*Meeting of the Aristotelian Society at 74, Grosvenor Street,
London, W. 1, on April 12th, 1920, at 8 P.M.*

VIII.—SYMPOSIUM: IS THE “CONCRETE UNIVERSAL” THE TRUE TYPE OF UNIVERSALITY?

By J. W. SCOTT, G. E. MOORE, H. WILDON CARR and
G. DAWES HICKS.

I.—*By* J. W. SCOTT.

No theory which professes to be knowledge can hope to stand if its truth would render knowledge itself an impossibility. We must know. There seems to be no getting away from at least this minimum of certainty.

There is left in the hands of the metaphysician, in consequence, one problem from which he cannot escape. What commentary is made upon the nature of the universe by the fact that knowledge arises in it? I believe that the presence of knowledge in the universe carries with it an affirmative answer to the question at the head of these papers, in the simpler form to which that question, I think, reduces itself, and to which I propose here to reduce it, namely, Is the universal concrete? The fact of knowledge seems to me to carry with it the consequence that the universal is the real, and so that it is concrete. Such, shortly stated, is the thesis which I should like to support in this paper.

In indicating how I seem to be brought to such a view, I shall give the position first quite crudely and summarily, and after that attempt some detail.

The fundamental point is a fairly simple one. It seems to me that if I know, then what I know is always someone else's. It is not simply mine. It is always other-than-mine; other-than-mine whilst mine.

And herein I find the answer to the question, Why is it, or How comes it, that that which I know presents itself to me

as real-and-objective? It presents itself thus, inasmuch as presentation precisely consists in the state of things where something of mine shows itself to be also, and at the same time, other-than-mine.

Finally, what appears in this state of things is universality, and concrete universality.

If I had to knit the three points together I should say:—*Someone else's and so objective, if there is to be knowledge at all.* And I should reckon that as amounting to the statement:—*Universality, and concrete universality, if there is to be knowledge at all.*

In attempting to interpret this statement in detail, it will be well, perhaps, to begin with the last-mentioned notion, universality. I take it that universality is simply the characteristic of being not mine alone but also other people's.

We may here recall the fact that this appears to have been the object of search in at least one famous enterprise in the history of philosophy which we all agree was a search for the universal; I refer to the dialectic of Socrates. His thirst for the Idea plainly has its spring in the sense that what is ours must be other people's too; that our meaning for Temperance or Justice cannot be allowed to be ours only. So long as what is just for the Athenian people does not hold at Sparta or elsewhere, discussion must go on. The situation is still present which keeps the dialectic in motion. The process comes to rest only in agreement; where what is just for me is also just for Thrasymachus and you and everybody. In this context at least, we find a search instituted for that which exhibits the characteristic, if I might so express it, of being found by all.

There is a search still, I think, for the same thing, the found-by-all-minds. And, although it would probably not be so readily agreed to be a search for the universal, I think it is so. I refer to the work of natural science.

That the quest of modern science is for the universal would

not be so readily granted, perhaps, as that the Socratic dialectic was. Very little reflection, however, should be enough to convince us that is so. In trying, say, to define a circle, I am surely trying to say what it is-always, or what you meet every time you meet one. That, surely, is a process of seeking the universal. And it consists in trying to state what logically could be stated by anybody whomsoever regarding the circle now in front of him. In trying to describe imitation or play, to take an instance from another quarter, I am still after the universal. I am surely trying to say what play is-always. And that consists, again, in trying to express what anybody might see in the particular set of gambols of the particular animal or human being which he witnesses. In trying to settle the true paths of the planets I am similarly trying to settle what the planets are always-doing; and that, once more, is the attempt to say what they might be found engaged in, by anyone whomsoever. There is thus still a striving on the part of men to reach the universal in the sense of something which is not theirs alone, but which might at the same time be anybody's.

There is a point, then, where ancient dialectic and modern science meet; a standpoint from which both the ancient dialectical sifting of human opinions and the modern scientific observation of natural facts, can be seen to have had one and the same aim. They are a search for the universal in that both are a search for what x or y or z is-always. (That if they are the latter they are also the former should, I think, go without saying. What else can the universal be? How can I ask for the universal "white," for instance, or for the universal "upon," except in one way, namely, by asking to be told what "white" is-always, or what "upon" is-always? And the "always," as we are now contending, involves a reference to other minds which is as essential to the modern scientific procedure as to the ancient dialectical. It is only more clear in the latter than in the former.)

The universal, then, is that which is common to more than

me. The next point is that this of others', which I find and cannot be a knower without finding, this of others' which I meet on the door-step every time I seek as a knower to emerge from my own privacy into the great public world, this universal—is the real.

It was so to Socrates and Plato. The Justice and Beauty which might be all men's, were alone, to them, the real Justice and the real Beauty. Even by us, it is clearly presumed that until we have found what any one might find—until we have found the *definition* of the circle, the *law* of the planets' courses, etc.,—we have not found the real. We do not very naturally, however, go beyond this negative commitment. We usually allow that it is possible for us to have found this universal while yet the real escapes us. I think the larger presumption is justified. I think that when we have found the universal the real is indeed present to us. The universal, in fact, contains those parts of the real which we sometimes fancy may escape ; and in knowing it we know them.

What are the parts of the real which seem to be capable of wholly escaping one, even when he knows the universal? They are, of course, the universal's particulars. Now, the universal appears to me to contain its particulars.

We may test this thesis in more than one way. I think, for instance, that we may take it to the bar of common sense and find it justified there.

At the standpoint of common sense, what I am after when I seek to know, is not to apprehend the object as it is to me, but to apprehend it as it is to me and everybody. To some extent I succeed. What does such success imply? When do I see the object as it is to me and everybody? Surely when I see it as containing all possible appearances of itself.

Common sense does not consistently take the very first appearance to be what the thing is-always and what it is-to-all. Common-sense has its little search to make. And its search terminates upon that appearance which is the container of the

rest, as the front view of a façade contains all the perspective views, or as the circular aspect of a hoop contains all the elliptical aspects which it presents from different angles. What the object is-always contains what it momentarily seems. It is the real, therefore. When it is present the real is verily present.

But the best proof that the universal contains its particulars and so is real, lies in seeing that were it otherwise there could not be knowledge. Concrete universality must be, if there is to be knowledge at all. The reason is that except the particular were in a containing universal, nothing could present itself as other-than-me. And this independence of the object is essential to knowledge.

That other-ness is essential to knowledge hardly needs to be proved. Knowledge, to be at all, must be of something; and of something which is not me or just-mine, but is, on the contrary, common to others than just-me, to numerous others, in the end, infinitely numerous others. The question is, how what is mine can be others'. Its being theirs is the problem. This is its objectivity, this is its independence, this is its being on-its-own, and being no part or creation of my mind. Now what gives it this independence, what makes mine others' is, so far as I can see, just the concrete or containing universal. Let me try to state this crux of the position a little more explicitly.

The universe is compatible with there being knowledge. When its features, its form and colour and motion, decide not to remain dark but to appear in knowledge, it is in *knowledge* that they appear. What appear, in other words, are the features themselves in their authentic independence, not anything merely created by the contemplating point of consciousness. If I ask,—How can this be? How can I have to do with what is not just myself? How can I break the charmed circle of my own privacy and reach what is outside?—the only possible answer lies in the concrete

universality of the object. I contemplate what is not-myself simply because the fact that I have begun to contemplate involves already the fact that the object before me has ceased to be just-myself. I can break through the circle of my privacy simply because, as conscious, I am never in it. To be through the charmed circle of my own subjectivity is to be in the presence of what is others's; and I am always there when I am conscious. For as conscious I *am* others; I am many men in one. The object before me is consequently, on its side, many objects in one, many particulars in one containing (concrete) universal. Deepening my hold on any reality consists in letting more of that universal into consciousness, multiplying my points of contact with it through mobilizing my available points of consciousness. To encounter something independent is to have to do with something which is infinite others'; or is infinitely other-than-just-mine.

One effect of the realistic philosophy of the present has been to push into the foreground the idea of independence. In terms of this conception I would attempt to draw together what I have said in my paper into the following formula: *The necessary and sufficient condition of that independence of the object by which the possibility of knowledge stands or falls, is its concrete universality.* Ergo, there is concrete universality.

It will readily be remarked that I want to go the whole way, in insisting that knowledge must be of the independent. And it is quite true that I do. But the only independence which I can conceive of as characterizing a thing that is anything to me, consists in its being something to others too. If it is not theirs as it is mine, if it is not some such rest to their eyes as it is to mine, then whatever the independence attaches to, it does not attach to that object which, in the language of the familiar metaphor, swam into my field of vision and across it and out again. The object must have independence. True. But this means that something of what the object is to me

must independently be. The independence must attach to something I see.

On the other hand, if this be what must be found independent, then there is no difficulty in finding that it is so.

There is no difficulty in my really finding what yet is genuinely not-mine-only. This is because of what we have pointed out. It is because of the internal multiplicity of each individual personality. That each of us should be many men in one is a curious fact (though biology may have some light to cast on it), but it would seem to be a fact. There is no more insuperable difficulty, therefore, about you and me being in touch with the same independent objects and so being in the same world (what subjectivism denies to be possible) than about me being in contact with the same objects and being in the same world from time to time. If it is absurd to say that I am literally in the same world with my twin brother now, then it is also absurd to say that I am now in the same world with the child who went to school under my name, or with my self of ten years ago, or with myself of last year, of last week, or last hour. Whatever I find at all is common to many. It is already others'. And so it is independent.

To sum up:—Man's search, as a knower, is a search for what is others' or universal. To Socrates and Plato this of others' is the real. And they seem to be justified. Because it is the sole conceivable independent, of the sort requisite for the possibility of knowledge. It is the only independent which can conceivably be, at the same time, something-to-me. And the independence it has, consists precisely in its containing all it has to offer to others who could contemplate it; or, in other words, in its being concretely universal.

II.—*By* G. E. MOORE.

I propose to confine myself to discussing Mr. Scott's paper, although it seems to me to have hardly anything to do with the question we were asked to discuss. And I may as well begin with that one among his theses, which, owing to the form in which he has chosen to express it, might seem at first sight to be the most directly relevant to our question.

He tells us at first that he believes that "the universal is concrete," by which he ought to mean that *all* universals are concrete; while at the end of his argument he seems to confine himself to asserting that "there is concrete universality," by which he ought to mean that *some* are concrete. And, if he were using words in their proper senses, then either of these two assertions would, I think, have *some* relevance to our question, though obviously the second would have very little; you are giving no answer to the question whether universals are the true type of universality, by merely asserting that there *are* concrete universals. The assertion that *all* universals are concrete would, I think, have more relevance, though I cannot agree with Mr. Scott that our question can be reduced to the question, "Are all universals concrete?" That it cannot is, I think, clear from the fact that a person might consistently answer our question in the affirmative, while denying that all universals are concrete.

But, in fact, what Mr. Scott seems mainly to mean by the expression, "Some universals are concrete" is: Some things which are both mine and others' contain their particulars. And it seems to me quite plain that this is an utterly different proposition from the proposition that there are concrete universals. I do not for a moment believe that those philosophers who have used the term "concrete universal," and have been anxious to insist that there are concrete universals, have ever meant by this assertion merely that there are things which are both mine and others', and which contain their particulars. I think,

therefore, that this proposition of Mr. Scott's, as well as the universal proposition (if he means to make it) that *all* things that are both mine and others' contain their particulars, are wholly irrelevant to the question we were asked to discuss; but since they seem to be one of the things which Mr. Scott is anxious to maintain, I will give my reasons for dissenting from them.

One point is, I think, worth insisting on with regard to the meaning of the expression "*x* contains *its* particulars." Obviously it cannot be properly used to express the tautologous proposition "*x* contains those particulars which it does contain." What it ought to mean is that those things which have to *x* some relation *other* than that of being contained in it are *also* contained in it. And if the expression "universal" be used in what I venture to think is its most proper sense, namely, as equivalent to "characteristic," "property," "predicate," "attribute" (all of which can be properly used as synonyms), it is obvious enough what relation you are asserting to hold between any given thing A and any universal P, when you say that A is one of P's particulars. You are asserting of A simply that it *has* the characteristic P—that P can be truly predicated of it; so that if, *e.g.*, P be the characteristic of being red, the particulars of P will be all the things which are red. With this meaning it is obvious enough that, in general at all events, a universal does *not* contain its particulars. But if the term "universal" be used in the extraordinary sense in which Mr. Scott has thought proper to use it, as meaning "what is both mine and others'," it is no longer obvious what can be meant by saying of a given thing A that it is one of the particulars of a given universal. And, in fact, so far as I can gather, corresponding to his new use of the term "universal," Mr. Scott has adopted a new use of the expression "*x* contains *its* particulars." One such usage is clearly indicated in the case of the two solitary instances which he gives of so-called "universals," which, according to him, do "contain their parti-

culars." He implies that we have an instance of something which is both mine and others' "containing its particulars," whenever we have one "appearance" of a thing containing all the other "appearances" of the same thing, "as the circular aspect of a hoop contains all the elliptical aspects which it presents from different angles." That is to say, the new arbitrary definition of " x is one of y 's particulars," which he implies, is: x is an appearance of the same thing of which y is an appearance.

Now with this definition of " x contains its particulars," I doubt whether what is both mine and others' *ever* contains its particulars, for the simple reason that I doubt whether anything whatever ever does so. I doubt, that is to say, whether any appearance of a thing ever contains all the other appearances of the same thing. Mr. Scott tells us that the circular aspect of a hoop does contain all the elliptical aspects which it presents from different angles. Does he mean to say that a hoop never presents more than *one* circular aspect? The more natural use of language is certainly to say that it presents many, *e.g.*, a circular aspect of one size, when viewed from one distance, and a circular aspect of another size, when viewed from another. And if Mr. Scott is using "aspect" in this natural sense, in which the same hoop may present many different aspects, all circular, he would not have proved his point that there is any one aspect which contains all the other aspects even if he were right in saying that there is a circular aspect which contains all the *elliptical* aspects; since he would have to maintain that there is a circular aspect which contains all the other circular aspects as well as all the elliptical ones. If, on the other hand, he is using "aspect" in such a sense that a hoop never presents more than one circular aspect, this throws an important light on what he means by an aspect or appearance. He must in that case, I think, mean by *the* circular aspect of a hoop, *the* characteristic which a hoop appears to have when it appears to be circular—namely, circularity itself. In that case,

when Mr. Scott maintains that the circular aspect contains the elliptic aspects, he must mean that the characteristic "circularity" contains the characteristics, "elliptic of such a shape that the major and minor axis are in the proportions 2 to 1," "elliptic of such a shape that the major and minor axis are in the proportions 3 to 1," etc., etc. . . And it seems to me quite evident that the characteristic "circularity" does *not* contain these other characteristics; nor can I think of any case whatever in which one characteristic of a thing contains all the other characteristics which that thing may appear to have.

If, on the other hand, Mr. Scott is using "aspect" in such a sense that there are many different circular aspects, there are two different views as to what may be meant by any one circular aspect. Some people hold that the expression, "This hoop looks circular to me now," means "The sense-datum of this hoop presented to me now *is* circular"; and on this view, every different sense-datum which is *of* the hoop can be naturally called an aspect or appearance of it; and there will be as many different circular aspects of it as there are circular sense-data which are sense-data *of* it. Others hold that the meaning of the expression "This hoop looks circular to me now," cannot be analysed in this way: that it does not imply that anything whatever which is presented to me now really *is* circular; but only that something presented *appears* (in an ultimate sense) to be of a circular shape of some particular magnitude. On this view, no sense-datum would be an aspect or appearance of the hoop; there would only be as many different circular aspects of it, as there are circular shapes of different sizes, which it appears to possess; and it would be natural to call the different characteristics "having a circular shape of *this* size," "having a circular shape of *that* size," etc., the different circular aspects of the hoop. But, whichever of these two analyses of the facts be correct, it seems to me quite plain that in no case does any circular aspect of the hoop contain any elliptic aspect of it.

In short, in whichever of these three senses Mr. Scott is

using "aspect," it seems to me that his assertion that a circular aspect of a hoop contains its elliptic aspects is a sheer mistake; due, I think, to his confusing this assertion with the obvious fact that if you take a circular *area* of any particular magnitude of diameter, that area will contain elliptical areas such that every possible proportion holds between the lengths of their major and minor axis. This obvious fact by no means implies, as I suppose he must think it does, either that any elliptic sense-datum contained in a circular one is ever identical with any elliptic sense-datum of the same size and proportions which the same thing may present on another occasion, or that the characteristic "circular" ever contains the characteristic "having an elliptic shape of the proportion 2 to 1," or that such a characteristic as "having a circular shape of *this* size" ever contains such a characteristic as "having an elliptic shape, with major axis of *this* length, and with *this* proportion between major and minor axis."

For these reasons, if by "*x* contains its particulars" Mr. Scott means "*x* is an appearance which contains all the other appearances, which are appearances of the same thing of which *x* is an appearance," I should deny that anything ever contains its particulars, and therefore that anything which is both mine and others' ever does so.

In another passage, however, Mr. Scott seems to give a different meaning to "*x* contains its particulars," though he does not seem to notice that he is doing so. Immediately before the passage just referred to, he suggests that he means "*x* contains all possible appearances of itself." And with this meaning I am willing to admit that it *may* be true that *some* things which are both mine and others', in *some* of the senses in which Mr. Scott seems to use that expression, do contain their particulars. *Some* material objects seem to me to be both mine and others', in the sense that they are known both by me and by others, and *all*, I should say, are both mine and others' in the sense that they *might* (conceivably) be known by all minds; and I am willing to

admit that (as some seem to hold) it *may* be true that every material object contains every possible appearance of itself, in the sense that it contains all the sensibilia which might be sense-data *of* it ; though I cannot possibly be expected to discuss on this occasion whether any sense-data are sense-data *of* material objects in the required sense, or whether, if so, the material object *of* which they are sense-data contains them. If, however, by his statement, "The universal is concrete," Mr. Scott means merely to assert that *some* things which are both mine and others', namely, those which are material objects, contain, in this sense, all possible appearances of themselves, I am willing to admit he *may* be right, though I am surprised that he should seem so certain about it. But I should still protest that there is no sort of ground for the assertion, which he seems to mean to make, that *everything* which is both mine and others' contains all possible appearances of itself ; nor for the assertion which seems to me plainly false, that in knowing anything whatever I know all its particulars.

But how about his arguments in favour of his proposition that what is both mine and others' (always or sometimes) contains its particulars? Perhaps they prove that he is right.

I can find only two arguments.

He tells us, to begin with, that his thesis "The universal is concrete" follows from the premiss "The universal is the real." And he seems in fact to use one argument, which does employ a premiss about reality. He tries, if I am not mistaken, to prove directly that every *known* real thing is (in one of his senses) both mine and others'. And he seems to assume, as self-evident (what I should not dispute), that some known real things have parts which are particulars. We thus get an argument having the two premisses "*Every* known real thing is both mine and others'" and "Some known real things contain particulars," which, of course, yield the conclusion "*Some* things that are both mine and others' contain particulars." But, of course, this argument does *not* yield the con-

clusion that anything whatever contains *its* particulars, except in the tautologous sense that it contains those particulars which it does contain; and hence it seems to me that this argument entirely fails to prove even that *some* things which are both mine and others' contain their particulars, far less, of course that *all* do.

But there is another argument, if it can be called so, suggested by Mr. Scott, which uses no premiss with regard to reality, and which, if sound, would yield the conclusion that *everything* which is both mine and others', in the sense that it is known both by me and others, must contain several particulars. This argument, so far as I can see, simply consists in laying it down as a self-evident principle that, in order that a given object A may be known to both of two different subjects, S^1 and S^2 , it must contain both of two different objects, O^1 and O^2 , one of which belongs in some sense exclusively to S^1 and the other exclusively to S^2 . And with regard to it, I have only to say, first, that it again would not yield the result that any such object contained any of *its* particulars, but only that it contained *some* particulars: in order to yield the result that it contained *its* particulars, it would have to be further assumed either that O^1 and O^2 were both appearances of A, or that they were both appearances of the same thing of which A was an appearance. And, secondly, I cannot see the slightest ground for regarding the principle as true. I can only suggest that Mr. Scott may have been led to suppose it self-evident, owing to what seems to be an empirical fact: namely, that when two subjects, S^1 and S^2 , perceive the same *material object* A, it always does present to each of them an appearance which it does not present to the other; and owing to his making the further assumption that these two appearances are both contained in A. I cannot see the slightest ground for supposing that, even if this is true of material objects, it is true of *all* objects known by several minds. Indeed, in order that I may know that it is true of material objects, it is obvious that I

must, in a sense, be able to know the appearance which a material object presents to you, though that appearance is not presented to me. Does Mr. Scott hold that in order that you and I may both know this appearance, it must, in its turn, present different appearances to you and me, and so on *ad infinitum*?

I have only space for one more remark on Mr. Scott's paper. So far as I can see, he is quite as anxious, if not more so, to maintain the thesis which he expresses in the form "The universal is the real," as to maintain that with which we have been hitherto concerned, and which he calls "The universal is concrete." And by the form of words "The universal is the real," he means, so far as I can make out, principally the proposition: Every real thing that is *known* is both mine and others'.

Now in order to consider whether this proposition is true, we have to ask what he means by "both mine and others'." And he himself identifies the meaning of this expression with at least three entirely different conceptions, without appearing to be at all aware that they are different. He tells us (1) that by "*x* is both mine and others'" he means: *x* is found by all minds; he tells us next that what he means is (2) *x* might be found by anybody; and he tells us, finally, that what he means is (3) *x* is what some sort of thing *is-always*. I should like briefly to define my attitude to each of the three propositions which will result from understanding "is both mine and others'" in the statement "Every known real thing is both mine and others's" in each of these three senses:—

(1) As for the proposition that Every known real thing is actually found by all minds, I have only to say that I see not the slightest reason for believing it. On the contrary, it seems to me highly probable that many real things that have been known to each of us have never been known in any sense to any other mind.

(2) On the other hand, the proposition that Every known

real thing *might* be found by anybody, seems to me to be true but absolutely trivial, if it means only: There is no logical impossibility in the supposition that what is known by me *might* have been known by anybody else; and false, if it means anything else.

(3) The proposition that Every known real thing is something which some sort of thing "*is-always*" seems to me certainly false. In order that *x* may be what some sort of thing, *e.g.*, a circle, "*is-always*," *x* must be a characteristic, *i.e.*, a universal in the proper sense of the term; since to say "A circle is-always *x*" means merely "*Every* circle possesses the characteristic *x*." And it seems to me absolutely certain that not all known real things are characteristics; *e.g.*, no event is a characteristic, no material object is one. That Mr. Scott should suppose the opposite seems to me only explicable on the hypothesis that, as has often been done, he has confused the "is" of predication with the "is" which expresses identity, and has supposed that when I assert "A is red" I am asserting that A is identical with the characteristic of being red.

III.—By H. WILDON CARR.

Dr. Moore has submitted Mr. Scott's thesis to a critical logical analysis, but prefaces this by expressing a doubt whether the thesis has anything whatever to do with the question we are asked to discuss. Whether it has or not I find the thesis of great interest, and propose, as Mr. Moore has done, to take my lead entirely from it. My interest, however, is in the metaphysical import of the argument rather than in the formal consistency or inconsistency of the logic.

The "concrete universal" I take to mean the theory of those who, following the Hegelian principle, the real is the rational, hold that it is possible to give a consistent account

of experience, subjective and objective, internal and external, without resorting to the notion of an extra-mental object of knowledge, existing independently, confronting the mind and exercising upon it an influence to which it is purely passive and receptive. The expression "concrete universal" conveys to me in its very terms the self-sufficiency of mind and the inclusion within its activity of the object of knowledge: for the term *universal* can only apply to concepts, not to intuitions, and the term *concrete* can only be descriptive of that which possesses within itself the ground of its existence. The question propounded to us—is the "concrete universal" the true type of universality?—means for me the problem of the nature of the concept. Is a concept an abstraction from particular reals, a convenient mental device for classifying the passively received revelation of experience, or for making an inventory of its contents? Is it only the naming of classes in order to facilitate intercourse? Or, is it a comprehensive and self-sufficient and inclusive apprehension by the mind of its own activity in the definite stages or moments of its life? In affirming that the pure concept is a moment of developing mind-life, by which I mean a stage or degree in the outward expression of an inner mind-energy, and in denying that the pure concept is an abstraction which the mind makes from particular independent reals, assumed or inferred to be presented to it, I suppose myself to be answering the question in the affirmative.

Mr. Scott also answers the question in the affirmative. The reason he gives for his answer, however, implies an entirely opposite meaning in the terms, and the difference between my view and his is only concealed by our identical answer to the question. Mr. Scott's argument is a striking one, but it is not new—it is practically the common-sense reply which Reid proposed to the scepticism of Hume. Also its revival is not novel, for it is substantially the position of the new, or as it is now more often called, the critical realism. I do not think

the argument is sound, either against Hume, or against modern idealists. It declares concrete universality to be the fact that the "object" of my knowledge is not mine alone, or simply mine, it is also someone else's, just as Reid said that when ten men look at the sun, each sees the one object of common-sense. I dispute the fact. Nothing is plainer to me than that the "object" of my knowledge is not someone else's, and that when ten men look at the sun each man's "object" is different.

It does not seem to me that the two positions are to be resolved by argument. If anyone tells me that he believes the "object" of his knowledge to be identical with the "object" of mine, at the same time that he acknowledges (as surely he must) that the image in his mind is totally different from the image in mine, I cannot think of any way of disproving it. I can only wonder that he should suppose such a hypothesis necessary (for such I understand to be the argument) in order to explain intercourse. This is at any rate the crucial point with Mr. Scott. All I can do, therefore, when presented with such hypothesis is to point out that if there exist a common object of two minds, independent of the individual image in each mind, then in so far as it is universal it is not concrete but abstract, and in so far as it is concrete, it is not universal but particular. And I challenge Mr. Scott to show me how his universal can become concrete save by becoming particular, and how, if it be supposed concrete, its universality can be anything but a pure abstraction?

I admit, however, that in concentrating attention on the problem of intercourse Mr. Scott does good service, for he enables us to see very clearly the essential difference between the two principles. He shows, in fact, how both have their origin and take their departure from the critical philosophy. I agree with the realist that it is impossible for the mind to construct the object of knowledge out of sense-data, Kant's intuitions, by means of concepts belonging to the original nature

of the mind, Kant's categories. I understand the critical realists to insist that an *a priori* condition of the possibility of knowledge is the existence of the object of knowledge. If this be their position (I have to be cautious for I am generally charged with misunderstanding them), then I agree to this extent that they are pointing to a hiatus or deficiency in Kant's theory of knowledge. (I mean, of course, Kant's theory as it is generally understood.) I hold in opposition to the realists that there is no need to go outside the mind to make good this defect. What Kant has not seen is that the image, which is the immediate object of knowledge, is not a construction nor an agglomeration of manifold sense intuitions or sense-data, it is a *sui generis* work of the mind.

My theory turns upon this point. There are images, that is, mental objects, which are not constituted of, nor analysable into, sense-data; and it is images, not sense-data, that our concepts relate. It seems to me that this fundamental principle, or at least that its full significance, has been unnoticed until our own generation. The merit of having called attention to it belongs to Benedetto Croce. I refer to his æsthetic theory.

The concrete universal is Kant's principle of the synthesis *a priori* carried to its complete logical conclusion. It is not a fact to which we can point and say there it is. It is a principle which is called for by the negative results which have followed and which must follow all attempts to deduce the possibility of knowledge from the assumption that the antithesis between mind and matter, subject and object, which common-sense accepts as fact, is original. It is impossible to conceive any way by which dual existences could severally or mutually generate the knowing relation. Descartes, who wrestled hardest with the problem, had to fall back on faith in the veracity of God.

When the idea of this original synthesis is presented in such terms as *elan vital*, activity, mind or spirit, life or consciousness,

we are at once reminded that we are borrowing from our ordinary experience figurative expressions which have in experience no substantial reality. We never, it is said, experience movement, life or thought, but only things that move, beings who live, minds which think. The reply is that this is true and also that it is the ground of our appeal to the principle of the concrete universal. The polarization of the subject-object relation which characterizes actual experience must have its ground in an identical nature. Extension, which gives the universe its aspect of externality, has its correlate in tension. The principle is grounded in the very nature of conceptual thought.

I conceive, then, the ultimate reality of the universe on the analogy of the individual mind. Mind is the only real existence which I know, or at any rate might know, directly and without mediation. In my developed experience I distinguish minds from the bodies to which they are attached, and the actions of these bodies seem to contrast as *reality*, with mental action—thoughts, desires, purposes and ends—as *ideality*. The bodily actions which express the life of the mind have a beginning and end in time and boundaries in space, and they are therefore a finite part of an external universe, but when I integrate these bodily actions in my full concept of mental activity the limitations alter their character. The restrictions which circumscribe the activity of the individual mind are not the spatial and temporal limitations which circumscribe the activity of the body. I cannot in fact conceive mind as I conceive body as pure actuality. I have to duplicate actuality with virtuality. Whenever an action is presented to me which I interpret as the expression of a mind, interpretation means that I duplicate the expression with an intuition. The concrete universal means that I cannot cut expression from intuition, ideality from reality, actuality from virtuality.

Now the challenge to such a position which is usually put forward, and which, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Scott in particular would make, is: "Very good, but you are now

intrigued into the solipsistic *impasse*. Your theory makes intercourse an illusion." It is therefore the fact of intercourse which appears to the realist to demand as the *a priori* condition of its possibility the positing of the object of knowledge as independent real. How, it is asked, can there be common knowledge unless there be independent objects common to the knowers? What else is a common object but one which is presented indifferently to individual minds for their discernment? The reply of the idealist is that this is completely to misunderstand the nature of intercourse and actually to misinterpret its mode. It is not possible to divide the world into entities which are active (minds) and entities which are passive or inert (objects), because passivity is a limit the attainment of which is simply extinction. What does nothing is nothing. There exists no mode by which anything can manifest quality save by exercising activity. The activity must fall on the mental side. Activity cannot be expressed as a property of the inert, that would be a plain self-contradiction. There is no way of conceiving the purely inert, of distinguishing it from pure nothing. This disability does not attach to the concept of activity simply because that concept is directly given to us in life, mind, consciousness itself. Mind or spirit is activity, activity which unfolds or develops. The intuition which is expressed in the image, the image which reveals the intuition is concrete ideality. Images and concepts are all the mind possesses and these are the products of its activity. In intercourse the mind does not project its images or concepts into another mind (as those who believe in telepathy for example appear to hold) but the actions which are the outcome of one mind's activity evoke the expression by another mind of its intuitions. Intercourse does not depend on common objects but on responsive actions. That common objects, if we suppose them to exist, should manifest themselves by a chaotic multiplicity of sense-data is to me simply unintelligible. The mind and its world is one and

indissoluble. This, in my view, is the theory of the concrete universal.

Let me now set against the view of Mr. Scott my own scheme of the activity which finds expression in intersubjective intercourse, in order directly to challenge the theory that at any stage whatever it is necessary to introduce the notion of independent common object. In my view so far from simplifying the problem of intercourse such a hypothesis would complicate it. I prefer, however, simply to challenge the fact. I say that as a matter of fact we communicate by sensibility, by emotion, and by imagery and not by the mutual recognition of independent objects. The living being, man or animal, enters on individual existence with the lines of objectivation, or the articulation of reality, determined in advance. Consider then the mind in its development? Is it a fact that sense stimuli cluster together to form objects? Clearly not, such clusters would not be objects in the sense required. Sense stimuli call into activity imagination; intuitions find expression in the images formed; images frame themselves in perceptions; perceptions are virtual actions, they present to the mind the outline of its actions as well as being the condition of them. A mother kisses her child,—where and what is the “object” such intercourse is supposed to require? Each no doubt feels the impact, each, let us suppose, experiences the emotion, each may create a wealth of imagery,—imagery of one another, imagery of their several worlds. There is clearly sensibility, emotion and imagery,—where and what is the common object identical for each and of which each is a passive discernor. Intercourse between minds depends wholly and at every stage on mental activity, and this self-sufficiency of mental activity is my theory of the concrete universal.

IV.—By G. DAWES HICKS.

"The key to all sound philosophy lies in taking the concrete universal, that is, the individual, as the true type of universality." In these words Dr. Bosanquet gives expression to what he would probably not hesitate to call the fundamental principle of his *Gifford Lectures*. He explains that by individual in this context he means "a system of members, such that every member, being *ex hypothesi* distinct, nevertheless contributes to the unity of the whole in virtue of the peculiarities which constitute its distinctness." An individual of this character he usually identifies with a "concrete universal," although sometimes he speaks of it as a "true embodiment" thereof. And he contrasts universality with generality: the latter he characterises as "sameness in spite of the other," the former as "sameness by means of the other." Dr. Bosanquet has given us, in fact, an independent presentation and elaboration of Hegel's argument in the third book of the *Logik*, and has raised an interesting issue for discussion.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Scott was prevented, by the restrictions of space imposed upon us in this Symposium, from showing the way in which he conceives his thesis to be connected with that just indicated. When he finds that Dr. Carr has taken his argument to be identical with the "reply which Reid proposed to the scepticism of Hume," I imagine his feeling will be not unlike that of the eels that were skinned by the fair Molly,—a feeling, namely, of being lost between pain and astonishment. For, unless I am greatly mistaken, so far from wishing to recommend the doctrine of Reid, Mr. Scott is taking his departure, as, indeed, Hegel likewise did, from the familiar contention of the Kantian philosophy that objectivity is identical with universality, that it is the function of thought to be productive of that peculiar component in the content apprehended which constitutes it, apart from its special sensuous clothing, an object at all.

"An object," said Kant, "is that in the notion of which the manifold of a given intuition is combined"; in other words, the sense manifold was, so to speak, fitted into a framework of universal notions, and these subjective notions then presented themselves to us objectively as part and parcel of every externality of sense that can come before us. Not only so. The universality of the object had as its necessary correlate the universality of the subject; and for such subject the object was an object of possible experience, and might, therefore, be said to be a common object (*das All-Gemeine*) for all individual subjects. I do not, of course, suggest for a moment that Mr. Scott is desirous of committing himself to the details of the Kantian analysis. But I have little doubt that in laying the stress he does upon presentation consisting in "the state of things where something of mine shows itself to be also, and at the same time, other-than-mine," he has been largely influenced by the leading ideas of that analysis. And I gather from what he has written elsewhere that he does intend to imply, after the manner of Hegel, that the universal, which in his view is the real, and therefore concrete, is at once a self-constructing activity, and at the same time (up to the limit of our apprehension of it) "a construction of ours; none the less our construction for its being the Absolute's."

In a curious passage of the first edition of the *Critique* (A. 385), Kant talks of the presentations of outer sense as having the appearance of "detaching themselves from the soul and hovering about outside of it"; and in a manner it would not be unfair to say that the whole armoury of the categories was called into requisition in order to account for the alleged fact which is thus paradoxically described. Somewhat similarly, Mr. Scott states the problem of knowledge, as he conceives it, in the form: "How can I break through the charmed circle of my own privacy and reach what is outside"? The implication apparently is that an object first of all presents itself to me as "just-myself," and then somehow "ceases to be

just-myself," and becomes other than myself. And the brunt of the problem would seem to lie in finding a mode of explaining this extraordinary transformation. I am bound at once to say that I think the problem thus presented to be an entirely fictitious problem; and Mr. Scott himself virtually admits it to be such when he proceeds to answer his question by saying, enigmatically enough, "I can break through the circle of my privacy simply because, as conscious, I am never in it."

It is not, however, difficult to see why, in the Kantian and post-Kantian theories of knowledge, objectivity should have been brought into such close and intimate connexion with universality. Whether when ten men look at the sun they are each of them seeing different suns or the same sun, certain it is that when they are thinking of the law of gravitation or judging, for example, that "similarity is a relation" (presuming, of course, that they *are* thinking about these things and not about something else), what each is thinking of is not different from what the others are thinking of, but is identical with it. If, then, all objects of sense-apprehension either involve as part of their structure *a priori* determination by universal factors (as Kant held) or *are* syntheses or "meeting-points" of universals (as was Hegel's view), there would appear to be at once suggested a mode of explaining what unquestionably both Kant and Hegel took to be a fact that an object of knowledge is a common object for individual minds.

But obviously the two notions—the notion of universality and of that which is common for different individual minds—cannot be forthwith treated as coincident. Whatever else the term "universal" may signify, it signifies at least this—a property or attribute or predicate that characterises two or more so-called things. What, then, is the connecting link between "common to different objects" and "common for different minds"? It is to be found, so far as Kant is concerned, in the thought of *Bewusstsein überhaupt*,—in the thought, namely, of the universal consciousness, of which, in its relation

to the manifold of sense, the categories are the ways of expression. It is to found, so far as Hegel is concerned, in the thought of the notion or concept as "the principle of all life, and thus possessing in every part a character of concreteness," as "an infinite and creative form, which includes, but at the same time releases from itself, the plenitude of all it contains."

Neither mode of effecting the transition can be pronounced successful. As regards the first, while an object is declared only to be an object in virtue of its *a priori* factors, yet it remains nothing short of miraculous that these, if not intrinsically characterising empirical contents, should be somehow imported into them from the outside. As regards the second, with which we are mainly concerned, it seems to me to be based upon a number of erroneous assumptions to some of which I will briefly refer.

One has to remark, at the outset, upon the woeful confusion between a universal and the conception of a universal. Two of Hegel's most competent interpreters, W. T. Harris and William Wallace, agree that he ought never to have employed the term *Begriff* with the significance which he here attaches to it, the former asserting that his having done so has given rise to more serious misunderstanding of his system than any other cause. That may be; but more is evidently involved in such procedure than the mere misuse of a term. It involved, in fact, the failure to recognise a two-fold distinction, the neglect of which is fatal to clear thinking. It is essential, namely, to distinguish the act of cognising a universal both from the universal itself and from the way in which that universal, in and through the act in question, is cognised. A mental state of *conceiving* is undoubtedly a concrete event or occurrence, a "moment," if you will, "of developing mind-life"; but it is as such neither a concept nor a universal. It is characterised, of course, as every other concrete fact is characterised, by a plurality of properties which it has in common with other mental states, whether of conceiving,

or of perceiving, or even of willing; but in itself it is as definitely *particular* as any fact in nature can possibly be. If it were, in truth, all that Hegel says it is—a self-determining activity which supplies its own matter or contents—still that would not in any way convert it into a universal in the sense in which he, like every one else, is perpetually using the term. Again, a concept is the way in which a universal is conceived, the mode in which it is grasped or apprehended by thought, and obviously is not to be confounded with the act through and by means of which it has been attained. A concept, as Mr. Bradley puts it, does not happen, neither can it possess a place in the series of events. And, lastly, although it is usual roughly to identify concepts and the universals to which they refer, and although for ordinary purposes no serious misunderstanding is thereby occasioned, yet it needs but little reflection to realise that the identification is in strictness illegitimate and may readily lead, in dealing with a question of the kind we are now discussing, to downright error. A concept is a product of thought—of thought exercised doubtless upon a world of objects which are found to exhibit certain identities of character. Its manner of formation can be more or less psychologically traced, and its actual nature determined. It is reached by a process that is at once analytic and synthetic; a process, on the one hand, of singling out what is imbedded in a matrix of reality, and, on the other hand, of bringing together what is presented in numerical difference. The universal to which it refers is a quality characterising a number of particulars, often widely removed from one another in time and space,—a “pervasive character of things,” as Alexander expresses it; although what precisely the pervasiveness implies is a vexed metaphysical problem.

Mr. Scott would solve that problem in Hegelian fashion*

* “The universal,” says Hegel, “is identical with itself, with the express qualification, that it simultaneously contains the particular and the individual.” Or, again, “the universal is that which permeates and includes in it everything particular.” *Et passim*.

by insisting that the universal contains its particulars. I agree entirely with Dr. Moore's criticism of that contention, and there is no need to reiterate what he has so lucidly said. I will only add that the instance which Mr. Scott gives of his thesis seems to be unfortunately chosen. Even though there were one 'appearance' of a thing which contained all the other "appearances" of the same thing, yet that would surely not entitle us to describe the former as a universal. If I fill a tumbler with a number of smaller tumblers, each one fitting into another, I do not thereby change the nature of the containing tumbler; it remains still just the *particular* entity that it was when it contained nothing but air. And so likewise with respect to the containing appearance. In what sense can the appearances which it contains be said to be "its particulars"? If the reply be that the containing appearance is not a mere indiscriminate collection of other appearances, but a unity, more or less systematic, of specific contents, an individual with a variety of characteristics, then clearly the same might be said of any one of the contained appearances, and what the contention really amounts to is that there are no such things as particulars at all.

Indeed, in whatever way the doctrine of "concrete universals" be formulated, it seems inevitably to involve the abandonment of any distinction between universal and particular. The true universal, it is maintained, is the individual; a system of members, such that each member contributes to the unity of the whole, and the unity of which permeates the whole, so that the members are related to the unity, as its adjectives or attributes. And inasmuch as each of the members is declared to be a system of like nature, one seeks in vain to discover anything which can be said to be particular. The individual, in the sense of an independent substantive existent, vanishes, and in its place is substituted a phase in some universal, which in its turn is a phase in another, and so on, until ultimately the culmination is reached in the Absolute.

As against this view, I would urge that the unity of the universal *in* its particulars is totally different from the unity of the individual as a unity *of* its attributes. Colour, for example, as a characteristic of material things, may no doubt possess some kind of unity, but most assuredly it is not *the* kind of unity exemplified by what is ordinarily called an individual. Appearing, as it does, here, there and everywhere, under the most varying conditions, there is amongst colours simply nothing corresponding to the unity and continuity of an individual object. The idea that there is a correspondence only seems plausible, as Professor Hobhouse has recently argued, because the universal is confused with the concept of it. The concept colour we can, as he points out, picture to ourselves, with some show of reason, as a sort of scheme, which in order to be realised must be filled in in certain definite ways, but which as a scheme maintains its unity through all its differences of fulfilment. And then to describe a thing as having a particular colour will seem to be tantamount to placing it in the scope of this scheme; "colour," we can say, "is a spirit upon things by which they become expressive to the spirit." But the conceptual system is one thing and the reality to which it refers another; and, whatever the relation between them may be, it manifestly is not a relation of identity. "The universal," so Hegel affirmed, "is the ground and foundation, the root and substance of the individual. Caius, Titus, Sempronius, and the other inhabitants of a town or country are all men. That they are so is not merely something which they have in common, but something without which these individuals would not be at all." They are individuals, that is to say, only as included in and controlled by a superior individual. The passage illustrates with sufficient clearness the confusion which Hobhouse is concerned to exhibit. Caius and Titus are each of them individuals, and each as a physical and thinking being has a unity pervading his different characteristics resembling in some measure the way in which colour pervades red and

blue. Each of these men has, however, an unbroken continuity of temporal existence; and, although both of them possess the common character of manhood, that common character is quite other than substantive continuity. It is true that Caius and Titus may belong to a family or clan, the members of which are in intimate relations with one another, and such a family or clan may be said in a sense to form an individual whole. But as such this family or clan would not like manhood be a universal, but essentially an individual, though an individual of a type different from that of a physical and self-conscious individual. To represent the individual as a universal because it is a unity in the diversity of its constituents and qualities is an error at once in logic and in metaphysics.

My main point, then, is that there is a fundamental difference between a universal and an individual, and that no universal, however complex, can become an individual. An individual is a substantive in the sense that it can neither be predicated of, nor inhere in, anything else; in a significant predication, it can be referred to only as subject and never as predicate. And the reason is that it can never be exhaustively determined by the universals that characterise it; it can be adequately determined only by the unique position it occupies in the world of existent fact. The individual, in other words, is never a mere combination or "meeting-point" of universals, simply because universals are not individuals, and no synthesis of any number of them could ever yield of itself the concrete existence of an individual thing. One is not of course intending to deny that whenever we characterise a substantive by an adjective we are thinking of the adjective as capable of characterising a plurality of instances. But that is never the whole of our meaning. We cannot think of adjectival predicates without at the same time thinking of them as exemplified in instances which are ultimately concrete individual things. "Wandering adjectives" can be, at the most, but concepts; a

universal is to be found not apart from but as qualifying particulars, while it is equally true that particulars exist only as qualified by universals.

I return now to Mr. Scott's paper, in order to elicit information regarding a contention upon which considerable weight appears to be laid. "Concrete universality must be," he says, "if there is to be knowledge at all. The reason is that except the particular were in a containing universal, nothing could present itself as other-than-me." Why not? If we had any ground for supposing that each individual mind were so constructed as to be quite unlike any other, and that no one could direct his apprehension upon an external object without casting over it a film "created" by peculiar eccentricities of his own, there might be cause for the scepticism suggested, although in that case I am at a loss to understand how the fact of the particular being in a containing universal would have the smallest tendency to mend matters. I can, however, find no justification for any such supposition. Intelligent minds are, I take it, concrete individuals characterised, as all concrete individuals are characterised, by common attributes. There is nothing, therefore, in their structure to countenance the surmise that their modes of apprehending concrete objects must deviate from one another in any considerable degree, and nothing, so far as I can discover, to lead us to imagine that such modes of apprehension are ill-adapted for discharging their function. Why, in order to apprehend as other men do must I, in some admittedly "curious" way, be those other men in one? To have a dozen eyes instead of two, or half a dozen centres of consciousness instead of a single centre, would surely make rather for baffling bewilderment than for mutual harmony.

I have only space for a brief concluding word on one topic touched on by Dr. Carr. When I found him identifying "critical realism" with the "new realism," I too felt like those eels skinned by the fair Molly. I believe I am responsible for coining the phrase "critical realism," at least in this country. I

explained carefully that it was introduced for the purpose of designating a theory of knowledge diametrically opposed to the "new realism"; and, so far as I know, no adherent of the latter has ever had the slightest wish to adopt the name. Latterly it has been made use of by a certain school of American philosophers; but, although I gather their position is different from mine (their book of Essays is announced, but has not yet appeared), they are no less opposed to the realism that is called "new." One of the chief positions of the critical realists is that in the act of perceiving an object there is no "image" in the mind, and in that respect I should imagine Mr. Scott is at one with them. Again, they have never insisted that the existence of an object is "an *a priori* condition of the possibility of knowledge." They have tried to show that in perception the presence of an existent object can be empirically established. Once more, so far as I am aware, no one has ever imagined that the world is divided into "entities which are active (minds) and entities which are passive or inert (objects)." No existent object, I should say, can be passive or inert, simply because it forms part of an interconnected causal system, and moreover is a source of bodily stimulation when standing in relation to a percipient individual.