to reality. But we cannot help ourselves, for it is as impossible to define Judgment as Consciousness. I have meant to acknowledge this openly by using the same term 'consciousness' over again in the above statement about consciousness rather than one that is synonymous.

But what is the use of a statement which explains nothing, and which becomes ridiculous if it is expanded? To say that consciousness is a judgment whose object is found in consciousness, means that it is a judgment whose object is found in a judgment whose object is found in a judgment . . . , and, like a recurring decimal, our statement repeats itself without end. Now we may give genuine information by such statements if we do not take them for explanations or definitions in the ordinary sense. To say that consciousness is a judgment is to state the *genus* of consciousness, and we can go on to state its *differentia* to be a judgment whose object is united to itself and found in itself. But if we try to explain this difference—if we try to reduce it to simpler differences—if we will not accept it as ultimate, then we offer, instead of an intelligible statement, an explanation which explains nothing, and a little criticism will discover its absurdity. Thus our object in

using synonyms and synonymous phrases to express the *differentia* of consciousness must be merely to suggest this difference to the reader, but never to explain it.

§ 5. *The two questions: What is the nature of consciousness? and, What should be the meaning of the word?* We have seen that as the act of being conscious is simple, we cannot define it in the ordinary sense of the word 'define'. But we can still define it in a broader sense—we can set a limit to its meaning. For to do so we need only see clearly what it is and mark its difference from other meanings. In defining a complex unity, we set out its complex difference, or a part of it; in defining a simple unity, we set out its simple difference. Precision in the meaning of a word, consistency in the use of it—the purpose of definition—may be as well attained in the one case as in the other. Now, to define the abstract term 'consciousness' is to say not what is, but what ought to be the meaning of the word. The abstract meaning of the word is ambiguous, vague, and fluctuating. The statement of this confused medley of meanings is not a definition of the word, but we define it when we reduce them to the clear and self-consistent meaning which the word ought to have.

But this is only one of our questions. We enquire also, What is the nature of that which is called consciousness? Thus our ignorance of the thing consciousness, and the confused meaning of the word, are the sources of our two questions. The word does not definitely suggest the meaning which it stands for; the thing is not clearly understood, hence the indefiniteness of the word. When the general nature of the thing is clear to us, the meaning of the word as it should be will become clear also. The definition of the word consciousness is nothing less than a statement of the general nature of the reality which we name consciousness. For the definition of the word is the meaning which it ought to bear: the meaning which it ought to bear, in distinction from the meaning or meanings which it does bear, is the meaning which can be predicated of the extension of the word, of the whole of it if possible, and no more than the whole of it: the meaning which can be predicated of the whole extension, and no more than the whole, is the meaning which every individual possesses in common with every other individual of the whole, and that which distinguishes this class of individuals from every other class: that which an individual possesses in common with a class of individuals is its general nature, or a part of its general nature, which is also its distinctive nature when it distinguishes this class

from every other class; it follows that *the* definition of a word is a true statement of the general and distinctive nature of the class which it denotes. Thus we conclude that the two questions of the paragraph are the same question differently expressed. We cannot, as Mill would have us, make the definition of the word consciousness merely verbal, unless we put out of our thoughts the nature of the extension, and concern ourselves only with the word. Then we give a definition which is neither true nor false but temporally useful, or correct as embodying what people mean by the word.

§ 6. *The basis and presupposition of the question.* The question—What should be the meaning of the word, Consciousness?—implies by its use of the definite article that we do not wish to have an arbitrary meaning, but the proper or objective meaning, of the word. The possibility of an objective meaning presupposes that some connexion is already established between the word, consciousness, and the reality. This connexion is between the word and its extension. This we presuppose; and from this extension we start in our endeavour to give an objective meaning to the word. We have but a vague and unsteady conception of consciousness, but there are innumerable concrete acts which constitute its extension. Expressed in their usual personal form, they appear as the propositions—I am conscious of *a*; or I am conscious of *a* as different from *b*, or as related in some other way to *b*. Now, it would seem that as we are to draw our meaning from the extension, so we must return to it to see if our meaning is in agreement with it. But here a difficulty occurs. The extension can only be a test of our meaning, if it be self-consistent—if a meaning can be given to it which includes the whole of it and no more. But if it be judged to be inconsistent, it has been already tested by this and other meanings. Thus each seems to be a test of the other; but the ultimate test lies in the extension. For if we affirm that the extension has a plurality of meanings, or that these meanings require both a larger and smaller extension at once, then this judgment of its meanings must be verified by reference to the extension. If verified, a part of the extension must be cut off, carrying with it its implied meaning, or the extension must be enlarged. Then we start afresh from this new extension to state its meaning. This judgment of its meaning, like the previous judgment of a plurality of meanings or no distinctive meaning, must be tested by the extension, and, if out of harmony with it, must be modified or rejected,

unless it can be shown that there be still some inconsistency in the extension. Thus we are aware that the extension of the term 'judgment' is inconsistent, and is wider in Logic than in daily life, where by a man's judgment is meant the *conclusions* he reaches about various practical matters, whereas in Logic we include more than such discursive thought. The larger extension then includes what the smaller excludes, and one or other must be modified. The extension of the term Consciousness, too, may be coextensive with knowledge, or be confined, as is usual in philosophy, to immediate or intuitive knowledge; but it cannot have both extensions. However, I do not think we shall find serious inconsistency in the extension of these highly abstract terms, but such as there is is easy to detect.

§ 7. *Difficult to say precisely of what we are conscious.* In starting from the extension of consciousness, the acts or states of being conscious, it is hard to say of what I am conscious. Let us take an instance. The transcendent judgment which affirms a thought in the mind of another is accompanied by a representation of that thought in the mind which judges it. Suppose that the thought be that of a person in a room, and that I, being aware of this, represent them in my own consciousness. This representation is the image of a man in the image of a room, which we may symbolise by *a* and *b* respectively. Am I conscious of this representation? It seems that I am. But what and how much is the representation or image? Each of the two images is conceived as belonging to a definite class of images. The one belongs to the class of man-images, the other to the class of room-images. These classes are not presented to me—I am not conscious of them—though some members of them I may be. The implied judgment of a community of character between *a* and *b* and these classes respectively is then a transcendent judgment and not an act of consciousness. Let us then try to lay aside both the representative character of *a* and *b* and their reference to classes. Are we not at least conscious of two coloured extensions, *a* and *b*, now imaged before me? We have still not excluded all class-judgments. For inasmuch as "two," "coloured," "extensions," are general terms, they all imply judgments which transcend the mere images *a* and *b* presented, and affirm them to be one in certain respects with classes of objects not presented. For the same reason I cannot even say that I am conscious of two visual sensations *a* and *b* as different from one another. But the difficulty is more seeming than real. It illustrates the

intimate connexion between the diverse elements of our knowledge—an act of consciousness on the one side, on the other a transcendent judgment. It shows how impossible it is to *express* that of which we are conscious without implying also that of which we are not conscious. Our words force us into verbal contradictions ; but our thoughts need not be contradictory. It is certain that we are conscious of something, as it is certain that we transcend that something. The first cannot be resolved into the last any more than the last can be resolved into the first. It is very obvious that, unless the act of being conscious tells me what this something is of which I am conscious, no other act can succeed where it fails. And when I carefully distinguish between the act of being conscious and the transcendent acts combined with it, that which I am conscious of in the present instance is clear to me. I am conscious of two images *a* and *b* ; I am conscious that the one is different from the other, and that the one is contained or visualised in the other. What other relations there are of which I am also conscious we need not stop to consider ; but I am not conscious of those relations which I inevitably imply to exist between these images and the objects they represent, and the classes to which these images are referred. I judge those relations, but I am not conscious of them, though my language contradicts me and asserts that I am conscious of them. And the reason is that we have here to do with an unity of acts which cannot be separated, but only distinguished ; and which distinction our language is not sufficiently subtle to express.

§ 8. *What follows from assuming consciousness to be different from judgment.* I am conscious that *a* is different from, and in, *b*. Let us abstract from the transcendent judgments with which this act of consciousness is combined. Now, we have seen that there is a judgment, or at least the possibility of a judgment, concerned with these very images *a* and *b* of which I am conscious. And the question is, whether this act of being conscious of *a* and *b* be different from this act of judging *a* and *b*. We feel an opposition to identifying them. The first seems an altogether unique act different from any judgment. But, on the other hand, if the two acts are different, how curious that we should use the same language to express both. '*a* is different from and in *b*' is the natural expression of my present act of being conscious : it is also a proposition which expresses my judgment. But let us at all events assume, that the act of being conscious of *a* and *b* is different from the act of judging *a* and *b* ; and watch

what follows from the assumption. In the first place, the act of being conscious is not a judgment about its object, nor has the act of judging a consciousness of *its* object. This judgment, like the transcendent judgment, is a mere judging-about-*a-and-b*,¹ and does not contain them, nor the relations between them; for to contain them is to be conscious of them. And since this judgment does not contain the reality of its object, it is different from consciousness in this respect, that the latter, in its presentation of *a* and *b*, does contain the reality of *its* object. Thus consciousness contains the object of the judgment, for the same *a* and *b* is the object of both acts. Further consciousness not only contains the object of the judgment, but the judgment itself. And that which distinguishes them always is, that consciousness never fails to contain reality, and judgment never succeeds in containing it. There is also this difference between them, that the one casts upon its objects a varying intensity, while the other judges about *its* objects with a varying certainty. Lastly there is the difference, that consciousness not only contains, but is a condition of the reality of its objects—for consciousness must be held to be a condition of what is real for consciousness—while judgment comes no nearer to reality than judging about it. Passing from difference to other relations, we may note the following strange interplay of the two functions. Each function makes an object of the other. For, when I am conscious of *a* and *b*, I can judge reflectively that I am conscious of them: and when I judge them, I can attain to a consciousness of my judgment. Now the act of judging *a* and *b* is an act of knowledge—if we regard it as true and not false: but the act of being conscious of them is not an act of knowledge, otherwise it would be a judgment. Thus knowledge can never absorb the function of consciousness, so as to become merged in it. Knowledge can never do what consciousness does with the object—hold the unmistakable, unerring, reality within its act. And thus its act is always the same in the respect that it remains transcendent, and never attains to an intuition of its object. But consciousness does attain to an intuition of this very object; yet its act is blind—we must call it a blind intuition. For, though we have knowledge, and judge about this act which is blind in itself, judgment cannot take this act bodily up into its own act so as to become itself intuitive, but remains judging about this act transcendently without ever containing it. We must now sum up our conclusions. Our

¹ MIND No 59, "The Antinomy of Thought," p. 366.

first is, that Consciousness is never an act of Knowledge ; and since, in the common meaning of the word, consciousness implies knowledge, we must hold that the common meaning is complex and confuses two radically different functions. Our second and last conclusion is, that Knowledge and Judgment are of one character in the respect that they never become intuitive.

§ 9. *Consciousness shown to be an intuitive judgment.* When we attempt to carry out the above conclusions we are forced to contradict ourselves. On the one hand, that distinction between intuitive and all other knowledge cannot be abolished : on the other, it is quite impossible to maintain that, in so far as I am conscious of an object, I am unconscious of it. Yet this is what follows from our conclusion that consciousness has itself no knowledge of its object. A knowledge of its object there may indeed be accompanying consciousness ; but this knowledge is transcendent. The only knowledge forbidden is that which consciousness claims exclusively to possess, and which is suggested by the word itself. Thus in so far as I am conscious of an object, I am unconscious of it, whatever other knowledge I have of it. Now, if it were possible to alter the nature of the act so that it should not be an act of knowledge, we could escape the contradiction. In fact the contradiction shows us that this is what we cannot do, that whatever the act of being conscious be, and however different from all other acts, that unique act must be an act of knowledge. Let us then accept this alternative, and endeavour to explicate its consequences.

Now, since the very act of being conscious is an act of knowledge, this knowledge is different from all transcendent knowledge in that it embraces or contains the reality—its object, and so far produces that reality, as consciousness is a condition of what is real for consciousness. Consciousness, in other words, implies an intuition of its object, an intuition that it is instrumental in effecting. Now, if we consider our former images, *a* and *b*, and this intuitive knowledge of them, we shall find there is still, for all difference, that function of knowledge that was revealed in the Transcendent Judgment—the affirming of reality, here the affirming-of-*a*-and-*b*-as-different-from-one-another. We saw (§ 2) that this judgment, useless as it seems, was at least a possibility ; now we see that it not only may, but must occur, wherever consciousness be. For consciousness is an act of knowledge, and therefore an act of judgment ; and inasmuch as I am conscious of *a* and *b* as different from one another, and co-existent, I judge them to be different and co-existent, although this

judgment be unexpressed. Now, directly we admit that consciousness is this judging of reality, we discover an identical essence common to it and the transcendent judgment which likewise is the judging-of-some-reality. And this discernment of a common quality tends to draw us back to our former supposition, that consciousness contains two different functions. For if there be, both in it and the transcendent judgment, a judging of reality, must we not refer that production of reality, or part-production which consciousness implies, to some other function than judgment? To make consciousness more than a mere judgment—to make it assume its own peculiar character—some fresh factor must surely be added to it, a factor the difference of which from judgment we see in this its part-production of reality. Thus we shall end in our former conclusion that the act of being conscious is complex, and that its unique act of being conscious is not an act of knowledge, while the knowledge involved with it is of the usual sort which fails to contain its object. This opposition of general and singular which we have thus set up in consciousness is a fallacy which Lotze has well explained. Wherever we reach the general, we find it hard not to oppose it to the particular. We take the general as a "*prius*"¹ to which the various concrete instances attach themselves. As the general will not explain the unique and individual nature of reality, we suppose that some other influence must co-operate with it. Thus we take the abstract form of the categoric judgment as a *prius*, and to reach the individual nature of consciousness we have to call to our aid another and different function. But it does not follow that there are two functions in consciousness, because an abstract form of judgment fails to give a complete interpretation of its nature. Wherever there is individuality there is difference between the individual and the type it individualises, which occurs without destroying its unity. What judgments could be more peculiar than the Hypothetic, Disjunctive, and Problematic? The first seems to be ever trying to become judgment rather than to be judgment. An arresting power lies in the 'if,' which restrains the protasis from becoming judgment, and likewise holds the apodosis in suspense till the protasis is freed. Shall we then conclude there are two functions at work—the one a judgment, the other a strange function which neutralises the first. Or again, let us consider the Disjunctive Judgment, which remains in eternal suspense between

¹ Lotze, *Metaphysic*, bk. i, §§ 85,6.

two relations and affirms neither : or the Problematic Judgment, which is infected throughout with uncertainty. Are we to suppose that the uniqueness of these judgments is brought about through some other function than judgment? We must rather hold that the function in each case is one, and nothing besides its own unique act of judging; that we have brought to the interpretation of these types of judging the abstract form of judgment in general which has been reached by abstraction from their differences; and then we are surprised not to find the very differences we have abstracted and expect some other function to supply them. Thus we have to overcome this prejudice with regard to consciousness. We must regard its function as none other than an act of knowledge, something more, indeed, than an act of knowledge in the abstract, but nothing more than its own unique act of knowledge. But as often as we regard consciousness as possessing the form of knowledge or judgment in general, we shall be disposed to think that some function different from knowledge must combine with knowledge to produce consciousness. Or if it were true that "abstract universals" were a real *prius* subsisting as an eternal "archetype" of all the changing variety of sense, then we should have to set some other function to work in order to produce out of this phantom "world of ideas" the real world of experience. Thus the act which consciousness implies is not a complex act, but an altogether simple and unique act. But, lastly, we shall be prone to deny this again when we compare intuitive knowledge with other knowledge and try to express the difference. For we cannot express it otherwise than in some such phrase as—that all other knowledge knows reality indeed categorically or problematically, but this knowledge alone contains the very reality that it knows; and this inevitably suggests that the act of containing is different from the act of knowing.

§ 10. *What is the meaning of reality in consciousness?* I am conscious of *a* and *b* as real. In what sense am I conscious of their reality? *a* and *b* I suppose are the present appearances of realities that continue under some form when I am no longer conscious of them. But I am clearly not conscious of this continuing reality. I am only conscious of their reality in consciousness. This again is ambiguous. Reality in consciousness may mean what is a fact of its past history or of its unaccomplished future, but if so it is not anything of which I *am* conscious, but something of which I *was* or *will* be conscious. That *a* and *b* are real in my consciousness

does not mean that a persistent reality underlies them, nor that they are real in past or future, but merely that I am conscious of *a* and *b* as real. And this reality is not anything above or beside *a* and *b* themselves. It is none other than these very images. Thus reality in consciousness means no more than presentation. Of any other reality, belonging to the images, I am not conscious. The universal nature of reality which is predicated of *a* and *b* draws these images into unity with all things, but of this I am not conscious: I cannot do more than transcendently judge it. So, again, I mean nothing more by containing this reality than that I am conscious of it. The verb, 'to contain,' sometimes better suggests the difference between the act of consciousness and other acts of judgment; and this is all that I intend by using it and not to resolve this difference into anything simpler (§ 4).

§ 11. *Is the act the same as the object of consciousness?* I am conscious of *a* and *b*. Here is suggested an opposition like that of general and singular which we have just criticised. For the act of being conscious—the 'I am conscious'—seems abstract, universal, and persistent: and the object seems concrete, individual, and changeable. The concrete *a* and *b* give place to *c* and *d*, and *c* and *d* to others. And so we separate them and put on the one side a pure identical essence, on the other a variable object. Is not this the old mistake of hypostatising an abstraction and supposing it becomes concrete by the action of another element? This my consciousness is not abstract but concrete, inasmuch as I am conscious of *a* and *b* and not of a mere object in general. Is it then anything different from *a* and *b*; is it not these very images? Is not the belief that it is something which faces these images, distinct from them, as steadfast compared with their ceaseless flux as the bank to the river which flows beside it, is not this due, in the first place, to the recognition that, throughout the variety of objects which pass before me, there is something always the same; and, in the second place, to the setting up of this unity underlying the object as a subject—a reality behind and distinct from the flow of its object? Let us then suppose that the act of being conscious is no such reality. There are three ways in which we may regard it as identical with its object.

§ 12. *The supposition that the act of being conscious is the same as its individual object, ends in contradictions.* Let us take an instance. I question whether *S* is *P*. I am conscious of this act of questioning; it follows that this act of being conscious is the same as this act of questioning. Again, this

act of being conscious is a judgment (§ 9); therefore a judgment and its opposite—a question—are the same reality. Now, though every question involves a judgment—for, without some basis of, at least, tacit affirmation, no question can be put—yet, wherein it is a question, therein it is an opposite of judgment. Lastly, it follows that this question is identical, not only with a judgment, but with an immanent judgment. Now it is easy to show that on theory a question is always transcendent, never immanent, and on practical grounds that a question is never put when its answer is already given in intuition. If then a question could by any possibility be a judgment, it would be a transcendent judgment. These contradictions can be added to by taking fresh cases. Suppose that I am conscious of a problematic or disjunctive judgment, my consciousness, inasmuch as it is an intuitive, is a categorical judgment; and this categorical judgment I must identify with the disjunctive or problematic judgment which is its object. But the difference between them cannot be overcome, nor can such an identity accompany it. This intuitive and categorical judgment is neither vexed by doubt nor by an alternative which it cannot overcome.

Lastly, the final result of identifying my act of being conscious with the individual object of which I am conscious is the denial that there is any difference in the mode of my activity. Not only are all judgments, so far as they are contained in consciousness, reduced to one type of the intuitive and categorical, but every feeling of pleasure or pain, every act of will or desire, so far as I am conscious of it, is identical with the same intuitive act, and all are without difference among themselves. But, inasmuch as these differences will still break out in spite of our efforts to efface them, the assumption from which we started must be considered as refuted.

§ 13. *Supposition that the act of being conscious is its collective aggregate of objects, ends in contradictions.* As the act of being conscious is not the individual object of which I am conscious, neither is it the sum of all the objects of which I am conscious. For if my act of being conscious is no one of the objects which make up the total number presented to me, the fact that these objects are now taken collectively instead of singly will not prevent similar contradictions arising to the former. The impossibility of identifying an intuitive judgment with a question will not be lessened because we throw in also a problematic or disjunctive act and various qualitatively different sensations. Our conclusion would

then be that the act of being conscious is partly interrogative, partly disjunctive or problematic, and partly sensational. But the act of intuitively judging has no part of its intuitive act interrogative, or disjunctive, or problematic. Throughout, it is assertive, and not interrogative; immanent, and not transcendent; decisive, and not halting between alternatives; categorical, and not problematic.

Lastly, the contradiction will not be a whit diminished by adding to the aggregate of present objects those which have been or which will be presented.

The conclusion of this and the last paragraph is a generalisation from a few cases. Inasmuch as there are certain cases—cases of reflective knowledge—where we fall into obvious contradiction through identifying the act of being conscious with its object, we must hold that the act is different from its object in all cases. Otherwise we should have to resolve the act into its object in those cases where no obvious contradiction followed, and reinstate the act in others where it did;—a wholly gratuitous assumption, and one which must regard the same persistent act as now one thing, now entirely different, merely because our capricious thought will have it so.

§ 14. *Supposition that the act of being conscious is some permanent quality or relation abstracted from its object ends likewise in contradiction.* As we cannot explain my act of being conscious as the concrete objects of which I am conscious, individually or collectively, we may think, inasmuch as the act seems changeless, abstract and identical at all times, that there is more probability about our present assumption that the act is some quality or relation implied in presentations. Thus, as compared with our former assumption, we gain a persistent element, and, further, we need no longer identify the act with the whole of its object. The act, we suppose, is a universal;—either a relation—a unity of the manifold—or some quality of the manifold which confers on it a persistent identity;—its object, on the other hand, is both this universal and this singular changeable element to which it is united. Our problem now is, to abstract from the objects presented the act of intuitively judging. Let us return to the same instance of reflective knowledge. Suppose I am questioning whether *a* is *A*, and that I am conscious of this question or intuitively affirm it. Now we may universalise this individual question to any extent—we may abstract all the categories that belong to it—but we shall never find that one of them is an act of intuitively judging. A question, however generally we consider it, as long as it

remains itself, never becomes a judgment, nor can we abstract from a transcendent act, while it remains itself, an intuitive act. The universal character of a judgment which makes it a judgment can never be predicated of a question. Thus we have proved that the act of being conscious cannot be identified with any general quality in its object. Is it then any relation of its object ;—is it a unity of the manifold of this sort ? Such unity or identity is based on, and relates the qualities which are identical. We have seen that these qualities are not the act of being conscious, but the supposition is that it may be the relation of identity between them. Now the subject is often taken to be the source of this and other relations but, I think, never itself a relation. The supposition is ridiculous. To suppose that a relation judges is like supposing that a taste sounds, or that a smell is coloured. But as some things seem ridiculous merely because they are new, let us try to find, as in former cases, some contradiction resulting from the supposition. I am conscious of a and b ; and we will suppose of a relation of identity between a and b . This relation is my act of being conscious. In being conscious of this relation, I am only conscious of my act of being conscious over again. But as such self-knowledge is very different from a knowledge of identity, and consciousness of identity is not self-consciousness, our assumption must be considered to be refuted.

What is true of this relation will be found to be true of all others : and the act of being conscious is neither any quality, nor any relation abstracted from its object. And, as it is no one of its individual objects nor the whole manifold of such objects (§ 12,13), we may regard this as proved, that the act of being conscious is distinct and undervived from its object, however closely united to it. And the character of the act is such whether it is yours or mine, so long as you mean by the phrase what I do, or so long as there occurs in your mind an act of this character.

§ 15. *The act of being conscious is the subject exercising one of its functions.* This is the conclusion to which we are now committed. Looking in consciousness, we found that the manifold of objects presented there are neither individually, collectively, nor abstractedly the act which is concerned about them. We express the distinct and unique nature of the act by saying, that it is the subject itself in one of its modes and states of acting. For the subject is the 'I' ; but what we have been considering is not the 'I' or subject in its highest abstraction, or in its complete character, but the subject as conscious—the 'I am conscious'. And our experi-

ments have proved—that the subject persists in spite of the attempt to do away with its subjective character ;—persists at least as an act of being conscious, however the case may be with its other so called acts, and whether they can, or cannot be resolved into some modification of the object.

We have then returned to the view which at first we were disposed to reject, but the grounds which led us to suppose it false are mistaken. Because the subject, as act of being conscious, seemed abstract, universal, persistent, and changeless, we thought that the view of it as a distinct reality was a fiction of metaphysicians who, as is the way with them, had hypostasised an abstraction. But the act of being conscious is only an “abstract universal” when we abstract it from its manifold and concrete objects, and—on the supposition that the subject has other acts—from the other acts to which it is united. It is only persistent and changeless, so far as we abstract from the fact that it is exercised now upon one set of objects, now upon another, or so far as we regard the manner of its continuance—how in ceasing to condition one object it comes as continuously to condition another. This unity of the act and its object we call consciousness which is no mere act, but always an act of being conscious of an object. And two ways of conceiving consciousness alternate in our minds according as one side or the other of its unity is prominent. Sometimes we conceive of it as an act conferring an intensive reality upon its object ; sometimes as a little world in itself—a microcosm. Then it is the wonderful panorama of objects that pass through it, that it holds for a time, which we are thinking about. But distinct from this panorama, though in unity with it, and sustaining it, as we suppose, the Universal Mind sustains the universe, there is always this simple ultimate act of being conscious, so little and obscure that we can scarce detect it, so important that without it the whole panorama would fall to pieces.

§ 16. *Summary of the argument.* I have sought to show that Consciousness, when we abstract it from the other acts combined with it, is nothing less than a judgment ; and that it is a unique judgment. Further, that in its uniqueness as an act of judging it is simple or uncompounded and unanalysable. But I have not intended to imply that Consciousness as a whole is simple. For Consciousness is a union of act and object. As an act it is simple ; as a union of act and object it is complex. The whole is a judgment—an act of judging united to its object, and whose object is altogether contained in the whole. This judgment,

besides its object, contains also the difference between its act and its object. Here is shown its contrast with the Transcendent Judgment. The Transcendent Judgment is not a union of act and object. It neither contains its object, nor the difference between its act and its object. It merely judges-its-object (see MIND No. 59, "The Antinomy of Thought"). But there is a fundamental unity between these widely contrasted judgments. Each is a judgment—an act concerned about an object different from its act; and, as an act, each is a simple reality. Thus Judgment, universally as an act, is such a simple reality. Lastly, I think I have proved that this mysterious something—the Subject—cannot be resolved into any association of presentations, nor into any one of them, nor be derived by abstraction from them, so far at least as the act of being conscious is concerned, which is a genuine function of the subject.

§ 17. *The act of being conscious, an element in a whole.* I will add in conclusion a few remarks upon the nature of the concrete judgment of which this act is an element. When we analyse any such judgment we recognise that, on the one hand, there is something presented, and, on the other, an act which transcends presentation. But there is a third constituent not apparent at first—an act which is concerned about the presentation. Each of these two acts, regarded abstractedly and apart from the concrete judgment in which they are united, is itself an act of judging, and nothing less or simpler. Thus an ordinary concrete judgment is not a union of ideas and presentations, not like reality a union of singular and universal, but is a union of an immanent and transcendent judgment. A presentation is not a judgment; a universal is not a judgment; the union of both is not a judgment. A presentation is an object of an immanent judgment; a universal—if it means a unity of the manifold—is an object of a transcendent judgment, since the manifold is not completely presented. As there is an act which judges presentations, so there is an act which judges universals and all objects not presented. The concrete judgment combines both acts, and contains also the object of one of them. Thus analysis reveals three ultimate constituents at least of the concrete judgment of which two are elements and no further analysable—(1) An intuitive act which conditions the presentation and maintenance of the reality its object; (2) The object or objects presented; (3) A transcendent act which judges-an-object without presenting or affecting it in any way.