

## ON A FEATURE OF ACTIVE ATTENTION.

I should like, in consequence of Mr. Ward's article (MIND No. 45), to be allowed a few words on an essential point. To Mr. Ward's objections in general I cannot reply, because the only answer I could make would be to confess that I have failed entirely and throughout to convey to him my meaning. I am sorry for this, because otherwise I should have valued his criticism. All I wish to do here is to attempt to clear up one point as to active attention—namely, the manner in which it may intensify sensations. The account which I adopted (MIND No. 43) was that the result is caused by a transfer of strength from an idea through blending.

If we take for example a composite smell, one of its elements may engross me directly by its strength. Again, resolving to observe and bringing the idea of one element, I may find the answering component in sensation strengthened. Or again, that component may excite ideas, its own forming the centre, and upon this we may find the sensation grow stronger. In all these cases I think the idea blends itself with the sensation, so adding strength thereto. No doubt much happens besides, but I think thus much to be essential, and I tried (as I believed) to say so (MIND No. 43, pp. 310-312).

Nor need anyone who holds that the working idea interests through pleasure be, I think, at a loss. If he should be so misled as to doubt that there are ideas of pleasure, he need not therefore cease to believe that ideas may be pleasant. Nor need he doubt that an idea, like every other psychical event, has a force which is not the same as its pleasantness. He will say, I think, that the influence of this pleasure on the sensation is another and a further question, but that here the essential point to his mind is a transfer of strength as distinct from pleasantness. But, for myself, I do *not* hold that interest must consist in pleasure, and I really did my best, though it would seem not successfully, to say so. (*Ibid.*, p. 310. Cp. 315, and 306, note.) I ought indeed to have mentioned, when, for argument's sake, I treated the interest of ideas as their pleasantness, that I did not intend that to hold good, for argument's sake, of sensations also. This, in fact, did not occur to me, and so I omitted to issue any warning to the reader.

I will only add my regret that my paper should have appeared to be a criticism on Mr. Ward individually. Nothing in it referred to him, and when the MS. left my hands I do not think that I had read one word of his writing. I have had that pleasure since, and can assure Mr. Ward that, though I think the view of Attention which he has adopted is quite inadmissible, this is far from blinding me to the solid value of his work in general.

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"ILLUSORY PSYCHOLOGY."—A REJOINDER.

Perhaps I may be allowed a few words of rejoinder to Prof. Dewey's reply on this subject in MIND No. 45. I would not ask it, since plainly controversy must end somewhere, did not Prof. Dewey allege, as his reason for making no attempt to deal specifically with my objections, that I have mistaken the bearing of both his articles so completely as to render my objections irrelevant. This allegation cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is entirely erroneous. I made no mistake of the kind. I did not suppose "that it was the object of one [the art. in MIND No. 41] to explain the nature of the individual and the universal consciousness, and of the other [that in MIND No. 42] to give some definite directions regarding