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FOUR AMERICAN ARTICLES ON INTROSPECTION

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The articles by Titchener (3 and 4) are to be followed by more on the same topic: Dodge (1) also refers to future studies in this field: Dunlap's article (2) is considered final in itself.

Each of the men uses the term "introspection" in a different sense, and their conclusions are naturally different as to the place of "introspection" in psychology. Dodge argues that inner perceptions are creative, and give only one indication of the mental reality. Titchener argues that analytic descriptive observation of experience is the essential method of psychology. Dunlap asserts that awareness of awareness does not exist. A résumé of each article follows.

Dodge remarks the general neglect of an examination of introspection: Müller's recent work is a good exception.

Current psychology is apt to assume a dualism, and to assert that only the material obtained by introspection is material for psychology, all else being merely physiological or physical. Psychology might be defined on this basis, of course, but we should then recognize the existence of another, broader science, "a science of the conditions of human experience, conduct, and personality" (p. 217), which would draw its facts from pathology, neurology, and behavior of animals as well as from introspection.

There is no doubt of the possibility of introspection, in the sense.

of observation of mental fact; we cannot question that the mind does perceive itself. Introspection is of great importance for a science of human experience, and "the precise phenomena which it mediates are given in no other way" (p. 215). But introspection is itself a mental fact, and must therefore be capable of psychological analysis and investigation, and its adequacy must be criticized. "Additional facilities in introspection would doubtless, as Kant suggests, turn humanity into a race of hypochondriacs" (p. 220).

Historically there have been two chief theories of introspection: (1) introspective realism, the theory that knowledge of one's own mental life is immediate and adequate; (2) introspective phenomenalism, the theory that "the inner life like the outer gives us only phenomena" (p. 219). This theory originated with Tetens and Kant; it has never become generally accepted; but Dodge considers it the correct one.

Every perception is an active, elaborative process, and involves an "apperceptive system." Man has an inner sense as well as an outer sense; and the perceptive process of the inner sense involves the same sort of apperceptive elaboration as does the perceptive process of the outer sense, but with peculiar apperceptive systems of its own.

The facts of psychology "differ from the physical facts entirely in their noetic setting, not in the stuff" (p. 221). The stuff is always integrated with one or another of the systematic groupings of experience. For the science of psychology there is an abstraction from the spatial attributes of the stuff.

The self-perception of introspection does not imply any "division of the self into observed and observing, different from that which occurs in every moment of attentive observation" (p. 222).

Training is necessary to the practice of introspection as to that of any other method of science. The result of such training is that the apperceptive systems of the observer create a practically ineradicable bias, and predetermine the result of the observation.

If the observed consciousness is itself the product of an elaborative observation, then the pristine non-conscious data, and also the process of elaboration, must both escape our introspective observation. And if a certain apperceptive system is necessary to the perception of any given element of consciousness, then it may well be that some actual elements must escape any introspection now possible. And "if consciousness itself, for the sake of argument, should be regarded as a process of integration, could the process itself ever get integrated in terms of its resultants?" (p. 224).

The fields of the subconscious or uncleared give some empirical basis for believing the scope of introspection is actually thus very limited.

"Simple sensations" are hypostatized "abstract qualities of consciousness" (p. 225). Introspection can never disclose "the stuff out of which consciousness is made," nor the total of "the apperceptive masses on which any given moment of awareness depends," nor "the causal relations of any fact of consciousness," nor "the psychical dispositions, psychophysical or physiological residua, engrams, or whatever we may for convenience call them" (p. 226). And there is reason to think that these are not even of the same nature as the consciousness that is observed.

"On these considerations the methodological dogma that all mental reality is subjectively observable and conversely that the subjectively observable alone is mental reality seems to me utterly unjustifiable. Moreover, analogy of the successful empirical sciences is opposed to it" (p. 227). We should use introspection as only one of the indicators of mental reality, and realize that knowledge of the mental reality itself must be reached by construction which uses other data also. The construction must however be that of science, not that of metaphysics.

Titchener (3) shows that psychologists now generally agree that introspection "is the one distinctively psychological method, and all data must, if they are to become psychological, be interpreted in the light of introspection" (p. 433). There would be a logical possibility, however, of some psychology without any introspection.

There are gross differences in the meaning of the term: to some it means a moralizing absorption in considering the value of one's experiences, and is justly considered morbid: to others it means a rationalizing interpretation of one's experience in terms of some philosophical system, and is considered incapable of producing agreement as to the facts of consciousness. The impersonal, critical, natural-science method of introspection is still often confused with these.

It is true that contradictory results have been produced by introspection in recent psychological work; but every science shows similar facts; and there is no sound reason for thinking unity of result cannot be attained in psychology. It is impossible to experiment without theories, but it is perfectly possible to alter theories to fit observed fact.

Introspection implies self-consciousness in one sense, but not at all in the sense sometimes assumed, that the mind in some way

gets outside itself, and is then aware of itself as observer and as observed and also of the relation of observation between the two. Introspection is an interrogation of experience, issuing ultimately from conscious purpose, and implying self-consciousness "only in the sense and to the degree in which all scientific observation, that of physics and chemistry included, implies self-consciousness" (p. 440).

Introspection is not necessarily a conscious process: the state of observing tends to become mechanized: it may exist as an occasional conscious process, but as such it is yet little known.

Non-introspective characterizations of mind are made also, from many different points of view, *e. g.*, of biology, and of every-day converse. Introspection is simply the observation from the point of view of descriptive psychology. As such it requires experiments and trained observers.

We cannot ask of introspection that it should give a system of psychology, for a system always involves explanatory principles which are not themselves to be found among the data of the science.

In his second article Titchener (4) starts from a consideration of introspection as a generic term: different methods are required according to the experiences to be observed, the purpose of the experiment, and the instruction, even when the various subjective conditions have been standardized. These methods must, however, be all alike in accepting the point of view of descriptive psychology, and therefore in looking for data and not for explanations. They are also alike in having essentially the same character as the inspection methods—observation and experiment—employed in the natural sciences. Introspection is perhaps simply the old method used with a new mental attitude. It is probably wise to retain the name, at any rate. Failure to appreciate that the attitude *is* different may lead to the "stimulus error," the falsification of the actual psychological data to fit some theory taken from another science. The observer must also be trained: a "phenomenology" which depends on naïve, common-sense accounts cannot be adequate for science.

The full method of introspection involves apperception or appraisal of processes or states, and also a record of the apperception. A schema of introspection given by Müller is paraphrased and provisionally accepted by Titchener. The apperception may be simultaneous with the process observed (direct introspection), or it may be of a memory-image of the process (indirect introspection). Classification may perhaps, however, be better made according to the character of the description: (1) immediate description, of an immediate process; or (2) mediate description, on the basis of present

apperception of a memory image of the process, or on the basis of a remembered apperception which was simultaneous with the process, or on a mixture of these. Müller's next distinction is important: the consciousness observed is *controlled* if it arises under the influence of introspective intent and becomes the object of special attention; it is *free* if it is neither influenced nor evoked in this way; but the distinction between free and controlled is not always sharp. This distinction is not to be confused with that between real and artificial, nor with that between spontaneous and voluntary.

Descriptive psychology assumes that consciousness, as the object of introspection, is describable in the terms of a complete analysis, that is, in terms of elementary processes and their attributes. Description is impossible without analysis. It is unfair to blame analytic psychology for the fact that its analysis fails to do justice to the value-aspect of consciousness, which confessedly transcends description. Consciousness is essentially something temporal: the objects of introspection are content-processes; it is a mistake to regard the objects as contents *and* processes. "We cannot observe an experiencing; we are not called upon, in psychology, to observe an experienced; what we observe is experience" (p. 498). "We cannot observe any product of logical abstraction" (p. 498), and therefore we cannot observe "relation" or "change" or "causation," though these terms *apply to* the data of psychology. "Psychological description can deal only with content-processes under their empirically distinguishable attributes" (p. 498). There is constant danger of surreptitious addition of logic-meanings, as coördinate with the data of pure description. Analysis cannot give a system of psychology, but its work must precede any system.

Titchener then gives a statement of the form of the introspection method used in recent study of thought by Marbe, Watt, Ach, Messer, Bühler, and workers in the Cornell laboratory. A definitely regulated method is evidently not yet attained in this field, but apparently might be reached in general accordance with Müller's formula.

Dunlap (2) notes that it has long been generally agreed that introspection, in the sense of consciousness scrutinizing itself, does occur. But "it is now high time that we should question, more seriously than has been done before, the existence of 'introspection' in the traditional sense" (p. 404). The theories of James and of Stout may be taken as typical of the current theories, and are more explicit than most.

James considered a state of mind to be a knower that knows

some object. Later this knower may itself become the object of a new knower; and the object of the first knower then becomes also one of the objects of the new knower. Only relatively enduring states can later become objects, so some brief conscious processes necessarily escape introspection.

This theory is criticized for giving no adequate treatment of the *knowing*. The only secure fact is that a succession of objects is known by one knower. James admits that states of mind all take one point of view; and this point of view constitutes the real I or subject. One might indeed say: Thoughts and things form two quite distinct classes of objects one can know; and knowing *thoughts* is what we call introspection. But this implies a representation-theory rejected now by most psychologists, and finally discarded even by James.

Stout considered that a mental state is not necessarily an object of consciousness, but that it may become so. In itself it is merely the awareness, the *knowing* of some object. A sensation, *e. g.*, is the awareness of a sensible quality; but it may become, secondarily, an object for another awareness.

This theory is criticized as giving no adequate account of the *knower*. "Knowing there certainly is," says Dunlap, "known, the knowing certainly is not. . . . I am never aware of an awareness." "There is no meaning in the term awareness which is not expressed in the statement 'I am aware of a color (or what-not)'" (p. 410).

The mistake of thinking introspection possible is probably caused by the fact that vague kinesthetic and coenesthetic sensations accompany the consciousness of some "external" object, as for instance sound. These may later become clear, and consciousness of them is then considered to be consciousness of the process of observing the sound. The objective self is taken to be the subject.

"There is, as a matter of fact, not the slightest evidence for the reality of 'introspection' as the observation of 'consciousness.' Hence we must, in default of some such evidence, cease the empty assumption of such a process" (p. 412).

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