VII.—THE ANALYSIS OF VOLITION: TREATED AS A STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODS.

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Introduction.

IT may be held to argue a degree of *naïveté* almost criminal in a professed student of Philosophy to have ever believed that philosophers must mean the same thing when they use the same word. However, I can best explain the standpoint and the purpose of this paper by confessing that I was once young and innocent enough to cherish that belief concerning the term "will." I found "The Will" used in various systems of *Metaphysics* as the key to the riddle of the universe. I found it used in *Ethics* and *Politics* as the key to conduct, individual and social. I found *Psychology* claiming the analysis of the will as one of its chiefest problems, and I found even some systems of Psychology treating will as the fundamental characteristic of mental process. However widely these different theories might diverge in the standpoints from which they treated the Will, I yet believed that in all these contexts the term "will" must ultimately refer to some single fact capable of definite and unambiguous identification and description. Thus, instead of keeping the diverse accounts of the Will in watertight compartments, so to speak, there suggested itself to me the interesting problem of tracing their connexion, of finding, if possible, a standard-conception, as it were, of the Will, which should be firmly based on psychological evidence, which could be carried on and taken for granted in the ethical and political theory of conduct, and

which should supply a test of the adequacy of the conceptions of Will employed in certain metaphysical speculations.

The paper which follows contains the record of this search and of its failure. Its special purpose is, on the one hand, to exhibit clearly, and to press upon the attention of psychologists and philosophers the fact of the utter disagreement of current theories of will, and, on the other hand, to trace the causes to which this disagreement is due.

I deal in this paper only with Psychology, for the root of the whole matter seems to me to lie there. I start with the assumption that willing is, *prima facie*, an immediate fact of experience (a mode of being conscious of which we are directly, not inferentially, aware), and that, therefore, Psychology, as the science which professedly deals with such facts, is most likely to supply the standard-conception of which I am in search. Hence this paper is devoted to a comparative analysis of some current psychological theories of the nature of will, which are supported by the authority of leading psychologists, and which have found wide acceptance.

The positive outcome—if I may anticipate the result—will not be a new theory of the will or even a decision in favour of one of the current theories. My main conclusion, which I hope to commend to the reader's acceptance, is rather that the disagreement between different psychological theories is not, at bottom, of the kind which can be settled by an appeal to "fact" in the sense of introspective evidence. On the contrary, it is due to differences of *principle*. It arises from conflicting assumptions about the nature and aim of psychological analysis, about the methodological standpoint to be taken up, about the conceptions to be employed. Everywhere, in Psychology, I find theory determined by conscious or unconscious presuppositions. That is the thesis for which the following paper contains the evidence.

And, I would urge, it is no reply to meet the contention at the threshold by saying: Psychology is an empirical science

which begins with "facts," and which invents its methods and its conceptions as it goes along, treating them merely as "hypotheses," and guided by their success in "working." For my answer is: You see the result in the present confusion of theories. To plunge in *medias res* has only one result, viz., to commit you to uncriticised assumptions which determine your results without your knowing it. That may be the inevitable way for a science to begin. It does not follow that it is also the way in which a science must inevitably continue. The only lesson to be drawn, as it seems to me, from the existing conflict of theories is that Psychology must turn back and criticise its own standpoint, and the assumptions or presuppositions which define that standpoint. This examination of the theories of Will, I hope, will show, by illustration from one particular group of problems, how urgent such a comprehensive criticism of fundamental principles is. There comes a time in the development of every science when it must set its house in order by reviewing its own theoretical foundations. This time has come for Psychology, and though the task of criticising its principles has by no means been left unattempted—I need but instance Münsterberg's *Principles*, as well as many special articles in journals in this country and abroad—attention still requires to be focussed more universally on the need of it.

So, again, some psychologists will probably object to several of the will-problems which are reviewed in this paper, as lying beyond the scope and province of Psychology, or as being problems with which Psychology is incompetent to deal. But such an objection would but reinforce my point, which is just to ask the question: Why should Psychology stop here rather than there? I want to challenge the justification of the limits—arbitrary limits, as they seem to me—which many psychologists set to their subject. For the setting of limits is always a matter of principle, and principles need to be critically justified, not uncritically assumed. That is just the whole contention.

In fact, I may define the issue by saying that it concerns the *kind and degree of abstraction* which Psychology should practise. No science—short of Metaphysics—can take the whole of reality for its province; every science must abstract. So far, I take it, we are all agreed. The kind and degree of abstraction which a given science practises, depend on its standpoint, *i.e.*, on the fundamental assumptions which it takes for granted, on the conceptions or categories with which it operates. The question is just whether this abstraction should be practised uncritically, without consciousness of its manner, scope, and influence, or whether it should be practised critically on well understood principles. And if the latter, then what ought these principles to be?

One further explanation is due to the reader to prevent misunderstanding. When I spoke above of a disagreement on principles which could not be settled by an appeal to "facts," I had in mind what I may perhaps be allowed to call the "Speculative" Psychology which is represented by the work of, *e.g.*, James, Stout, Münsterberg, Bradley, and, among an older generation, Lotze and Herbart. There has arisen, of recent years, a school of Psychology which, by contrast, may perhaps be called "Empirical," because it employs above all the method of Introspection under Experimental conditions, and claims to reach its results from observation of the facts with a minimum of theoretical presupposition. With the accounts of "will" produced by representatives of this school (*e.g.*, Ach) I am not concerned in this paper. Their examination would require a separate treatment. But of the older "speculative" school it is, I think, true to say that, even where its theories are professedly based on introspection or verified by an appeal to introspection, they are, in fact, determined in a characteristic way by presuppositions of a general kind as to the principles and concepts which Psychology ought to employ. From different standpoints and assumptions result different theories. That is the

situation which is to be exhibited and examined in this paper.

I shall take, then, the problem which, in general terms, may be described as the problem of determining the "nature" or "essence" of "will" or "volition," and show how the different theories which are current differ, not so much because of the resistance which the experience of willing offers to analysis, as because of the influence everywhere of latent or acknowledged assumptions. For the sake of convenience, I shall divide the discussion according to a number of special problems.

With these preliminary remarks on the purpose of this paper, for the better orientation of the reader, I pass now to the first problem.

I.

Is Volition Complex or Simple? Is its Character Derivative or Unique?

The first of these questions might appear to be simply one for introspective analysis to answer. The second almost inevitably leads on to genetic and comparative Psychology. None the less, these two questions may fitly be treated together, for they constantly tend in practice to pass into one another. And they are suitable questions to begin with, because they meet every student of Psychology at the threshold of the problem of will-analysis, and also because they do not, *prima facie*, raise any issues with which Psychology might be held to be incompetent to deal.

It will not be disputed, I take it, that some psychologists declare volition to be complex, others simple, and that both schools appeal to introspection in support of their view. On the other hand, the conclusion which I shall try to defend is, that it is not a matter of introspection at all but of methodological principles, and that a volition may very well be complex in one sense and simple in another. It depends on what kind

of complexity or simplicity we are looking for. But that is a matter of principle.

(a) First, then, the theories which treat volition as *complex*. Their general standpoint is that mental life—let us, provisionally, adopt the technical term “stream of consciousness”—is given as a complex whole which requires to be mastered by analysis. Their method is: analysis of the complex into its simplest elements. We “explain” the complex by showing how it is composed out of the simple. Here we may note, first, that this principle allies itself most easily with the method of analysis by cross-sections of the stream of consciousness, which gives us “states” and their constituent “elements,” but far less easily with the method of analysis by longitudinal sections, which gives us “processes” with their successive “stages.” Further, we may note that a great deal depends on how much we include in the complex to be analysed. We may treat the whole* stream of consciousness as a single comprehensive complex with lesser complexes within it—a moving, growing system of complexes, as it were. Or we may treat these lesser complexes as the “wholes” to be analysed. But, either way, there are some troublesome questions which psychologists do not face as often or as clearly as they should. We are familiar, *e.g.*, with the view which in the complex stream of consciousness as a whole, or even in any particular section of it, distinguishes three concurrent “aspects” or even “attitudes,” viz., the affective, the cognitive, the conative. Logically carried through, this view ought to treat every psychical fact, large or small, without exception as exhibiting these three “aspects” within it. It would have to explain the popular distinctions of language, “an emotion,” “a thought,” “an act of will,” as emphasizing

* It would, perhaps, be too inconvenient to ask in what sense it is a *whole*; where it begins and where it ends; what it includes and what not.

merely the aspect which happened, in any given fact, to be most striking and dominant. Are, then, these "aspects" or "attitudes" the ultimate simples at which analysis stops? Or are they themselves complex? And, if so, what are the simples into which they in turn must be analysed?

Or, alternatively, we find psychologists breaking up the complex stream into particular feelings, cognitions, conations and treating each of these again as a complex capable of further analysis. It makes, clearly, a great difference whether what we treat as a complex is a "conative character" of all mental processes or itself a particular mental process, a "conation." If we take the latter view, how far must analysis be pushed? Does not, *e.g.*, the familiar theory supported by Ebbinghaus and others, that a volition is a complex of "ideas" and "feelings," stop halfway? Is not the practice of psychologists in all these matters guided by assumptions which have not been sufficiently examined and which, when examined, threaten to turn out merely indefensible makeshifts?

Again, when we turn from the question what complexes Psychology is analysing to the question what simples it tries to reach, we come once more upon a whole nest of problems. It is easy to define the simple as the *terminus ad quem* of analysis, and as that which defies further analysis. But the point at which we *can* go no further is, in Psychology as in other sciences, not easy to determine, and in practice tends to be identical with the point at which we do not *choose* to go further—a very different matter. And, in either case, our procedure is really determined by the conception of the simple and unanalysable with which we start out. We go on analysing until we find the sort of ultimate that we are looking for, that we set out to find. In short, it is a question of assumption and principle. For instance, do we start with a conception of the simple as *qualitatively homogeneous* or as *qualitatively diverse*? In the former case, we shall probably follow those who, like Münsterberg, define the programme of Psychology as

the reduction of all complexes to sensations as ultimate elements, and suggest that even sensations, so far as they are still qualitatively diverse, may prove amenable to further reduction in the direction of yet greater homogeneity. In the latter case, we shall rather tend, like Lipps in some of his later work, to emphasize every shade and nuance of qualitative diversity, so that analysis will lead to an indefinitely large number of unique and ultimate "simples."

Thus this very brief and summary survey of one small corner of the field teaches already the lesson that these problems can not be settled by a naïve appeal to observed "facts." In Psychology, more perhaps than in any other science, our "facts" depend on what we take them to be; from the very start they are theorised by the way we think about them. It makes all the difference whether we talk of "states" or "processes"; of each soul as a single continuous "stream" or as a "bundle" or "sequence" of relatively disconnected processes; of "aspects" or "modes" of experiencing, or of "experiences," of complexes and simples of one kind or of another. Everywhere we come, at bottom, back to problems of method and principle, for the "facts" are elastic, and, with a little enthusiasm, can be squeezed, more or less, into any framework of thought.

But we are not yet at the end even of the problem of the complex and the simple. The search for the simple and unanalysable, the elementary and fundamental, may be conducted from yet other points of view, and the analysis of volition will differ accordingly. Such a fresh standpoint is especially the *genetic* standpoint which treats the complex as *derivative*, as having been formed or developed in the progress of mental life. This is not by any means involved in the mere analysis of the complex into the simple. It does not by any means follow that, because the complex can be shown to consist of simple elements, it has therefore grown or been composed out of these elements. On the contrary, analysis might

lead to elements which are wholly artificial, in the sense of being products of abstraction, incapable of having existed independently prior to the complex in which we distinguished them. But the elements with which genetic theory operates must have actual existence as starting points of the process. We can construe this process in one of two ways, either as forming a "whole" by *composition* out of its "parts," or by *growth* and *differentiation* out of something more primitive. In the former case, we shall be guided largely by the analogy of the conceptions of the *mechanical* sciences, in the latter of the *biological*. The former standpoint is, of course, characteristic of the older "Associationist" Psychology and need not detain us. The latter is the most common standpoint in modern Psychology. We must dwell on it for a moment, for it presents yet another line of search for the simple, and therefore leads to another kind of result. The question of principle is, in fact, whether the simple and ultimate element of which we are in search is to be taken as the last in the order of analysis, or as the first in the order of origin. We cannot answer: Both. The alternatives of this disjunction are mutually exclusive. For whatever we may posit as the first and most primitive type of mental life in the order of origin, *e.g.*, the sensation-mass, is "simple" not in the sense of being unanalysable, but only in the sense of being not yet analysed. Diversity and complexity are "latent" and "implicit" within it. Differences are there, but have not yet been "discriminated." In fact, mental development may be construed as consisting largely in this explicit differentiation, and it might reasonably be argued that out of the merely and wholly simple nothing complex could really develop at all. A psychologist sensitively critical of all his working-assumptions might at this point well be puzzled which of several different conceptions of development he is to work with, how to apportion emphasis between differentiation from within and aggregation from without, between inherited or acquired "structure" and incoming "stimulus." And one of

these days perhaps a disciple of Bergson will rewrite genetic Psychology from the standpoint of *Évolution Créatrice*.

In any case, we cannot fail to recognise that wherever the genetic standpoint is adopted in Psychology these problems are not far away. In the Psychology of Will they lead to that particularly troublesome problem of the *lower limit* of volition. At any rate, for all theories for which will implies "ideas" and, therefore, a level of cognitive development beyond the merely perceptual, it is both urgent and difficult to draw the line between what is and what just fails to be will, and to do this without postulating a break that would destroy the continuity of development. It is one thing to trace the development of volition from simpler to more complex forms; it is another to trace its development out of what is not recognisably volition at all. Yet the principle of continuity will have its revenge in urging us to specify on the pre-volitional level of mental life that process which, if it is not yet volition, at any rate fulfils the same function and supplies the basis on which volition has developed. It is tempting, of course, to treat the Sensation-Reflex and Instinctive Action as these pre-volitional stages, but in future those who do so will first have to settle their account with the Bergsonian view that instinct, so far from being a stage on the evolutionary road to intellect, is an independent, divergent and, in some respects, more important line of evolution.

However that may be, we have a definite issue on the question of the derivative character of volition and the consequences that follow from it. If volition is derivative, it cannot be a fundamental character of mental life, and even the change of terminology to "conation" or "striving" does not really help us to make it more fundamental. And, of course, no "voluntaristic" Psychology is possible. If, on the other hand, we construct a "voluntaristic" Psychology on the basis of "conation" (or whatever we may choose to call it), we run up against the difficulty that we must constantly

extend the meaning of the term far beyond the limits of the processes which we can, in our own consciousness, recognise and identify as possessing volitional character. There tends, in all these theories, to be a decided gap between the direct experience of willing and the facts which the theory forces us to treat as volitional.

At any rate, we have found that from the genetic point of view we must choose between treating volition as having developed out of a preceding and more primitive stage in which there were mental processes not yet volitional but capable of becoming so, and treating it as being itself primitive and present at the first and lowest level of anything that can be called mental life at all. Of course we can, and ought to, argue which of these alternatives it is better to adopt, but in the end we shall come back to a choice of standpoints and methods, viz., whether to begin with the introspective analysis of what we unmistakably experience as volition, or partly by inference from outward behaviour, partly by emphasis on certain features of mental processes, to construct hypothetically a conception of conation.

(b) We can deal much more briefly with the theories which treat volition as simple in the sense of unique and therefore unanalysable. About this theory little can be said, for when a thing is unanalysable, all you can do is to say so. All statements of this view, therefore, are bound to appear dogmatic; they become eloquent only in criticisms of views of the first type, for the only way of supporting the unanalysability of will is to show that all the attempts at analysis fail, in that what is offered as the result of analysis is something other than what we recognise as will. Whether analysis *does* fail or not, is, of course, itself matter of dispute, but, at any rate, the alleged failure of analysis is the only argument offered in support of the contention that will is unanalysable. That such an argument is precarious needs no pointing out, and at bottom

we come back to an assumption for which certainty is claimed in virtue of an immediate intuition. In fact, this theory of will is generally held by certain modern Neo-Realists who are also Neo-Intuitionists and who proclaim that both "knowing" (or "thinking") and willing are unanalysable. Thinking is thinking, willing is willing—and that is really all there is to say about it.

(c) But it remains to notice a view which may be regarded as a compromise between taking volition as complex and as simple. I refer to Dr. Stout's paper on Volition in the *British Journal of Psychology*, where volition is treated as a complex mental process which owes its will-character to the presence of some special element—a "felt tendency"—over and above all other elements and all complexity of structure. On this theory, I agree entirely with Professor Dawes Hicks' criticisms in his recent paper, to which I should like to add two further considerations: (i) That "tendency" here, as elsewhere in philosophy, is a question-begging word, for the conception of "tendency" involves that of "direction," and that raises the whole problem of the "awareness of direction," and of how far we have a right to predicate it of a mind to which we ascribe a "felt tendency." The phrase would be intelligible, though inappropriate, if it referred to what Stout has elsewhere called "the judgment that so far as in me lies I shall do something." Short of such an explicit judgment of the direction of a proposed act, the term "tendency," if not positively misleading, at any rate shirks the problem whether we do not lose the right to speak of "volition" or even of "conation" in proportion as the awareness of direction, of the aim or goal or purpose of the process, disappears from consciousness. I cannot help thinking that, in using "tendency," we come dangerously near committing the psychologist's fallacy of attributing to the mind which experiences the process, but is unaware of the direction in which it "tends," the knowledge

which the psychologist has of that direction. The question which must be pressed is whether a "tendency" can, properly speaking, be "felt," if feeling is explicitly taken to exclude any *thought* of the "direction" or "end" of the process.

And, secondly, to find the essence of will in a unique "felt tendency" escapes reducing the will to a species of feeling only through the ambiguity of "tendency." Once more: *What* is felt? If the answer is given in terms explicitly excluding thought of direction, we can only urge: That, after all, makes will a mere feeling. It assimilates will to the "affects." Once that issue is clearly put, we may doubt whether any psychologist is really prepared to champion that view. For, on looking more closely into all the views which identify willing with "striving" or "conative tendency," we find that they do not really mean that this peculiar "feeling" is the *whole* of the fact. Rather they treat it as belonging to a certain complex with a definite structure, and it is this complex which is really the volition *in concreto*.

At this point I may be permitted to make a positive suggestion. Is it not a mistake to isolate the will-character as a specific and unique feeling-element within the complex, and to speak as if only the addition of this element to the complex made it a "volition"? It is a view which inevitably suggests that the nature of the complex has nothing to do with the character of this feeling, that, in the absence of this feeling, the complex, though otherwise unchanged, would not be a volition. Surely we ought not in this way to divorce the will-character of the experience from the rest of its nature or structure. Would it not be better to hold that, whilst the experience of willing is unique, yet it is also complex in that it has a definite and analysable structure? On this view, then, volition will be both complex and, in a sense, simple: complex in structure, but simple and unique in its character *as a whole*. Since labels are convenient, I will call the principle, which seems to me to be here involved, the *Principle of Psychic*

*Wholes.** On this principle, which will, of course, extend to psychic complexes other than volition, volition will be a process analysable into elements, an experience with a determinate structure. Yet it will, at the same time, *as a whole*, have a character which is simple, in the sense of unanalysable, in that we cannot break it up into, or substitute for it, the elements which we can distinguish within the experience. In short, I would suggest that we have not got "will" or "volition" where we have not an experience of determinate structure, but that the character of this experience as a whole is unique and not analysable into the character of anything else.

Along some such line as this we may reach an acceptable compromise and avoid either of two extreme views, viz., the view that will is will and not further analysable, and the view which would dissolve will into a complex of other mental elements, which neither in themselves, nor in their combination, possess the characteristic will-character. For the rest of this paper, then, I shall assume that we are dealing with an experience of a determinate structure.

II.

Does "Realisation" or "Action" belong to the Essence of Volition?

Passing, now, to the structure of volition, we may deal first with that important group of problems which arise when we ask whether the carrying out of a decision, the realisation of a purpose, the fulfilling of a desire—in short "action"—is an essential part of volition. The question is full of difficulties, as

* I use "whole" here to express that I am referring to complexes which are more than mere aggregates or compounds. The Principle was, I think, suggested to me by the Principle of Organic Wholes in Mr. G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica*, though I do not know how far Mr. Moore would approve of the use I have here made of it.

may perhaps best be seen by reformulating it: What constitutes for a Psychologist a *complete* volition? (a) Is volition complete with the "act" of decision or resolution? Or (b) is it complete with incipient realisation? Or (c) is it complete only with full realisation? Whichever alternative we adopt, awkward "posers" can be put to us. To mention but a few by anticipation: if we adopt (a), we exclude from volition every process which does not involve deliberation, preference, choice, and on the other hand we include those idle resolutions of the weak-willed man which are never carried out. If we adopt (b), we shall get into difficulties over those volitions in which realisation is attempted but fails, or is abandoned from lack of persistence, or produces results far different from those intended or expected. If we adopt (c), we shall be pressed with the awkward question whether anything short of a "complete" volition, *i.e.*, one which has ended in full and successful realisation, can be called a "volition" at all. The argument is: If the essence of volition includes realisation, then short of realisation we have not got the essence, and therefore not volition.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, I am bound to confess that to my mind the most satisfactory theory of volition is one which includes "realisation" or "action." This view, of course, is best known in the formulæ that "volition is the realisation of an idea" or "the self-realisation of an idea," or "the realisation of an idea with which the self is identified." The second and third of these formulæ involve special problems which we will postpone for the present. And even the first formula is for our present purposes satisfactory only if we are allowed to take its terms in a wholly *non-technical* sense—a sense which is perhaps best expressed by saying that to "will" is to adopt and carry out a purpose or plan. No doubt, this is only a rough-and-ready description in terms which purchase intelligibility at the price of being unscientific. The main point is that we must rule out from present discussion the various

technical senses of the term "idea." We do not, *e.g.*, want to be drawn into a metaphysical argument concerning Mr. F. H. Bradley's theory of "ideas," because Mr. Bradley happens to be one of the foremost defenders in recent times of the view that volition is "realisation of an idea." To go into the philosophical questions which centre round "idea" would require a separate paper. My present concern is merely to discuss some problems which can be quite satisfactorily dealt with if we give to "idea," without any *arrière pensée*, the simple meaning of "purpose" or "plan." "To have an idea" is, I take it, a synonym for "to think." So far, then, as there is an idea-element in volition, it means that we think of something to be done, a result to be achieved, an object which will satisfy a desire and is attainable, *e.g.*, by certain movements. There are countless different ways in which thinking of this kind enters into willing. And when we want a comprehensive term to refer to what is thus thought of, we speak of "purpose," or "object of will," or "aim," or "end." We need not, then, for the present take "idea" to mean more than this kind of thinking.

In this way, we shall secure several advantages: (a) We shall not wholly lose touch with the meaning which, in ordinary life, is attached to "willing"; (b) We shall include what is the most important part, if not the whole, of the meaning of "will" in Ethics and Politics, where "purpose" and "decision" are certainly not to be cut off from action and conduct; (c) We shall not break with philosophical tradition. For the view which includes realisation in will can be traced back at least as far as Kant, and it has been supported again and again by most of the great thinkers since Kant, both in England and on the Continent.

Before passing on to details, a reminder may be appropriate of how the *Principle of Psychic Wholes* applies to the problem under discussion. That the adoption and realisation of a purpose is a process which may be lengthy and complicated is

obvious. And it should be equally obvious that we shall miss the essence of it if we take a cross-section of the course of such an experience at any particular moment. For instance, a cross-section during the stage of deliberation, prior to decision, gives clearly something less than will, something "not yet" will. A cross-section during the stage of realisation, after decision—what does that give? Something "after" will, something "no longer" will, a mere "consequence" of it? Surely, such a view is, to say the least of it, strained. We surely are still "willing" when we are carrying out a decision. And, *per contra*, we may now say that, in so far as we were seeking a decision, seeking to "make up" our minds, we were "willing" before as well. Still, we may see here how it is possible to sympathise with all the various views which look for the essence of volition somehow and somewhere in the moment of decision. We then get all the problems centring round the medley of theories offered by James in his *Principles of Psychology*, e.g., that decision consists in the "concentration of the attention" on the idea of the act, or in the "consent given" to the idea, or in the "fiat of the will" which releases the springs of action. But what of volitions not preceded by deliberation and decision? Or, in other words, is "ideo-motor" action to be treated as volition or not? If it is not, the theories just mentioned are far too narrow; if it is, they do not give the essence of volition.

In short, the Principle of Psychic Wholes challenges the Principle of Analysis by Cross-sections. The latter analysis is useful for accumulating details, but can give no comprehensive view of the nature of a psychic fact which, as a whole, extends beyond the present moment. To fix on one stage of, or incident in, a process and acclaim it as the essence of that process is, surely, a misuse of the method of cross-sections. We cannot thus do justice to the stages and the structure of a *process as a whole* at all. No doubt we may argue as to where the process should be taken to begin and where to end, but we

cannot really solve this problem by concentrating its whole essence into one moment of its course.

However, passing from these general considerations, let us raise the clear issue: Should "realisation" be included in, or excluded from, volition? Or to put it differently: Is a volition for psychological theory complete without realisation? Or again: Does the essence of volition, for Psychology, consist simply in "decision," or (where there is no decision because there has been no deliberation) in the "dominance" of an "idea"?

As always in Psychology, the answer to these questions depends, in the last resort, on certain assumptions, which are matters of principle. There are, broadly speaking, two stand-points: (i) There is the standpoint of those who start with some principle of distinction between "mental" and "physical" or "bodily" processes, who confine Psychology to the study of mental processes, and for whom Psychology ends where the "mental" passes into the "physical," the "idea" into "bodily movement." At that point, they would draw the line. On the mental side, and therefore for Psychological Theory, volition is complete with the dominance (however brought about) of the "idea" in consciousness. The "realisation" through the bodily organism lies outside its sphere. Psychologically, it is not part of volition. It should be noted, however, that on this view realisations which remain within the mental sphere, *e.g.*, voluntary recall, cannot be excluded from the province of Psychology, and the problem whether or no they should be included in volition is therefore not solved by the initial assumptions. (ii) There is the standpoint of those who avoid the whole problem—who, in fact, might fairly be said to "beg" the whole question—by setting themselves *ab initio* the task of analysing, not so much *volition*, as *voluntary action*. Now if we could look upon this as a deliberate attempt to return to a more concrete point of view, and to avoid some of the abstractions which stultify Psychology, it would deserve to be

heartily welcomed. But, unfortunately, it is not uncommon to find this very view combined with assumptions which wholly contradict it. To put the matter in a nutshell: if we want to have an intelligible theory of voluntary action, and especially of voluntary movement, we must not start off at the beginning with some theory of the distinction and relation of body and soul which makes all reference to action and movement in principle impossible. It does not matter much whether our theory be one of Interaction or of Parallelism. Either may be so formulated as to involve the fatal consequence. By way of illustration, let us consider the position of a Parallelist who deals with volition as voluntary action.

(a) First of all, we do, of course, want some methodological device for delimiting the respective spheres of Psychology and Physiology, and to prevent, on the part of either, that *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος* which is the source of all confusion of thought in science.

(b) But if, for this purpose, we adopt some sort of distinction between body and soul, at least we ought not to formulate it in such a way that it makes our conception of mental processes, and consequently our Psychology, falsely abstract. This is what inevitably happens when the distinction between the "internal," "mental" process and the "external," "physical" process is so drawn that the one ends where the other begins. From that position only one conclusion can be consistently drawn, viz., that "voluntary action" is a process of which the first half is mental, the second half physical, and that for the Psychologist, who is concerned with the mental half, volition is complete with the inward "fiat" or the "concentration of the attention on the idea." The other half of the process, the "realisation," will lie with the physical machinery and fall, strictly, outside the scope of Psychology.

(c) But in thus construing mental process as passing at a certain point into physical process, are we not overlooking

the fact that when we take stock of the *prima facie* sequence of mental process, *the experience of realisation frequently follows upon decision?* It is one thing to say that this sequence presupposes a bodily organisation, without which it could not happen at all. It is quite another thing to neglect or deny the sequence altogether. The realisation of purposes is as much part of the mental process as the purposes themselves. For this realisation, even though it consist of bodily movements and their effects in the "physical" world, is *de facto* experienced, and from this side of our perceiving it or inferring it or believing in it, it belongs to the mental series.

If this is clearly grasped, two important consequences follow :—

(1) *We cannot intelligibly construe the mental series at all if we abstract from its cognitive function.* We cannot intelligibly deal with the nexus of our perceptions and thoughts, with the way in which they refer to one another and have significance for one another, except through their "contents,"* *i.e.*, through *what* we perceive, think, etc. A certain thought, let us say, is followed by certain perceptions. We can construe this sequence as purpose and realisation only because we *de facto* experience *what* we perceive as being the fulfilment, the making real, of *what* we intended. The "actual" movement and its effects are experienced as realising the intended movement and effects. No abstraction of the "that" of conscious process from the "what" can give us a satisfactory basis for Psychology. Experiences, taken in abstraction from

* I doubt whether this term, however popular, is really helpful. It was introduced, I suppose, in order to eliminate the problem of the relation of the knowing mind to the object-world. In dealing with "anoëtic" consciousness, where "object" would be an inappropriate term, "content" has its uses. But, as a substitute for "object," it leads to needless abstraction. We may as well face the fact at once that, in judgment, we claim to apprehend a real "object-world" when we perceive and think. Psychology, however, need not go behind the claim.

what is experienced, are so empty and featureless that no significant sequence can be constructed out of them at all.

(2) If this be granted, we have a means of distinguishing between legitimate and illegitimate Parallelism. It is legitimate when with experiences (psychical processes) it correlates neural or cerebral processes which do not enter into the "what" of experience at all. It is illegitimate when it is substituted for the cognitive function of experiences in relation to their "objects," *i.e.*, when the experience of $x, y, z \dots$ is split up into two parallel series, of which the one consists of "mental," the other of "physical" factors, the one of perceptions and thoughts, the other of the objects perceived or thought about. None the less, there can be found statements of Parallelism which, in language at any rate, are committed to this position. It is a position which is attained with insidious facility. For the cerebro-neural organisation, which, as we have seen, is not part of the object-world apprehended, yet forms with the body and with the rest of that object-world (which we do apprehend) part of a physical system. Hence the Parallelism which holds for part is easily extended to the whole, particularly when there is a causal nexus between the neural process (unperceived) and the movement with its effects (perceived). Thus there result statements of Parallelism which begin by so contrasting the "mental" and the "physical" series that their cognitive relation is destroyed. Once that is done, they are precluded from moving in both the "inner" and the "outer" worlds simultaneously; they have no right to jump from "internal" idea to "external" realisation, from "mental" purpose to "physical" movement. Yet such hybrid processes, compounded of psychical and physical factors are frequently offered by the very men whose initial theory insists on a clean separation. Their Parallelism is often little more than an ornamental flourish which gives a scientific air to a chapter on Body and Soul. If they were consistent even in their own interpretation of Parallelism they would at least

analyse voluntary action not as a sequence of "idea" and "action," but as a physical sequence of brain-process—muscular movement—physical effect of movement, running parallel to a psychical sequence of idea (purpose)—perception of movement—perception and inference of effect. But it is clear that the psychical side of this Parallelism can be stated intelligibly only in terms of its cognitive relation to the last two terms of the physical series. And even then the Parallelism is misleading, because what is parallel is not the movement as "external" and the perception of it as "internal," but the perception of the movement and some cerebro-neural process which is not perceived at all. Let me repeat it once more: any attempt to delimit the sphere of Psychology by defining psychical processes as "internal" in such a way that their cognitive relation to the "external" is destroyed, leads to nothing but an artificial mutilation of experience which is even for Psychology unworkable. For, in the concrete, just as in perception and thought we apprehend an object-world, so in willing we transform that world by realising our purposes in it. All theories of volition which fail to do justice to this situation, whether it be by drawing the line between "mental" decision and "physical" movement or by a false Parallelism, have been found to rest, at bottom, on false initial abstractions. They must give way before the pressure of analysis from a more concrete standpoint. One direction from which this pressure constantly comes is that of Ethics and Politics. Men have psychologised from an interest in Ethics long before they psychologised from an interest in Psychology. And the psychological analysis of conduct in Ethics has been in the past, and is often still being, conducted in comparative independence of Psychology pure and simple. It appears to me that, if the ethical thinker has suffered from the disadvantage of not surveying the whole field systematically, he has, as a set-off, had the advantage of not being committed, *ab initio*, to false abstractions. He has fashioned his theory of

the will under the full pressure of the concrete fact which we call "conduct." If he distinguishes "inner" and "outer," "purpose" and "action," "character" and "life," yet he also holds these together as merely aspects, and inseparable, mutually complementary aspects, of the whole concrete fact. He knows that any separation of "intelligence" and "will" from their "world" and their "expression" in that world, leads to absurdities. There are many detailed problems about the will which the psychologist legitimately debates, but in which the ethical thinker has no interest. But I should like to put forward the proposition that *no psychological theory of will, which does not supply a satisfactory basis for Ethics, can be accepted as satisfactory* even for Psychology, at any rate, if we demand of a satisfactory theory that it should deal with the *whole* fact with which it professes to deal. I should even be inclined to extend this proposition to Politics, for the psychological basis of which professed psychologists have so far done singularly little, notwithstanding volumes on *Völkerpsychologie*.^{*} But to this topic I shall return in the last section of this paper.

III.

What are the Limits of a Single Volition within the Stream of Consciousness?

This question does not, perhaps, express very clearly the nature of the problems which I propose to discuss next. They are problems which, so far as I am aware, have hardly been appreciated, still less discussed, by psychologists. They are all of them problems which arise from the *serial* character of the stream of consciousness—problems, in short, to which one

^{*} Of course, the study of Psychology from the explicitly social or political point of view has not been wholly neglected. Not to mention German and French writers, I may refer to the very striking psychological chapter in Bosanquet's *Philosophical Theory of the State*, and to McDougall's *Social Psychology*.

commits oneself by assuming the "stream" as one's fundamental working-conception.

(a) Broadly, the question of what constitutes a *single* volition is a special case of the general problem: what constitutes a single mental fact or process of any kind, *e.g.*, a single perception, a single thought, a single feeling. Or when should we rather speak of a *cluster* or a *series* of distinct experiences? *E.g.*, when I handle, taste, and smell a fruit, have I a single complex perception or three distinct perceptions, be they simultaneous or successive? The question, in this form, may hardly seem worth asking. One is tempted to reply that it is a matter of choice and that it makes little difference which view one chooses. Let us then look more closely at the more difficult problems of analysis which come under this head.

(b) We have seen already that, though there may be volitions in which thought and action occupy but a moment, most volitions extend through a more or less lengthy space of time. To experience volitions of this kind is to go through a process: in willing we are always in transition. Now Psychology wants to deal with the "whole" fact, but what is the whole fact and how is it accessible? Clearly, it will not help to whittle down the fact to the present moment—in psychological language the "specious present." Clearly, most volitions are not confined within the bounds of the mere instant. We cannot get the whole fact together, *totum simul*, by treating it as if it were instantaneous, as little as we can get at it by selecting any instant and treating it as if it were the whole. Retrospectively, of course, when a volition has run its course, we can deal with it as a whole. But with a present volition, now in course of being experienced or lived through, we cannot deal in this way. At any given moment, if we take an introspective cross-section of the stream of consciousness, we get but a small section out of a continuous process, of which part lies in the past and part belongs to the future.

Its past course we can more or less completely recall, its future course more or less completely anticipate, but the whole of the fact is not actually experienced at any one moment at all. The "whole" volition, then, the psychologist's "fact," is more or less largely what, in technical language, is called an "ideal construction"—an expansion and interpretation of present experience by memory and anticipation.

Perhaps we are beginning to see now why it is not always easy to assign the limits of any single volition. The same—we may incidentally remark—is, of course, true also of the stream of consciousness as a whole. The actuality at any given moment is poor in meaning and content compared with its expansion by memory and thought.

(c) But the problem goes deeper still. We have agreed that it would be a false method to try to attain completeness by whittling a psychical fact down to the minimum of thought, sensation, feeling, etc., of which our experience consists at any given moment. We have also agreed that there is always, in greater or less degree, the expansion of the present by ideal reference to past and future. But how far ought we to go in this direction? *How far should we credit present consciousness with what is implicit in it, but not actually thought of?* This is a crucial and far-reaching problem, which ought not to be neglected in Psychology, even if it did not crop up constantly in discussions of conduct from the standpoints of Ethics and Politics. In view of the fact that, later on in the year, I am to take part in a symposium on this very problem of the Implicit in mental processes, I may be excused if I touch only on a few points here. In a general way, of course, psychologists have always recognised that present experience owes most of its meaning and significance to its implications, that organised past experience is effective in present perception and thought, and makes them, so to speak, intelligent without needing to be always explicitly recalled. But it has not always been equally fully realised that the recognition of this fact is really

inconsistent with the conception of the stream of consciousness. For that conception rests on the time-scheme in which the past is no longer, the future not yet, real; whereas the past which is implicit in the present, like the past which is actually recalled, cannot simply be called "past" and "unreal." This, I take it, is the fundamental truth underlying Bergson's conception of *durée*. But, again, in what way are the implications contained in the present? The sentences, *e.g.*, which I am writing now, are but a small section of the total volition which will not be complete except with the end of this paper, yet the whole plan and purpose, though I can make them explicit to myself, if I choose, are not present to me when I am concentrated on the particular point on which I am writing. So, again, a comprehensive moral purpose, a resolution to live up to some general principle of good conduct, may be realised on particular occasions, without any need to call to mind the full nexus of thought, reflexion and resolution, which is implicit in the particular act. So a man's work in his profession might be looked upon as the sustained and continuous realisation of a single comprehensive purpose. Even life as a whole might, with due allowance for conflicting purposes and lack of system, be interpreted in this way. But how little of a whole scheme of life, or perhaps of a whole "Weltanschauung," need actually be present to consciousness at any given moment in which, none the less, it must be regarded as implied. Has any psychologist ever properly written the Psychology of these "psychical facts"? Has anyone fully investigated the way in which implications are effective in present consciousness? Or what mental organisation we must assume to explain them, other than the crude conception of traces or dispositions? Or the way in which a given purpose grows and gets modified under the pressure of further experience

* James's theory of "psychic fringes," or, again, Wundt's theory of "Apperceptive Masses" might, perhaps, be adapted for the purpose.

and in the attempts to realise it? Or the difference between implications which were once explicit and are now implied, in the sense of taken for granted, and implications which are fresh discoveries, which only come to light by a special effort, not of memory, but of analysis and reflection? Are these latter part of the fact or not? And if not, why not? Clearly the whole subject of implication requires investigation, if we are to deal adequately with facts such as I have mentioned. And everywhere, according as we disregard or include implications, we can fix the limits of what we are to treat as a single volition differently. It is difficult enough to decide whether implications which were not thought of are to be treated as part of the fact. It is even more difficult when, in taking account of implications, we come face to face with the fact that what seemed separate and distinct volitions are, after all, but parts of, or stages in, the realisation of a single comprehensive purpose.

(d) After all that has been said, it is hardly necessary to point to yet another instance of the same difficulty. How are we to deal with *intervals* or breaks of continuity? Where these occur, are we to treat the discrete experiences as separate volitions, or as parts or fragments of single volitions? After all, there would seem to be comprehensive volitions in our lives which, with interruptions and resumptions, cover large portions of our existence. But have psychologists always been ready to permit so bold a use of the principle of identity? Or have they considered how far current abstractions would have to be abandoned or recast to make this use possible?

IV.

What is the Relation of "Volition" to the "Will," and of the Will of the Individual to the Will of the State?

The transition to these two questions from the group of problems which we have just discussed is not as forced as, perhaps, it seems at first sight. For, in truth, they contain the

same demand for a more concrete theory of willing. They involve an even bolder and more extended application of the principle of identity: they follow up in fresh directions the clue of *sameness* or *identity*. The questions of principle which I wish briefly to raise are: Has Psychology done all that it can legitimately be asked to do when it has treated of "volitions" as so many isolated happenings in the "stream of consciousness" which stands, in Psychology, for an individual mind? Or should it not *in* and *behind* "volitions" seek a "Will"? Again, does the interplay of the wills of individuals lie, on principle, outside the limits which Psychology has set to its inquiry? Or should it not give us a Theory of this interaction of minds in the sphere of their willing? Should it not examine whether it is not possible to view, not only the "volitions" of one mind as expressions of one "Will," but the "Wills" of many minds, under certain conditions, as expressions of one Will of a yet higher order? Has Psychology no concern with what is called in the Philosophical Theory of the State the "Real Will"? Has it no concern even with what politicians call the "Will of the People"? It is when one follows the clue of the term "Will" into these regions that current Psychology ceases to be one's companion. The point to be pressed is: Does Psychology lag behind merely because these problems lie beyond its present achievement? Or is it because they lie beyond its deliberate scope and intention? Does it claim these problems as its own—a field yet unworked? Or does it exclude them on principle? These are the questions of principle to which, in the final section, I want to draw attention.

(a) In the first section of this paper I gave some reasons for preferring to regard volition, not as an "aspect" or "character" of experiences, but as a concrete experience with a determinate structure and a unique quality as a whole. In all subsequent discussion, I had tacitly assumed that "volitions" in this sense are distinct, particular incidents in the stream of consciousness. The

search for the essential nature of volition had been interpreted to mean the search for the abstract class-character, in the language of Logie, of particular volitions, for the "intension" of the term "volition," a definition of the kind or type of structure peculiar to any experience, which deserved to be called a volition, and not to be found in any other experiences. Similarly, I had so far taken for granted that the term "stream of consciousness" is likewise an "abstract universal," fixing the standpoint from which the experiences of any and every individual "mind" may be construed. But so far the fact that particular volitions not only *occur*, but *appear to be connected*, in a given "stream of consciousness" or "individual mind" had been neglected and treated as irrelevant. And, similarly, the interrelation of individual minds and the fact that the volitions of one mind stand in different kinds of relations to the volitions of other minds had been kept out of sight. The question is: Can Psychology refuse to deal with these questions and, if so, on what principle?

(b) Now the assumption on which most Psychologists *de facto* argue is that of the existence of individual minds as isolated and distinct "centres of consciousness." Not that this standpoint is consistently maintained—*e.g.*, the treatment of "language" or of "intersubjective intercourse" would else be almost impossible—but it is currently the only one which is explicitly professed, either because it is the natural standpoint for introspection with its thesis that everyone is aware directly only of his own states of mind, and, at best, only inferentially of the states of other minds, or because experiences do not occur or exist *in vacuo*, as it were, but require to be referred to "centres." The psychologist is not a solipsist: he assumes the existence of distinct minds whose processes he investigates. But what is it that determines the attribution of given experiences to one "stream" rather than to another? The fact that each mind claims its own and distinguishes them from those of others. The simplest, and in the way of thought-

economy the cheapest way of theorising this fact is to group experiences round individual "centres." Of course, such a point of reference is far too abstract and empty to serve any useful purpose except in the first tentative gropings of Psychology. Psychology soon finds that it cannot really shut its eyes to the fact that the experiences of a given centre do not merely occur and succeed one another in the "stream," but have a definite nexus, a community of character, due to their belonging to this and to no other centre. Amongst the particular volitions which occur on the surface, so to speak, of the stream, we can soon trace a connexion. As we saw in the last section, with whatever breaks, intervals and modifications, particular volitions appear to point to one another, to be connected as parts of the same volition, or to be recurrent expressions, in response to recurrent situations, of some permanent and abiding purpose. Especially does this conclusion become irresistible, when we follow the clue of implications—at any rate, if we have decided that these are not, on principle, to be excluded. In short, we cannot well stop at particular volitions and the problem of their class-character—we are driven on by the pressure of concrete nexus to something like a "Standing Will" expressing itself *in* and *through* particular volitions. Of course, the analysis here follows the so-called "content," the positive "what" of purpose, and its result is not anything that can be called a "process" or "event" in quite the sense in which the terms apply to particular volitions. Instead we get some sort of abiding and permanent principle or system, or even a complex, or maybe a hierarchy, of systems, more or less harmoniously related to one another, and constituting "character" or "self." Our abstract "centres" of experience have become very concrete when they have been thus transformed into "selves" conceived as systems of interests and preferences. Most Psychologists follow the road from abstract to concrete so far—more or less. Few make clear the change of standpoint involved in passing from the

conception of mind simply as a continuous series (stream) of experiences to the conception of it as a self-centred system expressing itself in a series of experiences. Many oscillate from the one standpoint to the other, apparently without being aware of their own acrobatics.

(c) As regards the "self" and its relation to "volition" and "will" I need not say much, seeing that Professor Hicks has dealt very fully with this side of the problem in the paper to which I have referred already. There is, however, one point of immense importance which must be made clear. To speak of the "self" as a "system" of interests, etc., is no solution at all for the problems of *self-consciousness*. There is the fact that one of the most frequent experiences with which the psychologist has to credit his "centres" is each centre's awareness of itself as "self" and distinct from "others." This tremendous paradox of a fact is brought no nearer to our understanding by the conception of "system." From a spectator-standpoint we can describe a self as a system, and a self can so describe itself when, in reflection, it takes up the spectator-standpoint towards itself, but the immediate experience of self-consciousness is not thereby made intelligible. And this gives rise to the question whether we should not reserve the term "self" for those minds which are capable of self-consciousness in any one of all the different forms which it can take. In short, I seem to find the psychological use of the term "self" oscillate, without definite principle, and often without consciousness of the difference, between its application to a mind because it is a system and its application to it because that mind is capable of self-consciousness. It is on the basis of this second sense of "self" that all the questions about the relation of self-consciousness to "volition" and "will" arise in their most troublesome form. Must a mind (or soul) be capable of self-consciousness before we can say of it that it is capable of willing, *i.e.*, of carrying out a purpose or plan, of realising an "object" or "end"? Or, again, must

a mind be conscious of itself as a system, and determine its purposes on particular occasions by reflexion on the abiding preferences and principles which constitute its character, before we can say that it "wills"? If I have understood Professor Hicks correctly, he would answer "Yes" to both these questions. Yet, if we adopt that principle, large masses of mental processes, even in self-conscious minds, to say nothing of young children and animals, will be, on principle, excluded from "volition," *e.g.*, all impulses, desires, appetites, in which, however unreflective they may be, there is some thought of what is wanted. Would it not be well here to recognise the existence of "volitions" below the level both of "will" in the sense of some sort of system (it need not be more than habit) and of self-consciousness? It seems to me that experiences having the characteristic structure of volitions might well be allowed to occur at levels of mental life, where the impulse of the moment is not yet controlled by system, still less by reflective distinction of self and not-self.* On our decision of these questions depends, again, our attitude towards Dr. Bradley's phrases about volition being the "self-realisation of an idea" or the "realisation of an idea with which the self is identified." Critics have rightly complained of the ambiguity of these phrases, and it is indeed not easy to find out in what sense exactly Dr. Bradley intends them to be understood. In the first, apparently, the idea is supposed to realise itself—a view which is probably the result of the importation of a meta-physical theory into psychological analysis. In the second, the mind, not its idea, is the "self" referred to, but whether this

* Not to burden this paper unduly, I omit detailed discussion of the question whether the pathological phenomena of "fixed idea," etc., should be treated as "volitions," even though they lead to action against the explicit "will" of the "self." I should say they are volitions in fact and in principle, for we must admit that there may be any degree of disorganisation within the "self"; and why not use the conception of a perverted or morbid volition or will? Abnormal willing does not destroy the essential nature of willing.

identification with an idea implies self-consciousness or not, is not clear. It might mean no more than that the mind *de facto* has a certain purpose or desires a certain object. It might mean, also, that the mind reflectively has adopted that purpose or entertains the desire as congruent with itself. I mention these theories only to illustrate how necessary it is to be clear, on principle, about the sense in which "self" is to be treated as belonging to, or being excluded from, the essence of the experience of willing. And if this is clearly seen, we need not follow up the various complications of willing which result from complex modes of self-consciousness, *e.g.*, the contrast between "actual" and "ideal" self.

(d) Lastly, should the Psychologist, on principle, stop short at the distinction of individual minds or selves, and take it as his ultimate basis? Or should he follow up the interrelations of minds and mental processes, and examine the principles on which such an inquiry should be conducted and justified? And if he decides to include these interrelations within the scope of his inquiry, he may set himself two tasks, viz. (i) to trace the typical modifications of the processes of any individual mind by the action upon it of other minds; and (ii) to trace the processes of the "social mind." A good deal of psychological work on the lines of the former task has already been done. But, as regards the second task, most psychologists would, I take it, definitely exclude it from the scope of Psychology. It certainly raises the important questions of principle, whether the phenomena of social life and social action can be adequately theorised with the help of the conceptions merely of "individual mind" and "interrelation" or "interaction" in an "organisation of minds," or whether we shall not be driven to the conception of a "social mind," or, though the phrase is paradoxical, a "mind of society." In short, does Psychology stop at *individual minds in society* as its upper limit, or should it go on to the *mind of society existing in and expressing itself through the minds of its individual members*? The question is

the more worth pressing because, as a matter of fact, if psychologists do not stop at individual minds in social intercourse, they pass on to individual minds when collected in crowds, and speak of the "*mind of a crowd*." But can Psychology stop there? Why, if a crowd can be said to have a "mind" in more than a merely metaphorical sense, should we not pass on from "crowd" to "society"? From the chance-interest of the moment which draws together the one, to the supra-individual community of purposes that holds together the members of the other? In answer to these questions, much will depend on how we have decided some earlier questions of principle. If, *e.g.*, we have decided to include "realisation" in the essential structure of volition, we can hardly exclude those modes of realisation where our purposes become effective not merely through our bodies in the physical environment, but *in* and *through* other minds. If, *e.g.*, my servant wills to do *my* will, makes *my* will *his* own, where and what is the limit of that volition, concretely taken? Can we confine even the single volition always within the limits of the "individual" mind as distinct from "other" minds? And without touching on the many legal and moral problems here arising, do we not get the same problem on the largest and most complex scale when the individual's will is the organ of the State's will? The alternatives are: either to say "hands off" to Psychology in the face of this problem, or to tackle it, and in doing so to raise the question of principle whether an adequate theory requires merely the interrelation of individual minds or a single mind of a higher order of which "individual" minds are, as it were, the organs. In short, what are the least abstract principles which Social Psychology requires?