

# THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

## THE SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY

### I

THE next International Congress of Philosophy is to be held at Prague in 1934, with President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia at its head. Every member of the Seventh Congress will wish it well, while feeling that the meeting which closed at Oxford on September 5 has set a standard in many respects which it will not be easy to exceed.

The Congress had never met in England before. It had met five times on the continent, at Paris, Geneva, Heidelberg, Bologna, and Naples, and once in America when it convened at Harvard in 1926. The time was ripe for an English session, and for such a session Oxford was the almost inevitable choice. Not that the choice was without minor risks; those who know what Oxford weather can be like will read a little skeptically of five days of almost unbroken sunshine. But so it was. The physical conditions in other respects were hardly less satisfactory. Six of the men's colleges, New College, Merton, Corpus, Hertford, Magdalen, and Oriel, and one of the women's, St. Hilda's, opened their doors to the Congress, providing the members in most cases, as they do for their undergraduates, with two rooms apiece. Expeditions were arranged to Windsor Castle and Eton by motor, and to Nuneham Park by steamer; and in unphilosophic interludes, there were countless things to do for anyone with an eye to architecture or history. If one could not content oneself, as many did, with peering into endless green quadrangles or strolling in Addison's walk or the Christ Church meadows, one could go on a visit to Newman's rooms at Oriel or Johnson's at Pembroke, or search out the portraits of Duns Scotus and Bradley at Merton, Hobbes at Hertford, Green and Caird at Balliol. Christ Church offered, for an evening's social gathering, its great dining hall, where Locke looked down from the walls, a little apprehensively one thought, though whether in uneasiness at the strange company of all those Indian viceroys, or in alarm at the stranger doctrines of his successors, one hardly knew. On another day tables were scattered over the lawn of a Magdalen quadrangle, and Oxford philosophers and their wives served a hospitable English tea to their polyglot hundreds of visitors.

The sessions of the Congress were all held in a single large building on the High Street, the University Examination Schools. It was admirably suited for the purpose. There were often four sessions running at once, and if there were subjects or celebrities in several of them that one could not bear to miss, it was not thought in the least unseemly if one dodged out of one door and in through another at the turn of a paper. The largest of the rooms held over eight hundred auditors, and for the session of welcome on the opening night, it was full. At this session, the President, Professor J. A. Smith, gave the address of welcome, and was responded to by Professor Brunschvicg for France, the Greek minister to Great Britain for the home of philosophers generally, Senator Croce for Italy, Professor Driesch for Germany, and Professor R. B. Perry for the United States. The session began and ended on strikingly different notes. Professor Smith suggested that the real community of minds lay in the intellectual life and that the Congress was a means to increasing what was common. Professor Perry was disposed to think that such meetings might, on the contrary, serve to sharpen intellectual differences, but that this in itself was no small service. And he painted, with humorous touches, the picture of a "happy fellowship of irreducible differences."

Such conferences always have their lighter and personal side, which lingers in the memory longer than its importance perhaps would warrant. It is hard to forget the patriarchal genial Professor Alexander, there on the platform under the noses of the speakers, fixing his ear-trumpet in place with alarming decision at the critical points, and turning to the audience with a roguish twinkle if the point failed to come off. And these Congresses will be tamer affairs when there is no Professor Lutoslawski to dazzle and puzzle them with the incalculable meteorology of his moods. One remembers pleasantly, too, an effervescent little Dutch philosopher who facilitated his flow of English by launching into a high-pitched lyrical chant from which, once he had achieved it, he was always reluctant to descend. And then there was the unlucky Frenchman who, whenever told by the chairman that his time was up, heard the audience burst into applause, and taking this as the support of honest merit against a malevolent chairman, rose renewed like Antaeus from each decisive outburst and went on till his voice was lost in the storm. One minor lesson of the Congress is that a twenty-minute paper should be a twenty-minute paper. On too many occasions the chairman was embarrassed, the audience made restive, and the effect of a good paper largely nullified by failure to conform to so simple a rule.

There were some notable absences to regret. Mr. Santayana was

not there, nor M. Bergson, nor Mr. Russell, nor Professor Dewey. Professor Joachim was to have presided at one session, but was overtaken by illness while on vacation in Germany and could not come. The chairman of the American Congress Committee, Professor Armstrong, was also prevented from attending, as was Professor Aliotta of Italy, who was to have contributed a paper. Several members who were present were prevented at the last minute, through illness or otherwise, from taking their appointed part, including Dr. Dawes Hicks, Professor de Ruggiero, and Professor de Wulf. An absence of a different kind, which was felt by the American members in much deeper and more personal fashion, was that of Professor A. W. Moore of Chicago, the news of whose death in London arrived just as the Congress began.

## II

On its philosophical side the Congress was a medley of voices in which it would take much ingenuity to discern a harmony or even a dominant strain. One wondered what had become of the old militant systems, with their high claims, their sharp issues, and their uncompromising advocacy. Not a single champion of Hegelian idealism, for example, took the floor in its behalf. The cynic would no doubt account for this by saying that the "home of lost causes" had added another to its list, but it was perhaps due rather, at least in part, to the self-denying ordinance imposed by Oxford on itself, where the great tradition is by no means dead, and in part to the fact that idealism is in a state of heart-searching preliminary to voicing itself anew. But at any rate it was noteworthy that in almost every symposium the issue was not between systems, but between individuals. Professor Whitehead, in one of the impromptu discussions, drew a parallel between the present state of speculation and its state in Greece just before the great outburst in Socrates and his successors, a state in which science was refusing to rest content with the evidence of sense and was running out on every hand into speculation, without as yet any sort of agreement as to how to interpret its new findings. That was probably the impression of many about the Congress. There was more activity of thought, more alertness and eagerness than ever. In the course of the next decade or so, it might lead to something of immense significance. But it has not done so yet. Reflection has ceased to flow in the old channels of idealism and realism, mechanism and teleology, absolutism and pragmatism, but it has yet to find firm channels of its own.

There was only one notable exception to this at the Congress, and that was Croce. (Professor Alexander might have been another, but his only paper dealt with a recent and special interest of his, esthetics.) Croce appeared as the one redoubtable advocate of a

philosophy on the grand scale, and his presence, so far as one could judge, aroused more notice than that of any other member. Since his chief paper, printed in Italian, had, even apart from its authorship, a good deal of general interest, it deserves special notice.

It was entitled "Antistoricismo," the Anti-historical Spirit. Such a spirit seemed to him now everywhere apparent. It takes two forms. The first, which he called "futurism," is the worship of vitality, force, and activity for their own sakes, and of the new simply for its novelty, the worship of a future without a past. Futurist artists would like to start absolutely afresh without warping themselves through an attempt to master old forms; futurist politicians would like to do away at a stroke with customs and institutions evolved by the trial and error of centuries. Between the lines one could read Croce's reference to what America stands for in European eyes, and to what he considers the wild experimentation in Russia. The second form of futurism is an exaltation of the absolute, of system and uniformity, which in art would return to a rigorous classicism, and in social matters would suppress individual enterprise by an inflexible rule from above. (Surely, said his hearers to themselves, this is Fascism or nothing.) On the face of things, these tendencies seem opposites, but the fact is that the one passes into the other with the greatest readiness; anarchy is next door to despotism, and despotism is only too likely to become arbitrary. And the two are merely twin branches of one stem, the spirit of the French Revolution. They are complementary sides of experience, chopped sharply off from each other, developed in fanatical abstraction, and therefore incapable of expressing the rich fullness of human nature. The first is in essence the cult of the irrational, which tends to run out into an orgy of impulse; the second is an abstract rationalism which, in the attempt to fix man's values for him, ends by making them merely irrelevant to the real needs of his nature.

Such outbursts of the anti-historical spirit are by no means new in history. We have an example of it in the rigid otherworldliness of the early Christians, and another in the rationalism of the enlightenment. But Christian otherworldliness brought charity with it, and the enlightenment brought with it humanitarianism and a new sensibility to the rights of men. Is there any corresponding fruit of the anti-historical spirit of to-day? Croce looked for it in vain. Neither the new cult of vitality nor the new authoritarianism seemed to provide the forms in which a life that was genial and creative could grow up, and into which men could throw themselves with confidence, love, and joy. People are trying to be free by modelling themselves on the barbarians, and all they are attaining by it is a

barrenness which the real barbarians (who did not know they were such) would never have endured. Imperialism, a shrill nationalism, Marrian socialism, a reactionary Catholicism, the resistance of all attempts to build a peaceable European community, and the espousal of such causes even by the intellectuals,—these are all symptoms of a lack of that sanity which only comes with the historical mind.

As philosophers, what should we do about it? Croce answered in parables. Suppose, he said, quoting the poet Hebbel, that people no longer care to dress in silk; what is the silk-worm to do? It can only do what its nature demands, spin away patiently by itself. Suppose we were living in the times of Alboin and Attila, of Gregory and Boethius; with which side should we cast our lot? If we act in the historical spirit, he answered, we must do what Gregory did, throw ourselves into the main stream of civilization and culture, and trust that its deepened current can absorb again, as it once did, the barbarisms of the time. This does not mean conservatism. On the contrary, "the truth is that the historical and the liberal spirits are inseparable, so much so that history can not be better defined than as the story of liberty; only so does it get sense and intelligibility." To enter by reflection into the meaning of the world process that is working itself out through history is at once the truest philosophy and the truest religion. "He who opens his heart to the historical spirit feels himself no longer alone, but united to the life of the universe, brother and son and comrade of those great minds who, their labor over, still live in the works they have achieved."

For learning to become so eloquent was naturally an impressive thing. Whatever one thought about the correctness of it all, one could only concede the sweep and power of the reflection that found voice in it, and own gratefully that, whatever Croce may say, the great tradition of philosophizing is not dead.

### III

Perhaps of all the conferences, the one in which there was the nearest approach to agreement was one held on the first morning and opened by Professor John Laird. The question was, "Is the Distinction between Moral Rightness and Wrongness Ultimate?" Professor Laird took the familiar view that the rightness or wrongness of an action is to be found by balancing the goods it entails against those of other possible actions, that "good is not merely *a* reason for duty, but *the* reason for it." His argument for this view took a novel form. It is plain that some duties, for example, prudence and benevolence, must be justified in this fashion; to produce good for self or others in their very essence. Now "every

moral action is either self-regarding or other-regarding," if not both. "From this it follows that the principle I am engaged in defending is *relevant* to any moral action whatsoever." But is it all that is relevant? Does not the good which makes it our duty to tell the truth lie partly in "the *present* intrinsic dignity of truth-telling," and not merely in future consequences? Yes, said Professor Laird, we must admit that it does. Need we then give up our principle? Not at all, he replied. All we need do is to include such goods among the goods that we must take account of in estimating rightness, and our principle will stand as sound and general. M. Parodi seemed to agree with this, and though the other symposiasts, Professor Medicus and Dr. Schiller, dealt chiefly with other issues, they too seemed to differ only in detail.

The session on mechanism and vitalism also revealed a notable measure of agreement. It made clear that the present trend of thought on this issue is toward neither of the old extremes, but toward a middle position which may be roughly identified with the "holism" of General Smuts. The older mechanistic theory was left without an advocate. On the other hand two papers were devoted to the defence of a thoroughgoing teleology. Professor Wildon Carr maintained roundly that "if we abstract from purpose we negate the essence" of any living thing, and indeed that the world process itself can be understood only in the light of the end which it is realizing. And Professor J. E. Boodin, dismissing mechanistic cosmology as "more of a myth than the Timaeus," offered in its place a view which he described boldly as "An Animistic Cosmology." Mechanism can give no account of the origin of the state of affairs which it assumes, it can not account for the resistance to entropy, it can not account for the maintenance of order, or the apparent bending of events to one end. And "if we must assume a non-mechanical factor, why not include this in our conception as somehow immanent in the cosmos, instead of introducing it as a *deus ex machina*, when our mechanical account fails?"

But such uncompromising purposiveness did not represent the main trend of thought on this problem. Professor J. S. Haldane, speaking from the chair, presented it more precisely when he said that in his opinion biological processes were *neither* mechanical nor purposive. It was clear, he thought, that no conceivable extension of mechanism could explain how an organism maintained and reproduced its structure (he had long ago declined a readership in biochemistry at Oxford because he was not clear that, as then conceived, there was any such field); but, notwithstanding vigorous dissent from Professor Carr, he went on to say that this maintenance as a whole could not be described as purposive either. This, with minor dif-

ferences, was the view also of Professor Hoernlé, Mr. Joad, and Professor Ungerer of Karlsruhe. "The antithesis of mechanism and purpose is out of date" declared Professor Hoernlé; "the battle is one of mechanism *versus* holism." And holism in biology means that under "the guidance of the concept of the living being as a self-maintaining whole," we should take as the important thing in our study the agencies by which this is maintained.

Professor Woodbridge's discussion of "the Implications of the Genetic Method" lent further impetus to this trend of opinion. When we try in the old fashion to explain a process teleologically, after the analogy of the artist producing a picture, we are going outside the process proper and, instead of showing how its factors contribute to a result, trying to show why the process occurred at all. Such a proceeding when applied to nature is wholly futile. The true genetic method "leaves the fact of teleology precisely where it finds it" and devotes itself simply to "finding the co-operating factors in the production of a result." It does not try to explain teleology, which is probably beyond explanation, but uses it as a principle for the ordering and describing of fact. In another paper of the same symposium, Professor Singer attempted such a description of the facts of organic functioning in terms of the mathematical relations among classes and groups of points, a description which represented perhaps the nearest approach to a mechanistic theory that appeared. In striking contrast was Professor Driesch, who, accepting the fact of holistic behavior, insisted again on his well-known theory that there must supervene upon mechanical processes a vital factor or entelechy if these processes are to come alive.

#### IV

The sessions on logic and the theory of knowledge seemed more notable for their revival of doctrines already familiar than for their fertility of anything novel. Professor Lossky improved the opportunity to bring before the Congress the main features of his recent work on logic, based on an intuitionist philosophy. These features strongly recalled the logic of Bradley and Bosanquet on the one hand and on the other the Aristotelianism supported in the paper of Professor Noel of Louvain. The necessity we find in judgment and inference is not imposed by ourselves, as Kant supposed, but as Professor Noel put it "il exprime la structure même des choses." When in judgment, we tie a predicate to a subject, what we are really trying to do is to discover the consequent of a ground. Thus every judgment is synthetic, and states a connection of content, not a class inclusion; and the true principle of the syllogism is not the *dictum de omni*, but this, that the ground of the ground is the ground of the

consequent. Perhaps the chief surprise about this is that it should be offered as anything new. But after listening to some expositions of more recent logical doctrine, one hears these old things gladly. They help to keep alive the moribund tradition that logic has something to do with truth (and not mere validity) on the one hand, and with philosophy on the other.

A view of logical law which was strikingly at variance with Professor Lossky's was offered by Professor Lalande of the Sorbonne, whose paper was presented for him by Professor Robin. He began by considering and rejecting three common interpretations of logical laws, that they are pure forms, that they are the most general laws of the sciences, and that they are laws which, meaningless without a content, still hold of every content alike. These are all, he maintained, mistakes; "but if we agree to take all these laws of formal logic and logistic as statements of *value* or *logical obligation*, tout s'éclaire et s'ordonne." The principle of identity will then read, "The right and obligation to affirm or to deny a single proposition is invariable and imprescriptible"; the principle of induction will become, "In the absence of indication to the contrary, one *ought* to judge that what has always happened in a certain way in the past will happen in the same way in the future." These views of Professors Lossky and Lalande could perhaps be reconciled by a thinker who held, as for example Royce did, that reality *is* the attainment of an end, since then logical laws could be equally a description of the real and a guide to the will. But there were those in his audience who did not think that, without such a metaphysic, Professor Lalande's theory would much advance the case. For if we have a right and duty to think so and not otherwise, is it not because the real world is constructed so, and thinking otherwise misses the truth? And again, if so, does not logic make its claim upon us, as Professor Lossky maintained, because it reports how the real is put together?

Another defence, and an effective one, of a position which some had thought superseded, was offered by Professor Montague on behalf of causality. With the view that has approved itself to so many modern scientists, following Mach and Pearson, that all we can find in causality is a constant conjunction of events, he was unable to rest content. For in spite of the denials of the positivists it seemed to him clear that "we have the quality of enforcement as itself a datum . . . we have the feeling of one experience generating another." The true question, then, is whether this activity or process of enforcement goes on in the facts independently of our perceiving it. And this, he maintained, it did. For "in a world in which the events were independent and lacking in any real causal bonds, these repeated concurrences would be outrageous runs of

luck," while if we assume a real causal power, they are accounted for as the simple expression of it. Not nearly enough had been made, he thought, of the extraordinary improbability of events that were really independent behaving as the empiricists admit they behave. For antecedently, every amount of uniformity is equally likely. Perfect uniformity would therefore be infinitely improbable. If the infinitely improbable nevertheless occurs, why does it do so? It *may* be luck. But once assume the bare possibility of a causal power in nature, and "then the fact of nature's routines transforms it into an overwhelming probability." And on the side of this probability Professor Montague cast in his lot.

It was unfortunate that Professor Husserl could not be present to speak for the much-discussed school of German phenomenologists. But their work was discriminately criticised by Hans Driesch. So far as valid, he said, their program consisted in three endeavors. In the first place, it sought to supply a descriptive psychology of thought, reducing experience so far as possible to the unanalyzable elements of which it is composed, such elements as are pointed to by words like "this," "different," "pleasure." Secondly, it sought to offer a doctrine of categories, in the sense of a complete account of the relations which may be seen to hold *a priori* between the elements so distinguished. Under this head would fall syllogistic logic, for example, and the whole of arithmetic and geometry. Finally, it sought to fix conceptually the types of empirical order which recur most constantly, and which are exemplified in ordinary thought about "matter" or "organisms." So far, Driesch thought phenomenology legitimate and useful. All beyond this—and he enumerated various other claims—he held sweepingly to be mistaken.

## V

The single session devoted to esthetics produced an unexpected element of drama. Miss V. B. Evans of the University of Wales, having undertaken a criticism of Croce, found the Senator on hand in person to defend himself, while he in turn found that he had to defend himself not solely against a young lady from Wales, but also against the ex-commissar of education for Soviet Russia, M. Lunacharsky. Feeling was obviously strong in the Russo-Italian part of the debate, but it was kept under admirable restraint.

M. Lunacharsky was protesting against the "bourgeois" treatment of art. Theoretical esthetics and the study of art form for its own sake held little attraction for him, and he made a fervent appeal for the communist attitude, in which the important things about art were held to be its expression of popular feeling and its promotion of social betterment. For this view he and his countrymen

were taken sharply to task by Croce, who reminded him that he (Croce) did not speak of Communism from hearsay, that he had closely studied Marx and written on him, that it was by intellectual conviction that he had parted company with him ("malheureusement!" from M. Lunacharsky), that communists had never had acquaintance with art (witness Marx's deplorable verses), and that to estimate artistic values in economic terms was a radical mistake.

M. Lunacharsky was not alone, however, in thinking that esthetics had stressed too exclusively the philosophical problems of art. In a paper on "Die Bedeutung der Soziologie für die Aesthetik," Professor Müller-Freienfels of Berlin urged that the reflective study of art had suffered by running in turn to two extremes. It first tried, in Platonic or Kantian fashion, to define an absolute standard of beauty, and then finding this hard to attain or apply, flew to "ein alle Normen verwerfender Psychologismus" in which values seemed nothing but individual caprice. What is now needed, he thought, was a study of the middle ground between these, the ways in which art-forms are influenced by pressures from the group, pressures from religion, science, morals, and industry. He mentioned the effect of psycho-analysis on poetry, of "der Filmtechnik" on the tempo of German drama, of the reaction against photography in developing impressionism. "There is no 'art as such,' but only 'art for a subject who is esthetically awake,' and who is not to be looked at alone, but as part of a group which deeply and constantly modifies his esthetical receptiveness. . . . The competition of art forms does not go on in a realm of pure spirit, but is always at the same time a rivalry between actual groups" in which "victory or defeat is not decided by conformity to absolute standards, but by the deployment of social forces" (soziologischen Machtkonstellation). Müller-Freienfels was careful to add, however, that such study was only a necessary supplement and by no means a substitute for philosophical esthetics.

But the paper that was received with most interest in this section was undoubtedly that of Professor Alexander, who, with the distinction of the Order of Merit fresh upon him (he is the only Englishman except Bradley who has received the Order for philosophy) was in a sense the "grand old man" of the Congress. He took the question, How should one go about it to distinguish truth, goodness, and beauty? and suggested that there are two ways of doing this. The first way is "to observe the differences in the *controls* engaged in the creation of these values. For in all three there enter two constituents: one is the mind itself, the other the material upon which it works." Now in art the product is controlled by both these factors. On the one hand, "the artist has to obey the nature of the

stuff in which he works," whether paint or marble or words; on the other hand, the significance that this material gains comes from his mind. And the distinction of beauty from truth and goodness lies in this, that "in truth and goodness this double control is replaced by a single one, in truth control from the material, and in goodness control from the mind. They are in fact limiting cases in which one of the two controls evident in art varies in favor of the other." Science and morality, it is true, are in a sense both works of art. But in science the play of the mind is completely subordinated to fact. "In morals, on the other hand, the product is controlled, if it is to have goodness, entirely from the mind," and indeed even the material is mental, for "it is the passions which in virtue are regulated." The distinction between the three values is thus extraordinarily neat and simple. In beauty we have control by both mind and material; in truth by material alone; in goodness by mind alone.

But we can distinguish them otherwise. All values satisfy desire ("I believe myself," said Professor Alexander, "that it is this which makes them valuable") and we can distinguish them psychologically through the desires they satisfy. Thus the desire to be good is "the social passion or sentiment," "sociality, sublimated by intelligence and insight." The desire for truth is "sublimated curiosity," the impulse we see in dogs and monkeys, grown "disinterested and socialized." The desire for beauty was harder to identify, but Professor Alexander, greatly daring, went on to describe it as "a sublimation of the constructiveness exhibited in various animals (bees, beavers, ants, and nightingales)." Unfortunately the chairman's gavel compelled him to leave this an intriguing hint; nor did the later discussion, so far as the writer heard it, serve to bring from him a reply to the criticism that is first suggested, namely, that his distinctions are based on characters extrinsic to the values themselves.

His distinction between matter and form, however, found an able defender in Miss Evans, who devoted her paper to proving it valid. It was here that she drew from Croce a reply to both Alexander and herself, reaffirming his familiar doctrine that beauty is really what Alexander thought goodness to be, an expression which, so far as it succeeded, was an expression simply and solely of the mind.

## VI

That the new developments in physics should come up for appraisal by the philosophers was, of course, inevitable. Were these developments of any great moment for philosophy? Did they call for any large revision in one's thought of the structure of things, or in one's view of the nature of matter, or of the relation of time

and space, or in the theory of knowledge? These were the questions asked, and at one time or another in the Congress, they all came up for discussion. Two general impressions emerged; first, that, since the last Congress, the relativity theory has receded into the background and been replaced by the quantum theory as the center of speculative interest; second, that while philosophers are still uncertain of the positive import of this theory, they are by no means convinced of the most disturbing claim that is made for it, namely, that it does away with the law of causality.

This latter crucial point was discussed by Professor Zawirski of Posen in a paper on "La Théorie des Quanta et le Principe de Causalité." After sketching the development of the theory in Einstein, Exner, and Bohr, he said that "the critical attack on the principle of causality was made by Heisenberg in 1927," when "he showed that the law is unverifiable, not by reason of the inaccuracy of our means of measurement, but unverifiable in principle, and hence scientifically worthless. Heisenberg showed this by proving that though we can determine the position *or* the momentum of a particle, the more exactly we determine the one, the more indeterminate we must leave the other; hence in the very nature of the case, indeterminateness can not be excluded. It follows that "in the formula of the law of causality, viz., 'every present determinate state entails a certain determinate state to follow,' the antecedent is false. The present state of any system is by no means determinate, or its determinateness is at least unverifiable in principle." Are we to accept this, asked Professor Zawirski, as successfully impugning the law of causality? His own reply was No, and he appeared to be moved by three reasons. In the first place, science was in such rapid flux that what seemed demonstrably impossible to-day might cease to be so to-morrow, and we could not refashion our ultimate principles daily. Secondly, he argued *ad hominem*. Does a scientist accept the conservation of energy? Ordinarily, yes. But if Heisenberg is right, "does it not follow that this principle is forever unverifiable? If one accepts it, is one not saying that something is determinate in reality which must be left wholly indeterminate in experience?" And if this is to be done in one case, why not in another? Thirdly, "the new theory, though rejecting the causal principle, does not hold to an absolute chaos; on the contrary, it admits of order, since according to it, the disorder exists only inside its microcosmic wholes, and even here this is limited by statistical laws. Is that not a bit enigmatic?" If chaos really obtained in the microcosms, is it likely that we should get order in the macrocosms? Professor Zawirski thought not.

That the quantum theory had not disposed of causality, Pro-

fessor Jorgenson of Copenhagen agreed. He then went on to ask the question what recent physics could teach us about the *stuff* of the physical world. The answer, he said, was obscure, for two very different views had both established themselves, on the one hand the theory developed by de Broglie and Schrödinger that matter is composed of continuous waves, on the other the theory of Heisenberg, Jordan, and Dirac that it is composed of discontinuous particles. Bohr has shown that these are "complementary concepts" and both of them true, but the facts remain that "the application of the one excludes the simultaneous application of the other" and that the sort of entity which could behave in both ways at once is utterly unimaginable. "Physics," concluded Professor Jorgenson, "thus has become a science of an exceedingly symbolical character, the principle metaphysical outcome of which chiefly seems to be that all the ideas so far formed concerning the nature of the elements of the physical world have broken down, and that we are left at present with a symbolism that works surprisingly well, but whose proper meaning, granted that it has any, nobody has as yet revealed."

Speculation as to what the new views imply about space and time produced what was perhaps the most startlingly original suggestion of the Congress. Unfortunately, its author, Professor Northrop of Yale, had not time within the limits of his paper to give his proof, so one was left fascinated, but uneasy. The suggestion was this, that following in the wake of the new physics, we can solve the ancient problem of the relation of the eternal and the temporal if we recognize two type of atoms, microscopic atoms, and macroscopic ones which include these. Microscopic atoms do not exist or move in space or time at all: "instead they move and *are* in the macroscopic atom," which itself is at rest. That time and space are really unnecessary as referents for describing natural processes has been shown by Einstein, who found light-propagation, matter, and motion enough in themselves. "No longer can motion and natural processes be regarded as occurring in space, or time, or space-time . . . it is literally true that natural processes are in eternity rather than in time." Nevertheless, time is too near the heart of things to be taken as merely phenomenal. How, then, are we to conceive the relation of time and eternity? In this manner, replied Professor Northrop, we must "identify the eternal aspect of nature and experience with the effects of the changeless form of the macrocosmic atom, and their temporal character with the changing relations and molar properties arising from the motion of the microscopic particles. Both time and eternity are real. Their difference centers in the fact that the real has two types of atomic parts, one of which is at rest, the other in motion." It will be con-

ceded that this is a startling bid for the solution of this ancient problem. The author alluded to the fact that his grounds for it had been developed in this *JOURNAL* (Vol. XXV, pp. 449-467).

The effects of this state of things upon the theory of knowledge were discussed by Mr. C. E. M. Joad. The new physics on the face of it, he said, is idealistic or at least Kantian in its bias; atomic theory suggests that we never know a piece of matter directly," but only the effects upon us of the unknown *X* to which Professor Jorgenson had referred. Thus science was conceived by a writer like Eddington, is concerned not with reality, but with the appearances of reality to minds whose vision is feeble and distorting. Mr. Joad desired to protest against this view. After all, he insisted, "scientific knowledge is itself founded upon and checked by experiences such as that of seeing a red patch," and if we are going to dismiss the red patches and their kind as unreal, we must dismiss, too, the whole structure founded on them. But this would abolish science itself. How, then, are we to retain it? Only, he replied, by being realistic from the beginning. We must concede that both in sensing red patches and in building theoretical constructions we are in contact with an independent world as it really is. And for consistency's sake he went on to admit that all the changing objects of speculative science are real, but exist in different orders of reality. The difficulties of this position, some of which were pointed out by the chairman, Professor Prichard, were not very convincingly met.

## VII

The piquant question, Has philosophy any practical value? disclosed no morbid doubts among the philosophers as to whether they had a calling. Their subject was important, even practically important; so far they all agreed, but as to just what its value was, opinions differed. Probably the opinion with the largest support was that of Professor Field of Bristol. "Most human beings," he said, "have a greater or lesser number of general principles of conduct in their minds by which their behavior is influenced." We get most of these from tradition and take them for granted, but they are all the expressions of men's attempts to register the upshot of their experiments in living. These digests of our past are the guides of our future. But rightly to digest and interpret experience is the business of reflection, and such reflection is philosophy. Its practical value lies in "influencing and modifying the accepted standards of conduct which lie in the background of our minds," "in the constant and vigilant criticism of the assumptions which, without it, we should too readily take for granted." As a rule these assumptions change slowly. We may not know that they are changing at

all until some day we wake up to find that men's thought on a particular matter of morals or polities has suffered a total transformation. And in this change philosophy, if not *the* cause, is at least *a* cause, and an indispensable one.

Professor Bouglé of the Sorbonne answered the question rather differently. If anyone questions whether philosophy has practical effects, he suggested, one may simply point to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Communist Manifesto. "That ideas *created* the forces of the democratic and socialist movements we should not maintain for a moment. . . . But a time comes when, to coördinate their conduct and give coherence to their feelings, the proponents of a cause need a system of ideas to hold to. A philosophy gives them this. It defines the principles which serve as a rallying point for groping instincts, aspirations, traditions; elle fournit des drapeaux à la foule—it puts banners at the head of the mob." But having said this, he turned round and questioned whether such thought is philosophy at all. Indeed, he confessed to some disillusionment with philosophy as speculative science, and in the study of morals was inclined to put sociology in the place of prime importance. Here, at least, we get something certain, while philosophic appraisements of values are forever shifting. But the chairman, Professor Sorley, dissented. Descriptive sociology itself, he thought, could give no guidance whatever. What does give guidance is philosophical reflection and appraisal, directed upon facts which sociology may provide but can not assay.

But undoubtedly the most startling view of philosophy's function was offered by Professor Schlick of Vienna. The first person in modern times, he asserted, who has seen "with absolute clearness" the business of philosophy is Mr. Ludwig Wittgenstein. His great discovery is this, that philosophy is not a science, but the process of making ideas clear. Science is the only knowledge worthy the name, and the only philosophy worthy the name consists of the "activities, proceedings, and contrivances necessary for the discovery and proof" of scientific propositions, and for ascertaining what they mean. By reason of this discovery, "we are witnessing the beginning of a new era of philosophy." "Metaphysical tendencies will be entirely abandoned, simply because there is no such thing as metaphysics, the apparent descriptions of it being just nonsensical phrases." The consummation Professor Schlick devoutly wished and confidently looked forward to was that "no more books will be written about philosophy, but that *all* books will be written in a philosophical manner." One fancies the ghost of Comte clapping its hands in the background; but do not these prophecies of the death of metaphysics grow a little unconvincing as the world's great age keeps forgetting to usher itself in?

## VIII

American members contributed many admirable papers, only a few of which it has been possible to mention. In one of the historical sessions, there were three American contributors: Professor Bakeswell, who described the work of Royce in interpreting the American spirit; Professor Perry, who dissected the elements of William James's empiricism and its historical connections; and Professor Townsend, who described the theory of intuition developed by Jonathan Edwards. Nor were these the only historical papers. Professor Morris Cohen defended the view that the historian has a right to discuss what is and has been in the light of what might have been. Professor Robinson of Cornell described the sort of disputation which gave rise to the Topics of Aristotle. Professor Hendel traced the development in modern thought of the idea of political obligation. Professor A. A. Roback proposed an inquiry, at once historical and analytic, into the common elements of thought and feeling revealed by the greater Jewish philosophers.

Americans were also fully represented on the side of logic and epistemology. Both Professor Sellars, who explained how critical realism could be maintained without essences, and Professor Du-casse, who discussed the judgment of existence, intrigued their chairmen into debates which unhappily can not even be summarized here. Mr. Weiss pointed out that the *Principia Mathematica* embodies only one of many similar logics, all branches of a more general logic that remains to be developed.

Nor were the American voices silent about values. There were closely allied papers by Professor Krusé of Wesleyan University on how differing views of the judgment of value would affect the meaning of pessimism, and by Professor Tsanoff of the Rice Institute on the nature of evil. Professor Brightman submitted the thesis that real selves or unities of consciousness are so bound up with religion that the two must be accepted or rejected together. Professor D. S. Mackay maintained that emergent evolution provides a sufficient basis for a naturalistic ethics. Finally, Professor Hartshorne of Chicago developed a highly interesting argument to prove that sensations are really species of affections and hence that there can be no hard and fast line between objective facts and subjective values.

## IX

A few final reflections. Many felt that the British organizers had been quite too generous in their self-effacement. Not a single man from either Oxford or Cambridge read a paper, with the exception of Dr. Schiller, who would be the first to admit that he is no "true copy" of either. The loss was partly made up by enlisting

these men as chairmen, but while some of them, notably Professor Prichard and Mr. Joseph, took a vigorous part in the debate, to the general pleasure and profit, most of them were more scrupulous than their auditors could have wished in leaving the floor free for others. That was a pity, as a glance at the names of the chairmen will readily explain. The program throughout exhibited British fairness leaning and almost leaping backward.

As a means for the *discussion* of speculative issues, the success of the Congress was not unqualified. For the most part, this was inevitable, but it applies very differently to the papers themselves and to the following discussions. The impromptu discussions as a rule were disappointing; and they could hardly, indeed, be otherwise when speakers in various languages were offering first impressions of difficult arguments never heard before. But they were certainly better than they would have been if printed copies of all the papers had not been circulated at the beginning of the Congress. These were an invaluable aid, particularly in following an unfamiliar tongue. But viewed as discussion, there was an obvious shortcoming in the papers themselves: while those of a single session dealt with the same general theme, they had not, I believe, been seen by other contributors to the same symposium, and hence in many cases, not only failed to break lances with each other, but, like Mr. Leacock's hero, galloped furiously into the great open spaces in all directions at once. Apparently philosophers always do this unless bridled and bitted. Would their wild free spirit be broken if *A* were asked to write a paper and send it to *B*, and *B* to write on *that*, and *C* on his two predecessors? That would take time; it would be in some cases an unfortunate curb; but it would join an issue.

As usual in these Congresses, the difficulties of language were a frequent cause of stumbling. English, French, German, and Italian were all official, though English was much the most commonly used; and the member who could follow papers in all of them was an object of much envy. To Dr. Schiller this difficulty seemed particularly grave; in some of these languages, he pointed out, there were no equivalents for words that stood for fundamental ideas in the others; "meaning" is "a word which can not be rendered by any simple equivalent in French and German," and the English distinction between right and wrong "can not be *translated* into French at all." He was for appointing an "International Committee on Nomenclature" which would list the chief philosophic terms in use, with their translation or equivalents in the various tongues. But whatever the merits of this proposal, it did not advance beyond a "first reading."

It is tempting but dangerous to record impressions of the state

of philosophy in the contributing countries. If a single one may be hazarded, it is that at the moment philosophy seems most vigorous in England, Italy, and the United States. But this means a different thing in each instance. In Italy philosophic inquiry is apparently concentrated in a very small but active group, Croce, Gentile, Aliotta, Ruggiero, perhaps one or two others. The strength of England at the moment lies not so much in a few conspicuous figures as in a relatively large group of men—one could name twelve or fifteen at least—who are doing work that is genuinely distinguished, whether or not of the very first order. In America this diffusion of activity has been carried one step farther. There are perhaps few figures that would be called dominant, while the volume of philosophic activity is certainly greater than anywhere else in the world. Foreign critics who are disposed unkindly—and they are a large class in Europe at present—hint that American thought is more notable for its quantity than for its quality. To that there can be but one answer, and at least the beginning of it was supplied by some of the admirable papers presented to the Congress by Americans.

The foregoing is, of course, a very fragmentary record, which has not attempted the impossible task of reporting, or even alluding to, all of the eighty-two papers contributed. The complete record is shortly to appear in the official volume of the Congress. Meanwhile the program of the conferences, as distributed to the members at the time, is appended herewith.

BRAND BLANSHARD.

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE.

SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY, OXFORD, 1930

*Programme*

*Monday Evening, September 1.*

9 p.m. Address of Welcome by the President.

Replies by Professor L. Brunschvicg, His Excellency M. Caclamanos, Senatore Benedetto Croce, Professor R. B. Perry.

*Tuesday Morning, September 2.*

*Division A. Section 1.* "Is a philosophy of history consistent with the facts of history?"

Chairman: DR. J. B. BAILLIE.

Professor Jacques Chevalier, Professor Morris R. Cohen, Professor N. Hartmann.

*Division B. Section 1.* "The nature of perception and its objects."

Chairman: PROFESSOR H. A. PRICHARD.

Professor Charles Hartshorne, Professor G. Dawes Hicks, Mr.

C. E. M. Joad, Professor C. J. Ducasse, Professor Thadée Kotarbinski.

*Division C. Section 1.* "Is the distinction between moral rightness and wrongness ultimate?"

Chairman: THE PROVOST OF ORIEL.

Professor J. Laird, Professor F. Medicus, Monsieur D. Parodi, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller.

*Division D. Section 1.* (a) Ancient Philosophy. "What is alive and what is dead in the Philosophy of Classical Antiquity?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR A. S. FERGUSON.

Professor J. Stenzel, Professor L. Robin, Professor H. Gomperz, Professor Charles Werner, Dr. R. G. F. Robinson.

*Tuesday Afternoon, September 2.*

*General Session. Division A.* "Are recent advances in Physics of metaphysical importance?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR J. A. SMITH.

Professor A. Aliotta, Professor F. Enriques, Professor Jørgen Jørgensen, Dr. Z. Zawirski.

Conversazione. Christ Church Hall.

*Wednesday Morning, September 3.*

*Division A. Section 2.* "Must biological processes be either purposive or mechanistic?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR J. S. HALDANE.

Professor H. Wildon Carr, Professor R. F. A. Hoernlé, Professor E. A. Singer, Professor Emil Ungerer, Professor F. J. E. Woodbridge.

*Division A. Section 3.* "The relation between Metaphysics and Religion."

Chairman: DR. C. C. J. WEBB.

Professor Edgar S. Brightman, Senatore Dr. Benedetto Croce, Professor Ph. Kohnstamm, Professor F. deSarlo.

*Division C. Section 2.* "Is the ground of political obligation always one and the same?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR N. KEMP SMITH.

Professor W. Macmahon Ball, Professor G. Davy, Professor Ch. W. Hendel, Jr., Dr. J. Nissen.

*Division D. Section 2.* Philosophy of the 17th and 18th Centuries. "Has Kant by the introduction of his Transcendental Method rendered unnecessary the study of his predecessors?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR A. A. BOWMAN.

Professor F. H. Anderson, Dr. A. C. Ewing.

*Wednesday Afternoon, September 3.*

Garden Party. Magdalen College.

*General Session. Division B.* "Logic and Epistemology."

Chairman: PROFESSOR J. L. STOCKS.

(a) "The value of recent contributions to Logic."

Professor A. Lalande, Professor D. Michaeltschev, Dr. Paul Weiss.

(b) "Phenomenology."

Professor Hans Driesch.

*Thursday Morning, September 4.*

*Division B. Section 2.* "The nature and source of non-perceptual factors in thinking."

Chairman: PROFESSOR G. E. MOORE.

Professor Reginald Jackson, Professor Wm. Pepperell Montague, Professor L. Noel, Professor H. G. Stoker.

*Division B. Section 3.* "The relation of scientific thinking to the ideal of knowledge."

Chairman: PROFESSOR T. PERCY NUNN.

Professor B. Bauch, Professor L. Brunschvieg, Professor E. Dupréel, Professor Raffaelo Piccoli.

*Division C. Section 3.* "Recent suggestions in the Theory of Fine Art."

Chairman: MR. JUSTICE MEREDITH.

Professor S. Alexander, Miss V. Burdwood Evans, Professor Richard Müller-Freienfels.

*Division D. Section 3.* "Philosophy of the 19th and 20th Centuries."

Chairman: PROFESSOR A. N. WHITEHEAD.

Professor Ch. M. Bakewell, Professor H. Heimsoeth, Professor R. B. Perry, Professor J. L. Stocks.

*Thursday Afternoon, September 4.*

*General Session. Division C.* "The value of Ethical and Political Philosophy as guides in practice."

Chairman: PROFESSOR W. R. SORLEY.

Professor C. Bouglé, Professor G. C. Field, Professor W. Lutoslawski, Professor Leo Polak.

*Thursday Evening, September 4.*

*Business Meeting.* Oriel College Hall.

*Friday Morning, September 5.*

*Division A. Open Meeting.*

Chairman: PROFESSOR L. J. RUSSELL.

Professor J. E. Boodin, Professor F. S. C. Northrop, Professor E. M. Radl, Professor M. Schlick, Miss L. S. Stebbing, Professor G. F. Stout.

*Division B. Open Meeting.*

Chairman: MR. H. W. B. JOSEPH.

Professor Malte Jacobsson, Dr. George Katkov, Professor N.

D. Lossky, Professor G. D. Scraba, Professor R. W. Sellars.

*Division C. Open Meeting.*

Chairman: REV. PRINCIPAL G. GALLOWAY.

Professor L. Krusé, Professor D. S. Mackay, Professor R. A.

Tsanoff, Professor W. Tatarkiewicz.

*Division D. Section 1. (b) Mediæval and Oriental Philosophy.*

Chairman: PROFESSOR F. W. THOMAS.

Professor A. A. Roback, Professor Guido de Ruggiero, Pro-

fessor Konstanti Michalski, Rev. C. J. Shebbeare, Professor

de Wulf.

*Friday Afternoon, September 5.*

*General Session. Division D.* "In what respects has Philosophy progressed?"

Chairman: PROFESSOR J. H. MUIRHEAD.

Miss H. D. Oakeley, Professor Adolf Phalen, Professor H.

Zoltowski.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Philosophie der Raum-Zeit-Lehre.* HANS REICHENBACH. Berlin and Leipsic: Walter de Gruyter & Co. 1928. vi + 380 pp.

This truly philosophical study of scientific concepts is not a popularization of the new physics, but a serious, well-arranged exposition of a difficult subject. It does not whet the reader's curiosity with astonishing propositions, as most introductions to space-time theory do, but takes curiosity and philosophical interest for granted, as well as logical insight. Those, however, are the only qualifications it absolutely requires of the reader. Professor Reichenbach's point of departure is perfectly elementary—common-sense, Euclidean space, ordinary "clock time," and a world of solid physical things. His plan of campaign is to analyze these familiar intuitions logically, thus exhibiting what conventions of symbolization and definition they presuppose, and how they would be altered by a change in any of these conventions; and thereupon to build up ideas on the assumption of certain alternative conventions—ideas of non-Euclidean space, indeterminate contemporaneousness, space-time physics, and so forth, which have exactly the force of "intuitions."

Recent physics has confronted us with a great many incredible notions which we are told the scientists use in their trade; philosophers make noble efforts to accept these "queer" propositions, which certainly they can not entertain in their "ordinary" thinking. We have become accustomed to the idea that one must be able to manipulate several incompatible sets of concepts, some in ordinary