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OF

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

I.—THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCHES OF
MEINONG (I.).

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I HAVE undertaken to give some account in this Journal of Meinong's contributions to philosophy. It was a rash undertaking. For the task is one of peculiar difficulty. Had Meinong made any attempt to think out or develop a comprehensive metaphysical theory, it would have been comparatively easy to sketch the main features of that theory, and perhaps to indicate where it seemed exposed to attack. But his speculative genius lay not in the direction of system-building; and I suspect he distrusted the attitude of mind which system-building frequently betokens. His published work, and it is amazingly voluminous, is all of it of an extremely detailed kind; its value largely consists in its resolute thoroughness, in the rare combination it shows of unprejudiced observation with acute inference, and in the minute care with which he tried to see all round and to get to the roots of the problems he handled. Moreover, the themes he selected for treatment were almost always those at the growing-point of philosophical inquiry; he had an extraordinary facility of discerning precisely that which required to be wrestled with in order to make headway in philosophical research. As a writer he was lucid and clear; but his very persistency in tracking a subject through its ramifications gives to his mode of exposition a certain prolixity, which those who like to have their philosophy served up to them in imagery and metaphor will be ready enough to decry as dullness. Yet his intellectual honesty in describing the data with

which he was concerned, his subtlety of analysis, his keenness of criticism are sufficiently exemplified in everything he wrote.

In spite, however, of its difficulties, there is more need of such a task as has been set for me being undertaken in the case of Meinong's work than in the case of that of most philosophers. For it is true to say that the different investigations upon which he was engaged, independent of one another though at first sight they appear to be, are not in fact unrelated, and that his various lines of reflexion have principles in common which it would certainly be worth while to drag to light. I can hardly hope to succeed in doing so; but I may perhaps contrive to furnish such an outline of Meinong's ways of thinking as may be serviceable to those who have not as yet made acquaintance with his writings. Of their importance no one who is familiar with them can be in doubt; they are important as profound inquiries into the most fundamental of philosophical questions; they are important no less as illustrating the method by which philosophic truth is won.

By way of preface, I prefix a few words of biographical import. Alexius Meinong was born at Lemberg on 17th July, 1853. His family was of German extraction, and his father had settled on Polish soil on account of his professional duties. Meinong's student years were all spent in Vienna. After being six years at a private school there, he became a scholar of the academic gymnasium; and it was due in particular to two of his teachers in the latter institution that, contrary to the original plan of his parents, who had destined him for the law, and despite a strong inclination on his own part to devote himself to music, he decided in the end upon a scientific career. He entered the University in the autumn of 1870, matriculating in the Faculty of History. In the summer of 1874 he took his degree, having submitted for it a dissertation on Arnold of Brescia. From his gymnasium days he had, however, imbibed an interest in philosophy; and he chose philosophy as his *Nebenfach*, offering himself for examination in the first two of Kant's *Critiques* which, in blissful ignorance of their pitfalls, he had striven to master by his own unaided reading. The results of his criticism of Kant, animated, he tells us, by a very naïve radicalism, must, he confesses, have been primitive enough; but, without suspecting it, he had thus commenced his life's work. For a while he attended lectures on law; but early in 1875 he resolved to give himself entirely to philosophy. He sought naturally the guidance of Brentano, then at the height of his influence. That guidance was unstintingly placed at

his disposal; and Meinong never ceased to speak in the warmest terms of his indebtedness to his teacher,¹ although he had occasion to disclaim the description of himself and Ehrenfels as belonging to the Brentano school. The first of the *Hume-Studien* was the outcome of a line of investigation which Brentano proposed to him; and it served as *Habilitationschrift* by which he became a *Privatdozent* in the Philosophical Faculty of Vienna in 1878. In that capacity he continued in Vienna four more years, during which period Höfler, Ehrenfels and Oelzelt-Newin were his pupils. He was appointed in the autumn of 1882 (when the second of the *Hume-Studien* was published) Professor extraordinarius of Philosophy at Graz; and in Graz he remained for the rest of his life, refusing repeated calls to larger fields of labour (such as Kiel in 1898 and Vienna in 1914), because it seemed to him that here he would best succeed in accomplishing the scientific work he had prescribed for himself. He started at the University in 1886, through apparatus provided by private means, experimental research in psychology; and in 1894 there was instituted in Graz the first psychological laboratory established in Austria. In the spring of 1889, Meinong was appointed Professor ordinarius; and in the autumn of that year he married. During the thirty years that followed, an extensive series of investigations occupied his activity—investigations some of which had to do with fundamental epistemological issues, others that were of a psychological nature, and others again which belonged to the field of ethics, more especially to the theory of value, to which his yearly recurring lectures on practical philosophy had, in a certain measure, afforded the stimulus. Only by degrees (scarcely, he tells us, before 1900) did he come to realise that in all these researches he had been moving in a direction which was new and of vital philosophical significance. To the bulky volume that was issued in 1904 in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Graz psychological laboratory, Meinong contributed an introductory essay in which he definitely formulated, and endeavoured to determine the scope of, what seemed to him entitled to be called a distinct department of philosophical science clearly demarcated from either metaphysics, or epistemology, or logic, or psychology; and to it he gave the name of *Gegenstandstheorie*. After

¹ For instance, in the last of his publications, he wrote: "Was etwa das Leben nicht mehr zu schlichten vermochte, das hat der Tod geschlichtet, und vor dem Auge meiner Erinnerung steht als unverlierbarer Besitz, wie einst, die Lichtgestalt meines verehrten Lehrers in durchgeistigter Schönheit, übergoldet durch den Sonnenglanz seiner und meiner Jugend".

1904, much of his strength was concentrated upon what he regarded as problems of this new field of inquiry, and upon urging its claims to recognition. In 1914, he was elected a member of the Austrian *Academie der Wissenschaften* (he had been a corresponding member since 1906); and to its *Proceedings* several of his latest papers were contributed.¹ He died at the age of sixty-seven on 27th November, 1920, of an ailment which for months he had patiently borne, continuing his academic and scientific labours until a few days from the end.

I.

One of Meinong's early writings² was partly devoted to a discussion of the nature and aims of philosophical inquiry and the position of philosophy in respect to the other sciences. Without unnatural limitation, he had there contended, philosophy cannot be taken to denote a single comprehensive science. It indicates rather a whole group of sciences, linked together by a common characteristic. And the characteristic in question is, he urged, that of being concerned, either exclusively or at least in certain essential respects, with inner experiences. Not only psychology itself, but likewise epistemology and logic, ethics and æsthetics, can readily be brought under this point of view, embarrassing though it may be to find an exact formula for the connectedness which is thus implied. Even metaphysics, in virtue of the very generality of its subject-matter, is constrained to bring non-psychical into relationship with psychical facts, in order to maintain an independent position alongside of the natural sciences.

It might seem, then, as though Meinong were here assigning to psychology a dominant position among the parts of philosophy as a whole; and so in a manner he was. Any attempt to proceed in philosophical reflexion by leaving out of account the consideration of psychical processes is in itself, he argued, a sufficiently convincing demonstration of the inherent unnaturalness of such an endeavour, and no metaphysic elaborated without regard to psychological research

¹ Apart from the scattered papers now collected together in the *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (of which at the time of writing two out of the three contemplated volumes have appeared), the following are Meinong's chief publications: *Psychologisch-ethische Untersuchungen zur Werththeorie* (1894); *Ueber Annahmen* (1902; a second and greatly altered edition in 1910); *Ueber die Erfahrungsgrundlagen unseres Wissens* (1906); *Ueber Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit* (1915).

² *Ueber Philosophische Wissenschaft und ihre Propädeutik*, 1885.

and its results can be expected to stand.¹ Such was his contention to the last. But, as time went on, he came to draw a very sharp line of demarcation between psychology and psychologism, and to express himself as virtually in accord with Husserl's well-known polemic against the latter in the *Logische Untersuchungen*. Within the circle of a certain set of problems, it is, Meinong declared, sufficiently easy to see what is meant by the term psychologism; it simply means psychological methods of treatment in the wrong place. Since knowing is a mode of experience (*ein Erlebnis*), epistemology cannot wholly dispense with psychological methods. Yet over against the act of knowing stands the known; knowledge, in other words, has a double-sided aspect; and whoever pursues an epistemological inquiry as though there were only the psychical aspect of knowledge, or persists in forcing the other aspect under the point of view of psychical event or occurrence, cannot escape the reproach which the term psychologism carries with it.

Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that Meinong exposed himself to not a little misunderstanding by adhering as he did throughout to that early contention of his that in psychology is to be discerned the thread, so to speak, which binds the different parts of philosophy into such whole as they constitute. For he scarcely meant to imply more by the contention than that in the notion of *knowledge* is to be found the link of connexion between the several branches of philosophy, theoretical or practical. In other words, what, in truth, he was saying was that there is not one group of objects specifically entitled to be called the subject-matter of philosophy; but that any part or the whole of what is vaguely described as the field of experience may be handled philosophically if treated from the point of view of its relation to the human thinking subject. What light can it throw on the relations in which the human mind stands to the surrounding reality?—such was the fundamental question which philosophy has addressed to it. And, then, the special branches of philosophy would seem to be determined by the main differences of a general kind which disclose themselves in those relations. These differences would, for example, be not inappropriately classified under the three heads: (a) cognitive, (b) practical, and (c) æsthetic. So conceived, it is

¹ On the other hand, he was equally strenuous in maintaining that the psychology, be it never so experimental, which ruthlessly brushes epistemological and other philosophical considerations aside is bound to become entangled in crudities and absurdities, which, in the long run, will mean its undoing.

obvious that the treatment of knowledge in all its aspects must form the central portion of philosophical science. For it is only in and through the process of knowing that the human mind has a place at all in the scheme of existence; and, although the practical and æsthetic activities are distinguishable from the knowing activity, they nevertheless imply the latter as an essential condition of their possibility. Clearly, the investigation of knowledge divides into two diverging lines of inquiry, according as it turns upon the question as to the validity of knowledge or upon the question as to the way in which knowing comes forward as a natural process in the life of the individual mind. Furthermore, inasmuch as in both these paths of inquiry the antithesis between the subjective and the objective presents itself, yielding, in the one case, the problem of what meanwhile may be described as that of the 'correspondence' of our thinking with reality, and, in the other case, that of the way in which our mental processes are occasioned or influenced by external conditions, the final issue is bound to be raised which has been traditionally designated metaphysical. That issue may perhaps be expressed thus: What conception of real fact are we led to form in order to render intelligible, on the one hand, the attainment of truth by human thinking, and, on the other hand, the conjoint co-operation of mental and external conditions in the natural world?

Such, at any rate, in broad outline, is what I take to have been the essence of Meinong's view in respect to the function and scope of the philosophical sciences. Most of his publications between the years 1882 and 1904 had to do with questions which could not be exhaustively dealt with either from the point of view of psychology alone or from that of epistemology alone. And Meinong came gradually to see how both modes of investigation could be combined, and combined without committing the blunder, which can only lead to hopeless confusion, of prematurely mixing up the two methods and of drawing upon the one while ostensibly engaged in carrying on an inquiry under the other.

II.

It was a fortunate circumstance that Meinong had been induced to devote himself, at the beginning of his career, to a thorough study of Hume's theory of knowledge. The outcome of his patient examination of that theory was not only a valuable piece of genuine philosophical criticism; it was also a clear discernment of the exact points in regard to which

the adequacy of the empirical doctrine could best be tested. The *Hume-Studien* disclose, in fact, the way in which the crucial problems of knowledge originally shaped themselves for Meinong; it is, therefore, advisable to look at these *Studien* somewhat in detail.

The first of them (published in 1877) is concerned with abstract ideas and the process of generalising. The treatment of the matter by Berkeley and Hume is submitted to a scrutiny far more searching and penetrating than that which T. H. Green, in his elaborate *Introduction*, had brought to bear. Attention is drawn, for example, to the totally different senses in which Berkeley employs the term "sign" when dealing with ideas and words respectively and to the fact that he leaves entirely unanswered the important question, how a general *name* is related to a general *notion*. Berkeley, it is argued, ought to have seen that he had not disposed of abstract ideas by disposing of Locke's account of their mode of origin; for the very concessions he makes, obviously inconsequences in his exposition as it stands, would, if they had been followed up, have forced him to that conclusion. Indeed, in more than one place, Berkeley, it is pointed out, was on the verge of a psychological theory that could have been substituted for Locke's, in so far as he laid stress upon the consideration that in observing an individual fact it lies within our power to concentrate *attention* upon certain of its characteristics, and that thus its remaining characteristics are disregarded. Hume, it is shown, completely misconceived what he described as "one of the greatest and most valuable discoveries" made in his time "in the republic of letters". But the nominalistic view, which he erroneously took to be Berkeley's, *was* the view which he himself tried to put "beyond all doubt and controversy"; and, by examining in turn each of the negative and positive arguments employed in the *Treatise* for this purpose, Meinong exhibits, in a convincing manner, the failure of that attempt.

As regards the negative arguments, the very formulation of the thesis they are advanced to support is, Meinong bids us observe, in itself extraordinary. While Hume's intention is admittedly to deny *all* abstraction, what he actually tries to prove is that "the mind cannot form any notion of quantity or quality without forming a precise notion of degrees of each," as though it were not evident, on the face of it, how many of the cases usually taken to be cases of abstraction are thereby left out of account. But, waiving this objection, no one of the three arguments by which the thesis was to be put beyond the range of controversy will bear

examination. Take, for instance, the third of them. It will be granted, Hume avers, that everything in nature is individual, and that it would be absurd to suppose a really existent triangle which was without definite dimensions. And if this be absurd in reality, it must also be absurd in idea. Again, "to form the idea of an object, and to form an idea simply, is the same thing." If, then, it be impossible to form an idea of an object that is not possessed of definite quantitative and qualitative degree, there must be an equal impossibility of forming an idea, that is not limited in both these particulars. Meinong has little trouble in convicting this argument of either a formal or a material fallacy; a formal fallacy, if by 'everything' be meant *jedes Ding*, for then the word 'object' is equivocal, since it is used both for an existent thing and for a content of presentation, a material fallacy, if by 'everything' be meant *alles*, for then it is false that everything in nature is individual. Furthermore, granted that it is absurd to suppose there can be a thing in nature without its definite degree of quality and quantity, granted that each thing must accordingly be perceived as in this respect a determinate thing, does it, then, in the least follow that each idea of that thing must necessarily represent all these determinations? An assumption of that sort would be no less ridiculous than to maintain that because an individual existent has an indefinitely large number of characteristics, the content of the notion of that existent must be indefinitely great. In short, an idea of an individual thing is far from being an individual idea; and yet except on the ground that the idea of an individual thing is an individual idea, no inference can be drawn from the individuality of things to the individuality of ideas.

The positive line of argument by which Hume sought to come to the assistance of what he took to be Berkeley's theory turns out, in Meinong's hands, to be no less unsatisfactory. First of all, he would have us notice the singular want of perspicuity characterising Hume's exposition. The problem is to explain how a particular idea attains in our reasoning an application such as it would have were it universal. The explanation offered is that we apply the same name to similar objects; and, when that custom has established itself, the hearing of the name revives the idea of one of these objects, the one which happens casually to make its appearance most readily. Yet what about the other ideas, likewise associated with the name? "They are," Hume replies "not really and in fact present to the mind, but only in power." But, asks Meinong, since when? Hume would appear to say, since

the act of mentioning the name. A disposition to revive the ideas in question must, however, surely have been previously there, if eventually, through aid of the word, they are reproducible. The situation becomes the more perplexing when Hume goes on to assert that the word raises up besides the idea a "certain custom," and that this custom produces any other individual idea, for which we may have occasion. Are we, then, here to understand by "custom" a permanent indispensable pre-condition of the last mentioned idea, and by "occasion" the immediate cause of its appearance? If so, the whole theory stands or falls with what can be made out with respect to this "occasion". Nevertheless, Hume vouchsafes no information as to whether such an "occasion" must always be present whenever we hear that word, nor is it easy to see wherein the necessity of its presence could be supposed to lie, although in its absence there can admittedly be no question of generality. Hume's lack of precision just where precision is necessary renders it difficult to come to close quarters with the theory itself; but the moment we try to do so it becomes manifest, Meinong urges, how little mere association without abstraction is able to achieve. We have before us, let us say, a round piece of paper or a mill-stone (seeing that, *ex hypothesi*, we cannot think of a circle *in abstracto*), and we call this "shape". Now, it can safely be affirmed that it would never occur to us, so soon as we happened to see a square corn-field, to call to mind that "shape" and to give the name "shape" likewise to the field. No doubt, if we were in a position to think of shape *in abstracto*, all would be plain sailing, but this is precisely what Hume is concerned to deny. Naturally, the difficulty becomes the more glaring the greater the generality attaching to the name. Moreover, as Hume himself points out, the same thing may be called by a great number of different names—*e.g.*, mill-stone, a round thing, a heavy thing, a material thing, etc. Yet he has offered no explanation of how, under such unfavourable circumstances, it comes about that even the slightest appreciable association between word and idea could be formed. Once more, and assuming meanwhile that objections such as the foregoing have been surmounted, no sooner is the effort made to see how 'general ideas,' formed in the manner supposed, function *in propositions* than the theory breaks down hopelessly. A proposition, such as "wolves are mammals," it would have to be said, is in the first instance an assertion about words; so far as actual things are concerned, the statement could only express the result of a perfectly general inference based on a similarity which association with the word "mammal" presupposed.

But, since the same objects are also associated with many other words—*e.g.*, organic being—nothing would be gained by the knowledge of that similarity. Finally, if account be taken of all that is usually included under the head of abstraction, the inadequacy of the doctrine becomes strikingly apparent. We speak often enough of family traits, of natural types, of a literary style, and so forth; and, in doing so, are referring to characteristics which several individuals have in common. The ideas of such attributes appear, therefore, as general notions, in regard to which scarcely any one would dispute that the common feature must first be recognised as such before a name can be given to it. Here, then, quite certainly the name acquires its generality through the notion, and not the notion through the name.

The two fundamental errors that, in Meinong's opinion, vitiate Hume's theory are (a) his failure to take account of the content or intension of a concept, and (b) his use of the doctrine of association to explain the way in which the concept acquires its extension or denotation. In ordinary usage, the terms general and particular have reference to the extension, and the terms abstract and concrete to the intension, of a concept. A concept that is or can be applied to many objects is general; a concept that is obtained by an act of abstraction is abstract. Every concrete object is an individual object. But the presentation of a concrete object includes only such characteristics as can be apprehended by sense at any one moment; consequently individual objects are known, for the most part, in a form that is more or less abstract. No doubt, it is as concrete that every empirical datum comes at first into consciousness; and, in so far, concrete data furnish the basis of knowledge. Knowledge, however, is primarily concerned not with presentations but with their objects. In knowing, we seek to liberate that which we take to be peculiar to the object from the contingent features introduced into it by the act of apprehending. So that almost always just that which makes the presentation concrete will fall away from it. It follows, therefore, so Meinong argues, that while all general notions are abstract, not all abstract notions are general. In respect to the question whether a concept is universal or particular, the number of attributes constituting its content is quite immaterial; not so, however, the quality of those attributes, because it will be according as, in view of such quality, the presence of individual objects, corresponding to the concept in question, be conceived as mathematically or physically impossible or otherwise, that the concept must be held to be individual or

general. On the other hand, however, in respect to the question whether a universal concept is more or less universal, the amount of content may, under certain circumstances, be a relevant consideration, and the quality of the content always is; but neither from the one nor the other nor from both *alone* can any answer be given to the question, because, in reference to extension, we are concerned with a *relation*, while the content gives us only one term of the relation, and the second term must be supplied by experience. Meinong, insists, then, that the extension is not, like the intension, something definitely fixed or self-evident; but that, on the contrary, the real extension of a notion is no less independent of our knowledge than is any fact of the external world. Consequently, to suppose that between general and individual idea an association must first be contracted in order that the latter should be subsumed under the former is, for this very reason, absolutely precluded. In fine, Meinong's argument is directed all through to bringing out what he conceives to be the truth that not association but the self-conscious activity of attention is the main function involved in abstraction and generalisation.

The second of the *Hume-Studien* (published, as already noted, in 1882), deals with the theory of relations, and is much more constructive than the first had been; Meinong here elaborates a position of his own that, in view of his subsequent work, deserves special notice. His method, however, is still the same as before. He still proceeds on the basis of a critical discussion of what he finds in the writings of Locke, Hume, and the later empirical thinkers. As he had formerly refused to recognise in Hume's nominalism a legitimate development of Berkeley's doctrine, so here he is inclined to defend Locke's common-sense treatment of the subject under consideration against Hume's psychical atomism. But he does not fall into Kant's mistake of supposing it was only in reference to cause and effect that Hume had raised the issue of necessary connexion; indeed, it is not so much upon Hume's handling of causality as upon his handling of the more elementary relations of likeness and difference that Meinong's scrutiny is concentrated. And he maintains that Hume's whole theoretical philosophy is so essentially built upon his *Relationslehre* that an exposition of the latter, with any claim to completeness, would scarcely be justified in leaving a single portion of the former out of account.

At the outset, Meinong resists the view (the view of Mill and Spencer, but derived ultimately from Hume) that a relation, such as that of likeness, is explicable from the mere presence

to consciousness of two or more presentations, in this case like or resembling presentations. He takes his stand at once on the principle laid down by Lotze. "Every comparison, and in general every relation between two elements, presupposes," so Lotze had asserted, "that both points of relation remain separate, and that an ideating activity passes over from the one to the other, and at the same time becomes conscious of the alteration which it has experienced in this transition. We exercise such an activity when, for example, we compare red and blue, and thereby there ensues for us the new presentation of a qualitative similarity, which we ascribe to both."¹ Meinong points out that the existence of an activity of the kind indicated by Lotze had already been virtually recognised by Locke, when he described relations as complex ideas resulting from an act of comparison, although Locke had left the nature of the act which he thus specified undetermined. So much being granted, there is, Meinong argues, already determined what alone, in any intelligible sense, can be called the *fundamentum relationis* of the activity in question; clearly it can be no other than the compared presentations themselves. No doubt, what, as a rule, we have given are not single but complex presentations, complexes of presented attributes. If two dice, one red and the other blue, be compared and found to be different, the comparison, in the strict sense, has reference not to the shape but to the colour; and, accordingly, only the actually compared features ought to be spoken of as *fundamenta*. Yet, in such cases, we are wont to say not merely that the two colours but that the two dice have been compared, with the qualification, perhaps, "in respect to their colour". And in this usage may be discerned what Locke had in mind when he insisted that in a relation there is always requisite, on the one hand, the things to be compared, and, on the other hand, the "occasion" for such comparison. In the example just used, the dice are the things, the colour the "occasion". Evidently, then, there can be no relation without a *fundamentum*, or more precisely two *fundamenta*. These may themselves be relations, for relations can, of course, be compared; but we cannot go on making relations the *fundamenta* of relations indefinitely; ultimately every relation has for its *fundamenta* presentations which are not relations, for otherwise there would be a comparison in which there was nothing compared. Hume's initial error, an error that ruined his classification of relations, consisted in his confusing the notion of *fundamentum* with that of relation.

¹ *Grundsätze der Psychologie*, p. 23.

Two chief classes of relations are distinguished by Meinong—relations of comparison (*Vergleichungsrelationen*) and relations of compatibility (*Verträglichkeitsrelationen*). (a) Under the first class are included relations of likeness (*Gleichheit*) and of unlikeness or difference (*Verschiedenheit*). And here the view (e.g., Mill's) that likeness is only a special case of resemblance (*Aehnlichkeit*) is decisively rejected. Resemblance, it is argued, may be present in all conceivable gradations, but in likeness there is no gradation—what is like is completely like, and what is not completely like is not like—so that it would be unnatural to bring the cases of likeness and certain cases of unlikeness under the head of resemblance, and the remaining cases of unlikeness under the head of difference. Not only so; it would be difficult to imagine how, through determination of the notion of resemblance, the notion of likeness could have arisen. And finally, the usage of language is altogether adverse to the view in question, for in speaking of similarity one is almost invariably conscious of difference as being likewise involved. Resemblance, then, is always a special case of difference; in so far as partial agreement or likeness is essential to resemblance, it is still only likeness of *elements*, while the resemblance is asserted of the whole. Spatial and temporal relations fall within this class. The *fundamenta* of the former are like and unlike space-determinations within the homogeneous space-continuum, and of the latter time-determinations within the homogeneous time-continuum. (b) Meinong was led to constitute relations of compatibility into a class by themselves through consideration of what Hume had meant by 'contrariety' and Locke, in his familiar definition of knowledge, by 'repugnancy'. The notions compatibility and incompatibility are not, he maintains, constituted after the manner of the notions likeness and difference. The latter admit of no definition, and can only be explained by means of examples; the former do seem to admit of a kind of definition—compatible is what can subsist together, incompatible what cannot. In the long run, the question of compatibility can only be raised with regard to attributes of like time- and space-determinations. Here we seem to be face to face with an ultimate fact, and a fact which belongs not to the province of presentation but to that of judgment. When it is said, for example, that the 'round' and the 'square' cannot be simultaneously in the same place, there is no new presented content introduced by the phrase 'cannot'; it only makes the statement an expression of a negative judgment, and this judgment carries with it that peculiar, indescrib-

able, and familiar characteristic which it has long been customary to describe as evidence. It would seem, therefore, that relations of compatibility may be said, in a certain sense, to be secondary formations, in so far as they are based upon a special case of relations of comparison—namely, on the case of like space- and time-determinations. There is, however, a further feature to be noticed. The two possibilities that come forward in regard to this second class of relations do not stand independently side by side as likeness and unlikeness do. The one can only be characterised as the negation of the other; and, moreover, it is compatibility that is the negation of incompatibility and not *vice versa*; for compatibility seems to imply no more than that, in a particular instance, one has before him a case where evidence for an incompatibility of the kind indicated is wanting. If it be asked why such different things as cases of comparison and of compatibility should be grouped together under the title of relations between presented objects, Meinong would here justify his doing so by pointing in the first instance to the part played by the presented objects, which seemed to him perfectly analogous in the two cases. For these objects, the *fundamenta*, are invariably the basis upon which rest, in the one case, the presentation of likeness or difference, and the evident affirmation which attaches itself thereto; and, in the other case, the evident negation. So that incompatibility and likeness may each be said to be a relation between presented attributes.¹

Meinong does not claim that his two-fold classification of relations is an exhaustive classification, although it does, he thinks, cover *all* the seven kinds distinguished by Hume in the *Treatise*. There are, however, relations *toto genere* distinct from any that were considered either by Hume or Locke. For instance, in quite a legitimate sense, one may speak of a relation between the act of presenting (*vorstellen*) and its content, where we have to do not with presented contents alone but also with the act in and through which those contents have their being. And this relation is not the product of a new activity; on the contrary, in the apprehension of it we seem to be no less passive than we seem to be in regard to the data described as *fundamenta*. So, too,

¹ This contention was discarded in the later writings. In them, Meinong maintains that relations of compatibility are based upon Objectives (see below, p. 28 *sqq.*); and that, consequently, they are relations not between presented attributes but between objects such as can only be apprehended through judgments or assumptions (*cf.*, e.g., *Ueber Annahmen*, 2^{te} Aufl., p. 215 *sqq.*).

the relations between the elements of a composite presentation are not in the least analogous to the relations between the presented parts of a physical object. These, then, are instances of what Meinong here calls "real relations"—real, because, seeing they are not outcomes of a new activity, they must really belong to the data, otherwise there could be no awareness of them. At the same time, 'real,' in this context, must not be understood as referring to anything extra-psychical, for obviously the relations in question are between psychical data, and are directly accessible to us in a way in which relations outside the circle of psychical phenomena never can be. As contrasted with these "real relations," the relations previously considered may be called "ideal relations"—ideal, because they are the products of a specific psychical activity, and do not belong to the data apart from such activity. But now, within the sphere of "ideal relations" a further line of demarcation requires to be drawn. Hume distinguished between relations that depend entirely on the ideas compared and those that may be changed without any change in the ideas. Through his failure clearly to recognise the significance of *fundamenta* for a relation, Hume was led wrongly to include contiguity and distance under relations of the last mentioned kind. Yet his distinction itself is an important one and coincides with the distinction upon which Meinong thinks stress should be laid between primary and secondary relations. The primary relations, those of comparison and of compatibility, are obtained beyond question by an act of discrimination directed upon the given *fundamenta*. There are, however, secondary relations, combinations of special cases of primary ones, where relative determinations without *fundamenta* come more or less to the front. With respect to secondary relations the data accessible to us are not sufficient, and if we connect the assertion of such relations with these data, we must have grounds for doing so outside the data themselves. The two chief secondary or derivative relations are those of causation and identity, both of which have been acquired originally as the result of practical needs. Meinong's analysis of the causal relation is virtually in agreement with Mill's. He lays repeated emphasis, however, upon the consideration that with respect to causality (and the same is true with respect to identity) it is impossible to confine attention to presentations; there is always involved a reference to external things, to real existents. To ascribe causality to mere presentations would, he says, be like ascribing a true biography to a prince in a fairy tale. The relation of causality is invariably

"carried over" into the external world. And he tries to show that there is nothing inexplicable in this reference to real existents. When one says, for example, of two feelings, that prior to the act of comparison by which they are judged to be different they were in fact different, there has already been such a "carrying over" of the ideal relation of difference from presented contents to existent entities. At the same time, primary relations may be said to be "pure relations" in the sense that an *Uebertragung* of this kind is not essential for their being as relations, whereas it is essential for the being of secondary or "empirical" relations. The pure relations are, therefore, *a priori*, and the judgments asserting them are *a priori* judgments. But no judgment about empirical relations can rest on a merely *a priori* basis; and just as little can a judgment about pure relations do so when it has reference not merely to presented contents but also to existent fact. It is further clear that none but "ideal relations" can be "carried over" into the domain of extra-psychical reality.

III.

The foundation of Meinong's subsequent work is laid in these early *Studies*. In them almost all the problems to which later he devoted such unwearied intellectual industry are, in one form or another, indicated, if not distinctly formulated. Not a few of the positions which were here maintained came, it is true, in the course of time, to be abandoned, and others to be radically revised; and the reasons that led to such changes often throw the clearest light upon the views that were finally adopted. I shall have something to say immediately upon some of the principal changes; meanwhile I want to refer to one definite result which these investigations yielded him, and from which he found no occasion to deviate.

In his own way, Meinong had reached the principle which may not inappropriately be said to be the starting-point of the Kantian theory,—the principle, namely, that knowledge involves a unique antithesis between knowing and the known, and that any attempt, such as Hume had made, to dispense with the former term of the antithesis must inevitably prove futile and abortive. In other words, through grappling with the crucial questions which the work of Hume and Hume's followers had thrust upon him, Meinong came to see the necessity of insisting upon the consideration that an object known never can be identical with any act which

is a knowing of it. And when once he had convinced himself that all knowledge involves recognition of relatedness among the parts of what is known, the existence of cognitive acts, as distinct from what Hume had called "impressions" and "ideas," seemed to him to be indisputably established. Let me try to illustrate his position in this respect. If it be said that the two presentations *A* and *B*, having occurred, somehow give rise to the new idea *C*—the idea, namely, of their likeness or difference, such language only conceals the want of explanation in what is said. For there must obviously be some process, some operation of the mind, through which the production of *C* has come about. *A*, it is supposed, may and does occur separately, *B* occurs separately. What is it, then, that takes place when *A* and *B* are held together so as to admit of what Hume himself had vaguely called "comparison"? Now it is possible—I think it is certain—that in stating the case in this way one is conceding too much to the doctrine one is opposing, and I only do so in order not to go beyond what Meinong himself would have said. But the point is that even on the assumption that isolated contents, presentations, are thus given, the inference is irresistible that the simultaneous presence of these contents, their peculiarities, their changes, and so on, furnish a new set of conditions in response to which an inner activity of the mind must have taken place, if so-called ideas of relation forthwith make their appearance. In so far, Meinong was but reiterating Lotze's well-known contention; and in this particular reference, I do not know that he ever advanced any considerable way from Lotze's position. He did not, I mean, ever call in question the view of presentations as so many separately given units, or ask himself whether the separateness, the singleness, the distinctiveness, which presentations, we will say, come to have may not be due to that very activity which he took to be involved in the comparison of them and in discerning their relations. Had he done so, not a few of the obscurities that beset, as we shall see, even his mature view of cognition would, I believe, have been avoided, and he would have emerged completely from the subjectivism of his early days.

I pass now to consider the two main directions in which Meinong was led to see that the view of knowledge he had hitherto been taking required modification. These are not, in fact, disconnected; so soon as the one advance had been made, it was well-nigh certain that the other would follow.

(a) In the *Hume-Studien* no distinction had as yet been recognised between the 'content' of an act of apprehension

and the 'object' (*Gegenstand*) of that act. Throughout, the former term had been employed as equivalent to the latter; and the act of apprehending had frequently been spoken of as being 'directed upon' the content. I think it likely that Meinong was materially influenced in this regard by an exceedingly acute piece of psychological analysis by Twardowski, which was published in 1894.¹ With admirable lucidity, Twardowski pointed to the ambiguity that attaches to the term *Vorgestelltes*—an ambiguity in its way no less pronounced than that which admittedly attached to the term *Vorstellung*. An object may be said to be 'presented' in the sense that, in addition to the many relations in which that object stands to other objects, it also stands in a definite relation to a cognising subject. And, in this sense, a 'presented object' is a veritable object, just in the same way as an extended object or a lost object is one. But, on the other hand, by 'presented object' may be meant what is a decided contrast to a veritable object—namely, a 'mental picture' of an object—and then it is no longer a veritable object, is no longer, in fact, an object at all. That which is presented *in* a presentation is its content; that which is presented *through* or *by means of* a presentation is its object—so Twardowski tried to bring out the contrast. In the paper (published in 1899),² in which Meinong himself first definitely insisted on the importance of the distinction, Twardowski's little book is specially alluded to and some of its illustrations are used. The considerations that had weighed with Meinong were, he tells us, such as the following. Nothing is more common than to represent (*vorstellen*) or to think of something which does not exist. We may think of something that is contradictory, a round square, for example, or of something that does not happen to exist as a matter of fact, a golden mountain, say, or of something which in virtue of its nature cannot exist (likeness or difference is an instance), or of something which has existed or will exist but does not exist now. Nevertheless, in all these cases a *Vorstellung* exists and exists in the present. Now, argues Meinong, no unprejudiced person would wish to maintain that the *Vorstellung* exists whilst its content does not. That, however, is not the whole story. 'Content' and 'object' differ not only in respect to existence but in respect to their nature or character. That which is physical can be presented, but the content of a psychical act can only be psychical; so, too, qualities such as blue, warm,

¹ *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen*, Wien, 1894.

² *Ueber Gegenstände höherer Ordnung*, § 2, *G. A.*, vol. II., p. 379 sqq.

heavy, can be presented, but neither the *Vorstellung* nor its content by which these qualities are presented is blue or warm or heavy; attributes of this sort evince themselves at once as totally inapplicable to the contents of mental acts. As regards the relation of the mental act to its content, the view which Meinong came to hold appears to have been that they are inseparable but distinguishable constituents of one existent fact or event. Whether it be a presentation (say) of a steeple or of a causal relation, in each case an act of presenting is involved, and *quâ* act these presentations resemble one another. On the other hand, in so far as the presentations are presentations of different objects, they do not resemble one another. And that wherein presentations of different objects are unlike one another, notwithstanding the circumstance that as acts they are not unlike, is their content; such content, no less than the act, being in each case a psychical existent in the present, whereas the object presented by means of it may be non-existent, not in the present, not psychical.

"The chief argument *against* contents," Mr. Russell once said, "is the difficulty of discovering them introspectively";¹ and it seems often to be supposed that whoever speaks of the content of a mental state is speaking of something purely hypothetical, of which there can be no direct experience. But, in Meinong's sense of the term 'content,' it would be nearer the truth to say that 'contents' are the only things which we do discover introspectively. For mental states can become known to us introspectively not as mere bare states or processes, but only as *specific* states,—the awareness of a blue colour, for example, as contrasted with the awareness of a pain or the awareness of a want. And if it be contended that the common element, awareness, can, in all such cases, be distinguished from the specific elements, the reply is, "no doubt it can; but only in the way in which the common characteristic 'human' can be distinguished from the more specific elements that belong to particular individual men—that is, by an act of deliberate abstraction." Now, whatever else it is, an act of introspection is certainly not an act of deliberate abstraction; and whoever is on the search for mental states apart from their contents, or for 'contents' apart from the states whose contents they are, may well find that of either or both he can find no trace.² That, however,

¹ *Monist*, vol. xxiv., 1914, p. 452.

² As an interesting illustration, it seems worth while to mention that, after having for a long time been assured of the existence of 'mental acts' (cf., e.g., *Problems of Phil.*, p. 65) and altogether sceptical of 'contents,'

is due to the fact that he has been looking for something which no one ever supposed to be there.

(b) Throughout the *Hume-Studien*, Meinong had evidently been proceeding on the assumption that relations must be regarded as products of mental activity. They might indeed be thought of as 'carried over' into the physical world; but their essentially subjective character was not thereby called in question. It is in the article which appeared in 1891¹ on Ehrenfels' view of *Gestaltqualitäten* that Meinong is to be seen for the first time freeing himself from this assumption. In that article he acknowledges that he had himself fallen into the 'psychologist's fallacy' of thinking that, because a psychical act is requisite for the apprehension of relations, it is necessary that reflexion should be directed on psychical states in order that relations should be presented. But he had now come to see that from an empirical point of view the attempt to conceive the presentation of a relation (such as that between a colour and extension) as based upon the inner perception of an act of comparison instead of upon the compared elements themselves is wholly unnatural and contrary to fact. More particularly is the futility of such an *Umweg* apparent when it is pursued with respect to relations of compatibility. To suppose, in the case of the round square, that it is not 'round' and 'square' but the 'presentation of the round' and the 'presentation of the square' which are judged to be incompatible is surely perverse and non-sensical. No doubt, under certain conditions, these presentations may be judged to be incompatible; but 'round' and 'square' are found to be incompatible under the presupposition of like space- and time-determinations, whereas, to show that the corresponding presentations are incompatible, account would have to be taken of *their* mode of connexion. In the book that was published in 1907, in defence of the *Gegenstandstheorie*,² Meinong's rejection of the doctrine in question is still more emphatic. The most radical form of the subjectivist interpretation of the relations of likeness and difference would be, he thinks, that which took the former to *be* the possibility of confusing one thing with another, and the latter to *be* the absence of that possibility. Now, it may be quite true that likeness does really *indicate* the possibility of such

Mr. Russell is now persuaded of the existence of 'contents,' at least in the case of memory and thought, and cannot discover anything corresponding to acts (cf. *Analysis of Mind*, pp. 17-18 and 20-21.)

¹ *Zur Psychologie der Komplexionen und Relationen*, G. A., i., p. 281 sqq.

² *Ueber die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie im System der Wissenschaften*, pp. 143-145.

confusion; but little consideration is required to see that likeness only indicates and is not this possibility. In point of fact, one sees this neither better nor otherwise than one sees that a water-cart is not a mountain-tarn, or anything else that is obvious. And the best proof that likeness is not identical with 'to find like' is simply what a direct inspection of the two things yields. But an indirect proof can easily be provided by the reflexion that red and orange (say) are still like one another when they are not being compared. The argument is carried further in the volume, published in 1906, on the empirical bases of knowledge,¹ where it is contended that relations possess not only validity for what are there designated 'pure objects' but are transferable from the phenomenal to the real. While, in reference to our apprehension of relations, the influence of subjectivity need not be disputed, yet, it is argued, what we, as we are now constituted, are capable of knowing *a priori* is in no way rendered dubious through such subjectivity. We are justified, therefore, in asserting that things in themselves *are* like or unlike, etc., on precisely the same grounds as we are justified in asserting that colours are.

IV.

The two steps to which I have been referring having once been taken, the road to the elaboration of a *Gegenstandstheorie* was a fairly straight one. The next stage of Meinong's advance towards it consisted in his coming to recognise a class of objects which he called "objects of higher order,"² a conception, now sufficiently familiar, which was in fact only a further working out of the position that relations are objective in character. Objects of this class were found to be characterised by a want of independence, by a sort of incompleteness, such, for example, as attaches to the object 'difference,' if the attempt be made to isolate it from the differing terms. These objects are built, so to speak, upon other objects as their indispensable conditions, the latter being the *inferiora* of the former, and the former the *superiora* of the latter. The class of objects in question comprises not only relations but also complexes; and, in the case of complexes, the constituents, as in this sense analogous to the terms of a relation, play the part of *inferiora*. But a complex is more than a

¹ *Ueber die Erfahrungsgrundlagen unseres Wissens*, § 21 sqq.

² *Ueber Gegenstände höherer Ordnung*, *G. A.*, ii., p. 377 sqq. The phrase was not, of course, a new one. Meinong points out that Fechner had previously used it. But Lotze also spoke of *Vorstellungen* of higher order (*cf. Grundzüge der Psychologie*, iii., § 2).

collection of its constituents; it is not composed *merely* of a relation *and* its terms, for the terms in being related by the relation are at the same time related to it; and, although this involves a regress, the regress is not a vicious one, and so creates no difficulty.

The monograph just cited, published in 1889, may not inappropriately be said to be a preliminary survey of the ground which Meinong spent the last twenty years of his life in exploring. The preliminary survey was, however, sufficient to convince him of the enormous extent of the field. By 'metaphysics' had usually been understood a comprehensive science having for its aim to form a conception of the nature and ultimate ground of the universe; and numerous as the deceptive hopes that have been and are associated with the name may be, it is our intellectual shortcoming and not the idea of such a science upon which the blame for the deception must rest. Yet, in spite of the universality of its scope, metaphysics falls far short of being a science of objects. With the whole of what exists it has, indeed, to do. But the whole of what exists, including what has existed and will exist, is infinitesimal when compared with the whole of the objects of knowledge; and the fact that this has been so easily lost sight of is due, so Meinong avers, to that "prejudice in favour of the real" which has driven us to the extravagance of supposing that the non-real is something too trivial with which to concern ourselves. How absurd this prejudice is Meinong's preliminary survey had already made clear to him. Among the objects of higher order, he had discovered a great sub-division of "ideal objects"—objects which, to use his phraseology, subsist (*bestehen*), and many of which are of tremendous moment for what exists, but which themselves can, in no case, either exist (*existieren*) or be real (*wirklich sein*). Similarity and dissimilarity are, for instance, objects of this kind; they may subsist between realities, but they are not themselves bits of reality. Nevertheless, that in knowing we are vitally interested in these objects goes without saying. So, too, number does not exist alongside of the counted things, supposing the latter to be existents; and things that do not exist may be counted. Pure mathematics has in fact solely to do with ideal objects; and our "prejudice in favour of the real" leads here to the extraordinary, although, of course, not explicitly recognised, dilemma: Either that to which my knowing refers exists in reality, or it exists at least 'in my presentation'. And the very word 'ideal,' in defiance of its history, has come to stand for the latter. What does not exist outside of us

must at any rate exist within us—this we take involuntarily for granted, and it seldom occurs to us to reflect how futile and meaningless the subterfuge is.

Here, then, was a huge *Gebiet*, constituting, as it seemed to Meinong, that of a new science, of which only one portion, the department of mathematics, had hitherto had justice done to it. *Gegenstandstheorie* he defines as the science of objects as such, or of objects without limitation to the special class of those that exist, and of these latter only in so far as their nature (their *Sosein*), irrespective of their existence, is concerned. It has to inquire, one might, borrowing a favourite expression of Shadworth Hodgson's, say, what an object is 'known-as'; about its 'what' and not about its 'that'. Or it may be said to be the science of what can be known *a priori* about objects, understanding *a priori* in the sense in which Meinong uses the term.¹

What is meant here by *Gegenstand*? A formal definition is, we are told, precluded, seeing that both *genus* and *differentia* are wanting; *alles ist Gegenstand*. But etymologically the term *gegenstehen* furnishes, at least, an indirect characteristic. This term has reference, namely, to the experiences through which the *Gegenstand* is grasped or apprehended (*erfasst*), the experiences, however, not being looked upon as in any way constitutive for the *Gegenstand*. Every inner experience (*Erlebnis*), at least every sufficiently elementary one, has an object (*Gegenstand*), and in so far as the experience comes to expression, ordinarily in words and sentences, there stands normally over against such expression a significance or meaning (*Bedeutung*), and this is the object.² In so far as all objects in order to be known must be grasped or apprehended (*erfasst*), it is true that what is grasped or apprehended (*Erfasstes*) and object are the same. What is apprehended can, however, either be thought of as such or only as object. In the former case, the relation in which the object stands to the apprehending subject is thought of along with it. Yet it is by no means necessary that it should be. What is grasped or apprehended can be thought of merely as object, for, not only is the relation in question not contained in the thought of the object, it belongs in no way to the nature of the object. Every object stands in relations to other objects; the fact that along with these relations there

¹ Judgments are said by him to be *a priori* when they (a) are grounded on the nature of their objects, (b) evince themselves as of self-evidencing certainty, (c) hold necessarily, and (d) are independent of existence. See *Erfahrungsgrundlagen*, p. 10.

² Cf. *Ueber Annahmen*, 2^{te} Aufl., p. 28.

is that of being apprehended by a subject gives to the object the character of being an *apprehended* object, but not that of being an *object*. An object can *be* when the presentation by which it would be apprehended *is not*; and it can likewise *not be* when this presentation *is*.¹

As the notion of object in general may in some measure be determined from the point of view of apprehension, so Meinong thinks the chief classes of objects may be characterised by reference to the chief classes of apprehending experiences (*der erfassenden Erlebnisse*). Accordingly, the four main classes of experiences—presentation (*vorstellen*), thinking, feeling, and conation—may be said to have corresponding to them the four classes of *Gegenstände*—Objects,² Objectives, Dignitatives, and Desideratives—only the peculiar character of these objects must not be assumed to be first constituted by the peculiar character of the experiences by which they are apprehended.

(a) The various species of Objects may be brought to light by different modes of division, but meanwhile I confine attention to the division of them into those which exist, those which subsist, and those which neither exist nor subsist.

That there are non-existent Objects—that is to say, Objects which only subsist—Meinong took to be indisputable. No one would assert that the difference between red and green exists as tables and chairs exist; but equally no one would doubt the being of this difference. The difference between red and green is not, it is true, seen as the colours are seen, but then perception³ is not requisite for its apprehension; from the nature of red and green it is manifest that they *are* different.⁴ Difference is, in fact, a *superius* which discloses itself in an *a priori* manner from the *inferiora*;⁵ it is founded (*fundiert*) through its *inferiora*.

Meinong was likewise convinced that a class of non-subsistent Objects must be recognised. Impossible Objects, such as a round square, do not subsist, nevertheless they are Objects, so that we seem driven to the apparent paradox of asserting the being of that which has not being. Meinong's position in this reference is a difficult one; but, then, the problem which he was here up against is extraordinarily

¹ For several reasons, it is, I think, unfortunate that Meinong should have used the term *Gegenstand* in this all-inclusive sense. If he had employed the term 'being' with the comprehensive denotation it has become customary to give to it, he might have spoken of "entities" instead of "objects," and of a science of entities instead of a *Gegenstandstheorie*.

² When translating the German *Objekt*, I will use a capital O.

³ Meinong's view of perception I leave over for discussion.

⁴ Cf., *Erfahrungsgrundlagen*, p. 6 sqq.

⁵ See above, p. 21.

difficult. He tried, however, to meet the various objections that were raised against his view. Little weight could, he thought, be laid on the argument that the Objects which he regarded as non-subsistent must, in truth, be subsistent, seeing that they can be the subjects of true and therefore subsistent propositions. For obviously it is an argument which cannot be used by those who deny that there are non-subsistent Objects. If, as a matter of fact, a kind of being must belong to the round square, because subsistence cannot be denied to certain propositions based upon it, that is an argument *for* Objects such as a round square and *not* an argument *against* them. And to Mr. Russell's contention that the admission of impossible Objects involves denying the law of contradiction (the round square can be asserted to be both round and not round), his answer was that the law of contradiction had never been asserted except of the actual and the possible, and that whether it holds likewise of the impossible requires at least special scrutiny.¹ Meinong saw, at all events, that the problem is a real one and faced it seriously, whereas usually it is conveniently thrust aside as though it were no problem at all.

There is, however, a further difficulty with respect to this class of objects, about which I should like to say a few words. It arises in reference to the first division of them, of which I have not as yet spoken. What reason is there, on the view Meinong was taking, for supposing that there are *Objects* which not only subsist but exist? Meinong himself distinguished between these two kinds of being by pointing out that what exists must exist at some definite period of time, whereas what merely subsists is timeless, although existence as such is as timeless as subsistence.² And his pupil Ameseder, who usually follows him closely, adds the further differentiation that "that only is real (or existent) which can operate causally".³ Meinong certainly seems to imply that sense-data (*Empfindungsgegenstände*) do not exist. These 'homeless objects' (so described because hitherto they had formed part of the subject-matter of no science) are, he

¹ *Ueber die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie*, p. 16. In his review of this book (*MIND*, N.S., xvi., p. 439), Mr. Russell urges that the reply "seems to overlook the fact that it is of propositions (i.e., of 'Objectives' in Meinong's terminology), not of subjects, that the law of contradiction is asserted". I do not see that Meinong's remarks give countenance to this supposition. He appears to me to be saying that to suppose that two contradictory propositions can both be true may not be inadmissible when their subjects are impossible Objects.

² Cf., *Ueber Annahmen*, 2^{te} Aufl. p. 75.

³ *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie*, p. 79.

insists, neither mental nor physical. Colours, for example, are not mental; acts of seeing them are, of course, mental, and so likewise are the contents of these acts; but colours are quite distinct from presentations of colours. Nor are they physical; their substitutes in the material world are vibratory motions or modes of energy.¹ Ameseder definitely affirms that "since a colour is, like every other object of sensation, not capable of operating causally, its being is not existence". Every sensation, he contends, has a cause, but this cause is never identical with what, through the sensation, is apprehended. The cause is physical, or, at any rate, not psychical; what is apprehended through the sensation, the sense-datum, is neither physical nor psychical, and is not an existent.² Sense-data, then, being excluded, what are the existents that can be said to be Objects, in Meinong's sense of *Vorstellungsgegenstände*? As instances of existents, Ameseder mentions a quantum of water and a psychical process. But the water, as distinct from the sense-data erroneously, as he thinks, ascribed to it, is not presented, and can only be known, if at all, through perception, perception being in Meinong's view always an act of judging. Physical existents, one would gather, therefore, never can be Objects (*Objekte*). And the same would appear to be true of psychical processes, for they, too, according to the theory, cannot be presented. So that it would seem as though we were driven to the conclusion that for human knowledge, at any rate, there are no existent Objects. It is here, I think, that we come upon one of the weaknesses of Meinong's doctrine of *Vorstellungen*.

(b) His view of Objectives has become sufficiently familiar from Mr. Russell's discussions of it. If by a "proposition" be meant not a form of words which expresses what is either true or false, but that which is expressed by the form of words, that which is true or false, an Objective is equivalent to a proposition. Meinong himself preferred to say that a sentence is an expression of an act of thinking (an act of judging or assuming) and *has* a meaning; and that the meaning is the Objective, i.e., the object of the act of thought. Just as it is a characteristic of every *Vorstellung* to present an Object, so it lies in the nature of every act of thought to think an Objective. By employing the term 'Objective' Meinong wished to emphasise that what is judged or supposed is not an ideal *construction* on the part of

¹ *Ueber die Stellung der Gegenstandstheorie*, pp. 8-9.

² *Untersuchungen zur Gegenstandstheorie*, pp. 94 and 481-482.

the mind; that it is not the content of an act of thought any more than a presented object is the content of a presentation; that it is what thought discovers and not what thought may be supposed to make or manufacture. Objectives must clearly be "objects of higher order," and as such they are founded (*fundiert*) upon other objects—that is to say, either directly or indirectly¹ upon Objects. Confining attention at present to acts of judgment (i.e., omitting *Annahmen*), we may say that the Objective is what is judged (*was geurteilt wird*), and the Object what is judged about (*was beurteilt wird*). If, for example, it be asserted that the fire is bright, the Objective is "that the fire is bright," and this Objective is founded upon the Objects "the fire" and "brightness". Objectives are, of course, incapable of existence, but only false Objectives are incapable of subsistence. In his latest writings, Meinong was in the habit of saying that every object *has* being (or non-being); that there are, however, objects which not only *have* being (in this widest sense) but also *are* being, and that these are Objectives, while what *has* being, and *is* not being, is thereby characterised as Object. Or, expressed otherwise, Objectives attach to Objects, and Objects stand in Objectives. What exactly is to be understood by the non-being of false Objectives is, he admitted, a matter that requires investigation. Naming it meanwhile *Aussersein*, what remains undecided is whether this *Aussersein* is a determination of being or whether it denotes simply deprivation of being. The principle of Occam's razor and the circumstance that *Aussersein* has no negative seemed to him to favour the latter alternative, although he recognised the difficulty of the position.²

Being, taken in the widest sense as that which comes before us in every Objective, evinces itself either as being in the narrower sense, expressed in the form "*A is*"; or as being so-and-so (*Sosein*), "*A is B*"; or as co-being (*Mitsein*), "*If A, then B*". These correspond more or less to the distinctions recognised by traditional logic between so-called existential, categorical, and hypothetical judgments. [Whether there is any class of Objectives corresponding to the disjunctive judgment of traditional logic Meinong considered to be doubtful; it would rather seem, he suggested, that we have here to do with complexes of Objectives, such as may be

¹ The Objective of one act of thought can, of course, be founded upon an Objective of another, e.g., 'it is certain that *A is B*,' where what is judged to be certain is neither *A* nor *B* but 'that *A is B*'.

² The difficulty is not, of course, peculiar to Meinong's view. On no theory, so far as I can see, has any satisfactory explanation been given of what Meinong called "false Objectives".

met with in each of the three classes mentioned.] Since both *Sosein* and *Mitsein* necessarily involve a bifurcation of *inferiora*, these *inferiora* exhibit themselves in characteristic relations—the relation of predication in the case of *Sosein*, that of implication in the case of *Mitsein*. *Sosein*, again, falls into the sub-divisions of *Wassein* (e.g., “the horse is a mammal”) and *Wiessein* (e.g., “snow is white”); and *Mitsein* appears to be differentiated into the cases where the *inferiora* stand in an “if-relation” and those where they stand in a “because-relation”.

Meinong held further that the peculiarity of the being of Objectives is manifested in nothing more decidedly than in the modal qualities which, as he maintained, belong to it. Actuality (*Tatsächlichkeit*),¹ the quality of being a fact, can be ascribed only to Objectives, or to other objects only in a derivative sense. And, on purely empirical grounds, Meinong was convinced that when we are thinking of the factual character of an Objective we need not be thinking of the certainty and evidence in the judgment which grasps it. Certainty and evidence are subjective characteristics,—the one belonging to the act of judging and the other to its content; and, although we may come to be aware of the factual character of an Objective by reflecting on the certainty and evidence of the judgment, we are usually aware of it by direct inspection. Possibility is, so to speak, actuality of a lower grade, actuality is the maximum of possibility; so that the various degrees of possibility might be represented on a line the opposite ends of which would be actuality and non-actuality. So, too, necessity is a characteristic of many Objectives, a characteristic which is grasped, Meinong maintained, by what he called rational evidence, but which is in no sense constituted thereby. The characteristic of necessity, when it belongs to an Objective, is knowable in the most direct and immediate way;² it is given as something essentially positive, so that the interpretation of it as the inconceivability of the opposite is ruled out on this account alone. Not only so. Necessity cannot be taken to be an enhanced degree of actuality, as the latter is an enhanced degree of possibility, for actuality does not admit of enhancement. And, on the other hand, it is, in strictness, no less absurd to speak of a decrease of necessity, out of which decrease actuality could, as it were, result. For even

¹ If *Tatsächlichkeit* be rendered here by ‘actuality,’ actuality must not of course be taken to signify existence.

² Cf the opening pages of *Erfahrungsgrundlagen*.

³ *Ueber Möglichkeit und Wahrscheinlichkeit*, p. 122 sqq.

within the region of merely possible Objectives necessity is likewise to be found.³

(c and d.) Presentation and thought are, however, far from being the only means by which, as Meinong conceived, objects (*Gegenstände*) can be experienced by a conscious mind. No doubt the capacity of feeling as a medium of knowledge falls a long way behind that of presentation. Yet when, for instance, we pronounce a degree of warmth to be pleasant, it is easily seen, he urged, how utterly foreign it would be to experience to interpret the quality pleasant as being an experienced feeling produced in us by the warmth. So, too, he contended, the heavens are called beautiful in no other sense than that in which they are called blue, save that the experience (*Erlebnis*) through which the former of these qualities comes to recognition does not play in the inner life *merely* the part of being a mode of grasping or apprehending. But, all the same, it *does* play that part; and, consequently, there stand over against the feelings special kinds of objects, precisely as there do over against presentations and thoughts. These objects are always objects of higher order; and are, therefore, akin to Objectives. Meinong distinguished four classes of feelings—namely, those accompanying (i) the act of presentation, (ii) its content, (iii) the act of thought, and (iv) its content; and he tried to show that to each of these a specific kind of object could be correlated—namely, the qualities pleasant, beautiful, true, and good (provided that not only a cognitive but a feeling significance be ascribed to the term 'true'). These values, then, are distinctively objects (*e.g.*, when we say 'this ornament is pretty' we imply that it deserves to please, that it is worthy of being regarded as pleasure-giving); they are grasped through or by means of experiences, as all other objects are, but in their essence they are independent of such experiences; and as such they are what he designated Dignitatives. So, too, in desire, that which is desired is grasped through or by means of the content of the act of desiring, but it is not constituted thereby. To this class of Desideratives, may be reckoned objects that fall under the heads of *Sollen* and *Zweck*.

In the manner I have thus tried briefly to sketch, Meinong contrived to map out broadly the province of *Gegenstandstheorie*, and to carry out in several of its departments researches of a far-reaching kind. It may be objected that a province of these dimensions must certainly be co-extensive with the whole of philosophy, if not with the whole of knowledge. Meinong thought otherwise. It is clearly possible, he maintained, to deal separately with the general properties

of objects, to consider what can be ascertained *a priori* from their nature, without reference to their existence or non-existence. So regarded, it seemed to him that *Gegenstandstheorie* belongs to philosophy as an essential part of it; and that it in no way encroaches upon those parts of philosophy already recognised. That his investigation of its problems led him to important inquiries in other fields, particularly in the fields of psychology and the theory of knowledge, I shall try to show in a second article.

(*To be continued.*)