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ARTICLE V.

CONSCIOUSNESS.

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THERE is one universal condition of all knowledge, whether of external or internal facts, and that is consciousness. As the very words "to know" cover conscious or real knowledge, consciousness, as the condition of the act, becomes also the condition of all that the act yields.

However complete our philosophy aims to be, it starts with consciousness — with the impressions afloat in it, as clouds in the sky, and inquires into their origin, nature, and connections. It habitually errs by clinging only too closely to those inner visions, by refusing to recognize the constructive power of the mind, which, laying hold of these appearances as the mere symbols of being, imparts quite another stability to itself, and to the world about it. Philosophy, through the long range of speculation that separates Fichte from Taine, refuses to believe in the powers, the faculties of mind, because as faculties they are not phenomena witnessed in consciousness.

Whatever aid to mental science any may hope to derive from purely physical inquiries, they cannot interpret or apply this aid without that science itself as shaped by the facts yielded in consciousness. The crudest of the endeavors to substitute external for internal observation is that of phrenology; yet it well illustrates the complete dependence of the exterior suggestion on the interior facts. The skull alone, whatever its shape, and howsoever well defined may be its protuberances, tells us absolutely nothing of the number and nature of mental powers. Nor can these be reached by comparing the form of the skull with the actions of the man to whom it belongs. These actions must themselves be interpreted in consciousness by psychology before we can decide

on the powers which they indicate. They are, moreover, very complicated in the emotional and intellectual activities indicated, and must be subjected to psychological analysis before we reach the simple, primitive powers included by them. Thus the phrenologist must have his philosophy first, derived from consciousness, before he can make use of the aid which he claims to be rendered by the formation of the skull. If he starts with a false philosophy, with inadequate analysis, his physical adjunct cannot correct it, and will most likely confirm it. If there were clearly twenty divisions of the brain and no more, we might conjecture that they indicated twenty powers, but should find no clue therein to the nature of these faculties. For that, we must still be remanded to consciousness. The twenty directions of intellectual activity must be made out prior to their reference to the twenty compartments.

It is so generally admitted by all schools, or so involved in their method of procedure, that consciousness is the primary and essential source of the facts of philosophy, that we accept the conclusion as granted, and proceed to our real discussion, the Nature of Consciousness; the futile, abortive appeals constantly made to it; and the methods of proof in establishing mental powers.

If consciousness is the indirect condition of all knowledge, and the direct condition of all the phenomena of mind, it is certainly most important that it be clearly defined, and that philosophers adduce its testimony in one correct and accordant way. No discussion that is in the least searching can be lost on so preliminary a point as this, more especially as there are here much uncertainty and diversity of opinion; vague, irreconcilable, unsatisfactory appeals on all sides to an authority which no one recognizes in the same sense and way as his neighbor. So long as proof, intended from its nature to be final, — as the testimony of consciousness, if plainly and fairly put upon the stand, must always be, — commands not even a moment's attention, and takes upon itself every form of conflicting, contradictory statement, we can certainly make no general or satisfactory progress in philosophy. If the

differences between systems and methods lay at some point at which they could be recognized and reached, at which they could be increased or reduced by additional proof, then diverse minds could concur in forwarding philosophy; since, as in science, they could see the conclusions to be established, and the line of proof called for. But when, as now, men are taking an appeal to consciousness, final to themselves and final to no one else, there is endless confusion and contradiction, with little hope of progress and reconciliation. It is thus fundamental to philosophy to settle under what conditions and for what facts this reference to consciousness can be made, and when it is the mere evasion and retreat of an adversary who cannot bring to the front sufficient reasons.

Consciousness is not to be regarded as itself a power. Thus Dr. Porter and Taine speak of it. No act or state of mind can be understood without it. There is no knowledge that is not knowledge, that is, conscious knowledge; no feeling that is not conscious feeling. The moment we understand the simplest act of perception, we have recognized consciousness as its condition, its essential characteristic. To put back of the first act a second wherewith we are to know the first, is to bear with us to this second act the entire difficulty. If we can understand this second act as an act of mind known to the mind, we can understand the first act in the same way, and the rear act becomes a superfluity. Nor can it be urged convincingly against this view that the word "consciousness" is constantly employed in connections that seem to imply that it is a power. Language is not the precise measure of intellectual facts, but often accommodates itself to ease in their expression. It does not prove that the trees actually glide by us as we float swiftly down a river, because this is our method of stating a fact just the reverse of the apparent one.

Nor are different forms of consciousness to find the ready admission which many grant them. Thus we have in Morell the perceptive consciousness, the emotive consciousness, the intellectual consciousness, the logical consciousness; in Presi-

dent Porter, the natural consciousness and the reflective consciousness. These divisions of the one inseparable and uniform condition alike of thought, feeling, and volition, seem sometimes to spring from a confusion of ideas, sometimes from a confusion of language, leading to a confusion of thought. The emotive consciousness, the perceptive consciousness, with Morell, are awkward circumlocutions for the emotions and perceptions, and seem ready to convey the idea of an intellectual activity beyond the naked fact that an emotion as an emotion is known to the mind. The inferences, the clustering judgments, that gather about a perception, are not included in consciousness in any other way than are other intellectual actions, one and all. To speak of a natural consciousness and a reflective consciousness as in their nature distinct, is to double the error already made by President Porter, of regarding consciousness as a distinct power. It has now become two powers, presiding in two inscrutable ways over distinct kinds of phenomena. We venture to believe that the difference is to be found wholly in the mental phenomena, and not at all in their common condition, consciousness.

We are equally reluctant to admit of any sub-conscious facts that are strictly mental. Hamilton has a cumbersome mechanism of these, whose sole office is to explain the conscious facts of mind, and whose proof of existence is simply the interpretation they are thought to give. There are thus assumed facts, of whose being no independent proof can be offered, which are brought forward to expound familiar facts. A fact of a nature entirely unlike any known facts, hypothetical in the form and place of its being, — for what form and what whereabouts can an unconscious thought or feeling have? — can offer very feeble and very unprofitable explanation to any difficulties, since it itself presents a difficulty of the most formidable kind. Such solutions shift, without removing, the obscurity. There are doubtless physical facts transpiring in the nervous system that immediately and mediately affect the mind. If these are termed sub-conscious

facts, no criticism is to be passed upon the language, provided it be understood to apply to physical facts, and not to mental ones. The essentially invariable characteristic of the latter is, that they are known to some mind whose states and activities they are. Facts transpiring in darkness, under or beyond the reach of consciousness, are purely physical facts. This is the very pith of the distinction between the phenomena of mind and of matter. Taine says: "Beneath the ordinary sensations which we know by consciousness there descends an indefinite series of analogous mental events, more and more imperfect, and more and more removed from consciousness, without our being able to put a limit to this series of increasing degradations; and this successive lowering, which has its counterpart in the attenuation of the nervous system, leads us to the foot of the zoölogical scale, while connecting together, by a continuous sequence of intermediate links, the most rudimentary outlines and highest combinations of the nervous system and mental world." [1]

Here we have a sufficiently wide region for sub-conscious facts. The mind is identified with the nervous constitution, and through it there descends a "series of mental events" into we know not what darkness and depths of the physical world. Consciousness is thus a vision, a light that tarries above, and expires in a feeble, flickering way, at no definite bound in the "increasing degradations." Taine has this justification, that he strives to identify the highest nervous fact with the mental one which is its conscious counterpart. He explains the diversity between the impression made by "molecular movements of nervous centres" and the feeling or the thought which is their concomitant by the very different way in which they are approached, the one from without, the other from within; the one by the senses, the other by "a special inward process we term consciousness." Thus the two conceptions which the mind forms, the one of molecular change, the other of thought, are the diverse poles of one fact, due to opposite approaches. Much in the same way we see,

[1] Taine on Intelligence, p. 176.

and at the same time smell, a rose, uniting two irreconcilable sensations in one thing by virtue of double organs.

The image and comparison are alike illusory. If consciousness is an organ, regarding from within the molecular change of the nervous centres, then is it a separate faculty, centered in some second thing, the mind. Nor can consciousness, the common condition and ground of every sensation, be likened in a philosophical, instructive comparison to any additional sense yielding new diversities of impression. The mind cannot take rank with its own senses, consciousness with the separate faculties it conditions, and then be referred with them to some other mind or consciousness, back of all, that gathers up and collates the facts. The molecular changes of the brain cannot be at once an outside fact to be seen or conceived in their physical aspect, an inside fact in some way to be seen or conceived by consciousness, and also the entire fact, physical and mental, of the complete process. Or, if this can be so, the method needs more exposition. We still hold that the division between conscious and sub-conscious facts must be made to coincide with that between mental and physical ones, and that the highest nervous changes in the mind's chief organ, the cerebrum, are, in their physical, material aspect, no more mental than the twitchings of a galvanized muscle. Next in value to giving a sufficient reason for a fact, is the denial of the value of insufficient reasons. The mental state and the physical one which accompanies it stand as far apart as ever. No lines of connection that have been started from either shore have touched the opposite. We do not hereby exclude the many gradations of consciousness, its slow passage into oblivion, the gradual lapse into a purely physical product: the point made is, that the two classes of facts, the conscious and the unconscious ones, still remain apart, distinct in kind, the one mental the other material.

If we look upon consciousness as an inseparable characteristic of every mental state, that which makes it to be a mental state, we shall have occasion for two uses of the word,

an exact and a popular one, — a use that precisely covers the facts, and one that enables us easily to express a consequence of them. Exactly employed, consciousness will mean the characteristic form, the comprehensive idea, that includes all acts and states of intelligence, all mental facts. Submitting to the freedom and ease of expression, it will mean the knowledge which the mind has of its own states, as states, in their passing, complex forms. We may take an unhesitating and certain appeal to consciousness, in the second sense, for the general, unanalyzed contents of human experience, for the facts of thought and its varieties, of emotion and volition and their varieties. Under this appeal we shall meet with no contradiction, shall stand on common ground with all. Such is not the reference which is continually had to consciousness, and there is, therefore, no harmony of results, no starting-points for productive inquiry, no tests for profitable debate. This we will strive to make plain by a few, out of the many examples open to us.

Says Reid: "Consciousness assures us that in perception we are immediately cognizant of an external and extended non-ego."[1] Reid must here cover by consciousness the cognitive power on which it attends. Hamilton defines consciousness as "The recognition by the thinking subject of its own acts or affections." Under this definition, he returns again and again to assertions like the following: "We may lay it down as an undisputed truth, that consciousness gives, as an ultimate fact, a primitive duality — a knowledge of the ego in relation and contrast to the non-ego; and a knowledge of the non-ego in relation and contrast to the ego."[2] Morell makes the kindred statement: "Perception, viewed alone, indicates simply the momentary consciousness of an external reality standing before us, face to face."[3] President Porter gives this presentation of the same theory: "We inquire of consciousness what is, in sense-perception, the psychical act

[1] Works of Reid, collected by Hamilton, p. 755.
[2] Hamilton's Lectures, p. 202.
[3] Philosophy of Religion, p. 45.

or state? She replies, It is a process complex in its nature, but instantaneous in time. It is complex, because the soul, in its single act discerns two objects, its own condition and some material reality."[1] "What the soul directly perceives, i.e. distinguishes from itself, is its own sensitive organism so far as it is excited to sensation."[2]

Such are the appeals taken to consciousness by modern systems of philosophy — appeals characterized by their fearless, earnest reiteration. Restrict now the meaning of consciousness to the necessary knowledge which the mind has of its own cognitions, and how surprising is it that consciousness has not reported clearly, satisfactorily, till the advent of this modern school, a fact momentarily and universally present to it. If this appeal be now wisely taken, we can only say that we have not, as is supposed, common grounds of knowledge and inquiry in consciousness. These philosophers, far from establishing their own position, have rather overthrown the basis of all positions; have swept away the grounds of any agreement, by showing that the phenomena under discussion, to wit, those found in consciousness, are in different minds hopelessly diverse. We agree in the existence of thoughts, affections, volitions, in the various subdivisions of these, as perceptions, sensations, recollections, images, judgments. Whatever may be the tendencies of our theories, whether toward idealism, materialism, or realism, we accept these facts; but this additional fact, put side by side with them, as resting on exactly the same basis, we do not and cannot accept. It is the dogma of a school, which, whether true or not, is not self-evident, and cannot be ranked with undeniable, primitive facts, given as such in consciousness, without destroying the evidence, impeaching the authority, of those with which it stands.

It may be asked, does not the mere reference of a statement, so very partially received, to the authority of consciousness, show that there are no grounds for metaphysics in common phenomena to be investigated? It does show that the bounds

[1] Porter, on the Human Intellect, p. 127. [2] Ibid. p. 132.

and conditions of those phenomena are not recognized, and that a first step to profitable inquiry is a new settlement of limits, a new determination of the facts under discussion, their source, their authority, and the methods of their investigation. If such references to consciousness cannot be checked, that carry no conviction to an adversary, and are in his eyes mere dogmatic assertions, then the schools of philosophy must stand hopelessly apart, and the proofs of each be denounced by every other as insufficient and inconclusive.

It was argumentation of this sort which led Hume to say: "There are some philosophers who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call ourself. Undeniably, all these positive assertions are contrary to that very experience which is pleaded for them; nor have we any idea of self after the manner it is here explained." [1]

When one philosopher can flatly contradict another as to the testimony of consciousness proper, — that is, as to the very facts under consideration, — there is no hope of any unity of result, till this primary disagreement is overcome. Consciousness must mean one thing to us all, and the facts yielded by it be the same, before we can begin to build a common philosophical structure. Science is one, because its phenomena are understood alike, and have one practical test for their truth.

The reason why it has been possible thus to confound the testimony of consciousness, and confuse at the very beginning the subject of inquiry, we will point out a little later, when we have finished the instances of it to be adduced. It must be allowed, we think, that the philosophers of the sceptical and materialistic school have much less frequently fled unadvisedly to consciousness for defence than have intuitionalists. Hume is less open to the accusation than Hamilton, Spencer than Hodge. Yet even Hume has stepped into the slough. He says: "There is no impression, nor idea of any kind, of which we have any consciousness or memory, that is not conceived as existent; and it is evident that from this con-

[1] Hume's Works, Vol. i. p. 311.

sciousness the most perfect idea and assurance of being is achieved."[1] He then proceeds to draw the conclusion: "The idea of existence is the same as an idea of that we conceive to be existent." He here makes simple and single an act which correct analysis would make double, to wit, the sensation and the mind's contemplation of it as real. For the truth of this defective rendering he, too, goes dogmatically to consciousness. Says Hodge, in his Systematic Theology: "Consciousness teaches that the soul is an individual subsistence."[2] "We are conscious of an abiding, unchanging self, which is the subject of our changing thoughts and feelings."[3] "We get the idea of power from our own consciousness, that is, we are conscious of the ability of producing effects."[4] "This doctrine [the denial of second causes] contradicts the consciousness of every man. We know, as certainly as we know anything, that we are free agents, and that free-agency is the power of self-determination, or of originating our own acts. We are conscious of our own existence; we are, in one sense, conscious of the existence of other men."[5] "They [those who connect sin with choice] still insist that even evil innate, inherent sin, must be referable to our own voluntary agency, or it cannot be guilt in us. But this is contrary to our own consciousness."[6] A like direct appeal to consciousness is habitual with this author. He seems to find his entire creed legibly written on the mental tablets, though very few of us share his insight.

Dr. Carpenter makes this statement, in the Popular Science Monthly: "The psychologist of the present day views matter entirely through the light of his own consciousness; his idea of matter in the abstract being that it is 'something' which has a permanent power of exciting sensations."[7]

Dr. McCosh, somewhat in contradiction to what he has just before asserted, says: "Man is conscious that he has a power of will and spontaneity."[8]

[1] Works, Vol. i. p. 91. [2] Hodge, Vol. i. p. 377. [3] p. 389. [4] p. 406.
[5] p. 595. [6] Vol. ii. p. 189. [7] Oct. 1873, p. 693.
[8] The Divine Government, Physical and Moral, p. 283.

Dr. Hickok, in the following passage, includes the ego in the objects of consciousness. "They [appearances] are the reflection, or other side, of the ego itself, and could not be in consciousness but for the ego, and so the ego could not be in consciousness except for them."[1] He seems to hold that a knowledge of liberty is contained in self-consciousness. "Each knows his own freedom, and acknowledges the freedom of others; and thus the ego comes to complete self-recognition, and passes wholly through the second phase of knowing, termed 'self-consciousness.'"[2]

Morell makes this presentation of intuitions: "The subject stands immediately in presence of the object, and perceives it; hence we term the process, in some instances 'perception,' as when we come in contact with the external world through the senses; and sometimes 'intuition,' as when we have a direct knowledge, through the interior eye of consciousness, of higher and more spiritual realities."[3]

We need not analyze these assertions separately. It is evident the difficult truths of philosophy — the existence of matter, mind, power, freedom, right, and even of God — are by some referred directly to consciousness, and thus put out of the range of proof. By others they are as stanchly denied as first facts of consciousness, and then looked upon as disproved. We wish to make clear the ground of confusion between these contradictory methods — to show how it is that the swords of these vehement adversaries so often pass each other in the darkness, so rarely meet in well-directed blows.

The source of difficulty is found in the confusion which attends the word "consciousness." Definitions have not harmonized; and, still worse, the use of an author often departs from his own definition. This has arisen from the subtile nature of consciousness. It is not itself an entity, but the form, the comprehensive idea, of certain entities. We need not add anything to the acts of knowing and feeling to make them conscious acts of knowing and feeling. They can only be knowing and feeling at all under this condition

[1] Creator and Creation, p. 69. [2] Ibid. p. 70.
[3] Philosophy of Religion, p. 125.

of consciousness. The simplest possible affection of mind is as much characterized by this form of its being as the most complex. Consciousness, like space and time, is one of those conceptions — forms of being — abstract entities — that give essential and radical character to things and events; on their appropriate application, a knowledge of radical character depends. Yet a cognitive act of mind, while in itself simple, bears a double aspect. It, itself, as an affection, is known to the mind, and it also, as an active affection, discloses something else. The mind knows it, and knows through it, in one indivisible act, as the eye sees the telescope and also sees with it. The word "consciousness," always falling below its true application, has vacillated between these two bearings of thought. When carefully defined, it has inclined to the first meaning, and been more frequently employed to indicate the mind's recognition of its own action as such; when used in actual discussion, and made a final appeal, it has often sunk to the second, and designated the knowledge given as their product by any and all acts of cognition. It has sometimes, in definition, been made to cover this ground. James Mill thus regarded it as the generic knowing of the mind, hat is, the combined knowing made up of each specific form. Hamilton clearly draws the distinction above given between the two aspects of a cognition, and warns his readers against the danger of confounding them. Yet he seems to us to have fallen signally into the same error, both in defining consciousness and in his method of appealing to it. We have already given one of his definitions: "The recognition of the thinking subject of its own acts or affections." This does not prevent his saying: "Consciousness is not a special faculty; but our special faculties are only modifications of consciousness."[1] He does not recognize the real nature of consciousness, but seems to think that the question concerning it can be expressed under the alternative, "Is consciousness the genus under which our several faculties of knowledge are contained as species? or, Is consciousness

[1] Hamilton's Lectures, p. 145.

itself a special faculty, co-ordinate with, and not comprehending, these?" He would accept the first branch of the dilemma. Thus, also, Dr. Hopkins says: "Consciousness is the generic form of intelligence." [1]

It is plain that an idea of consciousness, that is constantly causing it to include every form of cognition, while the mind thus using it, is yet, from time to time, reverting back to its central office of revealing mental affections, and has no other word than it to designate this common condition of thought, will give rise to inextricable confusion. So defined, consciousness belongs, in a peculiar sense, to the powers of knowing. Indeed, if it be "the generic form of intelligence," it is difficult to see what it has to do with emotions and volitions. The knowledge which the mind has of its own affections is absolute, undeniable, indisputable. All philosophy assumes it at once. The knowledge which the mind has through its several powers of cognition, is more or less uncertain, admits of qualifications and limitations, and is that which philosophy is constantly engaged in discussing, enlarging, confirming. There is, therefore, a very wide difference between appealing to consciousness in the first and in the second sense; between asking after the floating, general affections of the mind, and the veracity, authority, of each of them as indicating or declaring something else. That I seem to see a ghost, is undeniable; that I do see one, not easily to be believed. That I think I remember a transaction, may be a certain fact; that I do so remember, may be a question of grave doubt. That I am reasoning, none will be disposed to deny; the truth of my conclusions, none may accept. To take an appeal on each of these points to consciousness with the same confidence and dogmatic assertion is utterly to confound philosophy.

Our cognitive faculties are not only less direct, and generally possessed of much less authority, than consciousness, they vary greatly among themselves as to the reliability of each and all their affirmations. One sense is less certain than

[1] Lectures on Moral Science, p. 218.

another; memory is less reliable than the senses; the validity of the judgment depends on the conditions of its exercise; the intuitions are trustworthy according to the precision which use has imparted to them. An appeal to the faculties should, therefore, in all cases, be made in a specific, and not in a generic form.

The faculty should be designated, and the conditions of its activity, and then we are prepared to estimate the value of its conclusions. Though no philosophy can stand that distrusts the faculties by which it is developed, and has no right to cast suspicion on those with which these are indissolubly associated, yet one faculty may criticise, confirm, limit another. Experience does teach us the field within which each power is reliable; and thus the faculty to which we refer our knowledge must, in each instance, be named, as constituting an essential part of the proof. There is hardly more difference between general rumor and individual testimony, than between an off-hand appeal to consciousness and an exact quotation of the mind's action confirmatory of a given conclusion.

The facts, also, rendered in consciousness are, even when very simple in form, very complex in origin, involving the present or past action of many faculties. When we say that we see a house of given form and dimensions at a certain distance, though we have used the single word "see" to express our knowledge, it is truly the result of the action of the greater part of our faculties, and of our past experience. This complex character of the states which consciousness reports in the most immediate, simple way, points to a very remarkable difference between the truths of the conclusions involved in them, and the certainty which attaches to their own existence. One may thus refer to consciousness — and many are referring to it — for the results of a faculty whose very being a large share of philosophers are denying. If such is to be the method of metaphysics, it will richly deserve the contempt so freely expressed for it.

We have a right to assume, and only to assume, the general,

unanalyzed states or affections of the mind — perceptions, judgments, emotions. These all freely grant us, all accept as the products to be explained. Here lies our first, only, and final recourse to consciousness in its appropriate form; a recourse in which the thought accommodates itself to the convenience of language. The problems of mental science being thus clearly propounded, and being essentially the same to all, we have occasion to enter instantly on the most difficult and obscure analysis, that of the states of mind, that we may see the simple powers implied in them. The process may be compared to that so familiar in chemistry. The substance which resists all farther decomposition is accepted as elementary, and for this reason simply, that analysis has exhausted its methods upon it. The affections of the mind are resolved by intellectual analysis into their simplest and most primitive form; and when any state can be separated into no parts or acts simpler than itself, or referred to no activity primitive to it, then it is accepted as a final, elementary constituent of the mind, and referred to a mental power or susceptibility of which it is the product. Nothing more is meant by a mental power than that capacity which is the ground or cause of a given affection. Hence to point out an affection as simple and primary, is to establish the implied faculty. The method pursued by Spencer, in his Psychology, is this of analysis. Indeed, the various forms of philosophy differ from each other in their value, chiefly in the steadiness and skill with which they analyze mental facts, the firmness with which they attribute every simple product to a mental power, the care with which, its existence being recognized, they define and measure it in the form and conditions of its putting forth.

When such a method is relied on, however diverse the conclusions reached, the way of correction and proximate agreement is open; since we have only to repeat the analysis, mark the points of divergence between ourselves and others, and test more faithfully the correctness of our methods. Harmony may not be the immediate result, but there will almost certainly be an approach to it, while the real grounds of

divergence will be brought distinctly forth. This, in itself, is a great gain. Nothing is to be despaired of while anything remains to be done. Disagreement is only hopeless when it is accompanied by blind dogmatism and arrogant assertion that leave no room for inquiry. Appeals taken, as they repeatedly are, to consciousness, are precisely, though they may be unwittingly, of this nature. They cover up and confound the points of diversity, and sweep away the grounds of investigation by calling in what is claimed to be a final and undeniable authority. It is as if the chemist should constantly refer to the compounds which contain his elements for a proof of their existence, while declining to disclose his processes of analysis to those whose results contradicted his own. An inquiry into the elements reached, and the methods of reaching them, speedily settles discrepancies in this department. The path of progress, though more difficult in mental science, as elements do not here offer the same final, satisfactory evidence as in chemistry, is yet essentially the same.

This purely speculative analysis of the affections of consciousness—those common complex affections whose existence all readily admit—finds confirmation of its conclusions in various palpable external tests. The daily actions of men are the products of these affections; and a correct division of faculties will show itself in a general correspondence of hypothetical with actual results — of the lines of action which would naturally flow from the alleged attributes and those which do follow from real powers. If the speculations of philosophy give a dreamy unreality to that life which is to us all a most palpable daily fact, then some element has been omitted, some root of connection sundered, and the ground of substantial, wide-awake existence in the senses overlooked. Every system must be realistic in this sense, that it at once embraces the outline and substance of the facts which are the products of mind, and thus discloses its character. Every action may be termed the secondary stage of an affection, and is, therefore, to be looked on as a key to it. Thus, when Hume, in his analysis of cause and effect, comes to the conclusion that we

have of it "no other notion but that of certain objects which have always been conjoined together," [1] he does not sufficiently explain that labor by which we are constantly striving to hitch new results on to old forces through a recognition of their nature. If the lifting of the lid of a tea-kettle has nothing to do with the power of steam, but is a naked sequence, it does not at all follow that a piston-head will be lifted likewise by it. Or, when he says, that our idea of time is one "merely of the manner or order in which objects exist," [2] he overlooks the fact that we understand the order of sequence by the idea of time, not time by the fact of sequence; and that the world is full of pieces of mechanism designed to measure time, as if it itself were a formal law to all events. It is true that these time-pieces, one and all, depend on a sequence, but they draw no attention to that sequence. The sequence is incident to the determining of equal divisions in a strictly formal element. It is possible for us to conceive that all sequences, everywhere, should follow each other more rapidly than they now do, with a maintenance of their present relative ratio; but if time were only this sequence such a conception would not be open to us, for the fact and form of sequence would be identical in the two cases. A time-piece does indicate something beside sequence, to wit, a rate of sequence, a rate, indeed, which we cannot measure without a second sequence with which to compare it, but which we can conceive by itself to be increased or diminished.

A second source of confirmation in mental analysis is language. This stands in most intimate union with the mental affections to which it is designed to give expression. While the distinctions of language, arising as they often do from the convenience of speech, and trusting to some secondary or suggestive force for a correct interpretation, are not the exact counterpart of the states and acts to which they apply, they nevertheless maintain a close and general correspondence with them. A philosophy that finds its divisions gathering up and harmonizing those hinted at in language

[1] Hume's Works, Vol. i. p. 124. [2] Ibid. Vol. i. p. 60.

receives decided support from that fact. A system that should deny the existence of memory must struggle hard against the entire current of expression. That the word "right," leaving behind one after another of its lower applications, comes to take up an ethical meaning, which makes it in so many connections the language of highest praise, goes to show that there is a corresponding supreme affection, its counterpart in the human mind. The quiet way in which the word "infinite" holds on its course, notwithstanding the laborious proof by which it has been shown to stand for an inconceivable *pseudo-idea*, affords evidence that the human mind does so grasp the notion expressed by it as to find an ever returning practical demand for it in the utterance of thought. The refusal of such a word to disappear from among the visible symbols of thought, after the chemistry of mind has pronounced it altogether volatile and deceptive in the idea indicated, discloses a grasp of the inner, spiritual senses more certain than that of the imagination and logical processes.

The history of philosophical beliefs also presents tests, though wavering ones, of the truths of mental analysis. Probability is given to a conclusion concurred in by many and diverse schools. The distinction between substance and qualities, force and phenomena, is one confirmed by a vast weight of authority, which, when it is rejected as authority, does yet indicate a controlling tendency, an insight, most likely in accordance with the facts. When, therefore, either idealism or materialism assumes a form that obliterates this distinction, a form that can put no substance under qualities, no agents back of activities, the gravest *a-priori* doubt is cast upon its methods.

When Hamilton, for the time being, sets aside this distinction in affirming that the mind in perception, "is immediately conscious of itself, and of something external to itself," our suspicion is excited, and we scan the new doctrine very closely. This assertion of a perceptive, sensational knowledge, of a substantial, non-phenomenal fact, — of real being, — is one quite out of the range of previous universal belief.

While all the conclusions of philosophers are freely criticized, they gain by concurrence, by accumulation, a power at least a little in advance of the reasons on which they rest. Not to feel the historic force of events and beliefs, is to lack one just and protecting sensibility.

The physical facts which accompany mental ones as their inseparable conditions, are another guide to correct analysis. Though sensation, as a mental affection, cannot be explained by a study of the senses, yet, we are aided in acquiring a knowledge of its divisions, limits, and method of cultivation by a careful study of its physical organs. The fact that the superior senses of sight and hearing find a nervous centre below the cerebrum sufficient to be the ground of reflex action, through the eye and ear, and yet, when the cerebrum is removed, fail to give a practical, working knowledge of the outside world, lends strong confirmation to the belief that the larger part of perception is a product, in the animal, of a spontaneous correlation, in man, of one established by experience, between the seat or centre of the sensations and the cerebral action which attends on them, puts them to service, and gives them, in connection with mental associations, the force of practical guidance. The crude sensation is transformed into perception by a superior activity, of which the cerebrum is the seat, and which stands in the closest affinity with the inferior sensational centre. The sensations can exist, as shown by reflex action, yet their entire external power and value be lost. "Here is a pigeon whose cerebral lobes are entirely removed, but whose corpora quadrigemina remain; when I suddenly put my hand near it, it makes a slight movement of the head to avoid the threatened danger."[1] Yet the animal so treated loses all intelligence, is unable to avoid obstacles, or help itself to food.

The relation of the voluntary to the involuntary powers affords another instance of a topic which can be most suc-

[1] Experiments of Flourens and Longet, as given in Taine on Intelligence, p. 156.

cessfully studied in connection with the nervous system. We find inferior nervous centres, working with automatic efficiency, yet made subject in various degrees to the pure mental powers that rule in the cerebrum. There is here an independence of position and of office, together with a union and subordination of structure, which present obvious physical counterparts of the facts of consciousness.

We refer to one other aid, that afforded by comparative psychology, a study of the powers and habits of animals. The extent to which the intelligence of the animal can be explained by a spontaneous correlation of constitutional functions, of the appetites and of the senses with the muscular system in what is known chiefly as instincts, and by the associations of true mental affections through memory in experience, seems to us to show that there is here a form of life to which necessary, organic, and sensational states are made to minister effectively and sufficiently. So far, we would accept the philosophy of Spencer. Here are combinations of inner states and outer actions, intelligent in form, appearing largely in consciousness, yet essentially the product of the physical circumstances under which they arise. When, however, this phase of intelligent being is made the type and measure of rational life, comparative psychology does not seem to us to favor the conclusion. The one fact of language shows that the human mind no longer works exclusively by concrete facts and their images, but chiefly by ideas — ideas which are a true product of intellectual powers, not the shadows and faint remainders of sensations. The starting-point of a being who moves intellectually by language, and of one which progresses by sensations, is radically diverse. A closer study of these two forms of intelligence, as shown in animal and in rational life, will go far to settle some of the more difficult problems of philosophy. The philosophy of fixed associations works its way fairly up to the bounds of reason; it has not, for us, by one step transcended them.

It remains the task of philosophy, by ever renewed analysis, and an increasingly patient and fair application of these tests,

to settle the powers of the mind, to run out and establish the limits of knowledge. But is not this precisely what philosophy has been about, with very partial results? Yes, and no; and the negation has more weight than the affirmation. A great deal of philosophy has overlooked the dependence of deduction on induction, of *a priori* on empirical truths, and has wrought diligently at relations which, at the best, lie purely between ideas, and do not give the measure of facts. Idealism is necessarily *a priori* and deductive, and prides itself on this feature, on this necessary sequence of its conclusions. But such a philosophy is no more mental science or ontology than pure mathematics is mechanics or astronomy. All that it can possibly be is logic, and, if a logic, it may be one utterly out of relation to facts since its notions, its enucleated ideas, may not correspond to these.

The sceptical philosophy of Hume — and the same is true of many of its numerous progeny at the present time — was almost purely deductive. Strange as it may seem, a school that has so closely affiliated with the inductive, scientific tendency rests on the purest deductions. Given the premises, that the phenomena of the mind are divisible into impressions and ideas, and that "the difference between these consists in the degrees of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind,"[1] and all his other conclusions follow in order. "All our ideas are copied from impressions."[2] Space and time are not distinct ideas, but "merely of the manner and order in which objects exist."[3] "The idea of existence is the very same with the idea of what we conceive to be existent."[4] "We have no other notion of cause and effect but that of certain objects which have always been conjoined together."[5] "All reasoning consists in nothing but comparison."[6] "Belief is nothing but a strong and lively idea, derived from a present impression related to it."[7] "Belief is more properly an act of the sensitive than of the cogitative parts of our nature."[8] "The sceptic still con-

[1] Hume, Vol. i. p. 15. [2] Ibid. p. 99. [3] Ibid. p. 60. [4] Ibid. p. 92.
[5] Ibid. p. 124. [6] Ibid. p. 100. [7] Ibid. p. 140. [8] Ibid. p. 233.

tinues to reason and believe, even though he asserts that he cannot defend his reason by reason."[1] "I have shown that the understanding, when it acts alone and according to its most general principles, entirely subverts itself, and leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition, either in philosophy or common life. We save ourselves from total scepticism only by means of that singular and seemingly trivial property of the fancy by which we enter with difficulty into remote — that is new — views of things."[2]

A volume is too much for a philosophy of this purely deductive character. A vigorous mind can step directly from the first of these propositions to the second, from the second to the third, and so on to the last. If our knowledge is only impressions in different stages of decadence, then, of course, the senses have the lead, and what is in the mind is better than what is out of it, up to the full force of its present being. Yet this proof may be displaced in ten minutes by a second conclusion, endowed with the same validity. Possession is not merely nine points of law; it becomes the entire ten, in the mental structure. When philosophers as vigorous and as influential as Hume work in this fashion, what progress are we to expect? The entire labor of establishing his system lay properly before these, his postulates, enunciated on his first pages. The great mass of his work is the relatively child's play of drawing conclusions and multiplying corollaries. If it be said that much of the analysis insisted on by him is, nevertheless, involved in the stages of development, we grant it; but urge that at the critical moment the original principle is brought in to decide the result. The mind is not allowed to reach any other elements than those which can be covered by impressions and ideas which are their shadowy counterparts.

The most modern forms of English philosophy are well represented by Hamilton and John Stuart Mill. We have, in both, either a defective analysis or a stubborn disregard, in the conclusions reached, of the tests of correctness we

[1] Hume's Works, Vol. i. p. 237. [2] Ibid. p. 330.

have mentioned. In the instances already adduced, Hamilton and his followers insist on the direct testimony of consciousness, both to the "ego and non-ego." Under these affirmations, if consciousness be used to express the mind's knowledge of its own affections, then both matter and mind, in their real substance, become affections of mind. In other words, there is no reality, but fluent states of consciousness, and we are, against the entire drift of this school, landed in idealism. If consciousness is employed as a generic term for all our cognitive powers, then, obviously, there is here no analysis; and a knowledge of the "ego and non-ego" is referred to that very complex mental activity which accompanies perception, without deciding on the special power or powers to which it is to be assigned. Can this knowledge be ascribed to the purely sensational element in perception? We think not; for, if so, the sensation ceases to be a state wrought in the mind, — an effect enveloped, permeated by consciousness, — and becomes, in part, matter or mind, in their permanent, absolute, hidden essence. It is inference alone that reaches something beyond the data, back of the premises, hidden under them as a substratum of force. If the senses directly grasp this also, then the phenomenal and substantial flow together, and mingle in one turbid stream, like the rains and snows of spring. Form and substance cease to be distinguishable.

Here is defective analysis. The idea of cause and effect is overlooked at the very point at which it renders its most efficient aid. Perception is full of inference, is slowly built up on inference, till, in the simple yet complex whole, the crude sensation is only the hidden foundation of the framework of knowledge — the rock that scarcely rises above the surface. The stubborn conviction with which this doctrine of direct perception is held to springs from the fact that a knowledge of matter and of mind is really contained in perception, though not in that element of it to which it is referred.

We gave, above, quotations in which the proof of human freedom is sought directly in consciousness. Now freedom

turns on the connection between states; is not itself a state. It cannot, then, be established by consciousness. Liberty is an idea, like cause and effect, which the mind brings to the explanation of certain facts, and must rest for proof on that particular power which furnishes it. If this faculty be discarded or discredited this notion goes with it, maugre consciousness.

Hamilton overlooks cause and effect in its real character and chief office. Mill, in his analysis, eliminates it altogether. Therein he does the utmost violence to universal action and language. These tests of correctness are not only not met; they are violated in the most flagrant possible way. Life, science, language are all constructed on the idea of force — firm efficiencies to be laid hold of and used. Simple antecedence is the travesty of daily speech and action — the merest shell of appearances, with which this living, germinant fact invests itself. The doctrine equally fails to meet the test of the history of philosophy, or that of physiology. The study of the arrangements and connections of the nervous system proceeds on the supposition that these indicate real dependencies — are the basis of efficient interaction. The idea that they are mere dumb show — false indications of forces never at work — is not the basis of physiological research.

Taine, whose work is the latest and most extreme presentation of this view, is compelled to regard most of the products of mental action as "hallucinations." "External perception is a true hallucination." "All these operations" — judgment, reasoning, abstraction, generalization, combination of colors — "comprise an hallucination, at all events, in an incipient state." "But whether the hallucinatory process be commenced or completed, matters little; and the states of our mind, when we are awake and in health, may be defined as a *series of hallucinations which do not become developed.*"[1] By so much we are saved from insanity. If we chance on development, we pass into madness. Quite

[1] Taine, On Intelligence, p. 220.

true is this conclusion, if there is no foundation for the notion of cause and effect, and no corresponding mental power. Then are we in our mental states forever played on by false images, begetting ungrounded beliefs; and the sane man is better than the insane one, only in that he believes in harmony with his fellows. But what are we to think of a philosophy that resolves all its own conclusions into hallucinations, and makes such a wreck of thought and language, that there is hardly enough left that is real and true to steady and explain by contrast "the hallucinations" and "hallucinating" processes everywhere afloat! Such a philosophy falls not much short of a *reductio ad absurdum* for itself and associated views.

Observe the definition of matter which belongs to it: "The permanent possibility of particular sensations." Rest on the word "possibility"; what does it imply but something which is the ground or occasion of the possible sensation? No cause or ground or reason yields no possibility. Why a *permanent* possibility? No answer can be given, except on the idea of causation. If there is no exterior or interior cause for the sensations, then they are not conditioned in their own being to permanent appearance. Nor is the mind, by the mere fact of their repetition, bound to anticipate them. If it were, there would be at least one efficient circumstance working conviction in the thoughts, that is, one cause. Without this idea of causation, thought falls to pieces, equally with facts.

This definition is self-destructive; not only can no reason be given for it, it scouts the only idea on which a reason could be given, and hence confounds reason and philosophy. All empirical reasoning about facts — and strange enough, this is all the reasoning that Mill is willing to accept — is left absolutely without connection or ground, by a denial of causation. The mere fact of continuity can be the basis of no conviction without a restoration of the discarded idea of an efficiency in facts. There must be given to sequence a governing power over the mind explaining its anticipations, otherwise the field of mental phenomena — reasoning, reasons

and all — is an "hallucination," a fleeting, feathery, disjointed vision.

Are we not, then, right in insisting that philosophy shall commence with a careful analysis of the general, complex, universally accepted facts of consciousness? That each result shall be closely, repeatedly, tested by the criteria of action, language, the history of thought, physiology, comparative psychology? That every element so reached and so approved shall be regarded as the sufficient proof of a corresponding power, and that all powers, in their own departments, under the limitations established by experience, shall be regarded as possessed of final authority? It is a shame to set down philosophy among the impossibles, till we have tried every method, put forth every effort. The wild conclusions of the past are much better than this. We are not shut up to the alternative. Sober, patient processes will yield sound results, here as elsewhere.

Dr. Hopkins, in his recent work, An Outline Study of Man, furnishes another example of the diversity and confusion of opinions that prevail on the subject of consciousness. Such a division, on so central a point, is a reproach and a weakness to philosophy; and we shall be glad to do even a little to remove it. "We would define consciousness to be the knowledge by the mind of itself as the permanent and invisible subject of its own operations."[1] The objections to this definition are manifest. It withdraws consciousness from the field to which it belongs, and assigns it an office already performed by other powers. It withdraws it from its proper field. Consciousness is brought forward to explain the knowledge of the mind of its own states. This is the riddle; and to define consciousness without reference to it, is to leave it unsolved. This is the habitual, philosophical use of the word. We do not wish to discover some activity which we may call by this name, but we wish to answer the question wisely, How does the mind know its own states and actions?

[1] p. 107.

We respond, that as states and actions they cannot exist otherwise than in the conscious grasp of the mind, and that consciousness, therefore, is the characteristic of every mental condition, the one regulative notion under which we group them. The above definition makes consciousness perform a work due to other powers. The phenomena of mind, like those of matter, we refer inevitably, under the idea of causation, to a force or power which underlies them — is the source of them. This is all the knowledge the mind has of itself as essential being, and this it reaches by instant inference under the intuition of causation. To insert consciousness here as a power, is to make of it a fifth wheel.

Dr. Hopkins, in the same discussion, briefly speaks of the view we have urged: "Is not consciousness one of those original and primitive ideas of which we have spoken? This has been said; but since consciousness accompanies our knowledge of those ideas in the same way as it accompanies our other knowledge, if consciousness were one of them, we should need another consciousness back of that, and so on forever." [1] This objection proceeds on so slight a grasp of the doctrine, that it is difficult to give any color to it. Every mental act is characterized by consciousness. Consciousness is not some one thing or particular quality, but a common condition or regulative idea of a whole class of acts and states. The mind assigns an event to a certain place and time. The use of these ideas involves a mental action, and hence the common condition of such actions — consciousness. There is no more difficulty in attributing this peculiar quality to one kind of knowledge than to another. The act of mind by which I recognize consciousness to be a constitutional condition of all mental states, is itself characterized by it; but there is no embarrassment to the view in this fact. If consciousness were a distinct power, then the exercise of it should involve a second act to cognize the first; but, as a condition of all mental states, it is, of course, present in the act which discloses this truth.

[1] p. 106.