VOLITION AND GENERAL.

Voluntary Action. G. F. STOUT. *Mind*, July, 1896. Pp. 354-366.

Types of Will. ALEXANDER F. SHAND. *Mind*, July, 1897. Pp. 289-325.

In an article in *Mind*, October, 1895, Mr. Shand maintained that will, though analyzable up to a certain point, had, in the last resort, a distinctive quality, incapable of further analysis or description. Mr. Stout here offers as an alternative the theory that will is desire qualified and defined by a certain sort of judgment, the judgment, namely, "that, so far as in us lies, we shall bring about the attainment of the desired end." The characteristic difference between indecision and decision is that in the former we do not yet know what we are going to do, while in the latter we do. Mr. Stout explains by means of this conception the distinction between voluntary and involuntary action which Mr. Shand made so much of. Thus, *e. g.*, the sneeze of a soldier marching to surprise a fortress is involuntary, because, although foreseen, it is not foreseen as something he desires to bring about; the indulgence of a morbid appetite may express the volition of the moment, but may be regarded as involuntary with reference to the man's general volition, etc.

In what is virtually a reply, but has the form of an independent essay, Mr. Shand endeavors to show that Stout's theory like all other general theories of the will, fails to take proper account of different types of volition. Urging the necessity of studying these before resting in any one general formula, he distinguishes and analyzes a number of volitional types and arrives, substantially, at the following conclusions: (I) *Simple volition.* We first seem to have will, as distinguished from inferior conations, when, along with the idea of a desired action, we have the judgment that, as far as in us lies, we are going to realize it. This agrees with Mr. Stout's formula. Simple volition is the state described without doubt or conflict of motives; complex volition is the state described preceded by such doubt or conflict. (II) *Will as negation.* The above definition includes only positive judgments. But there are volitions with the negative judgment, I am not going to do this. And this is a distinct type; for though logically the negative judgment implies the positive, this is not true psychologically. The psychological accompaniment of negative volition is not necessarily a contrary positive judgment, but a contrary positive conation. We must accordingly modify our definition and

say that the distinguishing character of will is either a judgment that we are, or a judgment that we are not, going to do something, or it is a mixture of both judgments. (III) *Hypothetical and Disjunctive Will*. But beside volitions of the categorical type, there are hypothetical and disjunctive volitions; and the peculiarity of the former is that they do not affirm that we are going to do anything, while the latter affirm that we are going to do one thing or another. Thus volitional judgment may assume a variety of forms, categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive, positive and negative. But the characteristic of will is not in the form of the judgment, but in the content, namely, in the emphasis on the agency of the self (which is, however, not peculiar to will), and in the belief that, conditionally, or unconditionally, we shall try to do (or not do) something. (IV) *Fictitious Choice*. Complex volition, or choice, is so defined that the following types must be taken to represent not real, but fictitious choice. (1) A traveler already decided to take the shortest road, on learning that this is the shortest, decides to take this. Here the antecedent conflict is purely intellectual. (2) He had not previously decided on the shortest, but on learning which is the shortest, at once decides to take that. Here blind conation develops into will without any conflict of desire. (3) A youth in easy circumstances determines to choose the profession for which his inclination is strongest, but is in doubt as to which is his strongest inclination. Until the final decision, there is conflict of desires, but no conflict of motives; as in (1) the volition becomes definite, but is essentially unchanged. (4) A child is set to choose between two playthings. If we assume a blind conation, at the start, to choose 'the nicer,' then, here too, in spite of the conflict of desires and apparent motives, the final volition is only the development of the original conation. In all four types, there is no real conflict of motives, consequently no real choice. The judgment is made up and defines the conation; but volition may run counter to the judgment, choose the worse, etc. (V) *Involuntary Action*. The most interesting cases are ideo-motor actions. (1) Actions produced suddenly through fear. If we maintain Mr. Stout's definition of an involuntary action and require the simultaneous existence of a voluntary resolution, such actions will have to be regarded, not as involuntary, but only as non-voluntary. (2) Actions produced by fear, but preceded by a determination not to do them. (3) Types in which conflict of desire is present, *e. g.*, the soldier endangering his own life and the army's by coughing. This case shows plainly that the distinctive constituent of will cannot be the judgment that we are going to do something. (4) Possibly types

involving choice; but an unambiguous case is hard to find. (VI) *Will as Imperative*. So far from it being true that volition is essentially determined by the judgment, I am going to do something, some volitions are expressed, not by a judgment at all, but by an imperative. Such imperative volitions always have for their object the control of another's conduct, and though usually simple, they may, by sympathy, be complex and involve choice. This type cannot be eliminated by assuming that imperatives are merely means for getting preformed volitions accomplished, for in some cases the conation issues in the imperative too suddenly. Nor can it be resolved into any of the judgment types; it is a unique differentiation. The judgment is either true or false, the imperative is neither true nor false. Finally (VII) *Desire and Will* do not always have the relation ascribed to them by Mr. Stout. Will is sometimes determined, not by desire, but by the less strong aversion. Thus the condemned man allowed to choose the form of his execution, actually wills to do what he desires not to do, since he desires to escape death in every form. There are in fact three types: (1) desire is the motive; (2) desire is effaced from the motive (*e. g.*, 'duty for duty's sake'); (3) desire is replaced by aversion.

Issue may fairly be taken with some of these contentions. If, *e. g.*, the condemned man choose to be shot rather than hung, it seems incorrect to say that his will is contrary to his desire because he does not desire to be shot. He does not will to be shot simply, but to be shot rather than hung. He is averse to being hung, he is also averse to being shot; but he has, among other stronger desires, this desire also, to get through with the disagreeable necessity in the least obnoxious way possible under the circumstances, and he resolves accordingly. In regard to 'imperative volition,' it may be doubted whether, *e. g.*, the command 'Do this' expresses more than a mere wish or desire apart from the implied consciousness, "I am determined that, as far as I can control your conduct, you shall." Finally, as regards the interpretation of the soldier's involuntary cough or sneeze, it seems beside the mark to say that it proves that the fore-knowledge, I am about to do this, is not the essential character in will; for nobody, certainly not Mr. Stout, said that it was.

H. N. GARDINER.

SMITH COLLEGE.

Genesis of Number Forms. D. E. PHILLIPS. Amer. Jour. of Psychol. VIII., 4, p. 506. July, 1897.

This study is noticeable for the fulness of its material, comprising returns from about two thousand persons. Half of these (974) were