MIND

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OF

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

I.—PROF. BAIN'S PHILOSOPHY.¹

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WHEN Prof. Bain was a student in Marischal College, Aberdeen, in the early "forties," the philosophy that was taught, and taught with literal adherence to the masters, was that of Reid and Beattie. In this he was duly instructed in the Class of Moral Philosophy and Logic; and although he came by-and-by to dissent from many of its leading doctrines he nevertheless derived from it an impulse to the study of psychology on an experiential basis and retained the aversion to unbridled metaphysical speculation that characterised the Scottish School. He learned here sanity and caution, and a reverence for actual fact. When, somewhat later, he came to be associated with John Stuart Mill and George Grote and imbibed the teaching of Auguste Comte on its scientific side, he made no real breach with the Scottish aim and method: he simply carried them forward, and re-examined the data on the same plan, though with greatly different results. To him, as to Reid, induction became supreme; and truth commanded his adherence only when it could be justified by experience.

But, with fundamental agreements, there were vast differences. On the one hand, he set himself to an independent analysis of mental phenomena and processes, and achieved therein a success that went far beyond anything attained by the Scottish philosophers; and, on the other hand, he carried

¹ Supplementary to my Note in MIND, No. 49, pp. 151-155.

the principle of Association thoroughly into his explanation of Mind—on its emotive, its intellectual, and its volitional side alike,—so that the conception of “faculties,” as distinct and independent entities, was swept away, and psychology was finally freed from the intrusion of metaphysics. With this was joined his insistence on the intimate relation between physiology and psychology and the necessity of making prominent the physiological reference in the handling of mind, both with the view of ascertaining the exact nature of psychical facts and of rendering mental science truly scientific. As stated by himself in the first preface to *The Senses and the Intellect*, his object was to “construct a natural history of the feelings, upon the basis of a uniform descriptive method”. For this task, his previous acquaintance with many branches of science (mathematical, physical, and biological), no less than his own natural inclination, pre-eminently fitted him. The result was a new view of the mind, consistently carried out, on positive principles, and psychology was started on lines of investigation that were to be ever more and more productive of good results.

Be it noted, then, at this stage, that Prof. Bain was, as most British philosophers have been, under the influence of the leading scientific conceptions of the moment. It may be affirmed generally that the advance in psychology in our land has very much followed the advance in physical research. The theory of sound, for instance, was the outstanding physical theory in the time of Hartley. Consequently, he proceeded to interpret mind according to the analogy, and to represent the nervous process as simply propagations of vibrations as in sound. Chemistry, in like manner, came to the front in the days of Mill. Consequently, the process of Association was interpreted in terms thereof—it was set forth as a kind of mental chemistry. So, in Dr. Bain's time, physiology was attracting much attention, and the work of Johannes Müller in particular was greatly in evidence, and there was also an awakened interest in biology. Hence, the physiological reference became prominent, and the method of natural history pointed the way to Dr. Bain's mode of procedure.

I.

The mind itself was, in the first instance, conceived as in relation to the body—its correlative or concomitant. This led to an elaborate study of the brain and nerves and to reiterated emphasis being placed on the functional unity of the

nervous system. Thus parallelism became the guiding idea—which, in one place, receives a semi-metaphysical expression thus,—“The arguments for the two substances have, we believe, now entirely lost their validity; they are no longer compatible with ascertained science and clear thinking. The one substance, with two sets of properties, the physical and the mental—a *double-faced unity*—would appear to comply with all the exigencies of the case. We are to deal with this, as in the language of the Athanasian Creed, not confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. The mind is destined to be a double study—to conjoin the mental philosopher with the physical philosopher; and the momentary glimpse of Aristotle is at last converted into a clear and steady vision” (*Mind and Body*, p. 196). Hence, a systematic plan was devised for the description of the feelings—a plan deliberately conceived and rigorously adhered to—in which their physical origin and manifestation were duly noted, as well as their mental characteristics.¹

Dr. Bain's view of the activity of the mind was conditioned by the great stress that he put upon muscular sensibility. He started with the muscular sense, and posited a native spontaneity of the system—a spontaneity that is not dependent upon external stimulus, but that originates in the fulness of the nervous centres. It is the discharge of surplus energy, effectuating movement, and leading thereby to experiences of comfort or discomfort, of pleasure or pain. In this we get the origin of the will; for movements that give pleasure, although they are at first random, are persisted in and so come to be sought after, while those that give pain are desisted from or avoided. In connexion with the muscular sense, also, was raised the question of the sense of innervation. It was Bain's contention that “as the nerves supplied to the muscles are principally motor nerves, by which the muscular movements are stimulated from the brain and nerve centres, our safest assumption is, that the sensibility accompanying muscular movement coincides with the *outgoing* stream of nervous energy, and does not, as in the case of pure sensation, result from any influence passing inwards, by incarrying or sensitive nerves”.² The tendency in recent times has been to lay the stress the other way—that is, on the afferent impressions and not on the efferent discharge of energy, and, while some have emphasised the joint-surfaces, others find the solution in tension of the skin. Nothing that has been advanced on these lines seemed

¹ See *The Senses and the Intellect*, 4th ed., p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 79.

conclusive to Dr. Bain; and, in face of the fact that feelings of expended energy are to our consciousness entirely different from and even opposed to sensations or passive feelings, he continued to maintain his position: "no other hypothesis so well represents the total opposition of nature between states of energy exerted and states of passive stimulation". Yet, he quite realised that the question is one for physiology rather than for psychology, and that the determination of it one way or another does not affect "the evidence of our subjective analysis". This comes clearly out in the latest edition of *The Senses and the Intellect*, where the statement of the previous edition is given in an amended form.

Still connected with the active side of the system is the importance that Prof. Bain attaches to the instincts, as primordial elements of mental life. The term "instinct" is here used, however, in a wide sense, so as to include, among other things, reflex actions and primitive combined movements. All the kinds of instinct are characterised by this, that they are native to the individual, serviceable to his being, and not gained by experience, although, of course, they need not all appear full-blown at the very opening of the individual's life. Their significance as primitive endowments on which education or acquisition proceeds comes out when we consider their connexion with pleasure and pain. This is given in the Law of Self-conservation, *viz.*, "that states of pleasure are connected with an increase, and states of pain with an abatement, of some, or all, of the vital functions". Supplementary to this is the Law of Stimulation, determining the limits of pleasurable feeling both in the case of the natural stimulants of the senses and the emotions and also in the case of narcotics and drugs. Its purport is, that "we possess a certain amount of nervous vigour or irritability, which is converted into the full actuality of pleasure, only when impelled by shocks that have no nutritive tendency, but merely draw upon, and consume, the accumulated power. If we apply stimulants, up to a certain point, we do not dissipate force beyond what will be repaired; if we fall short of that point, we miss the pleasure that our frame is able to sustain; if we exceed the point, we run into a declension or a degeneracy. It would seem that we can afford both the natural stimulation of the senses, and a certain amount of stimulating drugs, and yet not overdraw our allowance of nervous power."¹ In this sphere of investigation Dr. Bain practically led the way in Great

¹ *The Senses and the Intellect*, 4th ed., p. 316.

Britain, and his teaching has greatly furthered the advance of psychology.

But now comes the mind's activity in relation to the intellect. Dealing with sensations that come to it from without, the mind has the twofold power of retention and of discrimination regarding them,—that is the basis of the intellect; and “no law of the intellect appears to be more certain than the law that connects our discriminating power with our retentive power. In whatever class of subjects our discrimination is great—colours, forms, tones, tastes—in that class our retention is great.” The mind, then, is not purely passive, but is essentially active: even feeling is not bare passivity, for it involves consciousness of change, and that means discrimination.

This introduces the Law of Relativity, which plays such a prominent part in Bain's psychology. The statement of it is after the type of the older psychologists; but the use made of it is special to the writer. It is the one commanding principle, pervading the whole of our mental acquisitions. “An object,” it is said, “has no meaning without a subject, a subject none without an object. One is the complement or correlate of the other; drop the one to exalt the other into prominence, and you behave like him who could cancel the south pole of a magnet to make it all north. Subject and object are one of the innumerable couples, mutual foils, polar pairs, coined among the universe of our impressions as portions of our knowledge. An everlasting light in the eye would be equivalent to no light at all; it is the privative darkness that keeps us conscious of, or mentally awake to, positive illumination. . . . An absolute object or an absolute subject is a pure absurdity, irrelevance, or impossibility. Not more so, however, than light without darkness, redness without any other colour, high without low, straight without curved, greater without less.”¹ So too with feeling. “The sensation of heat has no absolute character; there is in it a transition from a previous state of cold, and the sensation is wholly relative to that state. It is known, with regard to the feelings generally, that they subsist upon comparison; the pleasure of good health is relative to ill health; wealth supposes comparative indigence.” It is obvious that the statement here is in some respects extreme, and Dr. Bain himself admitted this when he allowed that there is point in Dr. Ward's criticism that “the transition need not be from heat to cold, or *vice versa*: it can equally well take place from

¹ *The Emotions and the Will*, 4th ed., p. 574.

a neutral state, which is indeed the normal state, of neither heat nor cold. . . . Again, suppose a sailor becalmed, gazing for a whole morning upon a stretch of sea and sky, what sensations are implicit here? Shall we say yellow as the greatest contrast to blue, or darkness as the contrary of light, or both?"¹

The doctrine of Relativity was bound up with Bain's conception of Consciousness, and led to the elaborate efforts in *The Emotions and the Will*, in the *Dissertations*, and elsewhere, to define consciousness, or, at any rate, to ascertain its nature and characteristics with some degree of precision. He viewed the term as a collective name, and used the defining expedients of antithesis and discrimination, as well as historical reference, to make plain what this signified; and he was explicit in maintaining that "consciousness" should not be extended into "self-consciousness," unless by "self" is simply meant our subjective, in contrast to our objective, attitude in experience: in any metaphysical sense, it was to him an unmeaning word.

The relation between the senses and the intellect was brought out explicitly in Dr. Bain's doctrine of the seat of revived impressions. The tendency of ideas to work themselves out into actuality was to him very significant, and it coincided with the phenomenon of "the fixed idea" in enforcing the view that, in resuscitation, "the renewed feeling occupies the very same parts, and in the same manner, as the original feeling, and no other parts, nor in any other assignable manner".² This was to identify the revived with the actual feeling, and thereby was of practical value in enabling us, in some measure, to localise the processes of thought and thus to shorten our labour by permitting us to transfer much of our knowledge of the one to the other. "The properties that we find to hold good of sensation in the actual, we may, after a certain allowance, ascribe to the ideal. Thus the qualities of the sense of sight in any one person, as, for example, its discriminating power, would belong likewise to the visual ideas. The senses are, in this way, a key to the intellect."

Given, then, sensation and instinct and the spontaneity of the system, and given the mind's native power of retentiveness and discrimination, how is our knowledge, and ultimately our whole mental structure, built up? It is done by Association, working in the two forms of Similarity and Contiguity.

¹ Article "Psychology" in *Encyc. Brit.*, p. 49.

² *The Senses and the Intellect*, 4th ed., p. 356.

In this way, Dr. Bain was able to dispense with the treatment of the Intellect in the then-recognised fashion by "faculties" and to present mind as a unity, working in definitely ascertained ways and according to laws that might be scientifically determined. The stress of the effort lay in tracing the origin of such notions as space and time, and in explaining how we reach the conception of an external material world. It was a difficult and hazardous task; but the execution of it (as all will admit) was done with consummate skill and with great fulness, and, whether the elaboration be accepted as wholly satisfactory or not, it will stand as a monument of psychological ability of extraordinary penetration and vigour and will have to be taken account of for many a day to come. The doctrine was laid down and largely worked out in the very earliest edition of *The Senses and the Intellect*; but, like other of Dr. Bain's doctrines, it underwent development, and every new edition, embodying fresh research from many quarters, added something to the exposition of it and amended the expression at this point and at that. But it was reserved for the latest edition to lay stress on the higher instincts as a basis of our intellectual power, and, therefore, as significant in the present connexion. Here is brought in a direct reference to Heredity as necessary for the full explanation of our cognitive acquisitions. In earlier days, he had represented the development of the mind mainly from the standpoint of the individual's experience. Now he realised that the experience of the race counts for much, and must be taken into our calculations in estimating the growth of our higher notions. Take, for instance, Space. "Our feeling ourselves at home in the external world, from the date of our earliest recollections, implies a vast intellectual endowment, however it be accounted for. That much of it is engrained in us at birth is proved in a variety of ways; the intelligent reading of expression being not the most decisive. In regard to it, the salient circumstance is the inadequacy of our education during the first three years to lead us up to what our consciousness can attest as our power of conceiving the external world at that date. . . . The conclusion arrived at was, that the process could not be completed within the compass of our infant education; and that the accumulated experience of previous generations, hereditarily transmitted, would alone account for the result."¹ There can be little question that by thus definitely recognising heredity he greatly strengthens his case.

¹ *The Senses and the Intellect*, 4th ed., pp. 382, 398: see also 686.

We next expect him, in handling the growth of knowledge in the individual, to bring prominently forward the other great social factor, *vis.*, the formed language into which the child is born and which so largely facilitates his acquisitions. This, however, he does not do, and we note the omission. Nor does he, in dealing with Perception and its problem, keep separate the psychological from the epistemological aspect. This is somewhat surprising, considering how exact he was in keeping the different sciences and standpoints apart and how strongly he insisted on the necessity of such demarcation in the interest of exposition and of clear thinking alike. But everything could not be done at once; and I have little doubt that, if his great psychological treatises had seen the light for the first time to-day, instead of in 1855 and 1859, this separate handling would have been accorded. We see quite well that he appreciated the distinction from what he has said in the *Dissertations* and elsewhere in later references.

Keen as Dr. Bain was in his perception of critical points and ever ready for discussion, it was characteristic of him that, neither in his writings nor in his teaching in the class, did he, like many of his predecessors (*e.g.*, Hamilton), give inordinate attention to the treatment of the intellectual controversies. The problems had all a real interest for him; but he felt that psychology itself must be far wider than a mere handling of selected questions—which frequently, indeed, appeared to him to be merely an ingenious attempt to solve puzzles. The puzzle oftener than not (*e.g.*, that in connexion with the perception of an external material world) arose, so he conceived it, from a distorted standpoint or from the inadequacy of language to express the situation as actually experienced. Hence his insistence, rigorous and reiterated, on the necessity of defining one's terms and of bringing the abstract to the test of concrete particulars (to him, as to Kant, examples were "the go-cart of the understanding"); and hence his regard for such a thinker as Samuel Bailey, to whom definition and the concrete were everything, although his philosophical conclusions might sometimes be disputable and even distasteful. Hence, also, his habit, in examining a new work on psychology, of asking at the very outset whether in it "all the important faculties, or modes of cognition, are brought into fair or proportionate discussion, and whether the laws and processes are introduced in such manner and place as to be elucidated to advantage". According as the writer stood this test or failed under it, he made a favourable or an unfavourable impression. Neverthe-

less, when he published his *Mental and Moral Science*, he developed his exposition of "Nominalism and Realism," of "Experience and Intuition" as competing sources of knowledge, and of "External Perception," appending an historical account of each. This was because he was now writing mainly for the convenience and requirements of students, and so wished to be helpful in every way to the learner; but even then he took care not to obscure his general presentation of the psychological principles and topics. The historical surveys themselves have been found to be of real use; and it is noteworthy that they were the anticipation of a right method which has only now been fully worked out by Janet and Séailles—the method, namely, of treating the problems of philosophy historically, instead of swamping them in a general history of philosophy.

II.

The principles thus adequate to the explanation of senses and intellect are equally applicable when next Prof. Bain proceeded to the emotions and the will. Assimilating emotion to sensation, he was able to apply to the more complex the same natural history method of description that he had so strikingly used in connexion with the simpler, and he re-asserted the necessity of taking due account of the physical or bodily expression. In characterising emotion itself, the subjective aspect must be supreme, and the determination of this is got by introspection—on this point he was ever explicit. But he insisted also that we should aim, as far as possible, at gauging quantity in feeling, for the more accurately we can do this the nearer do we approach the characteristic of an exact science; and the estimate of quantity is largely dependent on the objective manifestation. On the other hand, he did not regard it as possible to give, in the strict sense of the term, a classification of the emotions—certainly not such a classification as natural history gives of animals or botany of plants,—so that you might achieve a graded system and settle once for all the order of exposition. All that could be done—at any rate, all that he himself attempted—was to arrange the emotions in certain definite groups or genera (some simple, others compound), and to offer an analysis and characterisation of each, although he felt and frequently said that, if an attempt were made at a proper scientific classification, it must found upon the great contrasting couple of Love and Anger. His analysis of the

various kinds of emotion is subtle to a degree, and marks an epoch in British psychology, having nothing to compare with it at the time when it appeared save that of Dr. Thomas Brown, which it soon superseded, though Dr. Bain himself thought highly of Brown and, in one of his later utterances (speaking of Brown's handling of a point in natural theology), pronounced him to be "one of the acutest minds that ever discussed this or any other theological thesis".¹ Much of Bain's work in this connexion has passed into the current psychologies, and no modern treatment of this department of mental science can pass by without consideration his presentation (say) of Tender Emotion or of the Æsthetic Emotions.

Great care was expended by Bain on the elaboration of the treatment of Sympathy; and his views on this topic underwent development, as seen clearly in the successive editions of *The Emotions and the Will*, as also in the fourth edition of *The Senses and the Intellect* (p. 362), where the inadequacy of "the fixed idea" to explain sympathy is dwelt upon. He was exceedingly explicit in his advocacy of the existence of disinterestedness in human nature and would not allow that our altruistic and extra-regarding acts could be resolved into selfishness or regard to reward or the aiming at ulterior pleasure. This gave a unique character to his position, inasmuch as his general principles required that pleasure and pain should be the ultimate test of action. His contention was: "So far as I am able to judge of our disinterested impulses, they are wholly distinct from the attainment of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. They lead us, as I believe, to sacrifice pleasures, and incur pains, without any compensation. . . . It seems to me that we must face the seeming paradox—that there are, in the human mind, motives that pull against our happiness. It will not do to say that *because* we act so and so, *therefore* our greatest happiness lies in that course. This begs the very question in dispute. . . . This is the only view compatible with our habit of praising and rewarding acts of virtue. If a man were in as good a position, under an act of great self-denial, as if he had not performed it, we might leave him unnoticed. If he has rather gained than lost by the transaction, he could dispense with any reward from us."²

Not less significant was his strong and consistent adherence to the doctrine that Malevolence is native to human

¹ *Dissertations*, p. 5.

² *The Emotions and the Will*, 4th ed., pp. 295, 296.

nature and one of the most powerful factors in it. It is here that his attitude towards the Evolution Theory becomes very interesting. It was in relation to the Emotions that he first declared himself on this point. Recognising that the theory must ultimately depend for its support on the evidence that can be adduced in its favour, he keenly urged that the nearer acquisition can be assimilated to instinct the stronger will the probability in favour of evolution be. Accepting, then, the theory as a working hypothesis, he allowed that it had a sphere of application in the case of the emotions, but a restricted one. It could explain certain things, and there were certain emotional phenomena that had fresh light thrown upon them by this hypothesis. A great testing case was that of Anger. What special light, then, can evolution throw on Anger? and what in Anger seems beyond its power of explanation? Take the species of anger known as Revenge. "The gratification of Revenge, if illustrated by the hypothesis of Evolution, carries us back to the predatory side of animal life. The struggle for existence involves at once peaceful co-operation and warlike antagonism; and if the one fact is the sufficing fountain of the pleasure of love, the other may be accounted the remote source of the pleasures of hatred and revenge. . . . Granting the evolution hypothesis, we can easily suppose the hereditary transmission of the predatory habits and of the satisfaction accruing from all that has to do with killing both prey and rivals. We are still, however, some way from the essential pleasure of malevolence. We have plenty of the reality of malevolent infliction without the sentiment. In fact, the full-grown sentiment does not appear necessary to the end in view. All that is needed is the impetus to seize and devour a sufficient number of animals to gratify appetite; to take pleasure in the prospect and in all the circumstances and signs of the effect; and finally, to destroy or weaken rivals and whoever stands in the way of the animal's gratifications. The added pleasure of torturing another animal is not called for by the situation; and the feeling at work is not so much being injured as being thwarted. . . . The predatory impulse, therefore, does not involve the pleasure of knowingly causing pain; but probably prepares the way for that refinement, at the proper stage".¹ Other emotions, in like manner, such as Love and Fear, have light thrown upon them by Evolution; but in every case there is a residuum—a something that eludes

¹ *The Emotions and the Will*, 4th ed., pp. 66, 66.

its grasp. On the other hand, there are emotions that scarcely come under the operation of the hereditary principle: such, for instance, are those connected with Property and with Liberty, and, above all, the Moral Sense. Of this last it is maintained that, in so far as it is connected with will, sympathy, and the leading emotions, it may be explained on the theory of development, but "the finishing stroke" in it "is due to Education and Authority," and this "constitutes the moral sentiment a distinct and peculiar phenomenon, different from all the other exercises of Will, Sympathy, and Emotion, or any compounds of these".¹

When we come to the Will, we see the significance of the stress laid at the beginning on the primordial activity of the physical system, with the two laws of Conservation and Stimulation. Bodily Movements, spontaneously originated, come by-and-by to be co-ordinated and controlled, under the motives of pleasure and pain. This seems corroborated by Evolution, which assumes the three grand postulates of Spontaneity, Conservation, and Retentiveness, and helps towards accounting for such voluntary manifestations as Effort and the gradation of expended Energy. From this as a beginning, the growth of the will is traced, first through volitional associations with the various senses, and, next, through the ascending stages of command over the feelings and emotions, motives or ends, deliberation, resolution, effort, until the highest phase is reached and will attains the stability and strength that is found in the matured experience. The whole process is the result of association, and is explicable on associationist principles. In this way, the handling of the Will was put on a different platform from what it had previously occupied in current treatises on the subject. It had been customary to contract the view, and to concentrate attention on the troublesome problem of the Will's freedom. That question appeared to Prof. Bain to be a mere metaphysical puzzle, originating in the inadequacy of language to cope with the facts of our experience, and not by any means deserving the prominence and importance that had been accorded it. He, consequently, widened the outlook, and thereby gave a fresh impulse to psychology at this point. A new direction was given to the study of the subject, significant for the future, when the attempt was thus made "to ascertain the nature of the faculty itself, its early germs, or foundations, in the human constitution, and the course of its development, from its feeblest indications in infancy to the maturity of its power".

¹ *The Emotions and the Will*, 4th ed., p. 57.

Note must be taken at this point of Dr Bain's handling of Belief. He is peculiar among psychologists in laying the stress, not on the intellectual, but on the volitional, factor in the process, and so in treating the subject under Will. In his analysis, he places emphasis on two points—(1) on preparedness to act as the test of belief, and (2) on primitive credulity as its essential characteristic. At first, we believe everything; and we should go on in this way indefinitely, were it not that we are met by some check or hindrance—are aroused by some shock of contradiction. "The supposition underlying belief is that we are working to a lead, following out some end, by the means that experience suggests, and that, so long as we are successful, we raise no questions as to truth or falsehood; we believe without knowing it. . . . The pristine assurance is soon met by checks; a disagreeable experience leading to new insight. . . . Thus, the vital circumstance in belief is, never to be contradicted—never to lose *prestige*. The number of repetitions counts for little in the process: we are as much convinced after ten as after fifty; we are more convinced by ten unbroken than by fifty for and one against."¹ It is not, then, as James Mill supposed, a case of inseparable association: inseparable association follows the number of repetitions, belief follows the absence of contradiction.

In Ethics, Dr. Bain accepted fully the utilitarian position, but gave a distinct turn to it by his pronounced advocacy of the existence of disinterestedness in human nature—to which reference has already been made. To him Conscience was, of course, not a simple and intuitive faculty, but a compound and derivative thing, whose nature could be analysed and its genesis traced. Society played the prominent part in the elaboration; and the authority of the State, legislating for the community, and enforcing its commands by rewards and penalties, was what gave rise to the characteristic traits of conscience in the individual.² But though derivative and not original, though compound and not simple, Conscience does not thereby lose its ethical value. That value depends upon its power to promote man's welfare and happiness. It is neither better nor worse for being derivative, nor would it be better rather than worse for being simple; but its significance is found in its efficacy to discharge the functions specific to it. In this way, Ethics is viewed in a distinctively practical and so in a distinctively English manner—from the

¹ *The Emotions and the Will*, 4th ed., p. 512.

² See *Mental and Moral Science*, "Ethics," part i., ch. iii.

standpoint of utility; and its ideality is thrown into the background. Indeed, the idealistic Ethics was repugnant to Bain. With such teaching as that of Green or Martineau he had little sympathy: he regarded it as visionary and elusive, and he disliked it as being based on the notion of man's native dignity or greatness. Such a notion he held to be unconfirmed by experience and suitable simply to minister to self-conceit; and he regarded it as having retarded the scientific handling of Ethics: he thought, in particular, that it had done much harm in connexion with the problem of Free Will. "Of sources of bias," he says (see *Practical Essays*, pp. 29-32), "prejudices, 'Idola,' 'fallacies *a priori*,' this may be allowed precedence. . . . A philosopher of our own day—Sir W. Hamilton—has placed on the title-page of his principal work this piece of rhetoric: 'On earth, there is nothing great but man; in man, there is nothing great but mind'. Now one would suppose that there are on earth many things besides man deserving the appellation of 'great'; and that the mechanism of the body is, in any view, quite as remarkable a piece of work as the mechanism of the mind. . . . Such gross pandering to human vanity must be held as disfiguring a work on philosophy. . . . This originating of a point of honour or dignity in connection with our Will has been the main lure in bringing us into the jungle of Free-Will and Necessity. . . . The weight of the reasoning is, I believe, in favour of necessity; but the word carries with it a seeming affront, and hardly any amount of argument will reconcile men to indignity." This attitude, no doubt, deprives Bain's ethics of the stimulating power that attaches to the idealistic ethics; but it was the logical consequence of his fundamental principles, and it enabled him to express his positions in scientific form.

In *Mental and Moral Science*, he supplemented his general ethical opinions by a series of sketches of ethical systems from Socrates downwards—partly with a view to elucidate the subject, but partly also for the convenience of the student, for whom his manual was primarily intended. These sketches have been criticised as dry and unattractive. So far as the objection has point at all, the reason is not far to seek. A man's philosophy must be taken in connexion with the man himself (his individuality counts for much), and the parts of it must be viewed in relation to each other and to the whole. But here, inasmuch as we have simply summaries or abstracts, upon a uniform and definite plan, the individuality of the philosopher is necessarily eliminated, and the relation of his ethical theory to the rest of his specu-

lation is virtually ignored. The best testimony, however, to the value of this historical section is that it was soon found to be a welcome substitute for Mackintosh's *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, which formerly held the field, that it is not yet superseded even by Sidgwick's *Outlines of the History of Ethics*, and that many students have studied it with interest and expressed their indebtedness to it.

III.

A distinguishing feature of Prof. Bain's philosophy was its pre-eminently practical character. It lends itself in an exceptional degree to varied application, more particularly in the sphere of education—as witnessed by his own educational writings, especially the *Rhetoric* and *Education as a Science*. In the preface to the latest edition of *The Senses and the Intellect*, he himself says: "The plan and object of the present work, as well as of its continuation *The Emotions and the Will*, having been conceived more exclusively with a view to practical results, I have seen no ground for materially altering the expository order and the proportions, in the laying out of the details". Everything was to him conditioned by regard to "practical results". It was mainly for this reason—more specifically in order that he might advance philosophy in all its branches and stimulate British psychologists to research and "practical usefulness"—that he took the bold step, eight and twenty years ago, of originating **MIND**. In the last number of this journal, I called this a "noble act"; and so it was. In the first place, the venture was absolutely new and involved considerable self-sacrifice: the originator stood alone, for no one else in this country was public-spirited enough to attempt the production of a philosophical review. In the next place, it involved an immense amount of preliminary trouble and worry, which any one whose philosophical reputation was already securely established might naturally have shrunk from. There was much apathy to be met; and even some philosophers from whom he expected encouragement stood aloof. In the last place, it was not an enterprise likely to add in any way to the originator's income, but, on the contrary, was likely to cost him much even in money. As a matter of fact, it entailed an annual pecuniary loss, so that, when the sixteen years of his sole proprietorship had expired, it was found that he had sunk several thousands of pounds in it. But his enthusiasm carried him forward, and the thing was done. Writing in 1891, and bidding farewell to his readers, the first Editor of

MIND, referring to the start of the enterprise, said : "That effort, as some know already, has been rendered possible by the public spirit of one man. Why should it not now be openly told, that but for Prof. Bain's generous initiative in 1876 this country might still be without a philosophical organ? Let the fact be borne in mind the next time it occurs to any one to remark the limitations of homebred English thinking. An English psychologist of the traditional stamp was the first to project, and single-handed has ever been there to sustain, a Review open to all the serious philosophical thought of the country and seeking new lights from the whole world around."¹

Dr. Bain was fortunate in having as his chief counsellor his former pupil and valued friend G. Croom Robertson, who not only aided greatly in planning the project and in securing contributors, but also acted as Editor during all the time of Dr. Bain's proprietorship. Between them, they made a splendid beginning in January, 1876, and, all along to the close, they were able to keep up the success which the first number achieved. The object of the journal is partly given in its title and its sub-title, which were chosen wittingly and after much deliberation. They were intended to indicate in brief the scope and subject-matter, and, in particular, to declare the readiness of the projector to welcome reasoned contributions in all lines of philosophy, while laying greatest stress on psychology as the basal science. But further, and more fully, the object was declared in a preliminary prospectus which was widely distributed at the time, and, again, in the Editor's prefatory words in the first number. There we see the broad spirit in which the project was devised, and the same lines on which it was proposed to proceed. Although mental science was to be supreme, speculation was to be encouraged in every department, so be it that it were legitimated (directly or indirectly) by experience. Starting from experience, it might take as high a flight as ever it cared provided it returned to experience again. So, too, the interest of the various sciences allied to psychology (Logic, *Æsthetics*, Ethics) were to be duly attended to, and the application of psychology to the purposes of the Educator. It was a broad and liberal-minded programme; and it was worked out impartially, so that no one could say that the journal existed simply for propagating the views of a single school.²

¹ *MIND*, 1st Series, vol. xvi., p. 557.

² See also Croom Robertson's article on "Psychology and Philosophy," in *MIND*, vol. viii., 1st Series, pp. 1-21—reprinted in his *Philosophical Remains*, pp. 250-273.

The successful execution of the plan depended mainly on two things—on the energy of the proprietor and the editor, and on the variety and efficiency of the contributors. The energy was conspicuous from the beginning. If, on the one hand, it could hardly have been possible to secure a more competent and enthusiastic editor than Robertson, it would have been difficult, on the other hand, to find any one who worked more vigorously and contributed more copiously of his best than did Prof. Bain. He expounded doctrines, he set forth new views, he discussed problems, he reviewed books; and the magnitude of his work is only partially seen from the volume of *Dissertations* that was recently published. These are chiefly reprints from MIND (including two articles contributed to the second series); but a considerable part of his book on *Education as a Science* appeared there, as also did portions of other treatises, as well as many smaller philosophical papers that have not been republished anywhere.

But now as to contributors. A glance at the Index of the first series of MIND shows that very many of the great names in philosophy of the last thirty years were enlisted in the service, although names are wanting that one would have expected to find present. Young men, too, came to play their part; and it is to the credit of MIND that it opened its pages so freely to young writers who, though doing good work, were as yet unknown to the world.

What philosophy would have been at this moment in Great Britain had there been no MIND journal started, it is, of course, impossible to say; but it is safe enough to affirm that, through it, philosophical interest in our land has been immensely increased and splendid work has been done in all the departments of mental science, which must command the gratitude of every one who has the welfare and the progress of philosophy at heart. There is evidence also that MIND has stimulated other countries; and, perhaps, it may not be too much to claim that the awakened interest in psychology that soon after its inception began in Germany was, in part at least, owing to it. And the impulse has not yet spent itself. May we not see it operative in *The British Journal of Psychology*, which has just made so brisk a commencement? Bain did not live to see this new development; but it would have met with his full approval, for his interest in experimental psychology was great, though he had a keen perception of its limits.

IV.

Prof. Bain's is a name in philosophy that cannot die. More especially will it be associated with psychology. What British psychologists have been able to accomplish during the last half-century has been in no small degree owing to the lead that he gave through *The Senses and the Intellect*, published in 1855, and through *The Emotions and the Will*, published in 1859. The extent of his influence it is impossible to estimate. It has gone abroad into many lands through his writings—many of which have been translated into diverse tongues. It emanated from his teaching as a professor, and lives in pupils who reproduce his spirit and his method. It is felt by others, not a few, who have attained renown in psychology, but who owe much to him for early counsel and encouragement. But, perhaps, the best testimony to his influence, and certainly the most striking proof of his originality, lies in the fact that any exposition of his distinctive positions must needs seem to the modern psychologist conversant with the subject a mere enunciation of commonplaces. The doctrines are commonplaces now, but they were new, and many of them alarming, when they first appeared. Hardly less significant is the fact that to some those doctrines are a perennial subject of criticism. That is a high compliment. People criticise only what they feel to have weight and potency: harmless, even though distasteful, teaching is passed by in silence. Prof. Bain himself was quite alive to the fact that many of his positions might be superseded in philosophy: he made no exaggerated claim to finality or to infallibility. In August, 1892, when speaking in public on the occasion of the unveiling of his bust placed by the community of Aberdeen in the Public Library, he said: "In the philosophy of the mind, the displacement of one system by another is proverbial. All that we can count upon, when we have done our best, is that some stones may be found to fit into the structures of our successors. . . . Even for the present, I am far from securing unanimity of judgment among those that have taken the trouble to follow me. That I do not complain of: it is not the business of any man to bring round the whole world, or the tenth part of it, to particular conclusions on debated questions. It is enough to have helped a number of people to draw their own inferences, and, in so doing, to improve on their previous knowledge. It is by the testimony of such that a man can be adjudged as an immediate benefactor to his kind, and the presumption is that the influence may last some time longer."

With confidence it may be asserted that there are stones in Dr. Bain's system that will be used, for long time to come, in the structures of his successors; and few will refuse to accord him the merit of having been "an immediate benefactor of his kind". "Pre-eminent," as the present Editor of *MIND* has phrased it, are his services to psychology and philosophy; and when the history of psychology comes to be written in English, a commanding place will be assigned to him among those who advanced the science of mind in the nineteenth century, and due acknowledgment will be made of the distinctive value of his work.