after the schoolmen had found in the Greek text an immediate source of knowledge of Aristotle's teachings, and appears not only in the writings of the last of the schoolmen, but also in those of the first representatives of the learning of the new era.

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DISCUSSION

THE STANDPOINT OF INSTRUMENTAL LOGIC

THE recent Logical Studies from the University of Chicago represent a somewhat notable contribution to American philosophy on several accounts. I wish here to consider the philosophical standpoint of the book from one side simply, in so far as it represents a protest against realism and ontology.

Briefly speaking, this standpoint makes, apparently, functional psychology supreme, for logic, and for philosophy in general. Thinking arises in a given psychological situation, and its relevancy is entirely limited to that situation. Thing and idea are reducible to the phases in this tensional experience which we call thinking, relative to one another, and to the situation in which they appear. Truth is to be put in terms wholly of the success which thinking has in leading up to a new experience, no longer torn by internal dis­sensions, but marked by immediacy of satisfaction. On the negative side, this denies outright any validity to the conception of an independent world of things to which thought points. The question of the relation of thought to reality in the traditional sense is entirely unmeaning. The material of our thought looks back to nothing save to the preceding experience out of which the difficulty that leads to thinking originates. The reference of thought is to nothing save the new integrating experience to which it leads. Objectivity is only a peculiar constitutive aspect attaching to a special stage of experience, at the period when experience is being reconstituted. The whole point of view represents a new positivism—not, of course, that the name condemns it—simplified by the abandonment as unmeaning of any unknown universe against which as a background human life is set.

It is not necessary to deny the relative value of this point of view. And the truth there is in it makes a polemic against the position more or less difficult to carry out. Every distinction that an objector may introduce can be shown to have a psychological genesis. And so if one simply sticks to the assumption that point-
ing out the teleological function of anything in the psychological
process is the final word of explanation, he has an answer to make
to every possible objection, which is satisfactory to himself, and
fits perfectly into his own point of view. But the defect of the
book, from the standpoint of convincing doubters, is just this, that
it fails to address itself to, or even recognize the least plausibility in,
the reasons which may lead to the questioning of its whole assump-
tion. The only justification of the assumption which it attempts
takes the form of showing how it simplifies the answers to certain
logical questions. This is, of course, good so far as it goes. But
if it simply involves throwing out of court as illegitimate most of
the questions which have represented difficulties in the past, it
may easily appear to be a purely artificial simplification. Of course
if it could be shown that the problems were set merely by a logical
entanglement, a failure to see clearly the abstract bearings of one's
assumptions, there would be nothing to say. But I venture to
think it goes back of this—that the difference lies in certain esti-
mates based on prejudices that are too obstinate for mere logical
analysis to reach effectively, and that are supposed to have a real
value for life.

Of course the most obvious difficulty to be brought up in the
way of holding that there exists no problem about the relation of
thought to reality, is due to the persistence of the common-sense
belief that there is a real world of some sort prior to human ex-
perience, on which this depends. I shall only stop to assert, in
the first place, that the discrepancy really is there, in spite of at-
ttempts to obscure it. And furthermore, when one really sets
before him the alternatives, I must confess, at the risk of appearing
unphilosophical, that I can not understand at all how anybody, how-
ever indoctrinated in modern critical idealism, can fail to feel the
burden of the problem, or to recognize that his results, no matter
how well fortified by argument, are out of line with our whole
natural instincts of belief. I submit that no ingenuity can make
such a belief seem to our natural thinking a mere logical absurdity,
and the problem which it involves an unreal one. And to have been
so sophisticated as to be no longer able to appreciate the force which
it has to the natural mind is a philosophical loss. A theory which
holds that the stars, e. g., and every reality for which the stars
stand, come into existence with the human need which leads to their
discovery, or that the earth really was flat, in any valid sense of the
word real, so long as men found it satisfactory to believe it so,
which denies, in a word, any meaning to the reality of an encircling
universe in which our human experience and our human thought
are set, may represent the fact, but it has no right to minimize its
paradoxical character. And the time has not yet come to take it
as an assured result of philosophy. It may be perfectly true that
there is a teleological aspect in our perception of the thunder whose
sound breaks in upon us, or of the wild beast which suddenly con­
fronts our path. But that the intrusion is a mere outgrowth of
the previous experience, I for one find it quite impossible to realize.
Of course one may say that this is simply an ultimate mystery of
experience, which, overweighted somehow, has the power of budding
forth in these unexpected ways. And it is true that difficulties
which call for the thought process do sometimes arise, e. g., in
ethical situations, largely after this fashion, as the outcome of the
development of experience itself. But it is another thing to apply
this explanation to the newly appearing physical facts, particularly
those which come upon us unexpectedly. In their case, I find it
vastly more natural to suppose, with the common run of men, that
the intrusion actually does arise from some outside source, which
had as such no definite relationship in psychological terms to the
previous flow of my life, although doubtless the recognition of it
involves some activity of mine.

Now this may be merely the instinctive prejudice of the uncon­
verted realist; even then it merits, it appears to me, a more sym­
pathetic treatment. However, it may be said that, apart from the
difficulty of getting away from it, the belief represents no special
value for life. I do not think this is true. When we bring this
conception of a real world into connection with the religious atti­
tude, its possible value is not hard to see; and I think it could be
shown to possess, similarly, a value for less ultimate experiences.
But it is, at any rate, not difficult to understand that one might find
a loss of value in giving up the independent reality of persons.
This, however, seems to follow equally. If a thing has no reality
apart from the function it plays in leading to some experience, so
a person is nothing save as he helps to a unitary social experience
of mine. I use the last two words because personally I do not see
any other outcome; but I will speak further of this presently.
Now I seem to myself, on the contrary, to believe that my friend
has, at the time of the very stage in experience when I am thinking
of him, a reality of his own apart from the thought which, refer­
ing to him, makes him useful in a further immediate experience
of mine, and apart from this later experience as well. I seem to
myself to know what this independent reality is to which my thought
only refers, and I most emphatically seem to find this independence
essential to the value of the social experience.

However much this issue may be beclouded, it appears to me
perfectly clear and straightforward. I suppose that the way in
which it would be met would be by denying that the experience is merely mine. I have only space to make a very brief comment on this solution. To repeat, in the first place, the problem. If I look back to something that I call a social experience—say, a tennis match—I find myself necessarily interpreting it in terms of a number of psychological series. Each person engaged has his own experience, which differs in part from that of any one else. If now I take some single common feature of the game, it is indeed capable of a functional psychological explanation. But the trouble is that it is capable of four such explanations, one in the case of each player. The recognition of a certain situation enters at one and the same moment into four psychological experiences, and grows out of conditions which are in each case at least partially different. If this way of looking at the matter is a delusion, at least it is a singularly insistent one. And accordingly, a theory such as I am considering can not be held to have justified itself, at least it will never convince doubters, until it has a clear answer ready for this question: How, if the final explanation of any fact is in terms of a functional psychology, are we to break the force of this common-sense belief that a psychological experience is always the experience of an individual. Just how are we to understand the way in which what we look back upon as different experiences can be united in a single psychological experience, and so become only aspects or stages of experience in the large, when they started out by seeming to be parallel series?

Since the theory in question has no disposition to make the common appeal to a deus ex machina in the shape of a supposed absolute experience, the possibilities of a solution are narrowed down. And the only understanding I can get of an answer is this: Every phase of experience is itself simply. It is not to be identified with any other phase. This of course necessarily follows from the psychological point of view. The perception of an axe is not, as experience, the axe as used. The perception of the friend is not the experience of the friend in social intercourse. The thought of the game is not the experience of playing. Now the real characteristics of a given reality are only its characteristics as experienced. We can not attribute to it the characteristics of a different phase of experience, just because it is different. So the fact that, when we think of it, the game of tennis falls into a group of distinguished phases, need not mean that the game itself was not felt as a psychological unity; it was so felt. Similarly of the assigning of any experience to a self. The self psychologically is only a peculiar aspect of experience, when we make a certain special reference. But this reference itself is intended to lead to a further experience
in which the subject-object relation is overcome; and therefore this later experience—illustrated by the active playing of the game—is not my experience at all. This, as I understand it, is the way in which the theory would escape the charge of solipsism.

I have only two things to say of this attitude. In the first place, I can not at all understand how the position is to be carried out consistently, without destroying the possibility of thinking altogether. Of course my thought of a past experience is not itself the past experience. But unless I can in my thought really refer to the experience now past, and recognize characteristics that actually belonged to it in itself, I fail to see how I am to get ahead at all. Of course this would involve the same transcendence in thought, and the same problem of a relation of thought to a reality in some sense outside it, that is denied to be possible. The validity of the present thought is, according to the theory, absolutely exhausted in its present functional value. The past experience was psychologically quite distinct, and therefore I can not now know it, but can only pass through a present thinking experience which is simply itself functioning. But I can not make it clear to myself that this is not the abandonment of philosophy. To state the theory intelligibly, it is constantly necessary to assume that I can thus refer back to past experiences as real, and know what they contained. I never could say that thought leads to an immediate active experiencing, if I did not assume it possible for thought to get away from itself as a special phase of experience, and to postulate a real identity between the past experience which it thinks, and the reference in the present thinking experience. Otherwise, since the immediate experience is not itself a knowing experience, it never could be known or talked about. And if I can know certain characteristics as really present in another past experience, although my present knowing experience does not possess them, so, on the other hand, a characteristic which I find no way of ignoring when I think of such a past reality, I must suppose really belonged to it—the complex of experiences in the tennis game was, e. g., a real fact, and sets a real problem not yet met.

The other point is this, once again: The whole force of the answer depends upon assuming the point at issue. The reply to the charge of solipsism is only good on the supposition that the psychological standpoint is supreme; if one is unable to accept this as a complete statement, it will still seem to him that the reply evades the whole point of the difficulty which he feels. The experience in which thought plays a part still appears always as the experience of a single person, beyond whom there are other persons having their experience at the same time. To show how in the experience
of any one of us there arises the recognition of ourselves and of other persons is a legitimate inquiry; but it fails to touch what is the important point. Common sense still believes that persons are real, not as aspects of experience (unless the word 'experience' loses its significance by being made to stand simply for 'reality'), but as the relatively independent centers of experience; and it sees no obvious way of getting them together in an experience at large. Until the difficulty is met, and met in a way which does not reduce itself to what can be interpreted as merely the psychology of an individual life experience—no less mine because I do not happen to be thinking of it as mine at the time—those who feel the difficulty must believe that the relation of thought to reality is a real problem, and that the attempt to solve it by denying its meaning is premature.

Of course the difficulties in the way of understanding the relation still remain. But I believe that the difficulties which the present volume canvasses are largely due to the fact that the writers whom it criticizes are only half-hearted in their recognition of the externality of reality to the judging thought. To be sure, the correspondence of our thought with reality always thus remains a postulate, an act of faith. In concrete terms, there is always the possibility, e.g., that I may misconstrue another person's feelings; and even the continual working success of my interpretation does not do away with a final abstract possibility of scepticism. But we have to take things as we find them. If reality actually were what it seems to be, if, that is, it were made up at least in part of personal experiences which, as facts of immediate experiencing, are mutually exclusive, then there is no conceivable way in which a given conscious unity, if it knew what lay beyond itself at all, could avoid having to take things ultimately on trust. Of course this involves something like a preexisting—not necessarily a preestablished—harmony. But we surely should not be any better off if we were to suppose that there was not any harmony existing between the parts of the world; and why not the harmony of knowledge as well as of anything else? The mystery is no more than the mystery involved in anything being what it is; it certainly is no more mysterious than the conception of an experience such as we are acquainted with, giving rise from within itself to all those casual variations which we call external happenings.

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