

## IV.—JUDGMENT AND APPREHENSION.

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In the following pages I wish to set forth such arguments as most appeal to me in support of the thesis that judgment and apprehension are identical, and to examine certain arguments which have been advanced by high authority on the other side.

Those who have opposed the current division between judgment and apprehension have usually done so by means of levelling up. They have protested that the activity of thought is everywhere, that the lowest step and the most elementary element in knowledge must still be classed as judgment. This line of argument, though a good one, might be usefully supplemented by the opposite plan of apparently levelling down. The division, it may be urged, disappears so soon as we remove from judgment the shadow of a mysteriousness and complication which it really does not possess. We may try to show, not that apprehension is itself judgment, but that *judgment itself is no more than apprehension*.

Take a simple case. Suppose six dots on a piece of paper, ::::, to be placed before the eyes of an intelligent man. He sees them in the full sense; sees into them, sees many of their relations, though very likely he puts nothing into words. Invited to speak, he says, "Very well, there are six dots, or two groups of three, or three groups of two; what next?"

Now at what point in this process did judgment supervene upon simple apprehension? Not, surely, just where the perception of number and relation came in, for to say this would be to make apprehension merely another name for sensation. Not, surely, just at the higher point where *words* are first used, for to say this would be to deny all judgment to an animal, and to attribute it in an altogether disproportionate excess to people who use verbal imagery as opposed to those who chiefly use other kinds. Is not the process homogeneous all along? a gradually developing cognition which may, if we like, be called judgment from the beginning,

but which may equally well be called apprehension up to the end?

But here the most important advocates of a division will reply, "In this special case judgment and apprehension were present side by side throughout. For *belief* in the reality of the thing apprehended was always present. Judgment exists wherever this belief exists; where there is not belief we have apprehension alone." The answer to this is, (1) that there are various universes of reality, (2) that, this *being granted*, belief in the reality of what is apprehended is indistinguishable from the apprehension itself. The *cognitive* process is precisely the same whatever universe is in question, whether it be one of those roughly classed as "actual," or whether it be one of those roughly classed as "imaginary".

Let us take a transitional case, where, instead of having six dots made for him on the paper by somebody else, the man makes them for himself and then looks at them. Here an act of creation by himself has preceded the cognition, but the cognition itself is precisely the same as in the first case. Next let us alter the universe a little; let the man not make the dots with pen and ink, but image them. An act of creation has again preceded the cognising, but he has created a different kind of reality. On the other hand, I maintain that the cognition itself is, in every relevant way, unaltered. He apprehends the imaged dots exactly as he apprehended those which he made on paper. It is no addition to say that he believes in them, or apprehends them as real. They have a different sort of reality; he sees them to be images and not marks on an actual paper, but they are real images. There is nothing here to make us say that when he used ink there was belief and therefore judgment, but that without ink there is only apprehension.

Let us take one more step. Nothing relevant is altered when the object has a sort of reality which is not adequately presented in sense or in sense-imagery. Let the man contemplate and examine the relation of 3 and 6 in general, or of 3003 and 617 in general. Let him follow a discourse on art "with an assenting mind". Let him contemplate his own character or a friend's, or a person's in fiction, created either by himself or another. Everywhere he is apprehending a thing, and it is no addition to this to say that he apprehends it as real, with its own special sort of reality. The objects are real number-relations, real laws of æsthetics, real person-ages in a book. The reality in some cases is due to acts of creation by himself, but the cognition of what is created is just as submissive, just as objective, just as believing in every case.

Our position is, then, that if judgment exists in any case of apprehension it exists everywhere. Or, to keep to our plan of apparent levelling-down, we will say that, since judgment means apprehension *plus* belief, and since apprehension without belief is as inconceivable as sight without seeing, therefore all judgment is simply apprehension. "I apprehend that . . ." is used in ordinary language in exactly the same sense as "I judge that . . ."; and the typical expression of assent is "Yes, I see".

It may, however, be said that the kind of reality we call actualness is so important that the apprehension of an actual thing as actual ought to receive a different name from any other sort of apprehension. It is judgment if you say "I upset the milk"; it is not judgment to say "The March Hare had upset the milk". I can only say that I see no reason for altering the name. The cognitive process in the two cases seems to be precisely the same, even for Lewis Carroll himself. Lewis Carroll in each case will be contemplating a creation of his own. They are creations in different worlds, which he will not confuse; he will see each as possessing its own special sort of reality. And no doubt he has rather a freer hand in creating in one of the worlds; he could do no more than pick up his own milk-jug, whereas if he chose to alter the story he could make the March Hare's to have never been upset at all. Yet so long as he does not make this change his judgment must be just as submissive in the one world as in the other; the fact of the overturned cup is as solid as any other fact, and bears as hard on all action in its own world — nobody must treat that jug as upright and full. The cognition is in every relevant way the same as cognition of a creation in the "actual" world. If that is the apprehension which is one with judgment, so is this too.

One final objection may be brought; it may be said that the *discrimination* of different universes of reality is so special and important a process that it ought to receive the special name of judgment as distinct from the ordinary apprehension. I should reply that this is possible but rather dangerous, because it suggests that the process of presentation here is different from the ordinary. I urge that this process is exactly the same, whether I am cognising a broken cup as existing in my drawing-room, in Queen Anne's drawing-room, or in Wonderland, or whether I am cognising it as broken in two and not in three.

I will now examine a few features in one of the most careful and important attempts to divide judgment from appre-

hension, that of Dr. Stout. Let us take first the treatment in *Analytic Psychology*, vol. i., pp. 99-114 (2nd edition). Dr. Stout bases his position on that of Brentano, but he gives so full and accurate an account of Brentano's arguments that I feel justified in saving trouble by confining my references to the English book. The main test cases proposed (p. 100) are "(1) The state of doubt or suspense of judgment; (2) The play of fancy or 'make-believe'; (3) Æsthetic contemplation without make-believe or with a minimum of make-believe".

(1) In doubt, according to the author (p. 103) "judgment is present in a most defective, and, so to speak, attenuated form, whereas the thought which it presupposes may be quite clear and definite. There need be no vagueness or indeterminateness in the simple apprehension of the alternatives."—According to my own account, this clear part is the apprehension, or the judgment, that "A must be  $x$  or  $y$ ". This is solid and distinct, whereas the tendency to improve and refine it may be weak, and the secondary apprehensions or judgments "one or the other, not both" and "evidence for  $x$  is this, for  $y$  that," may be so feeble that they create hardly any disturbance at all. The case is not one of a strong apprehension contrasted with a weak judgment, but of a strong apprehension-or-judgment contrasted with weak ones.

(2) In make-believe, Dr. Stout says, "the absence of disbelief seems . . . to depend on the voluntary exclusion of the question of truth or falsehood. . . . The moment that the question of whether or not the things we are thinking of exist is in any way brought before our minds, we unhesitatingly deny their existence." Yet "our idea of these feigned existences may be in the highest degree vivid and distinct". Therefore we have here a case of clear apprehension without belief, or with a minimum of belief; and therefore with a minimum of judgment.

It seems to me that this objection disappears so soon as we distinguish universes of reality, and so soon as we refuse to attribute any exaggerated importance for cognition to that universe which we call "actual". The phrase "to believe in" is no doubt most often used within the "actual" universe, and Dr. Stout seems to take it as properly confined to that universe, and extended to a work of imagination only so far as illusion, which is confusion of universes, comes in (p. 104). In my view the process of cognition is so exactly the same in all universes that it would be very awkward to attach importance to such a limitation. **Take**

belief rather to indicate essentially the *submissiveness* of all apprehension; the phrase "make-believe" is then quite accurate and quite independent of illusion. For our apprehension must submit not only to what is found but to what is deliberately created, by ourselves or by others and by hands or by head. In all these cases the submission is the same, and the apprehension, the belief, and the judgment are the same. We cognise the Mad Tea-party, then, just as we cognise a tea-party in actual life; and there is not the least need for us to confuse the universes in order to give the apprehension that submissiveness which makes it judgment, and without which apprehension could not exist.

(3) In æsthetic contemplation (p. 107) "a person listening to a piece of music, and giving himself wholly up to the enjoyment of it, apprehends the several notes, their time-sequence, and their other relations. But he does not frame judgments, either verbal or purely mental, concerning these matters. He is simply aware of them, and enjoys them. His mental posture is suddenly and strikingly altered if a false note occurs. The mood of æsthetic contemplation for the moment disappears, and he passes a judgment on what he hears."

This is an interesting objection from my point of view, because it is more readily met by levelling down than by levelling up. It would involve unusual language, though true psychology (according to me), to claim that the perception of the notes and their relations was already judgment. But just the same thing may be expressed in a more ordinary-sounding way if we claim that what is occasioned by the discord is still simply apprehension. The listener apprehends the notes as sounds in relation, as before; he now apprehends them also as bad sounds in discordant relation. Why is this to be given a new name? why is this judgment if the other was not? The man may not even use any words; but if he does, are words so important as to make all this difference? It is surely legal and not logical associations which lead common language to introduce just here the phrase "to pass judgment".

Dr. Stout next adds some special arguments taken from Brentano:—

(1) (p. 107) "There is no contrast between mere ideas as such, except in so far as their objects are contrasted. The antithesis of desire and aversion is of a different nature. It neither is, nor implies, a contrariety in the mode in which consciousness may refer to one and the same object. Now

the opposition of assertion and denial is in this respect entirely analogous to that of desire and aversion."—For me, the opposition of assertion and denial means the opposition of apprehension-of-presence in the abstract to apprehension-of-absence in the abstract; which is no doubt similar to the opposition of abstract desire and abstract aversion. Special apprehensions need not contrast or conflict any more than special impulses (whether desires or aversions) need do so.

(2) (p. 109) "In ideas there is no intensity except that which belongs to the presented content of consciousness. The reference to a subject has no intensive gradations." But "assurance or conviction certainly admits of degrees". There is an "essential difference between the quantitative gradation in firmness or fixity, which is proper to belief, and the quantitative gradation in vehemence or vividness, which belongs to presentation".—Certainly, every apprehension has many qualities, and the stability of its content depends very little on that content's vividness; or, as Dr. Stout points out (110, 111), on its third quality of definiteness and distinctness.

(3) (p. 111) "Brentano points out that mere ideas cannot strictly speaking be right or wrong. . . . Within the sphere of desire . . . it is otherwise. Here we find a distinction between the morally good and the morally bad. Similarly, in the case of belief there is a corresponding distinction between truth and error."—Dr. Stout quotes this argument without making himself responsible for it, and I am inclined to think that the facts concerned will fit in more readily with my view than with Brentano's. For in the sphere of desire there can be no distinction of good and bad until concrete details are given. Until you state time, place, person, motive, and circumstances, "the desire to go to London" can be called neither right nor wrong. The case of apprehension (or judgment) is exactly the same. "To apprehend family life" is an abstraction on which no verdict can be passed. The apprehension of family life as being an interesting subject for discussion, or as normally involving father, mother, and children, is true. The apprehension of it as essentially an affair of contract, or as existing in Plato's Republic, is false.

"In conclusion," says Dr. Stout, "we may say that the difference between believing and having an idea coincides with the difference between the question, Do you *understand* this proposition? and the question, Do you *assent* to this proposition?"—This is the difference between apprehending a

statement as *intelligible* and apprehending it as *correct*.<sup>1</sup> In each case we are making a judgment about the statement; we have that apprehension of it which implies a belief.

Let us turn now to Dr. Stout's later statement of his position, in *The Groundwork of Psychology*, p. 19 and onwards.

(*a*) "It is one thing to apprehend the meaning of a proposition and another to believe, disbelieve, doubt, or question it." The first four of these have already been dealt with. Questioning will fall partly under the same description as doubt; the apprehension "*A is  $x$  or  $y$* " urged to further refinement by the apprehension "*it is  $x$  or  $y$* ". The remaining part will be, I think, what Dr. Bosanquet calls it; not a special kind of cognition but an imperative; "tell me which it is".

(*β*) "To think of a thing is not the same as affirming or denying its existence."—No, for these are only two of the many aspects in which it may be thought of. This is illustrated by an example given presently; "the bare thought of being hissed may affect an actor disagreeably and the mere idea of a comic situation may excite laughter". A situation, that is, may be apprehended specially as being in actual existence, or it may be apprehended as being comic, or else simply as being "thus and so," as containing such and such a detail, and the laughter may follow immediately.

(*γ*) "Suppose that a man is absorbed in the enjoyment of the beauty of a picture. He is aware of the picture as really existing, and so far his mental attitude is one of judgment or belief. But this unformulated judgment is in the background of consciousness. It has nothing to do with the man's enjoyment. His interest is not in the real existence of the picture but in the mere presentation of Reality. If it threatens to fall and he stretches out his hand to save it, there is a transition from interest in what is simply apprehended to interest in real existence. A similar change of attitude takes place if he passes from purely æsthetic contemplation to the business of purchasing the picture." This is a curious and difficult argument, and offers several different points for comment. 1. I should of course agree that to be aware of the picture as "really existing" was itself a belief or judgment. To be aware of some other picture as "not really existing" would be unbelief, which again is judgment. There are many other alternatives: I may be aware of it as existing in the past, in the future, in a dream, on a condition, in somebody else's novel, in my own novel. All

<sup>1</sup>Or, if you like, between apprehending the content *as stated* and apprehending it *as being fact*.

these will be cases of judgment, though for my purpose in this article it is more convenient to call them simply awareness-of-existence. 2. Such awareness of existence is present in all apprehension. We are aware of existence even when we do not specify the object's particular kind of reality—the context or universe in which it exists. 3. This apprehension of the external context, as we might call it, seems to be of just the same nature as the apprehension of “internal context”. We cognised the six dots of our first illustration as placed on an actual paper or on a remembered paper or on an imaged paper or an imaginary paper; we also cognised them as being six and as being arranged in a rectangular figure. There seems no great reason for distinguishing the first set, under the name of judgment, from the second under the name of apprehension. When Dr. Stout says that the spectator's interest “is not in the real existence of the picture but in the mere presentation of Reality,” I should express the same thing by saying that the interesting and prominent part of the presentation before him consisted not in the external context of the picture but in its internal detail.

4. When the picture threatens to fall, the spectator's submissive cognition is interrupted by an *impulse to alter* what is cognised. Now the means of altering a presented thing must be largely conditioned by the kind of universe in which the thing exists—a universe of actuality, of memory or expectation, of fiction, or whatever it is. Hence the apprehension of “external context” is likely to become more prominent than before. Fresh interest attaches to the cognition of the special kind of reality possessed by the object before us. But I am unable to see that this cognition is of a different kind from the cognition of the other aspects which interested us. The two seem equally worthy to be called judgment, and equally well called apprehension.

(δ) The next illustration is from “the play of fancy,” and in essentials I have already dealt with it. My claims would be (i.) that when we create a fictitious situation we have just the same conjunction of creation and cognition as when we shape a model out of actual clay, or arrange six dots on an actual piece of paper; (ii.) that to apprehend any of these is necessarily to apprehend them as existing, though not necessarily to cognise the special nature of their existence; (iii.) that the cognition of this special nature, when it does occur, is of just the same sort as the cognition of any other aspect of the object, and is best described by the same name.

(ε) Lastly, “an illustration of a different sort may be drawn



from the use of words in speaking, reading, writing, and silent thinking. The words as printed or written characters or as articulated sounds are somehow present to our consciousness. But we are not usually forming judgments about them. So far as we judge, we judge concerning that which the words signify. As articulate sounds, or as printed or written characters, the words are in the main objects of simple apprehension merely." The words here seem to be subordinate though necessary details in a whole of presentation. We apprehend them in dim consciousness; in clearer consciousness we apprehend their meaning. This meaning we cognise as "being thus and so," and may or may not cognise it also as true, striking, or beautiful. Nowhere does judgment enter in any sense in which it is different from simple apprehension.

I have not been oblivious of Dr. Stout's use of his division to explain error, in his admirable article in *MIND* for January, 1908. It would, however, be of little use to attempt to discuss this until the doctrine has been further developed in the other articles he promises.

To sum up:—It appears that all kinds of the process which is called presentation in one aspect and cognition in the other are of the same nature, and had better receive the same name. They may, if we wish, be all called judgment, but it is more convenient and more in accordance with ordinary language to call them all apprehension. All (except possibly the extremely rudimentary form) involve some discrimination of features in the presentation-continuum. All involve cognition of the thing as existent, though the special nature of that existence need not always be specified. If the name of judgment is to be kept for one special process, it will certainly, I think, be best to keep it for the element of discrimination of the different *kinds* of reality. But this discrimination seems to be so much the same process as other kinds of discrimination that I greatly prefer not to give it a special name. With regard to Dr. Stout in particular, I find a difficulty in deciding whether or not just this is the distinction he wishes to make. Some of his examples are appropriate to it, but some seem to suggest a rather different line.

The best of giving up the traditional division is that so many traditional logical difficulties disappear with it. We have made this part of the mystery of judgment for ourselves. "Seeing is believing," when we remember that sight is not restricted to the eye of sense, and that the actual universe is not our only landscape. Reality presents itself to us on every hand, and to judge is simply to allow ourselves to see.