SYMPOSIUM—ORIGIN OF THE PERCEPTION OF AN EXTERNAL WORLD.

I.—By SHADWORTH H. HODGSON, *President*.

FIRST, as to the precise meaning of the question proposed for discussion. Its interest seems to me to be primarily philosophical, inasmuch as it bears upon the foundation of the doctrine of Idealism. I mean, that the point which it raises is one which Idealism must logically decide in the affirmative, namely: Is or is not a perception of self, as different, though not perhaps separable, from its own so-called inner perceptions or states of consciousness, a necessary antecedent of so-called external perceptions, which, as perceived or thought to arise from the not-self, become the foundation of our knowledge of an external reality? Or in other words, Must the perception of a difference between self and its perceptions generally be taken as a pre-requisite to distinguishing between perceptions which constitute our full knowledge of self, and those which constitute our full knowledge of an external world?

If any light is to be thrown on this point by a examination of the question proposed this evening, it is plain that we must not begin by assuming either an affirmative or a negative decision of the point. We must treat the point as undecided, and therefore must abstract from the consideration of the part played by a prior knowledge of self, in originating the perception of an external world. I therefore take the question proposed to mean: What are the sufficient and necessary constituents, the combination of which is the perception in question; *not*, at what epoch, or under what conditions, in the psychological development of an individual conscious being, their combination takes place, and the perception of an external world arises? The latter question does not exclude the assumption of some self-knowledge on the part of the percipient, prior to his perception of an external world; and to make this assumption, in the case of any particular class of perceptions, is to remove the enquiry from the domain of pure analysis to that of psychology, by making its answer depend on what we may think we have reason to know, from other sources, of the nature and powers of the percipient, and thus putting our own theories in the place of his perceptions.

Now the question as it stands may have four distinct meanings; it may mean to demand either:

1. Analysis of the perception of an external world, *i.e.*, combination of its sufficient and necessary constituents (as just explained).

2. Epoch and conditions of its arising as an event or existent in a percipient's development (as just explained).
3. Analysis of the perception *that* an external world exists as the real object of the perception of it.
4. Epoch and conditions of this latter perception of reality (No. 3) arising as an event or existent in a percipient's development.

Of these, No. 2 and No. 3 plainly pre-suppose No. 1, and No. 4 also pre-supposes No. 2. So that the primary question of all is No. 1, some answer to which is necessarily pre-supposed in putting any of the other three. We must therefore begin with this question, No. 1, in its distinctness from the rest; that is, must abstract from them and the ideas which they involve, in answering it; must make no use of our own present knowledge, if any, of the nature and powers of *percipients*, even by way of hypothesis.

It may turn out, and I think it will, that the answer, that is, the analysis of the perception when arrived at, will include the perception of a percipient as object, along with that of its own named object, an external world; and that question No. 3, which depends on No. 1, will therefore include the *reality* of the percipient, as well as the *reality* of a world external to him. In that case the *necessity* of the Idealistic doctrine, of a perception of self as different from its perceptions generally, would be precluded, and even the existence of it as an original perception be rendered doubtful, since a sufficient source for it would have been shown to exist in a different experience.

If these remarks are sound, it would be highly illogical to make use of any hypothesis concerning the nature and powers of the percipient, in analysing the perception of an external world, as defined in question No. 1. When we shall have pointed out the component elements, the combination of which constitutes the perception in question, the analysis thus given will hold good, whatever be the epoch at which it is effected, and whatever be the powers concerned in effecting the combination. The elements in combination will be the answer to the question, the analysis of the perception; the powers employed in effecting this combination, and the epoch at which it is effected, compared to other perceptions, will then fall back and take their place as part of question No. 2. These points concern the perception as an event, or existent state of consciousness; they are psychological conditions of its genesis as such. The analysis of the perception remains the same, whatever the nature of these conditions may be.

It is the natural pre-supposition of common sense, which may perhaps be called even a conviction, that there are real percipients and a

real external world, and that the percipients play a part, in procuring their own perception of it, as essential as that played by the external world perceived. It is the business of Psychology to formulate hypotheses concerning the nature and powers of percipient beings; and in doing so, psychology is logically bound to have recourse to analyses such as that of question No 1. It follows, therefore, that no conviction of common sense, nor any psychological hypothesis, ought to be included in, or assumed hypothetically as prior to, an analysis similar in kind to the one before us.

But now to come to the analysis. The perception to be analysed is designated in common-sense terms as that of an External World, by which I understand some positively perceived content which is external to something; and the first question is—external to what? If we say, external to the percipient, this involves an assumption, forbidden by the preceding considerations, of the nature of the percipient, an assumption of it as already known to be the *inner* of an *outer*, called external. This lazy and misty assumption should be left to fog-making Germans, who are very fond of it, and usually mark their sense of its value for that purpose, by space-printing the words *Das Innere*, *Das Aeussere*, and the like. The terms *inner* and *outer*, as distinct from the facts which they may be transferred to characterise, derive their whole meaning from spatial extension. To apply one of them, *Das Innere*, without proof, to the Self, is to turn it from a metaphorical adjective into a substantive, which is a fallacy. The applicability of the two terms to the self and the not-self, as distinct sources of perception, is a thing which requires showing, and cannot be taken as known *a priori*. Till that has been shown, *Das Innere* and *Das Aeussere* may pair off with *Das Unbewusste* as fog-generators. The sum and substance of Kant's *Critic of Pure Reason* consists in first falling headlong into the fallacy just signalled, and then showing at great length the unknowability of the entities which he has thereby fallaciously assumed.

If again we say, external to the perception, this not only at once trenches on question No. 3, which concerns the reality of the perceived object, but also involves the assumption, that a perceived object is known already, or known *a priori*, as external to the perception of it. That is to say, we make the question assume as known part of the very thing which it professes to enquire into.

It follows that the only course open to us is to make the question, *external to what?* part of the question to be answered by the analysis; that is to say, we have to analyse the perception of externality itself, in its origin, or ultimate and most simple form. We have not merely to show how we perceive a world external to this or that particular

thing, but how we perceive the relation of externality between any two or more things whatever.

Now there are only two kinds of perceptions which are, severally, at once sufficient and indispensable to give us the perception of externality; that is, which include in themselves the perception of parts beyond parts, simultaneously existing, and limiting one another. These are the perceptions of the two senses, sight and touch, taking the latter to include the muscular sense (as it is called) of resistance and effort. I call the content or immediate object of these senses *perceptions*, to indicate the presence in them of some formal element or elements, to which their externality belongs, along with the purely sensation-quality, light and colour in the one case, hardness, resistance, and effort in the other;—these two kinds of elements, that of form and that of sense, being inseparable from each other, and only together forming a complete or empirical item in the context of consciousness. Light and colour are always seen extended; hardness and resistance are always felt extended. We can neither see nor feel a mathematical point. And even the feeling of effort, taken alone, that is, not as involved in resistance, contains no indication of externality.

Several writers hold, that other senses besides the two named involve a perception of externality, of direction in space, and even of volume, which includes depth as well as breadth; among which they instance particularly organic sensations, and sensations of sound, many of which, they say, have a certain massiveness or voluminousness, in strong contrast to others which are thin and piercing. Sensations of sound also contain, it is said, clear indications of the direction from which the sound comes, and in this way include a rudimentary perception of externality. All this and much more, in far greater detail than can now be stated, is true. But then the perceptions of externality which are so given are partly, if not wholly, due to what are essentially touch and (so called) muscular sensations, closely combined with the specific quality of feeling by which the sensations or perceptions, as wholes, are named; and partly the rudimentary externality so perceived is not the perception of externality as defined above, and consequently is not alone either a sufficient or an indispensable constituent of an external world. It is true that, when once we have acquired the perception of an external world, we then see the meaning of massiveness, voluminousness, and direction of approach, involved in the sensations in question, and read back externality (in the sense defined) into them, from that previously acquired perception; to the full and complete knowledge of which they then become important accessories. But a perception of externality, in the sense of parts beyond parts, simultaneously

existing, and limiting one another, is not given by these sensations alone.

The simultaneous and combined exercise of two senses, each of which severally gives a perception of externality, seems to be requisite for the perception of an external world. No single sense alone gives the latter perception. Sight alone gives nothing more than superficial extension and seen motion therein. Touch alone gives nothing more than solid extension of separate bodies, neither connected with nor limited by other bodies simultaneously existing, unless these are touched simultaneously. A being endowed with touch alone would never perceive a space occupied by solid bodies which are outside his own, and have a continuous existence during the intervals of his coming into contact with them. And although he might well distinguish feelings of contact on the one hand from feelings, of effort for instance, arising in the movement of his own limbs, and from feelings of comfort or discomfort arising in parts of his own body, on the other, and thus form two contrasted groups of feelings which, to our present, or his own later apprehension, might be called external and internal with reference to the organism, still it cannot be held probable, or even possible, that he could conceive the feelings of the two last-named kinds, namely, feelings of effort and of comfort or discomfort, as together composing a self, to which the feelings of the former group, namely, those coming under the head of contact, were external.

The case of those who are born blind may perhaps be thought to militate against the conclusion, that two senses, each of which gives a perception of externality, are necessary to the perception of an external world. As those who are blind from their birth undoubtedly acquire, or may acquire, some form of the latter perception, the externality which is given by sight seems in their case to be no indispensable ingredient of it. But here we must remember, not only that touch is here combined with all the other senses, with the single exception of sight, and that it frequently acquires an abnormal degree of sensitiveness, but also that the perception of an external world, which those born blind may attain to, is formed under the instruction and guidance of those who can see, and who can convey mediately by descriptions, making use of analogy, an idea of that which only direct vision can immediately reveal. It would, in fact, be truer in such cases to speak of the conception, than of the perception, of an external world, inasmuch as thought plays by far the preponderating part in the knowledge which they have of it.

It is by reference to normal cases, that is, the case of persons endowed with the normal complement of senses, that the expression, *perception of an external world*, must be understood. In these cases

there is little doubt, that the combination of sight and touch is the actual mode in which that perception is attained. All strictly immediate sensations, or perceptions, to their full normal amount, are included in the *data* of the enquiry. All alike are at our disposal in accounting for the attainment of the perception in question. It is in fact a product of association, attention, and comparison, working on and with the perceptions of the two senses of sight and touch, as their material. Not that the perceptions of other senses are not being received and combined with them, and with one another, contemporaneously, but that these two senses alone among the rest supply the normally necessary ingredients, out of which that perception is built up.

We may conclude, then, that, externality being distinctly involved in sight and touch sensations only, it is in them only that we have the necessary and sufficient rudiments of the perception of an external world. When these two senses are exercised together, the perceptions of each combine with those of the other into the perception of a single world composed of grouped perceptions belonging to both kinds. When we simultaneously touch and see parts of our own bodies, the hands for instance, we have a group of perceptions, variable within certain limits, but forming on the whole a more or less constant centre of a vast space more or less approximating to the spherical, of unlimited or indefinitely limited radius, containing other groups of variable perceptions of the same two kinds, which we come to know afterwards as the material objects, first of common sense, and then, more accurately, of physical science. Such is the perception of an external world,—a world, in every act of perceiving which our own bodies are perceived as the never-absent central object. And it has never yet been shown, that we have originally any perception of self as a reality, and still less as a percipient, except as the central part or central object of that world. The combination of sight and touch perceptions is the perception at once of an external world and of the Subject as part of it, namely, as the central and permanent object, to which other objects are external, besides being external to one another.

The question, How or When the combination of sight and touch perceptions is effected, is psychological, or as it is now the fashion to call it, psychogenetical. It comes under our question No. 2. But it is clear that, whatever hypothesis we may adopt for its explanation, that hypothesis must either pre-suppose some analysis, analogous to the present, of the perception of an external world, or else must be built upon some *a priori* conception of the nature and powers of an immaterial agent, not warranted by experience. I mean of course that this holds good, until proof has been given, by pure analysis of perception, that a perception of self as a real percipient is derivable

from experience exclusive of visual and tactical perceptions. Similarly the answer to question No. 4 depends upon that which may be given to question No. 2. With neither of these questions am I now concerned.

Again, the reality of an external world, corresponding to our perception of the same name, is our question No. 3, which, I take it, does not fall within the scope of our enquiry this evening. Its answer depends plainly upon the pre-supposition of an answer being given to question No. 1, which is that now dealt with. Upon this question, which alone can be dealt with by analysis on grounds of immediate experience, without assumptions other than that of the *data* to be analysed, all the others, with their consequences, are dependent. And to make evident this truth is perhaps the most important result to be reached by discussing the question proposed to us this evening.

II.—By B. BOSANQUET, *Vice-President*.

THE President's analysis of the perception of an external world would have borne a good deal of expansion; but it is curtailed in favour of a negative contention, which we shall not be wrong in treating as the point of chief interest to the writer. This contention is stated in two forms; one, as I understand it, just, while the other is inconsistent with the writer's own analysis. Moreover, the familiar thesis which underlies this contention, has not, as it appears to me, the importance which the writer persistently ascribes to it. Its corollary, of the falsehood of Idealism, apparently borrowed from Kant's "Refutation of Idealism" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, ceases to be just when asserted without the limitations which Kant there assigns to it.

I understand the underlying thesis to be that the mind is not an immaterial agent—not a thing or entity. It is this which gives point to the negative contention, (1) that no antecedent perception of the self is among the conditions of the perception of an external world, and (2) that "no present knowledge" or hypothesis "as to the nature and powers of percipients" must be used in the scientific analysis of this perception.

In its first form, (1) this negative contention attacks the fallacy pointed out by Kant which consists in supposing that a *perception* of self as an *object* is prior to and a condition of the perception of objects outside one another in space. This criticism is applied by Kant to the Idealism of Descartes and Berkeley, the Idealism which regards external reality as in some way secondary to the perception

of self. Kant maintains that the perception of self can only be generated by and through the perception of objects in space. And this view seems at least nearer the truth.

The fallacy of treating external perception as secondary to the perception of self is probably, as Kant seems to suggest, dependent on the fallacy of regarding the external world as outside the mind, as though the mind were in the body as a box within a box. To write the history of this fallacy would require greater knowledge than I possess. It certainly determined Locke's views: and through him and his successors it affected the terminology of Kant in the doctrine of inner and outer sense. But the point that objects in space are not to be called outside the mind, but outside one another, is perfectly plain in Kant. This special point is tersely explained by Professor Green, and also by Professor Caird, and is now a mere matter of history.

The second form (2) of the contention seems to rest on a confusion with the first. To say that in scientific analysis of perception, we are not to use our knowledge of the nature and power of percipients, simply has the result that a few psychological conceptions, which are supposed to belong to the data of the problem, are employed without connection or completeness. Yet these few are enough to break down the principle. How can we assume the extensity of sight and touch, and such unconsidered trifles as association, attention and comparison, and yet say that we are "making no use of our own present knowledge of the nature and powers of percipients"? Without these data, brought to meet us by the verifying observations of a special science, we have no *vera causa*, and our analysis of common experience hangs in mid-air.

Is it not owing to this dread of being detected in using his really considerable knowledge of psychology, which is a wholly different thing from assuming a presentation of self prior to space-perception—that Mr. Hodgson stops short after he has said something of the idea "external," and tells us nothing of what is implied in "world"? "External," as he says, in agreement with Kant* and Hegel and Green, means having parts simultaneously outside one another.† What does "world" mean? I fear that this takes us into question 3. A world involves the representation, not the knowledge, of existence external to perception. Let us try it in Mr. Hodgson's account of our bodies. Our body is always perceived as the central object of the

* On 4th paralogism of Psychology.

† Unless "outside" means "outside in space," it is hard to define so as to exclude the parts of a numerical whole, or simultaneous feelings. I despair of distinguishing space by a definition without tautology.

perceived external world. This idea of a centre plainly includes in the perceived external world objects on which sight and touch are not at the moment resting. If it is said that world in this sense is a concept and not a percept, then I think we must quarrel with our title, the perception of the external world. World means a system whose parts are in some kind of connection, and therefore do not go out of existence for no relevant reason. Space-perception, if restricted to the momentary area of touch and sight, would not be the perception of a world. It would be wholly disconnected.

Some contribution to the question, how we get the world outside perception indissolubly bound up with the fragmentary moments of sense-presentation, is made by Mr. Hodgson in alluding to the complementary action of sight and touch. Sight gives us things existing out of touch, and touch, things out of sight. It is only an analogical step to think of things as existing both out of sight and out of touch, more especially as sight at least admits of endless gradations of clearness, so that we can easily see why the last barely appreciable change from visibility to invisibility should not suggest what no former variation suggested.

But some more definite occasion for the widening of perception into a world seems to be needed, and can hardly be found without the principle of negation, which is indispensable in all systematic connection.

Mr. Stout's article, in *Mind*, 57, on the Genesis of the Cognition of Physical Reality, shows how this element would introduce itself through the conflict of presentations, demanding some ideal steps to be interposed in order to smooth a transition which would otherwise seem to mark a *saltus* in experience. If things always did what we expected, we should not admit their independence. It is the partial disturbance of the mental course that provokes the suggestions, which convert sense-perceptions possessing extensity into an external world.

I can see no considerations in this argument, be it right or wrong, which fall outside the kind of nature and powers that Mr. Hodgson has ascribed to the percipient. It appears to me, indeed, that Mr. Stout does too much assume the priority of our definite perception of our own bodies. But however this may be, it is not, in Mr. Hodgson's sense, an antecedent perception of the self.

III.—By DAVID G. RITCHIE.

The question seems to me *primarily* a psychological one, as it concerns the *origin*, and not the philosophical implications of our perception of an external world; *i.e.*, I should identify it with Nos. 2 or 4 in the President's list (*see* page 27). And, on the whole, I think it must be identified with No. 4; for we can hardly have a perception of the external as external, without the implicit judgment that the external exists.

The question is psychological, but it cannot be discussed without raising philosophical questions, and it has, in fact, been one of the favourite avenues into metaphysics. We must answer the question, "What do you mean by external?"—as the President puts it "External to *what*?" A hundred years ago it was a favourite practice to appeal from the philosophers to the vulgar. One doesn't like to say "the vulgar" now; but one may well ask "what the plain man means?" Now by the external world the plain man certainly means the world outside his own body. His internal world means, most probably, his digestive apparatus. If he thinks of the soul, he figures it to himself as some *thing* inside his body ("a box within a box," as Mr. Bosanquet puts it, page 33). The most widespread idea, I fancy, identifies the consciousness of respiration with the activity of the soul, so that the soul is primarily located in the breast, and is only transferred to the head when a certain amount of physiology has become popularised.

The "metaphysical man" may say that the soul is an immaterial substance, one and indivisible, &c., &c., but he will probably continue to practise the picture-thinking of the plain man. Only so is it possible to understand how any one can have imagined that we can know a world external to our own minds, *i.e.*, know the unknown.

"External to our minds" might indeed be allowed as a way of expressing our discovery that a large part, by far the larger part, of our conscious experience goes on independently of our wills and in spite of our wishes. But this independence of our wills is also true of a great part of what we call our "inner" experience. Still, whatever other elements enter into the history of our coming to perceive that there is an external world, resistance to effort is, I should think, generally admitted to be the most important of them.

I cannot see how we can talk of an "external" at all, except in relation to an "internal"; but neither can we talk of an "internal" except in relation to an "external." I think the most hardened "idealist," if he is really a Post-Kantian, would agree with the

President, that there is no perception of an "inner" or of a "self" antecedent to a perception of an "outer" or a not-self.

Originally—at the dawn of consciousness—there can be no distinction of self and not-self, still less any distinction of "mental" and "physical." The fact that different parts of the body can touch one another and that the sense of touch must always be exercised at several points simultaneously, must be among the main elements in the distinction of one's body (which is what most people mean by "one's self") from the rest of the universe. When a baby strikes its hands together there is a more complex feeling than when it strikes its hands against something else; and here is a basis for the recognition of the self as distinct from the not-self. At first the distinction is vague enough. I imagine that when a kitten runs after its own tail, it has not yet distinguished itself from its environment: nor perhaps has a baby when it first grasps its own toes.

The recognition of the mental as distinct from the bodily comes much later: and I doubt if any one, uninfluenced by philosophy or by some theology which has absorbed philosophy, considers his own body as properly belonging to the external world.* The mental or inner world is distinguished from the physical or external world under the influence of dualist metaphysics, the mental world being thought of by the help of physical analogies. It requires a great effort to get over this stage, and to realise that the distinction of self and not self falls within the mental world; i.e., within the totality of our conscious experience.

In the sense in which our own bodies can be said to belong to the external world, externality might seem to mean simply the "outside-one-another-ness" of things, i.e., extension or space. But externality means more than extension. A large part of what we call the "inner" or merely mental has also to be thought of *as if* in space. Even general ideas, unless we are using them for the time being purely like algebraic symbols, will call up some image, however dim and fluctuating, which image must be an image of something extended, quite as much as is the percept of a real object. Does "external," then, mean *really* existing in space, as distinct both from that which is thought of without reference to space at all, and from that which is imagined as if in space? The question about the perception of the external world would then be identical with the question, how we come to believe in the reality of space, which is part of the general question about our belief in reality. What then

* Contrast, e.g., Homer's "*They* were a prey to dogs and birds, but their ghosts went to Hades," with what Plato makes Socrates say in *Phaedo* 115 c. How the ghost becomes the soul would require a long historical enquiry.

does the plain man mean by "reality"? He means, most usually, that which is not simply experienced by himself at the moment, but that which may be valid for him at other times; moreover, and this is the more important test of reality—he means that which is valid for other people as well as himself. If I ask "whether anyone heard a sound just now?" and the rest of the company answer "No," then, unless I have a very high opinion of the superiority of my own powers of hearing, I must admit that I have imagined it—it was not real. The reality of space means the possibility of others understanding and accepting what we experience with regard to it. There can be a science of the relations of space, because we find that we all have to think in the same way about them. And there cannot be a science of feelings or sensations, except in so far as we can translate them into terms of space, which have a common meaning for all persons, (*e.g.*, regard sounds as vibrations).

As often happens, there seems so much difficulty in settling what our question means, that there is hardly time left to attempt an answer to it. But I shall try to give one very briefly, using, so far as I can, the results already arrived at by Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Bosanquet.

Perception, as distinct from mere sensation, involves some interpretation of our sensations; and I think sense-perception* always involves some reference, however tentative and vague, to position in space; for we do not *perceive* even sounds or odours (as distinct from merely having our sensation of hearing or smell awakened) unless so far as we judge them to come from this or that direction. (Observe a dog when it perceives a sound or a smell). Space, for those who have sight, is interpreted so much in terms of vision, that we are apt to overlook the dependence of our original knowledge of extension upon the sensations of muscular movement and upon complex sensations of touch. Space cannot be analysed simply into terms of time, though we always do use our notions of time and space to help each other out.

But, as I have said, extension is not the only element in externality. We come to believe in *externality* through feeling resistance to our efforts, through experiencing interruptions, contradictions, incoherences in the flow of our sensations and ideas. We come to perceive an external *world*, through finding that these seeming irregularities belong to a coherent and intelligible system, in relation to which the sensations of different senses can be interpreted and fitted together, and which has a meaning for other minds besides our own.

* To use the term "external perception" might seem to assume the point.

REPLY TO MR. BOSANQUET'S PAPER.

By SHADWORTH H. HODGSON, *President.*

MR. BOSANQUET has done me the honour of leaving almost undiscussed the special subject of this evening's debate, in order to devote himself to demolishing my treatment of it. The points which he urges against me are so grave, that I must be pardoned if I explain myself with some minuteness. I shall consider them under two heads; 1st, his statement that I have apparently borrowed from Kant's *Refutation of Idealism* a corollary from the thesis which, in his opinion, I am most concerned to maintain, namely, "that the mind is not an immaterial agent;" 2nd, that one of the two forms in which I have stated my conclusion is inconsistent with my own analysis.

1. As to the first point, I certainly was not thinking of Kant's *Refutation of Idealism* when I wrote my paper, though I will not undertake to say, that it may not have originally suggested the idea, that the perception of objects in space is a pre-requisite of the perception of Self. The debt which all the world, and especially all students of philosophy, owe to Kant is immeasurably great, and it is difficult to distinguish, in any line of thought which deserves to be called philosophical, what parts or elements in it are specially traceable to his initiative. There are, however, two very distinct modes of this indebtedness. One is on the score of his most instructive exhibition of how his own thoughts work, under the necessities imposed upon them by his own method; the other on the score of his clear insight into imperishable truths, under which head is to be noted especially his holding fast to the unity of human nature in the two great departments of its activity, called by him the Speculative and the Practical Reason, which is the inspiring principle of his whole system of philosophical thought, and his unswerving loyalty to which deserves our deepest veneration and gratitude. This, however, does not immediately concern us now. I turn to the question of the perception of Self, as the condition of the perception of objects in space.

Here Mr. Bosanquet has entirely mistaken my meaning. He thinks that I am merely repeating Kant's proof, that the perception of the phenomenal Self, as object of the inner sense, pre-supposes a perception of phenomena in space, as objects of external sense, both kinds of phenomena being held by him to be real, in opposition alike to what he calls Cartesian, and to what he calls Berkleyan, Idealism; whereas my intention was, and is, to attack Kant's identification of

his assumed noumenal Ego or Subject, evidenced (as he thinks) by the Transcendental Unity of Apperception, with the supposed inner or subjective source of the so-called *a priori* element in experience. This doctrine, this identification, of Kant's, on which the whole theory of the three Critics (or *Critiques*, if the French form of the word is preferable) is founded, involves, as I conceive, the very fallacy which he exposes as a *sophisma figuræ dictionis*, in his Chapter on the *Paralogisms of Pure Reason*. And the thesis which I really consider it important to maintain, and which I urge in the concluding sentences of my paper, is,—not the psychological thesis, that the agent in consciousness is material (although I do hold this to be in psychology the best working hypothesis),—but the strictly philosophical thesis, that analysis of experience, without any prior assumptions as to its sources, whether phenomenal or noumenal, is the only secure basis of philosophy. Psychology in my view logically comes after and depends upon philosophy. Thus, in my discrimination of the four questions, No. 2 and No. 4 are psychological, following and depending upon No. 1 and No. 3 respectively, which are philosophical.

Mr. Bosanquet seems not to have noticed the following sentence in my paper, "The sum and substance of Kant's *Critic of Pure Reason* consists in first falling headlong into the fallacy just signalled" [that of hypostasising *Das Innere*] "and then showing at great length the unknowability of the entities which he has thereby fallaciously assumed." What I maintain is, that Kant himself demolishes the foundation of his own theory. For if, as he argues in the Chapter on the Paralogisms, we have no knowledge whatever of the Soul as the object of Rational Psychology, it is illogical to assume that it is an activity or real agency, co-operating with something not itself, or itself in another form, to produce either synthetic *a priori* judgments, or any other modes or forms of experience.

Kant's famous Critical Theory must therefore be itself characterised as a theory belonging to what he calls the empty science of Rational Psychology, and one founded on an illegitimate psychological hypothesis. It is not philosophy; it is not even *Kriticismus* in any justifiable sense; it is Transcendental Psychology. Its whole fabric consists of deductions from a psychological assumption, which being baseless leaves it like an ingeniously constructed cloud-castle in the air. For the pure or abstract Subject of consciousness is just as much, and just as illogically hypostasised, when it is assumed to be real activity, as when it is assumed to be a simple immaterial substance. And that it is hypostasised as a reality is shown by a positive function being attributed to it, namely, that of giving rise to the *a priori* element in experience, and so giving law to Nature. No

mere logical form, not even the great Principle of Negativity, unless hypostasised as a reality, can be supposed to do anything like that. Such is the fallacy into which Kant falls, because he takes up the question of the genesis of experience, before taking up that of its *whatness* or analysis. Hence his Chapter on the Paralogisms is virtually a demolition of his own theory,—a demolition with which I heartily concur.

But Mr. Bosanquet will perhaps say, "Oh, this is all matter of history, and has been explained over and over again by the late Professor Green, by Professor Caird, and others." I do not know whether it has or not. What lends the point its interest in my eyes is, that the assumption of agency in consciousness, or of consciousness being an agency, as for instance in thinking, has never been abandoned by the Germanisers, nor taken for anything but a self-evident fact. Whereas in my opinion it requires proof, and that proof drawn from experience alone, not indeed after the fashion of the English Empiricists, but by subjective analysis of experience as it actually occurs. I take my stand on the traditionally English ground of Experience, and I say, that if any perceptions or cognitions are necessary or universal, or are necessary or universal elements of other more concrete or contingent ones, then they can be found and pointed out in the texture of experience itself, by analysing it; and moreover, that the fact of such perceptions, conceptions, or elements, being so found is not of itself any proof that they have their source in consciousness as an activity or active agent. The very meaning of Kant's phrase "*ein Actus der Selbstthätigkeit des Subjects*" must be learnt from experience in the first instance. The proof that consciousness is agency has yet to be given. Kant, it is said, made an epoch in philosophy. And so he did, an epoch which has lasted a whole century; but it has been an epoch of fog, owing to the single unwarranted psychological hypothesis, that consciousness is agency.

2. As to the second count in Mr. Bosanquet's indictment, I may be much more brief. He says in effect two things, 1st, that the attempt to exclude our knowledge of the functions of percipients from the analysis which we give of their perceptions results simply in the selection of a few disconnected conceptions arbitrarily supposed to belong to the *data* of the question; and 2nd, that my own analysis does not, as a fact, conform to my own precept in this respect.

As to the first point I can only say, that, when an analysis of the perception of an external world shall have been given in accordance with my method, and in due connection with its context in the totality of experience,—and not merely an anticipatory sketch of the

results of such an analysis taken as an isolated fragment, as in the paper which I am defending,—then it will be seen whether the difficulty of distinguishing the function of perceiving from its concomitant product, the process-content perceived, has or has not been satisfactorily surmounted.

As to the second point my reply is, that every word at our disposal importing consciousness is ambiguous, expressing both some function of a Subject and some content of sensibility, for instance, the words which Mr. Bosanquet takes from my paper, sight, touch, association, attention, comparison. To avoid the evils which necessarily attach to this ambiguity in language was the chief reason, the chief source of the necessity, for my discriminating the four senses in which the question of this evening might be taken, and selecting one of them as the primary and philosophical one. Of course in effecting this discrimination I make use of the psychological knowledge, be it more or be it less, which is at my command. But this is a very different thing from introducing psychological elements into a philosophical analysis, when the two kinds of questions have been discriminated. I do not anywhere in my sketch of an analysis build upon the function expressed by a word, but always and only upon the content expressed by it. I made it sufficiently clear as I thought (though it seems I was mistaken), that it was a philosophical and not a psychological analysis that I was dealing with. I cannot fairly be blamed for not repeating this reminder whenever I have occasion to use a word importing consciousness. If the words which Mr. Bosanquet quotes are taken to mean function rather than content, then the sentence in which they stand, and which (I admit) most readily suggests that meaning, must in fairness be understood as an anticipation of what belongs to question No. 2, and not as introducing functions into the analysis of question No. 1. I do not for a moment deny that, when we come to the psychological question, the question of the *genesis* of the perception spoken of, we shall require a *vera causa*, for which we must have recourse to the functions of the Subject, and which can only be ascertained by the positive science of Psychology.

REJOINDER TO MR. HODGSON'S REPLY.

By B. BOSANQUET.

It does not appear to me that the self now alluded to by the President could ever, according to Kant, be the object of a perception; and therefore it could not, if I am right, be regarded as the object of a perception prior to that of the external world.

REPLY TO MR. RITCHIE'S PAPER.

By SHADWORTH H. HODGSON, *President*.

MR. RITCHIE has addressed himself to the fourth and last of the meanings which, according to my discrimination of them, the question of this evening may bear, whereas I addressed myself to the first. Our two papers, therefore, move on different planes, and can hardly be said to come into collision. With reservation of the point at which they might possible collide, the point of logical priority as between the two questions, No. 1 and No. 4, I am happy to find myself in substantial accordance with Mr. Ritchie's paper. There are, however, one or two minor matters on which I should like to say a word.

And first, as a plain man myself, I should like to protest against attributing to the plain man that singular notion of his internal world, which Mr. Ritchie says, at page 35, that he probably entertains.

Secondly, as myself a metaphysician, I feel bound to insist, that a man who holds the immaterial substance opinion about the Soul, also spoken of at page 35, is not a "metaphysical man" at all, but a Rational Psychologist. *Qua* metaphysician, "*hypotheses non fingo*."

I cordially agree with Mr. Ritchie's sentence at page 36, "It requires a great effort to get over this stage, and to realise that the distinction of self and not-self falls within the mental world, i.e., within the totality of our conscious experience," at least so far as it describes the attainment of the distinctive insight which first dispels the Egyptian darkness of merely common-sense conceptions, and admits the first gleam of philosophical light. But I protest against "the totality of our conscious experience" being made synonymous with "the mental world," unless the term *mental* is understood in a figurative and popular sense. It is better, in my opinion, to keep the terms *mind* and *mental* for psychological, as distinguished from philosophical or metaphysical use. The mental and the physical belong alike, and in the same sense, to "the totality of our conscious experience." Both import some real agency; the terms *consciousness* and *experience* do not.

Lastly, on page 37 top, in speaking of the plain man's meaning of *reality*, Mr. Ritchie gives two tests of it. He says: The plain man "means most usually that which is not simply experienced by himself at the moment, but that which may be valid for him at other times; moreover,—and this is the more important test of reality,—he means that which is valid for the other people as well

as himself." Both tests are no doubt employed, and both are valid. But I hesitate to call the second the more important. At any rate, it is not the ultimate one, but rests upon and presupposes the first. And for this reason, that other people, and their expressions of agreement or disagreement, are themselves part of that external world the reality of which requires testing, and this can only be done by an appeal to something which lies within the conscious experience of the person who tests it. But this is not all. Mr. Ritchie's first named test is the one by which the conception of reality itself is established in the first instance. The second can only be applied after this concession has been established, that is, to particular cases which fall under it. Judged by this standard, the first test is by far the more important of the two.

REJOINDER TO MR. HODGSON'S REPLY.

By DAVID G. RITCHIE.

THE President has only criticised details in my paper; so that the very briefest reply is all that is necessary. (1.) What the plain man means by the internal I must leave to the plain man to decide; *i.e.*, I appeal to ordinary language, and not to a careful use of terms such as the President would employ. (2.) I used "metaphysics," as it is very commonly used, to include the three "dogmatic" philosophical sciences, ontology, cosmology, and rational psychology. (3.) I admit that "mental" *may* be used in antithesis to "external;" but I think it is a false and unworkable antithesis, and, in any case, it falls within the mental in the wider sense, from which we distinguish the *merely* mental. (4.) Other people's experience is only an available test so far as it comes within our own experience. But I do not think coherence in one's own experience alone is ever a *sufficient* test of Reality: else, *e.g.*, the colour-blind person could never be brought to admit that he was colour-blind, or the blind person to understand the physical theory of light: the individual, as individual, would be the measure of existence.