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X.—REALISM AND VALUES.

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I.

IN his essay on "Realism, a Study in Art and Thought," Mr. A. McDowell draws attention to the fact that alike in Philosophy and Art there has in recent years been a tendency to dwell upon "values" rather than "ideals." The change is not one of terminology, merely, but expresses a change of attitude. Ideals are constructions of the intellect embodying in abstract form what ought to be; values express an actual relationship to the purposes of the concrete living subject. "You may conceive an ideal perfection and regard it coldly; but it becomes a value if it embodies what you really feel" (p. 251).

The study of values is one of the "growing-points" of philosophy at the present time, and a glance at the literature of the subject is sufficient to show that there is as yet little agreement as to analysis or interpretation of the facts which come under consideration. Differences in treatment depend partly on the general philosophical standpoint of the writer and partly on the complexity of the value situation itself.

What, then, are the factors to be distinguished whenever we find "values"? In the first place, there are the elements which are present in any cognitive process, viz., a knowing mind and an object known. Over and above these are the features peculiar to the value complex,—the subject is not merely a knower, but is also an agent; the object is not merely a thing known, but is also a thing which satisfies a want, or fulfils a purpose of the knower. Accompanying these relations of the subject to the object is the peculiar feeling tone which characterizes the worth situation.

In the simplest kind of values, mere "likings" and "dislikings" these elements are clear; *e.g.*, "I like peaches" implies a knowledge of the fruit through sense perception. It means also that peaches satisfy a want which I feel from time to time, and in so doing, have value for me. The statement "Peaches are delicious" characterizes the same set of facts in a slightly more permanent way.

It implies, as above, that I know the fruit, that it satisfies my desire, and in addition that for me, at least, it always has this value. In other words, by attributing universality to the conditions which are found to give satisfaction, those conditions tend to be regarded as a quality of the object itself. "Deliciousness" comes to be thought of as a property of peaches. No one making this statement, however, would seriously challenge an opponent who disagreed with him; the fact of disagreement would merely serve to bring home the subjectivity of the judgment to both concerned—"Chacun à son goût." But quite a different attitude would be taken to the man who challenged the beauty of the Demeter, or the truth of a well-established scientific doctrine, for in such cases we claim that the value holds for all minds and at all times. What is the ground of such universality? The answer to this question will depend upon the philosophical standpoint of the thinker.

It is, I think, a question of particular interest to thinkers of the realist school. For realists the cognitive relation is an external one and reality is independent of mind. Values, however, are stubbornly subjective, and yet they are no less real. How then does realism deal with values? As a matter of fact, there is great divergence among realists themselves, and in what follows I wish to discuss the accounts given by Dr. G. E. Moore, Professor R. B. Perry, and Professor Alexander as typical of attempts which this school of thought is making to deal with the problem.

II.

Perhaps the most thorough-going attempt to treat values objectively is that of Dr. Moore. He boldly maintains that values belong to objects quite apart from mind, and are unaffected by minds or wills. Ideas of goodness, truth and beauty are indefinable. "If I am asked 'What is good?' my answer is that good is good and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked 'How is good to be defined?' my answer is that it cannot be defined" (*Principia Ethica*, p. 6). Again, "If we set ourselves seriously to find out what things are good, we shall see reason to think . . . that they have no other property both common and peculiar to them besides this goodness—that in fact there is no criterion of goodness" (pp. 137–138). Further, this unique quality belongs to objects or situations as such and is not dependent upon judgments of minds. When arguing against Sidgwick's restriction of the ultimate practical end for man to Goodness, Perfection or Excellence of human existence, *i.e.*, to characters, of human existence, Dr. Moore puts an extreme case as illustrating his point. He bids us imagine a world exceedingly beautiful, lovely in form and colour and harmony. Then imagine the ugliest world possible, let it be a heap of filth containing everything that is to us most disgusting for whatever reason. He bids us then compare these two worlds. "Supposing them quite apart from any possible contemplation by human beings; still is it irrational to hold that it is better that the beautiful world should exist than the one which is ugly?" (p. 84). His answer is that the only rational view is that the beautiful world is in itself better than the ugly one, "then it follows that however many beings may enjoy it, and however much better their enjoyment may be than it is itself, yet its mere existence adds something to the goodness of the whole: it is not only a means to our end, but is also itself a part thereof" (p. 85). Value being intrinsic in certain objects is as inde-

pendent of knowing minds as are secondary qualities; and is not in any way to be regarded as correlative to a desiring subject. It is not the same thing as to say that any being or set of beings has towards it any mental attitude whatever—either an attitude of feeling, or of desiring or of thinking something about it. And again, “By saying that a thing is intrinsically good, it means that it would be a good thing that the thing in question should exist even if it existed quite alone without any further accompaniments or effects whatever” (*Ethics*, p. 65). In his earlier writings Mr. B. Russell takes a similar view. He also points out that it is no more possible to analyse “goodness” and “badness” than to analyse “redness.” The nearest we can come to an explanation of it is to say that a “thing is good when on its own account it ought to exist and bad when on its own account it ought not to exist” (*Philosophical Essays*, p. 5). Again, “Good and bad are qualities which belong to objects independently of our opinion just as much as round and square do; and when two people differ as to whether a thing is good only one of them can be right though it may be very hard to know which is right” (p. 11). Because the idea of good is thus simple and ultimate, it is illegitimate to draw any conclusions involving it from premises in which it is not expressly stated. An illegitimate inference of this kind is made when it is held that the doctrine of evolution is a ground for belief in the goodness of things. “Goodness” is an ultimate concept and is not in any way deducible from evolution.

In Mr. Russell's later writings there are indications of a change of attitude toward this question. In the Introduction to *Mysticism and Logic* there occurs the significant statement. “I feel less convinced than I did of the objectivity of good and evil” (p. 8), and most of the essays in that volume urge devotion to a purely scientific standpoint as the right attitude of philosophy, ethical ideals being valuable only as “the indication of some new way of feeling towards life and the

world, some ways of feeling by which our own existence can acquire more of the characteristics which we most deeply desire" (p. 109). In other words, Mr. Russell has given up the doctrine of the Independence of Values.

The views of Dr. Moore and Mr. Russell represent one extreme in the attempts of realism to deal with values. If this view were tenable it would have the great advantage of avoiding confusion between the subject, and the valued object, —the value would lie wholly in the latter. Again, the distinction between the act of judging a value, and the value itself would be clear; the act would be like any other act of judging, and the value would belong entirely to the object. The difficulty of this view, to me, lies in the very conception of a value which is wholly independent of a subject who values. To say that it is better that the beautiful world should exist rather than the chaos of ugliness which Dr. Moore pictures does surely reintroduce the idea of a mind "for whom" it is better.

As an example of a totally different method of treating the problem in accordance with principles of realism, a method which leads to the opposite extreme, I turn to an article by Professor R. B. Perry, entitled "A Realistic Theory of Independence." This paper is Professor Perry's contribution to the volume entitled *The New Realism*. Here he maintains that it is not the part of realism as such to reject off-hand, subjective existence, but rather to be more critical of it, and above all to avoid hypostatizing subjective facts into substantive existence. In this paper he devotes a section to the realm of subjectivity (pp. 136-144). He finds that all cases which come within this realm are complexes, including among other factors, consciousness. No such complex is subjective through and through but may be analysed into elements or lesser complexes which are objective. Among such complexes are values. Values are essentially a function of desire and have reality only in the fulfilment of interests.

"There is no quality or combination of qualities that is inherently valuable; or incapable of possessing value; or exclusively valuable in the sense that things would be valueless without it. Such interest as that of desultory curiosity or promiscuous acquisitiveness may invest *anything* with value; and there is nothing so precious that its value would not disappear if all needs and likings and aspirations were extinguished."* The value of an object then depends upon a desiring subject, but it is not necessary that the subject should know that he is desiring to constitute the object valuable. In fact, he urges, if interest did *cognize* value the value would be not the fulfilment of desire, but a quality of the object as Mr. Moore regards it. This he considers untenable. "In so far as I find traces of what some regard as irreducible feeling qualities, they localize themselves in my body or not at all; in proportion as I distinguish and examine them they lose all semblance of that presence in the object which becomes increasingly clear and unmistakable in the case of colour and sound. In short the attentive effort at localization, whereas it unites the secondary qualities with the object, dissociates the alleged tertiary qualities and tends to unite them with the sentient."†

The attitude of interest then does not cognize the value upon which it is directed but it *constitutes* the value.

It is important therefore for clearness in discussion to distinguish between a *fact* of value and a *judgment* of value. This distinction is brought out most clearly by Professor Perry in the following example. In the statement "I like the Monna Lisa because it was painted by Leonardo," there are included two separate judgments:—(1) "I like the Monna Lisa" which is a judgment of value. It reflects, he says, a more immediate experience of the fact than does *your* statement that I like the

* R. B. Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 333.

† R. B. Perry, "The Definition of Value," *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. xi, p. 153.

Monna Lisa, but it is in no other sense different from it. And (2) "Leonardo painted the picture" which is evidently not a judgment of value, but in this case happens to be the condition of the existence of a value. In addition to these two judgments there is the complex state of mind which contains his liking of the picture. "This is the central fact but it is no more *judgment* than is my entering the Louvre to see the picture. It *constitutes* value, but does not judge it; it determines the truth or falsity of the judgment that I like it, but is not itself true or false" (p. 161).

What then is the real nature of this "liking" which is the central fact of a value experience? It would seem that it is ultimately nothing but an attitude of the subject expressed through bodily changes in response to an object. "They (tertiary qualities) appear to me to be either modes of attitude or impulses and thus motor or sensory *qualia* which are localizable in the body. . . . I conclude that interest is not an immediate cognition of value qualities in its object but is a mode of the organism enacted, sensed and possibly felt, and qualifies the object through being a response to it" (p. 153). Such being the nature of value the cognition of value lies in the observation and recording of different interests and determining their relations to one another and to their objects. The judgment of value is a judgment about interest but is otherwise like any other judgment.

Professor Perry allows that it is repugnant to our ideas to admit that the bare psychological fact of a particular liking is in itself a guarantee of value. Human thought demands a criterion by which superiority and inferiority shall be assigned to the values themselves. Perry himself finds such a criterion in the idea of a quantitative scale of interest fulfilment. That which serves to the fulfilment of more interests, or to their more permanent satisfaction is better than that which results in a less fulfilment.

"It is certainly more plausible to argue that value is

restricted to the satisfaction of one's whole self, whether objectified or not, but in any case distinguishable from the momentary impulse. Good would then be that which satisfies a person *thoroughly or fundamentally or permanently* after every interest has had an opportunity through reflection of making its claims count. But if one asks why this sort of interest fulfilment deserves precedence of the fulfilment of isolated or momentary impulses, for my part I can find only one answer. It is because it is a more conserving, fruitful fulfilment of an aggregate of interests than is possible when these interests are unorganized. The organized fulfilment of a self is better than the disorderly indulgence of its several impulses on the ground that the fulfilment of interest as such is good, and *therefore the more the better*" (p. 157). And again: "There is no specific kind of interest, personal, social, or metaphysical, that can be said to determine value exclusively, or even preeminently, save in so far as it sums or enhances the fulfilment of unlimited interest" (p. 159).

Even those interests which expressly contain a ground beyond themselves are amenable to the same criterion. I admire the floral decoration of a certain dinner table assuming the roses to have come from the greenhouse. I may desire medicine on the ground that it will cure my cold. In such cases the ground of the liking or desiring is open to verification. If the roses turn out to be made of silk I shall cease to admire them (as table decoration at least), and their value ceases. If the medicine does cure my cold, its value is felt to be well-grounded and becomes greater; for, as Perry points out, in getting the medicine I should have got two things I desired, the medicine and the cure. "A valuation that is undisturbed and fortified by increased light is in a special sense a true valuation or a genuine value. . . . A value founded on truth is hardier and more prolific—and there is the truth value in itself to be added" (p. 160).

III.

In his account of values* Professor Alexander has much in common with Professor Perry, and would, I imagine, to a large extent agree with him. Alexander's treatment is particularly valuable, as we have here the subject brought into close relation to the rest of a realist system, exhibited in fact as the crowning point of a metaphysical structure built upon a realist foundation.

Throughout his system Professor Alexander works with the idea of evolution, and he finds the hint of what at a later stage becomes value proper, in the principle of adaptation to environment. Natural Selection, so far from ignoring values, as is sometimes urged, is but a name for the way in which values are established. The process may be detected as low in the scale of evolution as the chemical elements; in the organic world it is clear. That a particular type of plant or animal flourishes in given surroundings while other types die out means that such an environment *is good for* such a type, and, *vice versa*, the type *is good for* the environment. Among the higher animals, where the creature actively seeks or rejects objects in fulfilment of its instincts, value shows itself still more clearly; the object satisfies an interest in the subject.

But value in the fullest meaning of the term is only to be found at the stage where reflective consciousness has developed. Throughout the development of his argument in *Space, Time, and Deity* up to this point, Professor Alexander has exhibited reality as a system of complexes of space-time, some of which we call things and others minds. Minds share the characteristics of things and possess the further property of being conscious; but the cognitive relation in no way affects the thing apprehended. In the realm of values, however, the relation between minds and the rest of reality is very different; here mind may be said to be creative. "Values are unlike the

* Alexander, S., *Space, Time and Deity*, vol. ii, p. 236 ff.

empirical qualities of things, shape or fragrance or life; they imply the amalgamation of the object with the human appreciation of it. . . . We have values or tertiary qualities in respect of the whole situation consisting of knower and known in their compresence. Strictly speaking it is this totality of knower and known, of subject and object which is true or good or beautiful" (p. 238). For Alexander as for Perry it would seem that value arises then in a particularly intimate connexion between minds and objects. Certain things seem beautiful, others ugly; certain acts good and others bad; certain judgments true and others false; because of a tendency of mind to seek satisfaction in certain directions. The satisfaction of the tendency to learn, the desire to do, and the desire to express ourselves in outward form gives rise to the tertiary qualities. It will be found that what satisfies the tendency in each case is coherence within the object sought. We must beware of inventing a quality of satisfactoriness which may be predicated of the object; or of imagining that coherence itself is a quality of the object. The situation brought about by the union of minds with things in the realm of values is literally the creation of a new level of reality; and the attribution of the term valuable either to the subject or object presupposes this higher complex (p. 302).

Truth is reality as possessed by minds—the assertion that such and such belongs to space-time. It is therefore embodied in a judgment. The act of judging or believing stands over against its object which is an assertion or a proposition. "A's going down the street" is a relation which I perceive; "A is going down the street" is the same relation judged. "The judgment is the percept dissected and reconstructed; it is not merely a perspective of reality but a perspective containing an assertion; I shall say an asserted perspective" (p. 250). That which is thus judged is a "fact." Now concerning facts we may not ask whether they are true or false—they are neither for they are real. But we may legitimately ask whether they

are truly facts as they claim to be. The old question "What is truth"? may bear one of two meanings. It may mean "What propositions must I believe in order to have truth"? In this case the answer is supplied by the sciences. Or it may mean "What makes truth true"? Alexander's answer to this is as follows: "Any reality is an occupation of space-time in a particular configuration. I call that its internal structure. . . . Truth and error depend in any subject matter on whether the reality about which the proposition is conversant admits or excludes that proposition in virtue of the internal structure of the reality in question; this truth is apprehended through intercourse of minds of which some confirm the true proposition and reject the false and the truth is the proposition so tested as thus related to collective judging" (p. 252).

The test of truth then is not correspondence to reality but the coherence amongst themselves of propositions. True propositions belong to reality; false ones introduce elements from elsewhere; they are found to be incoherent with true ones and are rejected by us. True propositions, however, are real facts and except for their truth (*i.e.*, being possessed by mind) they are the same as reality itself. The only reality error possesses is as the object of the judgment.

Whereas coherence among true propositions and among the minds which believe them is determined by the nature of reality itself, in the realm of practice it is coherence among wills which primarily determines what is *good*. "The reality which we produce is good in so far as it satisfies coherently the persons who bring it about" (p. 274). The objects of will are propositions or connexions of fact which we seek to bring about in the external world, *e.g.*, a certain journey is to be taken. In order to bring about what I have thus first in idea, it is essential to be guided in my action by the nature of the particular bit of external reality in which I find myself, including existing social institutions. I must for example fit my actions in with the local railway time table. But the primary fact is that a

conscious mind wills an object and the realization of that willing involves changing the external world. Human beings are essentially social in character. Hence in some cases, they co-operate with one another to bring about the objects of their willings; in other cases they compete with one another for the realization of incompatible ends. Out of this ceaseless conflict there emerges a body of "goods" approved by the general body of agents. These are conserved in various moral and social institutions and become the standard by which either an agent or his action is judged. "The characters are good which act in the spirit of these institutions, and the various types of their goodness are the virtues of character. The non-mental facts which are the purely external aspect of the institutions are not good in themselves but only as securing in certain fashion, that is, coherently, the satisfactions of the passions of the persons engaged" (pp. 277-8). Since moral institutions and laws are concerned to secure the coherent distribution of satisfaction among individuals, evil is the failure to do this. Evil deals with the same conditions as good, viz., human nature and the external world, but handles them amiss; satisfaction is not achieved, or is achieved by the wrong person, or in respect of the wrong objects. Evil is therefore the moral counterpart of error.

In the case of the third type of tertiary quality,—beauty and its unvalue ugliness,—the connexion between minds and things is still more intimate. When an object is judged to be beautiful a part of the object itself is supplied by the mind. As compared with a perceived thing, the beautiful object is illusory, for it does not exist in the form in which it is apprehended. But as compared with an illusion the beautiful object is not erroneous because it is not attributed to any real object outside the æsthetic experience itself; it is a new sort of reality brought into being by the mind itself in combination with objects.

If the æsthetic semblance were taken to be real it would become cognitive illusion and cease to be æsthetic; for example,

the figures in Botticelli's "Spring" express movement, but if we thought they really moved, the æsthetic effect would at once disappear. Beauty in an object means the harmonious blending of elements, some existing in reality and some supplied by the mind itself. But it means more also. It distinguishes those minds which do see beauty in the object from others which fail to do so. "Coherence in the internal constitution of beauty is also coherence among the minds which appreciate it, and exclusion of other minds" (p. 294). Such persons who do appreciate beauty become standard minds—this is only possible because the beautiful percept is the result of a judgment. "Just because such judgments, 'I see this alive,' 'I see this form solid,' are implied in the beautiful work, it is possible for others to take note of my attitude and at once to find the same object beautiful and to share my attitude; to approve both the beauty, and me in my pronouncement that it is beautiful" (p. 295). The propositions we deal with in judging beauty are different from the propositions of truth and goodness. They are neither ordinary external propositions, nor are they mental propositions, but they are propositions in which mind and the non-mental are combined. This account of the appreciation of beauty applies not only to works of art but equally to natural objects. In the case of a natural object Professor Alexander maintains, when its beauty is felt it is incorrectly perceived—something is added to or selected from reality in the process.

This view seems to me to be full of difficulty. I admit that we *may* read our moods into a scene (p. 289)—the whistling wind over dried stems of dead grasses on the hillside may sadden us; but when we describe the scene as "dreary," "lonely," we do so knowing well that the "dreariness" is a mode of ourself not a quality of the landscape. In other cases where we admire the beauty of a landscape or the grandeur of mountain scenery, I fail to see that mind does add features to the object in the way Professor Alexander suggests. In admiring a landscape it would seem that it is the form of the

various objects, the wealth and blending of colours, which call out immediately the response of human appreciation. These features would undoubtedly not be the same if I stood on the hill itself but the modified features are "mere appearance" in Professor Alexander's sense of the term, and are due to external reality, not to mind. The blueness of the mountains and their rugged outline, the blending of the purple and gold of the heather and gorse, which are the elements I consider beautiful are undoubtedly due to the distance from which I am viewing them, but I cannot see that in judging them as beautiful mind has added anything more to them than in judging them as distant. When the mountain is judged as distant the proposition claims to be true; and if the claim is coherent with all other true propositions about the mountain then reality is of this character,—and the mountain is distant. When the mountain is judged to be beautiful, then its beauty according to Alexander lies in the fact that the proposition judged presupposes another proposition in which the mind has in some way united itself with the mountain. In each case the "judging" must be a bare act of assertion. These assertions are distinguishable the one from the other only by their objects which are in the first example an assertion about external reality as such, and in the second an assertion about external reality combined with mind.

One cannot help feeling that this treatment of values gives no account of the experiencing of value. How does the enjoyment of a judgment of truth differ from the enjoyment of a judgment of beauty? Yet as experiences they are certainly different. Would Professor Alexander agree with Professor Perry in describing the "central fact" of value experience as "modes of attitude and impulses," or "as an enacted, sensed, or possibly felt mode of the organism," or is there no such "central fact"?

Professor Alexander's account of truth I find still more difficult. It is asserted that the criterion of truth is coherence among propositions, *i.e.*, assertions about reality; but if truth

thus follows reality and is determined by it what is gained by denying coherence to reality itself? (see p. 258). Unless reality itself be coherent how can "truth about reality" be so? It would seem that by thus refusing to admit that it is the nature of reality to be coherent, Alexander is driven, in spite of himself, to treat truth as a subjective character of minds for he is compelled to admit that a fact which is true to-day may be false to-morrow (p. 263) or even that contradictory facts may be true for two minds at the same time if they live under different conditions. "The once true proposition may turn out even to be erroneous for the newer knowledge, while it remains true and real as such within the narrower range of ancient revealed fact." Professor Alexander's criticism of the pragmatic view of truth is that it gives no account of the nature of reality but states simply "Truth is that which works." He himself would go a step further and say, "Truth works because it is determined by the nature of reality" but for a satisfactory theory of truth one must I think understand "determined by reality" in a more drastic sense than Alexander himself does.

From the point of view of his theory there can be no distinction between a "judgment of fact" and a "judgment of value," for every judgment must be of the latter type. One feels, however, that there is a real difference in status between truth and the other tertiary qualities. While goodness and beauty are predominantly *subjective* in reference, even when universal in form, truth is essentially *objective*. Goodness and beauty are determined primarily by the efforts and interests of individual subjects; truth is determined primarily by the nature of reality itself. Acts of believing or judging are of course subjective and transient in character; but truth possesses a form of reality timeless and unchangeable in and through which the world of changing existence is revealed to us.