VOL. II. No. 2. JANUARY 19, 1905

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY
PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS

THE THING AND ITS RELATIONS

EXPERIENCE in its immediacy seems perfectly fluent. The active sense of living which we all enjoy, before reflection shatters our instinctive world for us, is self-luminous and suggests no paradoxes. Its difficulties are disappointments and uncertainties. They are not intellectual contradictions.

When the reflective intellect gets at work, however, it discovers incomprehensibilities in the flowing process. Distinguishing its elements and parts, it gives them separate names, and what it thus disjoins it can not easily put together. Pyrrhonism accepts the irrationality and revels in its dialectic elaboration. Other philosophies try, some by ignoring, some by resisting, and some by turning the dialectic procedure against itself, negating its first negations, to restore the fluent sense of life again, and let redemption take the place of innocence. The perfection with which any philosophy may do this is the measure of its human success and of its importance in philosophic history. In a recent article in this JOURNAL, 'A World of Pure Experience,' I tried my own hand sketchily at the problem, resisting certain first steps of dialectics by insisting in a general way that the immediately experienced conjunctive relations are as real as anything else.[1] If my sketch is not to appear too *naïf,* I must come closer to details, and in the present article I propose to do so.

I

'Pure experience' is the name which I gave to the original flux of life before reflexion has categorized it. Only new-born babes, and persons in semicoma from sleep, drugs, illnesses or blows can have an experience pure in the literal sense of a *that* which is not yet any definite *what,* tho' ready to be all sorts of whats; full both of oneness and of manyness, but in respects that don't appear; changing throughout, yet so confusedly that its phases interpenetrate, and no points, either of distinction or of identity, can be caught. Pure ex-

[1] JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS, Vol. I., No. 20, p. 566.

perience in this state is but another name for feeling or sensation. But the flux of it no sooner comes than it tends to fill itself with emphases, and these to become identified and fixed and abstracted; so that experience now flows as if shot through with adjectives and nouns and prepositions and conjunctions. Its purity is only a relative term, meaning the proportional amount of sensation which it still embodies.

Far back as we go, the flux, both as a whole and in its parts, is that of things conjunct and separated. The great continua of time, space and the self envelope everything, betwixt them, and flow together without interfering. The things that they envelope come as separate in some ways and as continuous in others. Some sensations coalesce with some ideas, and others are irreconcilable. Qualities compenetrate one space, or exclude each other from it. They cling together persistently in groups that move as units, or else they separate. Their changes are abrupt or discontinuous; and their kinds resemble or differ; and, as they do so, fall into either even or irregular series.

In all this the continuities and the discontinuities are absolutely coordinate matters of immediate feeling. The conjunctions are as primordial elements of 'fact' as are the distinctions and disjunctions. In the same act by which I feel that this passing minute is a new pulse of my life, I feel that the old life continues into it, and the feeling of continuance in no wise jars upon the simultaneous feeling of a novelty. They, too, compenetrate harmoniously. Prepositions, copulas, and conjunctions, 'is,' 'isn't,' 'then,' 'before,' 'in,' 'on,' 'beside,' 'between,' 'next,' 'like,' 'unlike,' 'as,' 'but,' flower out of the stream of pure experience, the stream of concretes or the sensational stream, as naturally as nouns and adjectives do, and they melt into it again as fluidly when we apply them to a new portion of the stream.

II

If now we ask why we must thus translate experience from a more concrete or pure into a more intellectualized form, filling it with ever more abounding verbalized distinctions, Rationalism and Empiricism give different replies.

The rationalistic answer is that the theoretic life is absolute and its interests imperative, that to understand is simply the duty of man, and that who questions this need not be argued with, for by the fact of arguing he gives away his case.

The pragmatic answer is that the environment kills as well as sustains us, and that the tendency of raw experience to extinguish the experient himself is lessened just in the degree in which the elements in it that have a practical bearing upon life are analyzed out

of the continuum and verbally fixed and coupled together, so that we may know what is in the wind for us and get ready to react in time. Had pure experience, the pragmatist says, been always perfectly healthy, there would never have arisen the necessity of isolating or verbalizing any of its terms. We should just have experienced inarticulately and unintellectually enjoyed. This leaning on 'reaction' in the pragmatist account implies that, whenever we intellectualize a relatively pure experience, we ought to do so for the sake of redescending to the purer or more concrete level again; and that if an intellect stays aloft among its abstract terms and generalized relations, and does not reinsert itself with its conclusions into some particular point of the immmediate stream of life, it fails to finish out its function and leaves its normal race unrun.

Most rationalists nowadays will agree that pragmatism gives a true enough account of the way in which our intellect arose at first, but they will deny these latter implications. The case, they will say, resembles that of sexual love. Originating in the animal need of getting another generation born, this passion has developed secondarily such imperious spiritual needs that, if you ask why another generation ought to be born at all, the answer is: 'Chiefly that love may go on.' Just so with our intellect: it originated as a practical means of serving life; but it has developed incidentally the function of understanding absolute truth; and life itself now seems to be given chiefly as a means by which that function may be prosecuted. But truth and the understanding of it lie among the abstracts and universals, so the intellect now carries on its higher business wholly in this region, without any need of redescending into pure experience again.

If the contrasted tendencies which I thus designate as pragmatistic and rationalistic are not recognized by the reader, perhaps an example will make them more concrete. Mr. Bradley, for instance, is an ultra-rationalist. He admits that our intellect is primarily practical, but says that, for philosophers, the practical need is simply Truth.[2] Truth, moreover, must be assumed 'consistent.' Immediate experience has to be broken into subjects and qualities, terms and relations, to be understood as truth at all. Yet when so broken it is less consistent than ever. Taken raw, it is all undistinguished. Intellectualized, it is all distinction without oneness. 'Such an arrangement may *work*, but the theoretic problem is not solved' (p. 23). The question is '*how* the diversity can exist in harmony with the oneness' (p. 118). To go back to pure experience is unavailing. 'Mere feeling gives no answer to our riddle' (p. 104). Even if your intuition is a fact, it is not an *understanding*. 'It is a mere

[2] 'Appearance and Reality,' pp. 152–3.

experience, and furnishes no consistent view' (pp. 108–9). The experience offered as facts or truths 'I find that my intellect rejects because they contradict themselves. They offer a complex of diversities conjoined in a way which it feels is not its way and which it can not repeat as its own. . . . For to be satisfied, my intellect must understand, and it can not understand by taking a congeries in the lump' (p. 570). So Mr. Bradley, in the sole interests of 'understanding' (as he conceives that function), turns his back on finite experience forever. Truth must lie in the opposite direction, the direction of the Absolute; and this kind of rationalism and pragmatism walk thenceforward upon opposite paths. For the one, those intellectual products are most true which, turning their face towards the Absolute, come nearest to symbolizing its ways of uniting the many and the one. For the other those are most true which most successfully dip back into the finite stream of feeling and grow most easily confluent with some particular wave or wavelet. Such confluence not only proves the intellectual operation to have been true (as an addition may 'prove' that a subtraction is already rightly performed) but it constitutes, according to pragmatism, all that we mean by calling it true. Only in so far as they lead us, successfully or unsuccessfully, back into sensible experience again, are our abstracts and universals true or false at all.[3]

III

In Section VI of my recent article, 'A World of Pure Experience,' I adopted in a general way the common-sense belief that one and the same world is cognized by our different minds; but I left undiscussed the dialectical arguments which maintain that this is logically absurd. The usual reason given for its being absurd is that it assumes one object (to wit, the world) to stand in two relations at once; to my mind, namely, and again to yours; whereas a term taken in a second relation can not logically be the same term which it was at first.

I have heard this reason urged so often in discussing with absolutists, and it would destroy my radical empiricism so utterly, if it were valid, that I am bound to give it an attentive ear, and seriously to search its strength.

For instance, let the matter in dispute be a term M, asserted to be on the one hand related to L and on the other to N; and let the two cases of relation be symbolized by $L - M$ and $M - N$ respectively. When, now, I assume that the experience may immediately come and be given in the shape $L - M - N$, with no trace of

[3] Compare Professor MacLennan's admirable *Auseinandersetzung* with Mr. Bradley, in this JOURNAL, Vol. I., No. 15, p. 403 ff., especially pp. 405–407.

doubling or internal fission in the *M*, I am told that this is all a popular delusion; that *L* — *M* — *N* means two entitatively different experiences, *L* — *M* and *M* — *N* namely; and that although the Absolute may, and indeed must, from its superior point of view, read its own kind of unity into *M*'s two editions, yet as elements in finite experience the two *M*'s lie irretrievably asunder, and the world is broken and unbridged between them.

In arguing this dialectic thesis, one must avoid slipping from the logical into the physical point of view. It would be easy, in taking a concrete example to fix one's ideas by, to choose one in which the letter *M* should stand for a collective noun of some sort, which noun, being related to *L* by one of its parts and to *N* by another, would inwardly be two things when it stood outwardly in both relations. Thus, one might say: 'David Hume, who weighed so many stone by his body, influences posterity by his doctrine.' The body and the doctrine are two things, between which our finite minds can discover no real sameness, though the same name covers both of them. And then, one might continue: 'Only an Absolute is capable of uniting such a non-identity.' We must, I say, avoid this sort of example, for the dialectic insight, if true at all, must apply to terms and relations universally. It must be true of abstract units as well as of nouns collective; and if we prove it by concrete examples we must take the simplest, so as to avoid irrelevant material suggestions.

Taken thus in all its generality, the absolutist contention seems to use as its major premise Hume's notion 'that all our distinct perceptions are distinct existences, and that the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences.' Undoubtedly, since we use two phrases in talking first about '*M*'s relation to *L*' and then about '*M*'s relation to *N*,' we must be having, or must have had, two distinct perceptions;—and the rest would then seem to follow duly. But the starting-point of the reasoning here seems to be the fact of the two *phrases;* and this suggests that the argument may be merely verbal. Can it be that the whole dialectic consists in attributing to the experience talked-about a constitution similar to that of the language in which we describe it? Must we assert the objective doubleness of the *M* merely because we have to name it twice over when we name its two relations?

Candidly, I can think of no other reason than this for the dialectic conclusion;[4] for, if we think, not of our words, but of any simple concrete matter which they may be held to signify, the experience itself

[4] Technically it seems classable as a fallacy 'of composition.' A duality, predicable of the two wholes, *L* — *M* and *M* — *N*, is forthwith predicated of one of their parts, *M*.

belies the paradox asserted. We use indeed two separate concepts in analyzing our object, but we know them all the while to be but substitutional, and that the *M* in *L* — *M* and the *M* in *M* — *N* *mean* (*i. e.*, are capable of leading to and terminating in) one self-same piece, *M*, of sensible experience. This persistent identity of certain units (or emphases, or points, or objects, or members—call them what you will) of the experience-continuum, is just one of those conjunctive features of it, on which radical empiricism insists so emphatically.[5] For samenesses are parts of experience's indefeasible structure. When I hear a bell-stroke and, as life flows on, its after image dies away, I still hark back to it as 'that same bell-stroke.' When I see a thing *M*, with *L* to the left of it and *N* to the right of it, I see it *as* one *M;* and if you tell me I have had to 'take' it twice, I reply that if I 'took' it a thousand times I should still *see* it as a unit.[6] Its unity is aboriginal, just as, in my successive takings of it, the multiplicity is aboriginal. It comes unbroken as *that M*, as a singular which I encounter; they come broken, as *those* takings, as my plurality of operations. The unity and the separateness are strictly coordinate. I do not easily fathom why my opponents should find the separateness so much more easily understandable that they must needs infect the whole of finite experience with it, and relegate the unity (now taken as a bare postulate and no longer as a thing positively perceivable) to the region of the Absolute's mysteries. I do not easily fathom this, I say, for the said opponents are above mere verbal quibbling; yet all that I can catch in their talk is the substitution of what is true of certain words for what is true of what they signify. They stay with the words,—not returning to the stream of life whence all the meaning of them came, and which is always ready to reabsorb them.

IV

For aught this argument proves, then, we may continue to believe that one thing can be known by many knowers. But the denial of one thing in many relations is but one application of a still profounder dialectic difficulty. Man can't be good, said the sophists, for man is *man* and *good* is good; and Hegel and Herbart in their day, more recently H. Spir, and most recently and elaborately of all, Mr. Bradley, inform us that a term can logically only be a puncti-

[5] See above, p. 534 ff.

[6] I may perhaps refer here to my 'Principles of Psychology,' Vol. I., pp. 459 ff. It really seems 'weird' to have to argue (as I am forced now to do) for the notion that it is one sheet of paper (with its two surfaces and all that lies between) which is both under my pen and on the table—the 'claim' that it is two sheets seems so brazen. Yet I sometimes suspect the absolutists of sincerity!

form unit, and that even single conjunctive relations between things, such as experience seems to yield, are rationally impossible.

Of course, if true, this cuts off radical empiricism without even a shilling. Radical empiricism takes conjunctive relations at their face value, holding them to be as real as the terms united by them.[7] The world it represents as a collection, some parts of which are conjunctively and others disjunctively related. Two parts, themselves disjoined, may nevertheless hang together by an intermediary with which they are severally connected, and the whole world eventually may hang together similarly, inasmuch as *some* path of conjunctive transition by which to pass from one of its parts to another may always be discernable. Such determinately various hanging-together may be called *concatenated* union, to distinguish it from the 'through-and-through' type of union, 'each in all and all in each' (union of *total conflux,* as one might call it) which monistic systems hold to obtain when things are taken in their absolute reality. In a concatenated world a partial conflux often is experienced. Our concepts and our sensations are confluent; successive states of the same ego, and feelings of the same body are confluent. Where the experience is not of conflux, it may be of conterminousness [things with but one thing between]; or of contiguousness [nothing between]; or of likeness; or of nearness; or of simultaneousness; or of in-ness; or of on-ness; or of for-ness; or of simple with-ness; or even of mere and-ness, which last relation would make of however disjointed a world otherwise, at any rate for that occasion a universe 'of discourse.' Now Mr. Bradley tells us that none of these relations, as we actually experience them, can be real.[8] My next duty, accordingly, must be to rescue radical empiricism from Mr. Bradley. Fortunately, as it seems to me, his general contention, that the very notion of relation is unthinkable clearly, has been successfully met by many critics.[9]

[7] See above, pp. 534, 540.

[8] Here again the reader must beware of slipping from logical into phenomenal considerations. It may well be that we *attribute* a certain relation falsely, because the circumstances of the case, being complex, have deceived us. At a railway station we may take our own train, and not the one that fills our window, to be moving. We here put motion in the wrong place in the world, but in its original place the motion is a part of reality. What Mr. Bradley means is nothing like this, but rather that motion is nowhere real, and that, even in their aboriginal and empirically incorrigible seats, relations are impossible of comprehension.

[9] Particularly so by Andrew Seth Pringle-Pattison, in his 'Man and the Cosmos,' and by L. T. Hobbhouse, in Chapter XII. (the Validity of Judgment) of his 'Theory of Knowledge.' Other fatal reviews (in my opinion) are Hodder's, in the *Psychological Review,* I., 307; Stout's in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* 1901–2, p. 1; and MacLennan's in this JOURNAL, No. 15, 403.

It is a burden to the flesh, and an injustice both to readers and to the previous writers, to repeat good arguments already printed. So, in noticing Mr. Bradley, I will confine myself to the interests of radical empiricism solely.

V

The first duty of radical empiricism, taking given conjunctions at their face-value, is to class some of them as more intimate and some as more external. When two terms are *similar,* their very natures enter into the relation. Being *what* they are, no matter where or when, the likeness never can be denied, if asserted. It continues predicable as long as the terms continue. Other relations, the *where* and the *when,* for example, seem adventitious. The sheet of paper may be 'off' or 'on' the table, for example; and in either case the relation only involves the outside of its terms. Having an outside, both of them, they contribute by *it* to the relation. It is external: the term's inner nature is irrelevant to it. Any book, any table, may fall into the relation, which is created *pro hac vice,* not by their existence, but by their casual situation. It is just because so many of the conjunctions of experience seem so external that a philosophy of pure experience must tend to pluralism in its ontology. So far as things have space-relations, for example, we are free to imagine them with different origins even. If they could get to *be,* and get into space at all, then they may have done so separately. Once there, however, they are *additives* to one another, and, with no prejudice to their natures, all sorts of space-relations may supervene between them. The question of how things could *überhaupt* come to be is wholly different from the question what their relations, once the being accomplished, may consist in.

Mr. Bradley now affirms that such external relations as we here talk of must hold of different subjects from those of which the absence of relations could a moment previously have been asserted. Not only is the *situation* different when the book is on the table, but the *book itself* is different as a book, from what it was when it was off the table.[10] He admits that "such external relations seem possible and even existing. . . . That you do not alter what you compare

[10]Once more, don't slip from logical into physical situations. Of course, if the table be wet, it will moisten the book, or if it be slight enough and the book heavy enough, the book will break it down. But such collateral phenomena are not the point at issue. The point is whether the successive relations 'on' and 'not-on' can rationally (not physically) hold of the same constant terms, abstractly taken. Professor A. E. Taylor drops from logical into material considerations when he instances color-contrast as a proof that *A*, 'as contra-distinguished from *B*, is not the same thing as mere *A* not in any way affected' ('Elements of Metaphysics,' 1903, p. 145). Note the substitution for 'related' of the word 'affected,' which begs the whole question.

or rearrange in space seems to Common Sense quite obvious, and that on the other side there are as obvious difficulties does not occur to Common Sense at all. And I will begin by pointing out these difficulties. . . . There is a relation in the result, and this relation, we hear, is to make no difference in its terms. But, if so, to what does it make a difference? [*Doesn't it make a difference to us onlookers, at least?*] and what is the meaning and sense of qualifying the terms by it? [*Surely the meaning is to tell the truth about them.*[11]] If in short, it is external to the terms, how can it possibly be true *of* them? [*Is it the 'intimacy' suggested by the little word 'of,' here, which I have underscored, that is the root of Mr. Bradley's trouble?*] . . . If the terms from their inner nature do not enter into the relation, then, so far as they are concerned, they seem related for no reason at all. . . . Things are spatially related, first in one way, and then become related in another way, and yet in no way themselves are altered; for the relations, it is said, are but external. But I reply that, if so, I can not *understand* the leaving by the terms of one set of relations and their adoption of another fresh set. The process and its result to the terms, if they contribute nothing to it [*Surely they contribute to it all there is 'of' it!*] seem irrational throughout. [*If irrational here means simply 'non-rational,' or non-deducible from the essence of either term singly, it is no reproach; if it means 'contradicting' such essence, Mr. Bradley should show wherein and how.*] But, if they contribute anything, they must surely be affected internally. [*Why so, if they contribute only their surface? In such relations as 'on,' 'a foot away,' 'between,' 'next,' etc., only surfaces are in question.*] . . . If the terms contribute anything whatever, then the terms are affected [*altered?*] by the arrangement. . . . That for working purposes we treat, and do well to treat, some relations as external merely I do not deny, and that of course is not the question at issue here. That question is . . . whether in the end and in principle a mere external relation is possible and forced on us by the facts.''[12]

Mr. Bradley next reverts to the antinomies of space, which, according to him, prove it to be unreal, although it appears as so prolific a medium of external relations; and he then concludes that ''Irrationality and externality can not be the last truth about things. Somewhere there must be a reason why this and that appear together. And this reason and reality must reside in the whole from which terms and relations are abstractions, a whole in which their internal

[11] But " is there any sense," asks Mr. Bradley peevishly, on p. 579, " and if so, what sense in truth that is only outside and 'about' things?" Surely such a question may be left unanswered.

[12] 'Appearance and Reality,' 2d edition, pp. 575–6.

connection must lie, and out of which from the background appear those fresh results which never could have come from the premises'' (p. 577). And he adds that ''Where the whole is different, the terms that qualify and contribute to it must so far be different. . . . They are altered so far only [*How far? farther than externally, yet not through and through?*] but still they are altered. . . . I must insist that in each case the terms are qualified by their whole [*Qualified how? Do their external relations, changed as these are in the new whole, fail to qualify them 'far' enough?*], and that in the second case there is a whole which differs both logically and psychologically from the first whole; and I urge that in contributing to the change the terms so far are altered'' (p. 579).

Not merely the relations, then, but the terms are altered: *und zwar* 'so far.' But just *how* far is the whole problem; and 'through-and-through' would seem (in spite of Mr. Bradley's somewhat undecided utterances[13]) to be the full Bradleyan answer. The 'whole' which he here treats as primary and determinative of each part's manner of 'contributing,' simply *must,* when it alters, alter in its entirety. There *must* be total conflux of its parts, each into and through each other. The 'must' appears here as a *Machtspruch,* as an *ipse dixit* of Mr. Bradley's absolutistically tempered 'understanding,' for he candidly confesses that how the parts *do* differ as they contribute to different wholes, is unknown to him (p. 578).

Although I have every wish to comprehend the authority by which Mr. Bradley's understanding speaks, his words leave me wholly unconverted. 'External relations' stand with their withers all unwrung, and remain, for aught he proves to the contrary, not only practically workable, but also perfectly intelligible factors in reality.

[13] I say 'undecided,' because, apart from the 'so far,' which sounds terribly half-hearted, there are passages in these very pages in which Mr. Bradley admits the pluralistic thesis. Read, for example, what he says, on p. 578, of a billiard ball keeping its 'character' unchanged, though, in its change of place, its 'existence' gets altered; or what he says, on p. 579, of the possibility that an abstract quality A, B, or C, in a thing, 'may throughout remain unchanged' although the thing be altered; or his admission that in red-hairedness, both as analyzed out of a man and when given with the rest of him, there may be 'no change' (p. 580): Why does he immediately add that for the pluralist to plead the non-mutation of such abstractions would be an *ignoratio elenchi?* It is impossible to admit it to be such. The entire *elenchus* and inquest is just as to whether parts which you can abstract from existing wholes can contribute to other wholes by a change of arrangement without change of nature. If they can thus mould the wholes into new *gestaltqualitäten,* then it follows that the same elements are logically able to exist in different wholes [whether physically able would depend on additional hypotheses]; that through-and-through change is not a dialectic necessity; that monism is only an hypothesis; and that an additively constituted universe is rationally thinkable. All the theses of radical empiricism, in short, follow.

VI

Mr. Bradley's understanding shows the most extraordinary power of perceiving separations and the most extraordinary impotence in comprehending conjunctions. One would naturally say 'neither or both,' but not so Mr. Bradley. When a common man analyzes certain *whats* from out the stream of experience he understands their distinctness *as thus isolated.* But this does not prevent him from equally well understanding their combination with each other *as originally experienced in the concrete,* or their confluence with new sensible experiences in which they recur as 'the same.' Returning into the stream of sensible presentation, nouns and adjectives and *thats* and abstracts grow confluent again, and the word 'is' names all these experiences of conjunction. Mr. Bradley understands the isolation of the abstracts, but to understand the combination is to him impossible.[14] "To understand a complex *AB,*" he says, "I must begin with *A* or *B.* And beginning, say with *A,* if I then merely find *B,* I have either lost *A,* or I have got beside *A,* [*the word 'beside' seems here vital*] something else, and in neither case have I understood.[15] For my intellect can not simply unite a diversity, nor has it in itself any form or way of togetherness, and you gain nothing if, beside *A* and *B,* you offer me their conjunction in fact. For to my intellect that is no more than another external element. And 'facts,' once for all, are for my intellect not true unless they satisfy it. . . . The intellect has in its nature no principle of mere togetherness" (pp. 570, 572).

Of course Mr. Bradley has a right to define 'intellect' as the power by which we perceive separations but not unions,—provided he give due notice to the reader. But why then claim that such a maimed and amputated power must reign supreme in philosophy? It is true that he elsewhere (p. 568) attributes to the intellect a *proprius motus* of transition, but says that when he looks for *these* transitions in the detail of living experience, he 'is unable to verify such a solution' (p. 569).

[14] So far as I catch his state of mind, it is somewhat like this: 'Book,' 'table,' 'on'—how does the existence of these three abstract elements result in *this* book being livingly on *this* table. Why isn't the table on the book? Or why dosn't the 'on' connect itself with another book, or something that is not a table? Mustn't something *in* each of the three elements already determine the two others to *it,* so that they do not settle elsewhere or float vaguely? Mustn't the *whole fact be prefigured in each part,* and exist *de jure* before it can exist *de facto?* But, if so, in what can the jural existence consist, if not in a spiritual miniature of the whole fact's constitution actuating every partial factor as its purpose? But is this anything but the old metaphysical fallacy of looking behind a fact *in esse* for the ground of the fact, and finding it in the shape of the very same fact *in posse.* Somewhere we must leave off with a *constitution* behind which there is nothing.

[15] Apply this to the case of 'book-on-table'! W. J.

Yet he never explains what the intellectual transitions would be like in case we had them. He only defines them negatively—they are not spatial, temporal, predicative, or causal; or qualitatively or otherwise serial; or in any way relational as we naïvely trace relations, for relations separate terms, and need themselves to be hitched on *ad infinitum*. The nearest approach he makes to describing a truly intellectual transition is where he speaks of *A* and *B* as being 'united, each from its own nature, in a whole which is the nature of both alike' (p. 570). But this (which, *pace* Mr. Bradley, seems exquisitely analogous to 'taking' a congeries in a 'lump,' if not to 'swamping') suggests nothing but that *conflux* which pure experience so abundantly offers, as when 'space,' 'white' and 'sweet' are confluent in a 'lump of sugar,' or kinesthetic, dermal and optical sensations confluent in 'my hand.'[16] All that I can verify in the transitions which Mr. Bradley's intellect desiderates as its *proprius motus* is a reminiscence of these and other sensible conjunctions (especially space-conjunctions), but a reminiscence so vague that its originals are not recognized. Bradley in short repeats the fable of the dog, the bone, and its image in the water. With a world of particulars, given in loveliest union, in conjunction definitely various, and variously definite, the 'how' of which you 'understand' as soon as you see the fact of them,[17] for there is no how except the constitution of the fact as given; with all this given him, I say, in pure experience, he asks for some ineffable union in the abstract instead, which, if he gained it, would only be a duplicate of what he has already in his full possession. Surely be abuses the privilege which society grants to all us philosophers, of being puzzle-headed.

Polemic writing like this is odious; but with absolutism in possession in so many quarters, omission to defend my radical empiricism against its best known champion, would count as either superficiality or inability. I have to conclude that its dialectic has not invalidated in the least degree the usual conjunctions by which the world, as experienced, hangs so variously together. In particular it leaves my empirical theory of knowledge[18] intact, and lets us continue to believe with common sense that one object *may* be known, if we have any ground for thinking that it *is* known, to many knowers.

[16] How meaningless is the contention that in such wholes (or in 'book-on-table,' 'watch-in-pocket,' etc.) the relation is an additional entity *between* the terms, needing itself to be related! Both Bradley (A. and R., pp. 32–3) and Royce ('The World and the Individual,' I., 128) lovingly repeat this piece of profundity.

[17] The 'why' and the 'whence' are entirely other questions, not under discussion, as I understand Mr. Bradley. Not how experience gets itself born, but how it can be what it is after it is born, is the puzzle.

[18] Above, p. 538.

In another article I shall return to this last supposition, which seems to me to offer other difficulties much harder for a philosophy of pure experience to deal with than any of absolutism's dialectic objections.

WILLIAM JAMES.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

SOCIETIES

THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

THE American Philosophical Association held its fourth meeting at the University of Pennsylvania on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, December 28–30, 1904. There were morning and afternoon sessions on Wednesday and Thursday and a morning session on Friday. The session on Tuesday afternoon was commemorative of Immanuel Kant, the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology assisting. Professor Addison W. Moore, was expected to read a paper on 'Pure and Practical Reason in Locke,' in commemoration of the bicentenary of the death of John Locke, but, unfortunately, he was unable to attend the meeting. On Thursday morning the association united with the American Psychological Association in a joint session, Professor William James presiding. The president of the association, Professor George Trumbull Ladd, read his address on Thursday evening, in Price Hall, on 'The Mission of Philosophy.' The address was followed by a smoker at the Colonnade Hotel, in which the members of the American Psychological Association joined. The annual dinner of the American Society of Naturalists and affiliated societies was held at the Hotel Walton on Wednesday evening and was largely attended by members of the association. At the business meeting on Thursday afternoon the following officers were elected: President, Professor John Dewey; Vice-President, Professor J. A. Leighton; Secretary-Treasurer, Professor J. G. Hibben; new members of the Executive Committee, Professor H. N. Gardiner and Dr. R. B. Perry. The other members of the Executive Committee are Professors James H. Tufts and H. Heath Bawden, and the retiring members Professors William A. Hammond and F. J. E. Woodbridge. The next meeting of the association will be held in Emerson Hall, Harvard University, in acceptance of the invitation of the Harvard department of philosophy, presented to the association by Professor Münsterberg.

The sessions were well attended, but there was not as much discussion as at other meetings. The following papers were read: