The Central Problem of David Hume's Philosophy

An Essay towards a Phenomenological Interpretation of the First Book of the Treatise of Human Nature

by

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To my Father

Φιλόσοφος καὶ θυμοειδὴς καὶ ταχὺς καὶ ἰσχυρός

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C. V. Salmon (M. A. Oxon).

Introduction.

The Treatise of Human Nature sets out to be a study of the whole nature of man. But in effect Parts I. to IV., comprising Hume's First Book, and the entirety of the Treatise which is devoted to 'metaphysical' speculation, resolve themselves into an analysis and description of the subjective 'act' of External Perception. The problem which forms the core of Hume's enquiries, to which all that precedes it stands as a preparation, is stated succinctly in the 2nd Section of Part IV. First, To explain the principium individuationis, or principle of identity. Secondly, Give a reason, why the resemblance of our broken and interrupted perceptions induces us to attribute an identity to them. Thirdly, Account for that propensity, which this illusion gives, to unite these broken appearances by a continu'd existence. Fourthly and lastly, Explain that force and vivacity of conception, which arises from the propensity[1]).

In view of the obvious difficulties attending this interpretation of the work, I have looked in the early portions of the Treatise for a problem which might co-ordinate the whole. I have followed the orthodox steps of other critics, and sought to make Hume's treatment of Causality upon the one hand, and his treatment of Reason upon the other, the centre of his thought, only to find that neither of them can serve with justice to the tenour of the whole. For if it is difficult to correlate all the Parts of the Treatise to its last Part, it is not for lack of uniformity of theme. From the first paragraph to

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 489.

the last, the Treatise is governed by Hume's conception of the nature of human consciousness. Hume proclaims his interest with no lack of decision in the Introduction. 'Tis evident, he says, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another[1]). And he speaks of his philosophy as the science of Man, and of Human Nature itself as the capital or center of the sciences, which he intends to seize. And he says .... In pretending .... to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security[2]). The attempt to delve, thus, into the ultimate springs and principles of human nature is pursued throughout the Treatise; and in concluding the first Book, Hume writes For my part, my only hope is that I may contribute a little to the advancement of knowledge, by giving in some particulars a different turn to the speculations of philosophers, and pointing out to them more distinctly those subjects where alone they can expect assurance and conviction. Human Nature is the only science of man; and yet has been hitherto the most neglected[3]).

If reason or causality had provided Hume with his central problem, he would have conceived the essence of Human Nature to be rational or causal. But Hume did not consider it as either the one or the other. He admitted no objective causality, and if he did not actually deny the human faculty of reason, he confined it to as narrow a sphere of activity as he could. Hume's science of Man was conceived as the investigation of the principles of human Consciousness, and the principles which he examined most closely in Book I were those involved in the external perception.

By reviewing the results of this examination I hope to shew up Hume's genius in a new light. The study of Hume as a forerunner of Kant, upon the one hand, and as one of the founders of modern empirical psychology, upon the other, has tended to obscure his own philosophy. His conception of consciousness, and the method which he used to examine its structure, have not received any direct

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 306.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 306—7.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 552.

development either from the Kantian philosophy, or from empirical psychology. The one has been too formal, and the other too objective, to be in sympathy with Hume's descriptive and subjective work. But the present century has seen the rise of a school of thought in Germany whose attitude towards philosophy and philosophical problems is akin to Hume's. The Phenomenological[1]) conception of Consciousness as the matter of philosophy, as the foundation of all intelligence whatever, and the a priori alike to Logic and Psychology, resembles Hume's conception of Human Nature. Historians will see Hume's lineal successors, not in Kant or Mill, but in Brentano and Husserl. For the essential of Hume's philosophy is its subjective attitude, the notion that the ultimate explanation of truth and all ontologies awaits the practise of an introspection. This introspection should not be psychological in the empirical sense, for it has to reveal the ultimate processes of consciousness itself. But, like the psychological investigation, it aims at description and not at definition. Hume did not always succeed in keeping his reflection pure of a reference to physical and psycho-physical reality. His connection with these involved him in many difficulties, and brought him to some extravagant conclusions. He was tempted to abandon the principle which he had tried to establish: The origin of all the individual's knowledge is within himself. But he clung to it, and sacrificed the reality of all the natural world. I am first affrighted and confounded, Hume writes at the conclusion of his first Book, with that forelorn solitude, in which I am plac'd in my philosophy, and fancy myself some strange uncouth monster, who not being able to mingle and unite in society, has been expell'd all human commerce, and left utterly abandon'd and disconsolate .... I have exposed myself to the enmity of all metaphysicians, logicians, mathematicians, and even theologians; and can I wonder at the insults I must suffer?[2])

It might seem as if a philosopher had justly earned the scorn of his associates, who, at the end of his enquiries, could leave the individual as a battle-ground between his faculties, compelled now by

1) Phenomenological. — The Title adopted by the Phenomenological School of Philosophy, which is at present under the leadership of Edmund Husserl. The School includes, or has included, such members as M. Heidegger, A. Reinach (the late), M. Scheler (the late), R. Ingarden, O. Becher, D. von Hildebrand, H. Konrad-Martius, and others.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 554.

reason, and now by common-sense, to opposite convictions. But Hume may be admired for preferring to leave his work full of absurdities than to forsake the principles of his Subjectivism. For these are irrefutable, and his mistakes are not difficult to rectify. The Subject is the only 'object' of philosophy. Within himself lies the philosopher's world, albeit large enough to hold the universe, and universum of knowledge. The history of philosophy has shown that the introspection of consciousness requires a strict discipline. Two prejudices hamper the philosopher, the metaphysical prejudice, and the empirical. Hume was free of the former. At the expense of the metaphysican he cracked many a joke. But the empirical fallacy returned to plague him whenever he seemed quit of it. Paradoxical as it reads, Hume was led into solipsism by his belief in reality. For, while he recognized that the subject was responsible for his consciousness of every objective sphere, he considered himself obliged to qualify the subjective with some of the qualities of the one objective sphere of Reality. The reality of the Humeian consciousness quickly excluded the reality of the whole world else.

This Essay occupies itself first with as much in Parts I—III of the Treatise as is essential to the matter in Part IV. Before examining Hume's special problem of the external perception, it attempts to outline the general theory of philosophy in which Hume conceived his problem set.

Part I.

Concerning the Generalities of Hume's position.

Chapter I.

"The Way of Ideas." Hume's Heritage.

§ 1. The "Idea". Descartes and Locke.

The title of Hume's first Section, Of the Origin of our Ideas, involves him in historical relation to his past. Hume was not the first to conceive of a science of man. The epistemological notion, that something, at least, of the nature of the objects of knowledge consists in our knowledge of them, is as old as philosophy itself. 'Modern' philosophers had embodied the notion in the word "Idea". "Je prends le nom d'Idée pour tout ce qui est conçu immediatement par l'esprit[1])." Locke used the same word for the same

1) Descartes, Letter to Hobbes.

notion. All knowledge, he thought, depends upon the immediacy of our apprehension of it. That only can be known certainly which is immediately present to the mind. "It is evident, the mind knows not things immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them." "Since the mind, in all its thoughts and reasonings, hath no other immediate object but its own ideas, which it alone does, or can contemplate, it is evident that our knowledge is only conversant about them [1])."

This notion of the "idea" as the "immediate" object of consciousness is, in itself, ambiguous. Locke, being chiefly interested in what he called "knowledge", makes the reason the chief object of his study; and in the Essay, the "idea" gradually assumes the meaning which is generally assigned to it do-day, of being object to the reason, of being 'thought'. It is this notion of the idea as rational which lends the Lockeian terminology its significance. That only can be 'known' which is an 'idea'. The 'idea' being 'immediate' is present under "Intuition". The Lockeian "intuition" is always rational, and belongs together with "Demonstration" to the province of Logic. No 'knowledge', then, is absolutely 'known', except the 'ideas' of the reason, for no other objects of consciousness, except the reason's ideas, are 'immediately present to the mind'.

Such an interpretation of Descartes' notion of the immediacy of the idea is, however, unnecessarily confined. For why should the 'mind' be the reason, and not rather the whole of apprehensive consciousness?

Being dissociated from the Lockeian terminology, the phrase "the mind knows not things immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them", carries a universal significance. Locke does himself suggest a wider application of the principle than he actually makes: and if Descartes had not already suggested that ideas might be immediate in the sense of being the "means" of all consciousness of objects, the notion was implicit at any rate in his Cogito, ergo Sum. The residuum of the Cartesian Dubito was in fact an "idée". Descartes had recognized that when a man "doubts" the whole world, he does not empty his consciousness of all its content. Were a man to wake at any moment and recognize that what he had taken for perceptions had been illusions merely, and the objects of those perceptions non-existent, his perceptions themselves would yet remain, incontrovertibly, perceptions of those objects believed real;

1) Locke, Essay on Human Understanding, Bk. IV, Ch. IV, § 3.

and those objects as they were perceived would have been a content of consciousness. The same applies to every field. If the truths which a man reasoned were apprehended to be figments and not true, the man's consciousness itself would not have been void, but still 'objective', an intuition of objects believed true. If these objects had no 'existence' outside consciousness, they had one within it, But for the sake of philosophy the real world need not cease to exist, or become recognized for a nonentity. Truths need not become null or recognized for fiction. An exclusion from the attention merely of the real world, or of the world of truths, suffices to turn the attention of the individual on to his consciousness itself. The Cartesian dubito was certainly not sceptical. It implied no more than the possibility of a change of attitude, away from the objective, towards the subjective. The possibility of disregarding the objects of consciousness in any perception, and of regarding the objects in consciousness in the same perception, does not impugn the objectivity of what was perceived, for it involves an entire change of attitude. The two sets of objects, the objects of consciousness and the objects in consciousness, can never be apprehended at the same time, since the one requires the objective, and the other the subjective, regard. The objects in consciousness may be called "ideas", and because they are not alternative to, but complementary to, our consciousness of objects themselves, they may be called "immediate", and the means to our consciousness of objects. As much as this was latent in Descartes, and neither Locke, nor Hume, saw the whole of it. Locke put both sets of objects on the same plane, and adopted a 'representative' theory to relate them; and Hume, considering them as strictly alternative to one another, denied the existence of the objective for the sake of that of the subjective. Locke suggested, definitely enough, that the object in consciousness was the means by which we became conscious of objects outside consciousness, and in one passage he departs from his usual terminology to use the word "idea" in this sense. "There can be nothing more certain", he writes, "than that the idea we receive from an external object is in our minds: this is intuitive knowledge[1])." And again, "It is evident the mind knows not things immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them. Our knowledge, therefore, is real only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things[2])." It is significant that the importance of these

1) The Essay, Bk. IV, Ch. II, § 14
2) The Essay, Bk. IV, Ch. IV, § 3.

two sentences should have rested chiefly on the misleading influence which they exercised on Locke's successors. Campbell Fraser has referred to the second of them as "the germ of modern philosophical scepticism," and has held it responsible for every variety of Representative Theory of Perception, on the one hand, and by way of reaction against it on the other, for such dogmatic 'realism' as Reid's assumption "in the name of common sense, that we perceive things in the senses without ideas."

§ 2. Subjectivism and Psychology. Hume's attitude towards himself. The "philosophic" and the "natural" state of mind.

When we first scrutinize the problem of the theory of knowledge we most of us become 'comparative subjectivists'. We recognize that the world is dependent on our perception of it. But most philosophers have been content to recognize the fact of this relation between the world and ourselves, and leaving the relation itself obscure, to pass as quickly as they may to the elaboration of a priori principles for some of the spheres contained in the objective world. The logician is as far as the psychologist, and both as the natural scientist, from solving the problem of the 'relation' itself. The abstract ideas with which the logician deals are 'objects' as much as things in the natural world, and as capable as these of being studied in and for themselves. But the study of them for themselves requires, in the one case as in the other, a careful exclusion of the subjective elements involved in our apprehension of them. The philosopher can make no more elementary mistake than to suppose that the reason is a faculty more peculiarly essential to consciousness, than, say, perception, or the faculty of dreaming, and to conclude that he has only to study the reason and the laws of thought, to find the clue and ultimate explanation of all consciousness. The reason may be considered peculiar to the 'human' being; and, from the evolutionary point of view, reasoning is a late, if not the latest, development of consciousness. But this does not mean that reason may be taken by itself as the essence of human consciousness, or that it includes within itself the other faculties, because, historically speaking, it presupposes them. On the contrary! Logic is an 'abstract' science, and the ideas of the reason must be purified of every non-rational element before our observation of them can yield valid results. Natural Science is equally 'abstract'. The scientist must purge his objects of every non-real element before his observation of them can

yield valid results. Thought on the one hand, and reality on the other, are particular realms of which the human person is, or can be, conscious. But since neither reasoning, nor perception, is the sole faculty of human consciousness, not even a subjective study of these faculties can claim to be the supreme study of philosophy. It happens that psychology, for the most part, has not been a subjective study of the faculties of consciousness. Psychology has concerned itself with the observation of consciousness as it can be seen to function in the life of persons. As such it cannot claim to be a study of the relation between a person and the world of his consciousness. The person, whose functions psychology observes, is already an object in the world, a real object or a psychical object, according as the psychology is empirical or pure, but always an 'object'. In studying the reaction of persons to happenings in the real world about them, or the sequence of their so-called 'states of mind' which are discernible to him, the psychologist is always interested in something objective. The persons and their psycho-physical, or psychical, actions and reactions are the objects of his consciousness. The psychologist is himself making use of a relation of himself to an objective world. The relation is his consciousness of those persons and their activities. It follows that if the word 'a priori' be confined to its most absolute sense, to designate that ultimate relation of a person to any and every of his objective worlds, and eventually to every possible objective world, then the results of the conventional psychology cannot be called a priori. Psychology can only be made a priori in the absolute sense when it is conceived by a subject as the examination of his own states of consciousness, and as a further step from these, as the examination of all possible states of consciousness; and it is only in this highly specialized sense that Hume can be called a psychologist. For Hume's purpose was to examine his own consciousness, and, turning his attention from what was objective to him in everyday life, to concentrate upon what was actually passing in his own mind, and what was implicit in his consciousness itself. Hume describes this reflective state of mind in a comparison which he draws between the philosophic and the natural state of mind. He thought that the two states of mind were contradictory to one another. Having failed, himself, to comprehend the nature of the relation between consciousness and its objects, he felt himself bound to make a choice between the objects in consciousness and the objects outside it. Philosophically speaking, he considered himself compelled to admit that no one can ever perceive anything but his own "perceptions"; but in daily life

his unsophisticated nature obliged him to believe that he perceived realities independent of himself. Hume's misinterpretation of these two states of mind does not rob his discovery of the essential differences between them of all its value. When Locke made his "ideas" 'representations' of realities, he was nearer to scepticism than Hume, the avowed sceptic, who made the "ideas" and the "objects" alternative to one another. To every representative theory stands the unanswerable objection, that, in fact, we do not perceive two sets of objects but only one. If we grant, as we can be forced to, that it is only in virtue of our perception of the tree that we perceive the tree itself, yet we are also bound to admit, that we do not perceive both our perception of the tree and the tree itself. When Locke said that "the mind knows not things immediately but only by the intervention of the ideas it has of them — *Our knowledge, therefore, is real only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things*", — he was arguing, falsely, from his premise to an absurdity. As if what enabled a man to perceive, for example, a house, was that there was taking place in his "understanding" a certain coalescence or agreement of his "ideas" of the walls and roof! that, in fact, for each part of the real house there was a correspondent part of an ideal house which was fitted together in the understanding, as a child might cut out and piece together a cardboard reproduction of a house! so that a man became conscious of the real house when the last part of the ideal house, a window or a chimney-pot perhaps, had been stuck into its place in his understanding!

Hume did better than this in making the perception of the ideas, and the perception of the realities, strictly alternative to one another. For while it is true that we can apprehend them both, we can never apprehend them both at the same time, or from the same point of view.

Hume speaks of "metaphysical reflections", and describes the philosopher sitting in his chair, abstracted from the world of every-day, and conscious not of the world itself, but only of his ideas of it. And presently, will he, or will he not, Hume's philosopher becomes again the man of every-day, and adopts the attitude of practical life. Hume sets reason upon the one hand, and nature upon the other. Most fortunately it happens, Hume says, that since reason is incapable of dispelling these clouds, nature herself suffices to that purpose, and cures me of this philosophical melancholy and delirium, either by

relaxing this bent of mind, or by some avocation, and lively impression of my senses, which obliterate all these chimeras. I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hours' amusement, I wou'd return to these speculations, they appear so cold, and strain'd, and ridiculous, that I cannot find in my heart to enter into them any farther. Here then I find myself absolutely and necessarily determin'd to live, and talk, and act like other people in the common affairs of life[1]).

And on the other hand, At the time .... that I am tir'd with amusement and company, and have indulg'd a reverie in my chamber, or in a solitary walk by a river-side, I feel my mind all collected within itself, and am naturally inclin'd to carry my view into all those subjects, about which I have met with so many disputes in the course of my reading and conversation .... I am uneasy to think I approve of one object, and disapprove of another; call one thing beautiful, and another deform'd; decide concerning truth and falsehood, reason and folly, without knowing upon what principles I proceed. I am concern'd for the condition of the learned world, which lies under such a deplorable ignorance in all these particulars. I feel an ambition to arise in me of contributing to the instruction of mankind ..... and this is the origin of my philosophy[2]). Hume did well to emphasize the essential difference between the points of view of ordinary conscious life and of reflective philosophy. That he thought that the beliefs in which a man lived in the one point of view were directly contrary to those in which he lived in the other, was due to a misconstruction of the data which he found in each. The misconstruction is not difficult to remedy; and since the fault was, partly at any rate, responsible for his having kept his philosophical data distinct from his natural data, we need not be too severe upon it.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 548—9.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 550.

Chapter II.

The Nature and Necessity of Introspection.

§ 3. Hume's notion of Introspection on the field of consciousness. J. S. Mill on the "psychological" and "introspective" modes.

Hume conceived of philosophy in the terms of a man reflecting upon his own consciousness to the exclusion of the real world and the life which he is accustomed to lead there. Philosophical truth can only be revealed, he conceived, under a kind of philosophical introspection. Hume took up Locke's purpose of describing to others "what it is their minds do, when they perform the action they call knowing"[1]), but carried it out by a different method. He extended the Lockeian notion of 'knowing' to cover, in theory, every possible faculty of conscious apprehension, and in practice, the faculty of perception. He took very little account of the reason. Of the 36 Sections which compose the first Book of the Treatise, only 4 are concerned at all directly with the reason. Of these 4, one, (Sect. 7, Part I) is occupied with denying, as against Locke, that there is any such thing as an "abstract" idea; one (Sect. 1, Part III) with showing that almost everything which Locke called "knowledge" he ought to have called "opinion"; another (Sect. I, Part IV) has for its title Scepticism with regard to Reason; and the fourth (Sect. 16, Part III) refers shortly to what Hume delights to call the Reason of Animals. The sphere of Humeian rational knowledge is confined to arithmetic and a small part of algebra. Ideas related in these two disciplines alone are allowed to remain within the "demonstrative inference". All other so called 'ideas' can offer us probable knowledge only, and belong, therefore, to the Lockeian "judgment". "Judgment", Locke said, "is the thinking or taking two or more ideas to agree or disagree by the intervention of one or more ideas, whose certain agreement or disagreement with them it doth not perceive, but hath observed to be frequent and usual."[2])

By carrying on what almost amounted to a crusade against the Continental Rationalists, Hume removed the "idea" from the faculty of reason, and used it in connection with conscious apprehension in general. And having thus extended the faculty of knowing, he went on to change the kind of "description" which Locke had given of what it is the mind does when it performs the action called knowing.

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1) Locke, 2nd Letter to Stillingfleet.

2) The Essay. Bk. IV, Ch. 17, § 7.

For Locke's attempt at description had degenerated into an attempt to discover the temporal origin of our ideas. The mind was a piece of white paper which, in its growth from infancy, received impressions like marks in ink. Believing that there was a fixed order in the arrival or occurrence of these impressions, Locke conceived it to be the task of the philosopher to ascertain this order, and construct a system, or description, of human consciousness, based on this history of ideas. And, since Locke, such an account of the growth of the mind has been generally accepted as the proper task of psychology. In a passage in his Examination of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy, J. S. Mill, accepting Cousin's definition of the business of philosophy, to decide what it is that our mind really "testifies to", what it is that is really given us at first hand in our "intuitions", divides philosophers into two schools. Both schools accept the task, but each pursues it with a different method of investigation. The one uses the "introspective method", which Mill condemns, and the other the "psychological method", which he applauds.

"The elaborate and acute criticism", he writes, "which is perhaps the most striking portion of M. Cousin's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, sets out with a remark which sums up the characteristics of the two great schools of mental philosophy by a summary description of their methods. M. Cousin observes that Locke went wrong from the beginning, by placing before himself, as the question to be first resolved, the origin of our ideas. This was commencing at the wrong end. The proper course would have been to begin by determining what the ideas now are. To ascertain what it is that consciousness actually tells us, postponing till afterwards the attempt to frame a theory concerning the origin of any of the mental phenomena. I accept the question as M. Cousin states it, and I contend that no attempt to determine what are the direct revelations of consciousness, can be successful, or entitled to any regard, unless preceded by what M. Cousin says ought only to follow it, an enquiry into the origin of our acquired ideas. For we have it not in our power to ascertain, by any direct process, what Consciousness told us at the time when its revelations were at their pristine purity. It only offers itself now, when buried under a mountainous heap of acquired notions and perceptions. It seems to M. Cousin, that if we examine with care and minuteness our present states of consciousness, distinguishing and defining every ingredient which we find to enter into them — every element that we seem to recognize as real, and cannot, by merely concentrating our attention upon it, analyse into

anything simpler — we reach the ultimate and primary truths, which are the sources of all our knowledge, and which cannot be denied or doubted, without denying or doubting the evidence of consciousness itself, that is, the only evidence which there is for anything. I maintain this to be a misapprehension of the conditions imposed on enquirers by the difficulties of psychological investigation. To begin the enquiry at the point where M. Cousin takes it up is in fact to beg the question. For he must be aware, if not of the fact, at least of the belief of his opponents, that the laws of the mind — the laws of association according to one class of thinkers, the Categories of the Understanding according to another — are capable of creating, out of those data which are uncontested, purely mental conceptions, which become so identified in thought with all our states of consciousness, that we seem, and cannot but seem, to receive them by direct intuition; and, for example, the belief in Matter, in the opinion of some of these thinkers, is or at least may be, thus produced. Idealists and Sceptics, contend that the belief in Matter is not an original fact of consciousness, as our sensations are, and is therefore wanting in the requisite which ..... gives to our subjective convictions objective authority. Now .... these persons .... cannot be refuted .... by appealing to Consciousness itself. For we have no means of interrogating Consciousness in the only circumstances in which it is possible for it to give a trustworthy answer ... (namely, before the mind has been buried under the mountainous heap of acquired associations) .... We have no means of now ascertaining by direct evidence, whether we are conscious of outward and extended objects when we first opened our eyes to the light. That a belief or knowledge of such objects is in our consciousness now, whenever we use our eyes or our muscles, is no reason for concluding that it was there from the very beginning, until we have settled the question, whether it could have been brought in since .... The proof that any of the alleged Universal Beliefs, or Principles of Common Sense, are affirmations of consciousness, supposes two things, that the beliefs exist, and that there are no means by which they could have been acquired .... Locke was therefore right in believing that "the origin of our ideas" is the main stress of the problem of mental science, and the subject which must first be considered in forming the theory of the Mind"[1]).

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1) Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy. J. S. Mill. Longmans Green, 1878, pp. 176—179.

§ 4. Hume vindicated, and Mill criticized.

It is noteworthy that Mill believed himself to be taking Hume's side, and arguing, as Hume might have argued against Cousin. His reference to the "laws of association" is intended for Hume, and in "Sceptics contend that the belief in Matter is not an original fact of consciousness", the allusion is to Hume. But Hume would not have commended Mill's arguments. Hume did not endorse Locke's attempt to find in the temporal origin of our ideas the a priori of philosophy. There are reasons for calling Hume a sceptic, but he never contended that the belief in matter was not an original fact of consciousness. On the contrary, over and over again, Hume bears witness to the force of the belief in matter. It was for Hume precisely our b e l i e f in matter which was an original fact of consciousness, something to which our mind will testify, in spite of all the arguments which we can bring against it. — No one can hope to understand the Humeian Laws of Association, who imagines that they were framed to account for the temporal origin of our ideas. Hume was convinced, like Cousin, "that Locke went wrong from the beginning". Hume was convinced, like Cousin, that the proper course is "to begin by determining what the ideas now are". Hume's purpose was precisely Cousin's, namely, "to ascertain what it is that consciousness actually tells us, postponing till afterwards the attempt to frame a theory concerning the origin of any of the mental phenomena". For what interested Hume was not the origin but the 'genesis' of our ideas, not the question, w h e n did our mind make us conscious of such and such objects? but the question h o w does our mind make us conscious of such and such objects? Putting the question as Cousin put it, Hume was anxious to decide what it is that our mind "testifies to", when it is taken in and for itself, or, as Locke put it, "to describe to others what it is their minds do, when they perform the action they call knowing". It was with this task that Hume's armchair philosopher was occupied, as he sat, practising introspection, to the neglect of the whole world. What Hume really did in his work on the external perception, was to shift his attention from the objects generally perceived, on to the conscious experience of perception itself. This is not to say that he always realized what was involved in this change of attitude. He was often inclined to confuse the 'perception' with the object perceived, and to argue, — and it is in this sense that Hume was a sceptic, — that because space, time and matter, and all that they involved, were not themselves to be found in the 'perception', although they were un-

doubtedly 'perceived', that space, time, and matter, did not really exist. Hume was right to suppose that, by investigating the perception, he could discover how the perception of space, time and matter is made, but quite wrong in supposing that he ought to find space, time and matter there themselves.

Mill is perfectly entitled to consider the business of psychology as the "enquiry into the origin of our acquired ideas". One task of empirical psychology is to provide us with a "history" of our ideas, regarding both the growth of the individual baby to the man, and, anthropologically, the growth of the human race. But, when Mill goes on to consider this historical enquiry as a priori, and precedent to any valid philosophical enquiry, "I contend that no attempt to determine what are the direct revelations of consciousness can be succesful, or entitled to any regard, unless preceded by . . . . an enquiry into the origin of our acquired ideas," he not only misunderstands the nature of philosophical enquiry, but by impugning the certainty of intuition, makes it impossible, after, as before, the practice of psychology. The philosopher will be willing enough to grant the psychologist that "we have it not in our power to ascertain, by any direct process, what Consciousness told us at the time when its revelations were at their pristine purity". For it must seem to the philosopher, as it seemed to M. Cousin, "that if we examine with care and minuteness our present states of consciousness, distinguishing and defining every ingredient which we find to enter into them .... we reach the ultimate and primary truths, and which cannot be denied or doubted, without denying or doubting the evidence of consciousness itself, that is, the only evidence which there is for anything". The conviction that present consciousness is self-sufficient, that it can be taken to contain within itself forms and faculties sufficient to, and responsible for, the objective truths with which it presents us, is the only possible foundation for philosophy. We can only be justified in considering mathematical propositions as true, if we believe that our own faculties of consciousness are responsible for the propositions appearing to us as they do. Our intuition must be believed to be beyond the reach of doubt. The evidence of each present state of mind to its present self must be taken to be ultimate and absolute. If, like Mill, we found the truth of, say, mathematical propositions on a historical past, we must also make them dependent on a historical future. Not only shall we need to trace the historical origin and growth of our ideas of number and relations of number, in order to support our mathematical

arguments with fundamental proof, but having thus established them, we shall still be obliged to qualify them by making them relative to the present state of our development. If we succeeded in proving the historical truth of 2 plus 2 = 4, we should be forced to admit that some future development of the human mind might bring the same premises to a different conclusion. In the passage quoted, Mill confines himself to the faculty of perception, but such a limitation is quite arbitrary. His "For we have no means of interrogating Consciousness in the only circumstances in which it is possible for it to give a trustworthy answer", if it be valid at all, must apply to all the faculties of consciousness. "The proof that any of the alleged Universal Beliefs . . . . are affirmations of consciousness, supposes two things, that the beliefs exist, and that there are no means by which they could have been acquired." Mill was constrained to enquire into the perception, rather than into any other faculty, by his interest in, and prejudice for, reality. Did he conceive of a sort of "golden age" in the history of mankind, when men 'perceived' only what really existed? He draws a distinction between "data which are uncontested", by which he understands perceptions of objective and ultimate realities, and "purely mental conceptions", which the mind invents and superimposes upon these original perceptions, so that the real and the fictitious can no longer be disentangled, or recognized for what they are. Mill conceives that this invention and imposition of fictions on to "uncontested data", is due to a power of "association" native to the human mind. And when he talks of "association", he thinks of himself as a disciple of Hume. "The laws of association", he says, "are capable of creating, out of those data which are uncontested, purely mental conceptions, which become so identified in thought with all our states of consciousness, that we seem, and cannot but seem, to receive them by direct intuition."

In thus interpreting the Humeian laws of association, Mill totally misunderstands the best of Hume's work. For with whatever hope Hume may have started his research, of being able to distinguish between those data in consciousness, which are in Mill's sense "original" and "uncontested", and those which are posterior to these, he discovers quickly that consciousness is not capable of supporting any such distinction. He finds that if the notion of association is to be used at all, it must be used with reference to all the processes of consciousness. He finds that no means remain for distinguishing in consciousness between "data which are uncontested", and "purely

mental conceptions". On the contrary, he finds that all the data in consciousness must be called "fictions", i. e. the production of the creative mind. In so far as Hume remains true to this point of view, and places the 'origin' of the whole content of all the worlds which we perceive, or could perceive, in a purely subjective 'genesis', he reaches the true starting point of all philosophy, vindicates his conception of the dependency of the sciences on "human nature", and both proposes, and practises, the "introspective method" of philosophy which Mill condemns.

§ 5. Concerning the nature of Introspection. Real Hypostases.

The introspective method will examine consciousness itself. It excludes all the objects of consciousness. The real world and all its past and future is one class or sphere of objects. Mathematics and its entities, and logic and its conceptions, are other classes or spheres of objects. All are excluded. The introspective method supposes that the whole of our perception or consciousness of these and other objective spheres, is due to, and must be explained by, the processes of consciousness itself. To take particular examples, it is not the reality of the real world which makes us perceive it, or the truth of the logical world which makes us aware of its truth and its truths. The laws of the genesis of our consciousness of these worlds will be neither real nor logical. The introspective philosophy proposes to investigate not the laws or principles of these objective worlds, but the laws or principles of our consciousness of these worlds; and it must take the greatest care that no law or principle belonging to these worlds be taken over from these worlds, to explain, or to be used towards explaining, the principles of our consciousness of these worlds. The principles of the objective worlds presuppose the consciousness in which we know these worlds. The laws of these worlds are a part of these worlds as we know them, and must not be employed in explaining the 'as', or manner, of our knowing them. Any employment of objective laws, be these real, or logical, or moral, or aesthetic, in explaining the principles of consciousness involves hypostasis, and will prevent a proper explanation. Hume was in no danger of using logical principles to explain the processes which he found in consciousness. He had very little use for 'rationalization'. But he did not succeed in clearing his subjective regard of the taint of reality; so that he gave some excuse to his successors for regarding him, as Mill regarded him, as an empirical psychologist. But Hume

was not guilty, like Mill, of the 'historical hypostasis'. Hume saw no difficulty in the "mountainous heap", and did not impugn the evidence of the direct intuition. It is true that, in his very first section, Hume makes use of the historical argument. In considering the relation of his "Impressions" and "Ideas", he talks of the order of their first appearance[1]), and thus allows himself to share, for a moment, Locke's conception of the historical task of philosophy, which, for the most part, he spurns. But in view of the fact that Hume quickly made the "idea" swallow the "impression" by turning the "impression" into an "idea", he left no "first appearance" to establish an "order of appearance", and may be absolved from any real devotion to an argument of which he makes no further use. But over and over again Hume asserts the autonomy of the direct intuition, and does not hesitate to oppose it even to those beliefs which are most generally accepted.

But, besides the hypostasis involved in the historical argument, there is another which Hume shares with Mill, and to which he clings. Mill wished to set those "data which are uncontested" upon a basis of reality, and did so in two ways. He held that the "uncontested data" in the mind represented real existences, in contrast to the "purely mental conceptions", such as Matter, which represented only fictitious existences. Hume had done away with this distinction. Hume found no ground, at any rate in his better moments, for distinguishing between "uncontested data" and "purely mental conceptions". In fact he laid it down, eventually, that if our data are uncontested it is precisely because they are what Mill would have called "purely mental conceptions". But Mill was inclined to say not only that our "uncontested data" represented realities, but also that they owed the fact of their being "uncontested" to their being realities themselves. The suggestion is unmistakeable. "Idealists and Sceptics", he says, "contend that the belief in Matter is not an original fact of consciousness, as our sensations are, and is therefore, wanting in the requisite which . . . . gives to our subjective convictions objective authority." Mill wishes to rest a part, at any rate, of the incontrovertibility of our "uncontested perception data", on the fact of their being themselves sensations, and as such "real". Locke, whom Mill applauds, starting, like Mill, with the historical bias, had made use of the same argument. "Since there appear not to be any ideas in the mind," Locke wrote, "before the

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 314.

senses have conveyed any in, I conceive that ideas in the understanding are coeval with sensation; which is such an impression, made in some part of the body, as produces some perception in the understanding. It is about these impressions made on our senses by outward objects that the mind seems first to employ itself in such operations as we call perception, remembering, consideration, reasoning, etc."[1]). This fallacy, that the incontrovertibility of the data of consciousness rests, in the last resort, both actually and historically, upon 'reality', manifested through the 'real' means of sensation, has been widespread. In our own day, owing largely to the extravagant faith in reality, which the success of the natural and physical sciences has produced, we have seen the birth of a physiological psychology which claims to comprehend philosophy. One would not have expected Hume, who drew so great a gulf between the objective and the subjective worlds, to be liable to it. But Hume was often guilty of the real hypostasis, and even after his most brilliant analysis of a purely subjective experience, he was tempted to reduce the whole experience, absurdly, to the terms of real sensation.

In the matter of causation, to take one example, Hume takes great pains to point out that our perception of cause is dependent upon certain purely subjective processes of consciousness, and in the very face of this proceeds, first, to deny that there is any such thing as real cause, — an inverse use of the real hypostasis — and then, — a direct use of the real hypostasis — to assert that it is a cause which governs the processes of consciousness. In this we see a repeated contradiction.

§ 6. Hume confused between the "psychological" and "introspective" modes.

Hume's most illogical use of realistic arguments — they always lead him to absurd conclusions — is explained by the fact, that, although he did achieve a very considerable practice of philosophical introspection, he did so rather in his own despite, and without quite recognizing the nature of his operations. Hume's own descriptions of the experiments he is going to conduct conform to the "psychological" rather than to the "introspective" method, and offer Mill some excuse for taking him for an ally. Having laid down in his

1) The Essay, Bk. II, Ch. I, Sec. 23.

Introduction the absolute importance and universal scope of "Human Nature", Hume says, And as the science of man is the only solid foundation for the other sciences, so the only solid foundation we can give to this science itself must be laid on experience and observation . . . . For to me it seems evident, that the essence of the mind being equally unknown to us with that of external bodies, it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than from careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations. And tho' we must endeavour to render all our principles as universal as possible, by tracing up our experiments to the utmost, and explaining all effects from the simplest and fewest causes, 'tis still certain we cannot go beyond experience; and any hypothesis that pretends to discover the ultimate original qualities of human nature, ought at first to be rejected as presumptuous and chimerical[1]). So far there is nothing definitely amiss in Hume's programme, although the conception of "experience" as the only foundation for philosophy is obviously in need of closer definition; and Hume's "tho' we must endeavour to render all our principles as universal as possible" rather suggests that, for some reason or other, he supposes that this will be impossible. Now what prevents a science from reaching universal principles is the possibility of its being bound to particulars. If a science is obliged to proceed strictly inductively, it can never reach beyond a relative generality compounded of the sum of observed cases. We can conceive of empirical psychology as being limited in this way, but the idea seems foreign to philosophy. Is Hume going to consider the "experience", which he calls the foundation of all consciousness, as being nowise different from that objective psycho-physical experience and experiencing, which supplies empirical psychology with its subject-matter? . . . . to me it seems evident, he writes, that the essence of the mind being equally unknown to us with that of external bodies, it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than from careful and exact experiments, and

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 308.

the observation of those *particular* effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations[1]). And finally, after a comparison of his task with that of the natural scientist, he writes, Moral philosophy has .... this peculiar disadvantage, which is not yet found in natural, that in collecting its experiments, it cannot make them purposely, with premeditation, and after such a manner as to satisfy itself concerning every particular difficulty which may arise. When I am at a loss to know the effects of one body upon another in any situation, I need only put them in that situation, and observe what results from it. But should I endeavour to clear up after the same manner any doubt in moral philosophy, by placing myself in the same case with that which I consider, 'tis evident this reflection and premeditation would so disturb the operation of any natural principles, as must render it impossible to form any just conclusion from the phenomenon. We must therefore glean up our experiments in this science from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men's behaviour in company, in affairs and in their pleasures. Where experiments of this kind are judiciously collected and compared, we may hope to establish on them a science which will not be inferior in certainty, and will be much superiour in utility to any other of human comprehension[2]). Is this, then, to be the end of Hume's boasted "science of human nature", this philosophy which was to contain "a compleat system of the sciences", that it should "not be inferior in certainty", and should be "much superiour in utility to any other of human comprehension"? It would be disappointing, being nothing more nor less than a formulation of what Mill called "the psychological, as distinguished from the simply introspective mode", being "the known and approved method of physical science, adapted to the necessities of psychology". Fortunately Hume did not follow the methods which he here lays down. Once fairly started on his investigations he disregarded the limitations which he had foreseen.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 308.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 309—10.

A regard for what Hume called the "peculiar disadvantage of moral philosophy", and what Mill called "the necessities of psychology", has been so general among students of the "science of man", that it will be well to consider, somewhat closely, the nature of these limitations, which Hume seemed ready to allow to his investigations. The purport of the passage is the following. The philosopher is prevented from the examination of his own mind by certain difficulties native to introspection. These difficulties make it, in effect, impossible that the 'natural' or 'true' principles of consciousness or 'experience' should be revealed. "Premeditation," Hume says, "disturbs the operation of the natural principles", thus rendering the instance under examination 'artificial', that is, different in its nature from the ordinary unreflected experiences of conscious life. This disturbance of the operation of the natural principles obliges the philosopher to disregard himself and his own consciousness, and turn his attention on to other people, other subjects, whose experiences he can study in their natural state. It is from this point of view that Hume is doubtful, and rightly doubtful, of rendering his principles universal. For in the early stages of such psychological investigation, the investigator is working empirically and a posteriori, collecting a large number of similar instances of particular experiences. But even when this investigation has been advanced far enough to allow these particularities to be converted into abstract generalities, the discipline built upon these can claim no more than relative a-priority. The investigation has all along been in the strict sense 'objective'. The material of this science may be called 'experiences', but these are, after all, the experiences of other people, that is, experiences objectively observed, and not 'experiences' in the strict sense, i. e. experiences experienced. The material of objective psychology is "persons" rather than "experiences". These "persons", psycho-physical or psychical as they may be regarded, are 'objects', part of the world of which the investigator is conscious, part of the world, then, his consciousness of which the investigator has created for himself. If he regards these 'persons' physically, they belong, in his consciousness, to his creative experiences of perception. If he regards these 'persons' psychically, they belong, in his consciousness, to his creative experiences of sympathy (i. e. he projects on to some body which he perceives, a power of experiencing experiences, similar to his own). If he regards them psychophysically, they belong, in his consciousness, to a compound of his creative experiences. In each of these three cases, of which one

belongs rather to the science of biology or physiology than to psychology, the results of investigation are 'objective' in the strict sense, being the products of a subjective consciousness and experiencing, which is itself not regarded. These results can be accurate and useful, and are capable of sustaining general rules and principles which are no less valid than those of any other natural or physical science. Its a priori discipline is on the same plane as that of any other physical or natural science. Hume himself was aware both of the comparative relativity of the psychological a priori, and of its congruity with the a priori's of the other sciences. But if this impossibility, he writes, of explaining ultimate principles should be consider'd a defect in the science of man, I will venture to affirm that 'tis a defect common to it with all the sciences, and all the arts, in which we can employ ourselves, whether they be such as are cultivated in the schools of the philosophers, or practised in the shops of the artizans. None of them can go beyond experience, or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority[1]). Indeed this relativity, which is the best which an empirical psychology can produce, so weighs upon Hume, that he writes: I do not think a philosopher who would apply himself earnestly to the explaining the ultimate principles of the soul, would show himself a great master in that very science of human nature, which he pretends to explain, or very knowing in what is naturally satisfactory to the mind of man. For nothing is more certain, than that despair has almost the same effect upon us with enjoyment, and that we are no sooner acquainted with the impossibility of satisfying any desire, than the desire itself vanishes. When we see, that we have arrived at the utmost extent of human reason, we sit down contented[2]). But, as he says, A true sceptic will be diffident of his philosophical doubts, as well as of his philosophical conviction[3]), and this sitting down contented in despair does not long detain him. In spite of a recurrence of such passages, in spite of the compromise which Hume is so often tempted to make between his doubts and his convictions, the latter

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 309.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 308—9.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 552.

dominate the work, and stand much as he set them out in his Introduction. The mind is the citadel of human science which we may seize. We are to leave the tedious lingering method, which we have hitherto followed, and instead of taking now and then a castle or village on the frontier, to march up directly to the capital or center of these sciences, to human nature itself; which being once masters of, we may everywhere else hope for an easy victory[1]). It is this hope which inspires the Treatise, and this task to which Hume devotes himself. Hume's main theme is not to be questioned. In spite of all his doubts his conviction remains with him. Hume is convinced that while all the rest of the sciences, empirical psychology among them, "cannot go beyond experience or establish any principles which are not founded on that authority", philosophy itself can go "beyond experience". Philosophy can go 'into' experience, can concentrate upon experience itself, and that experiencing, which presents us with all the objects of our knowledge, and conditions them. When Hume despairs, it is because he cannot justify his practise of the introspective mode. But he recognizes, that if he may not practise it, he will be driven to accept the limitations of the empirical psychologist, who regards other persons and not himself.

§ 7. Final vindication of the Introspective Mode.

What was the nature of the "peculiar disadvantage of moral philosophy", which seemed likely, at one time, to drive Hume into the ranks of the empirical psychologists? Philosophy, Hume said, "in collecting its experiments, cannot make them purposely, with premeditation, and after such a manner as to satisfy itself concerning every particular difficulty which may arise". For, says Hume, "tis evident this reflection and premeditation would . . . . disturb the operation of any natural principles". As Hume does not state, explicitly, how this reflection would disturb the experience in question, in asserting for ourselves the contrary, we shall be content to state, and invalidate, the most general argument which is brought against the possibility of pure introspection, and from which, in our opinion, all minor objections derive their force.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 307.

This argument runs as follows. Let it be granted, that no subject can become conscious of any object whatever, without himself living through a certain 'experience'. It is obvious that this 'experience' is one which takes place below the threshold of consciousness, and, that anyone living in the ordinary attitude is quite unaware of 'experiencing' any such 'experience'. Let it be supposed, however, that by some such method as the Cartesian dubito, the subject can succeed in revealing this internal experience to himself. It is to be understood, now, that the subject succeeds in experiencing consciously what before he experienced unconsciously. He finds that these experiences consist of certain 'intentional'[1]) 'processes', through which his 'mind' works to create for itself its accustomed consciousness of objects. If, now, by the constant practice of such reflection, our philosopher became able, in each and every of his conscious experiences, to remove his attention from the object of his consciousness, and turn it inwards on to that consciousness itself, and discover there the processes through which he had lived, and by whose means only he had arrived at his consciousness of the object, it would have to be allowed that he was in the possession of a method which could furnish him with the ultimate a-priori of all knowledge. For he could take every faculty of consciousness by turn, the perception of reality, the apprehension of truth, recognition of the right, appreciation of the beautiful, etc. etc. and from a description of the processes involved in his consciousness of a plurality of particular objects in these several fields, pass, through a manipulation of their varieties, to the region of strict generality. There he could exhaust the types not only of all actual, but also of all possible, experiences of objects. But, says now the objector, all this claim is based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of introspection, and on an ignorance of the difficulties native to its practice. For if it is true, as was granted, that the subject cannot become conscious of any object without living through a certain experience, below the threshold of consciousness, then, the subject cannot say, in any particular instance of reflection, that the 'processes' which he is now surveying, are those by means of which, a moment since, he was conscious of such and such an object. This for one of two reasons! Either

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1) The word "Intentional", was brought into modern use from the Scholastic by Brentano. For its present use in Phenomenological Philosophy, see Husserl, 'Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie', pp. 64, 168, et seq: Max Niemeyer, Halle a. S., 1922.

the 'processes' which he is now surveying are not the whole, but only a part, of those through which he had to live, in order to be conscious of his object, or they are not those at all which helped him to a consciousness of that object, but are processes which are helping him now to his consciousness of themselves. This alternative depends upon the two kinds of interpretation, which can be put upon the original premise, that no subject can be conscious of any object without living through certain processes, which are the means of his consciousness of that object. The first interpretation is as follows: If every object of consciousness presupposes a means in consciousness, then those processes, which become, under introspection, objects of consciousness, themselves presuppose a means in consciousness by which they have become objectified. And since it must be acknowledged that the 'processes' revealed are not identical with, but different from, the original object of consciousness, it must be acknowledged also, that the processes underlying these processes, as the means of their being objectified, cannot be identical with, but must be different from, those 'processes', become objects, which have been shown to underly the consciousness of the original object. In other words, since it is impossible to 'reflect' without changing the object of consciousness, each reflection presupposes a new 'means', and the reflecting subject must be involved in an infinite regress, before he can ever arrive at what he may say, absolutely, was the 'means' by which he was conscious of any particular object, i. e. the 'processes' which he is surveying at any particular moment are not the whole, but only a part, of those through which he had to live, in order to be conscious of his original object.

The second interpretation of the original premise argues that because no subject can become conscious of any object whatever, without himself living through certain processes as a 'means' to that consciousness, for that very reason, those processes, which it is admitted are lived through, can never be revealed, i. e. made the objects of consciousness. For, if no subject can be conscious of an object without a means thereto, it is presumed that the same means will always furnish the subject with a similar object, and that a different object will always imply a different means. If therefore, it is in the nature of all the means to any particular object to remain below the threshold of consciousness, we can never hope to bring them up into consciousness; for the only circumstance, in which we can live through the particular means, is in the consciousness of the particular object of which it is the means. There is, therefore, no

such thing as a strictly reflexive consciousness, but each state of consciousness implies its hidden means. We can never be aware of consciousness itself, but only of objects: and when we seem to be conscious of actual internal experiences, we are in reality either inventing, or remembering, states of consciousness which we have experienced, but never those which we are at the moment actually experiencing.

Re-quoting Hume's objection, it will be seen to be capable of bearing both of the interpretations offered above. When I am at a loss, he said, to know the effects of one body upon another in any situation, I need only put them in that situation, and observe what results from it. But should I endeavour to clear up after the same manner any doubt in moral philosophy, by placing myself in the same case with that which I consider, 'tis evident this reflection and premeditation would so disturb the operation of any natural principles, as must render it impossible to form any just conclusion from the phaenomenon[1]).

It remains to show that both interpretations are based upon a misconception of the nature of philosophic reflection or introspection. In considering the significance of Descartes' discovery of the possibility of 'doubting', we spoke of the ability of the subject to disregard the objects of his consciousness at any given moment, in order to regard the consciousness itself, or the 'objects in consciousness' at the same moment. Having interpreted the dubito as an essential change of attitude, from being interested in the various objective worlds of our consciousness, to being interested in what Descartes discovered to be the pregnant world of our consciousness itself, we need do no more than appeal to a personal experiment, which every reader can make for himself, to assert, that this 'possibility' of a radical change of attitude is an essential part of every moment of objectifying consciousness. We make no reference here to a 'real' possibility, for the practice of introspection takes place from the very start upon a purely subjective plane. By saying that every subject 'can', in every moment of his conscious life, remove his attention from the object of his consciousness, on to his consciousness itself, it is asserted that it is impossible for any subject to conceive of any state of consciousness, on which he could not,

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 307.

under certain conditions, 'reflect'. The 'certain conditions' include both the real occasion, which may not, of course, be proper to the realization of this 'possibility', and the actual ability, which can be bred in the subject only by practise. But since, in the realm of a priori, it is impossible to conceive of any state of consciousness which could not bear, under the right occasion, and in the person of the able subject, the reflexive attitude, we assert that the possibility of becoming reflexive is an essential part of all consciousness. From this ground it is easy to discover a fundamental mistake, made by both the arguments given above, against, in the one case, the utility, and in the other case, the possibility, of reflection. In making use, as both arguments do, of the premise, that the same object of consciousness implies the same means in consciousness, and the same means the same object, to conclude that an identical experience must always terminate in the apprehension of an identical object, they are guilty of the empirical fallacy of real hypostasis. They seek to cover an ideal identity with the quotation of a purely real numerical difference, and to obscure the identity of an ideal quantity by stressing a purely real difference in quality. "Since it must be acknowledged," the first argument ran, "that the 'processes' revealed under reflection are not identical with, but different from, the original object of consciousness, it must be acknowledged also, that the processes underlying these processes, as the means of their being objectified, cannot be identical with, but must be different from, those processes, become objects, which have been shown to underly the consciousness of the original object." "It is presumed," so ran the second argument, "that the same means will always furnish the subject with a similar object, and that a different object will always imply a different means". Now these antitheses between identical objects, and identical means, and different objects and different means, rely upon the particularity of what is real. For granting, as the objectors must, that a unity can be a compound, and one whole consist of many parts, and that, in any given state of consciousness, the attention of the subject can be shifted from the unity to the compound, from the whole to the parts, and, among these parts, from one part to another, there is no ground, except that of the distinctness, and numerical difference, in time, of the different moments of consciousness, for maintaining that the experience in question is not identical. But the question of real time can only be raised when the subject is engaged in ordinary perception. In order to reflect upon the perception itself, and no longer on the object of the perception, the

duty of the subject is to exclude the whole world of reality of which the particular object is a part. Real time, therefore, as much as the rest of reality, will have no place in what he finds in his consciousness. In other words, the identity which he finds there must be independent of real time. Speaking then of conscious experience, it is clear that one and the same experience can be experienced innumerable times, since it is the consciousness of the same, and not the real experience of the same, which is involved. There is nothing startling in this assertion. It applies to other non-real spheres besides the sphere of consciousness. No one is likely to argue that the identity of a Beethoven symphony consists in, or is dependent upon, any one of the particular performances which may have been given of it, or any one of the particular orchestras or audiences, or on any one of the particular scores on which it is written, or even on the original manuscript. The identity of a piece of music is independent of all these things. One and the same truth may be apprehended innumerable times by innumerable people in innumerable worlds; and it can be known by one person on innumerable occasions as the same truth. The identity of a conscious experience is not dependent upon any one particular experience of it, or upon my being concentrated upon any one of its compound parts or moments. And, in the case of perception, so little is the real object which I perceive involved in my perception of it, that if the object which I had perceived were removed, and an exactly similar object put in its place, my second perception itself, when I perceived the new object, would be identical with my first.

Both the arguments brought against the practise of the introspective mode suffer from being too ingenious. In the course of one identical experience I can not only exclude the object of my consciousness from my attention, and regard my consciousness itself, but having done this, I can, for the sake of testing its identity, turn my attention away from my consciousness, and back upon the original object, and thence back again upon my consciousness, and after this manner as often as I please. With this ability at my command, I can disregard metaphysics, and by my practise itself, establish the validity of what I do. Granting that the same object of consciousness implies the same means in consciousness, and the same means the same object, I have only to recognize the complexity of elements involved in my consciousness of an object, to realize that I can regard now this element, and now that, within the unity of the one experience. And I have only to establish the total unity by an obser-

vation of what is involved in its means, and to test it by turning my attention freely backward and forward, from object of consciousness to consciousness of object, to recognize at once that I am involved in no infinite regress. For when I seek to find the means which underly the means I have observed, I find, reflexively, that they are identical with themselves.

Introspection, then, is not only possible, but able to furnish me with the whole of the means whereby I arrive at the consciousness of any given object.

After an extensive practise of the introspective mode, the philosopher will be able to describe the processes by which he arrives at the consciousness of objects in the variety of all his faculties. From this personal, or egoistic, realm of a priori, it will be but a step for him to pass, by the means of abstraction and variation, from his own consciousness to the absolutely universal generalities of consciousness in general, and to declare, in the realm of pure Subjectivity itself, the ultimate truths of all philosophy.

In spite of his profession to deny the possibility of the introspective mode, and his intention to devote himself more to the examination of other people than of himself, when he came to the problem of external perception, Hume did forsake empirical psychology, and derive, from the employment of introspection, a notable success.

Chapter III.

The place of Logic in the Sciences.

§ 8. Locke's Division of the Sciences. The Rational Hypostasis, and the two operations of Abstraction.

When Hume took up Locke's task of "describing to others what it is their minds do when they perform the action they call knowing", he made two signal modifications on Locke's attitude. With Locke's preliminary classification of the departments of knowledge he had no quarrel. "First", Locke had said, "the nature of things as they are in themselves, their relations, and their manner of operation".[1]) Here we are to pursue "the knowledge of things, as they are in their own proper beings, their constitution, properties, and operations; whereby I mean not only matter and body, but spirits also, which have their proper natures, constitutions, and operations, as well as

1) Locke, The Essay, Bk. IV, Ch. XXI.

bodies". This is *Φυσική*, or "natural philosophy", whose end is "bare, speculative truth". Whatsoever can afford the mind of man any such, falls under this branch, whether it be God Himself, angels, spirits, bodies, or any of their affections, as number and figure, etc." Next comes *Πραχτική*, whose domain "is not bare speculation and the knowledge of truth: but right and a conduct suitable to it", "that which man himself ought to do, as a rational and voluntary agent, for the attainment of any end, especially happiness". The third department is *Σημειωτική*, or *Λογική*, which is announced shortly, as "the ways and means whereby the knowledge of both the one and the other (i. e. of *Φυσική* and *Πραχτική*) is attained and communicated". This is the province of philosophy. In setting Locke's observation free, 1. wholly from its rationalistic, and 2. partially from its empirical, bias, Hume was only adopting the recommendations of Locke's own programme, to which Locke had proved unfaithful. The comprehensiveness of *Φυσική*, which is the characteristic of this division of the sciences, should have kept Locke's *Λογική* clear both of rationalism and empiricism. *Φυσική* was to include both logic and psychology. The limits of these sciences expressed the distinction latent in Locke's "new way of ideas", between 'ideas' in the conventional sense of 'objects' to the reason, or imagination, or memory, and 'ideas' in Locke's original sense of 'means' of consciousness. The Lockeian "ideas" were conceived as being the means by which each faculty of consciousness arrived at the consciousness of its objects. The reason, like every other faculty, owed its apprehension of 'ideas' in the conventional sense, to 'ideas' in the Lockeian sense. Locke's philosophy was to concern itself exclusively with the means of consciousness, and not with the principles of any objective sphere of consciousness, such as the principles of logic. When Leibniz[1]) took objection to Locke's inclusion of the formal, as well as the material disciplines, in *Φυσική*, he was representing the rational prejudice against the new conception of philosophy. Leibniz wished to remove the formal disciplines from the sphere of "natural philosophy", in order to make them the foundation of philosophy proper. Parallel to the Real Hypostasis operates the Rational Hypostasis. It is surprising that the writings of Locke, Berkeley and Hume should have done so little to dispel a prejudice, still general, that there is one objective sphere of human consciousness which contains the answer, in the shape of truths, to all the problems which can confront the

1) See Leibniz, Nouveaux Essais, Livre IV, Ch. 2: "De la Division des Sciences".

human intelligence; and one faculty, namely, the reason, which, being properly and purely used, can supply a Universum of knowledge, in the shape of an explanation of all Being, and all modes of Being.

No body of knowledge which is to be ultimate, entire, and a priori in the absolute sense, can be concerned with objects, not even when those objects are the ideas of reason. Leaving on one side the conception of reason itself, which involves many difficulties, it may truly be said, that all the a priori knowledge which we possess is the result of abstraction, and that philosophy, like every other science, can only arrive at its final principles within the body of an abstract and formal discipline. But abstraction is not to be identified with reason. Abstraction is not an intuitive faculty, but a certain method which can be practised in any field of observation. The quality of the a priori which it procures is not the product of the abstraction itself, but depends upon the nature of the field in which the abstraction is used. Radical abstraction involves two separate operations. Under the first operation the field of observation is purified from the concomitant foreign elements which accompany the general observation. The natural scientist 'abstracts' his material by excluding the subjective and inter-subjective elements of perception, to concentrate upon what is 'real' in the perceived object. The moralist, on the other hand, abtsracts his material by purifying his observations of human behaviour from all their 'real' conditions. The aesthete must purify his data from what is not aesthetic, the logician his from whatever is not logical. But the philosopher must purify his data from everything objective, whether this be real, or moral, or aesthetic, or logical. He must concentrate upon what is subjective, upon the means of, instead of upon any termination of, consciousness. Upon this operation of abstraction depends the validity of the observations to be made. The second operation of abstraction is a process of Variation, by which the observer passes from the realm of that which he does actually observe to the realm of that which he might observe, to the realm of the possible and the a priori. It is with the second of the operations of abstraction that the reason is often falsely indentified. Theorists have been ready to describe their activities as 'reasoning', without considering what it is that they have actually done, when they have 'generalized', and passed from a statement of what objects have been, to a statement of what objects might be, from a statement of what they have perceived, reasoned, appreciated, to what they might perceive, reason, appreciate. It is slighting reason to regard it as an illuminating

process which can be turned on to any field of investigation to order its data, and elucidate its principles. For reason is itself a special faculty by which we apprehend truths, just as we apprehend realities by the special faculty of perception, beauties by the special faculty of aesthetic appreciation etc. The confusion of reason with a purely formal and perfectly general process, which we can practice upon every one of the special objects of consciousness, has led to a false notion of the superiority of the logical principles and laws proper to the objective realm of truths, over the laws and principles of other objective realms. Under this fallacy many forms of 'Idealism' have taken the field. The Rational Fallacy is balanced by the Empirical Fallacy which has attempted to dominate the principles of all the objective spheres by the principles of the one objective sphere of reality, and to subordinate the use of each of our faculties, to the one faculty of perception. As the Rational Hypostasis is evolved from a sense of the 'general' quality of reasoning, so the Empirical Hypostasis is evolved from a sense of the 'original' character of perception. But, in their final stages, each of the two fallacies is guilty of a double hypostasis. Not only do they seek to impose the abstract principles of one objective realm on to the abstract principles of another objective realm, but they even seek to convert the principles of their own objective realm into principles governing the operations of the subjective faculties themselves. This is to confuse one objective realm with another in the terms of their a priori, on the one hand, and, on the other, to confuse the principles regulating the objects of a faculty with the principles regulating the faculty itself.

In addition to rational and empirical hypostases, attempts have been made by would-be universalists to extend moral, aesthetic and religious principles over the whole of objectivity, and to offer an explanation of all Being in laws taken from a Being of one kind.

§ 9. Hume's excess of zeal against the Continental Rationalists. First distinction of the elements of the Impression. Hume's view of Abstract Ideas.

Hume freed Locke's later attitude from the rationalistic bias, from which it ought, upon Locke's own programme and division of the sciences, to have remained free. "Bare, speculative truth, — was Locke's definition of *φυσική* — and whatsoever can afford the mind of man any such, falls under this branch, whether it be God Himself, angels, spirits, bodies, or any of their affections, as number and

figure etc." There is no room for doubt. Locke placed logic within the compass of natural philosophy. At this point in the development of his thought, Locke was drawing a distinction between the definitive formal disciplines which had their place in *φυσική*, and the ultimate descriptive task which he alloted to philosophy proper or *Σημειωτική*, between the function of 'definition', so often mistaken for a subjective region of philosophy, and that true subjective 'description' of the processes of consciousness, which can reveal the ultimate a priori. In this distinction Hume saw the embryo of a philosophical system. His first anxiety was to dispel the influence of the Continental Rationalists. 'Tis usual with mathematicians, he writes, scornfully, to pretend, that those ideas, which are their objects, are of so refin'd and spiritual a nature, that they fall not under the conception of the fancy, but must be comprehended by a pure and intellectual view, of which the superiour faculties of the soul are alone capable[1]). And he ends by concluding grudgingly that certain ideas of quantity are the only ideas which permit of furnishing any such exact relations to one another, as reason claims to discover. One of the doctrines in the Treatise, which has been accustomed to receive most notice, is Hume's denial of the abstractness of the so-called 'abstract' ideas; as Hume put it, that all general ideas are nothing but particular ones, annexed to a certain term, which gives them a more extensive signification, and makes them recal upon occasion other individuals which are similar to them[2]). It must needs be granted that there is much here which is highly unsatisfactory. His assertion that with the exception of arithmetic, and a small part of algebra, there is no science which can supply us with "certain knowledge", is most unhappy, and by denying the abstractness of ideas, Hume had left himself no logical right to concede certainty even to these two disciplines. Moreover it was the empirical fallacy which supplied him with his dearest argument. He borrows his first statement of it from "Mons: Malezieu", "'Tis evident, that . . . . . existence in itself belongs only to unity"[3]). He adds his own: — An idea is a weaker impression; and as a strong impression must necessarily have a determinate quantity and quality, the case must be the same with its copy or represen-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 375. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 325. 3) See Gr. & Gr. I, p. 393.

tative . . . . 'tis a principle generally receiv'd in philosophy, that everything in nature is individual, and that 'tis utterly absurd to suppose a triangle really existent, which has no precise proportion of sides and angles. (Hume has Locke's 'abstract' triangle in mind.) If this, therefore, be absurd *in fact and reality*, it must also be absurd *in idea*; since nothing of which we can form a clear and distinct idea is absurd and impossible. ..... Abstract ideas are ... in themselves individual, however they may become general in their representation[1]). This argument depends upon the real hypostasis. If it were a fact that "everything in nature is individual", — and the saying is obscure — an 'idea' is not a part of "nature", and cannot be made to bear the characteristics of reality. All that need be said concerning the derivation of the "idea" from the "impression", in its connection with the present argument, is that the latter term lacks definition. The "impression" needs to be distinguished from the objects of which it is the impression. It does not follow, that, because the object of an impression is "particular", the impression of the object is also "particular". Moreover, if we talk of "real" impressions, which have "a determinate quantity and quality", and mean by those, no objects of perception, but the perception itself, we are referring either to a physical or psycho-physical 'experience', which must be carefully distinguished from a subjective 'experience' of consciousness. A. observes B. perceiving a table. A. may refer to B's perception of the table, when he observes it, as a reality with a determinate quantity and quality, for what A. means by B's perception is an objective fact. But no one can suppose for a moment that it is from an "impression" in this sense, i. e. B's perception as it is observed by A., that an idea, 'table in general', can be abstracted. B's 'perception', as it is observed by A., is nothing 'like' a table, and cannot be described by A. in terms of 'table'. The 'perception' from which the abstract idea 'table in general' can be abstracted, is not a 'real' experience, but A's own perception-of, or consciousness-of, the table. This consciousness may be a perception of a particular table, but it is not itself 'particular' in the same sense. For it is 'subjective', and cannot be known, experienced, or observed, by any one except the subject himself. If it 'exists', at all, it exists within the subject. It cannot be real, for one of the marks by which we recognize reality is its being

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 327—28.

perceptible by more than one person in its own particularity. But B's perception can only be experienced by more than one person by being deprived of all its particularity, i. e. by being generalized, by being taken as the 'perception of a table in general'. This general 'consciousness', or 'experience', can be described by any subject in reflexion, but it is plain that it is not to this subjective experience that we refer, when we talk of an abstract idea of a table, of a triangle etc. Hume was right to insist that no real object can explain the idea which is abstracted from it. For if the real object is particular, it cannot explain something which is general. Hume has in mind Locke, whose 'abstract' triangle, neither scalene nor isosceles, nor with any "precise proportion of sides and angles", is supposed to be both particular and general.

Purging it of its empirical allusion, we can find in Hume's Abstract ideas are in themselves individual, however they may become general in their representation, the valid suggestion, that we should look for the origin of abstract ideas in our actual abstraction of them. If we can never 'perceive' anything abstract, and so cannot assert that anything abstract 'really exists', we can, perhaps, create abstract ideas for ourselves by a certain process of the 'imagination'. Hume's "however they may become general in their representation" makes the reader curious to know how that could happen, and suggests to him that Hume may have had some notion as to how it actually does happen. And indeed Hume had. Having denied the 'existence' of abstract ideas, he offers a very tolerable description of how they are abstracted. When we have found a resemblance, Hume writes, among several objects, that often occur to us, we apply the same name to all of them, whatever differences we may observe in the degrees of their quantity and quality, and whatever other differences may appear among them. After we have acquired a custom of this kind, the hearing of that name revives the idea of one of these objects, and makes the imagination conceive it with all its particular circumstances and proportions. But as the same word is suppos'd to have been frequently applied to other individuals, that are different in many respects from the idea, which is immediately present to the mind; the word not being able to revive the idea of all these individuals, but only touches the soul, if I may be allow'd so to speak,

and revives that custom, which we have acquir'd by surveying them. They are not really and in fact present to the mind, but only in power; nor do we draw them all out distinctly in the imagination, but keep ourselves in a readiness to survey any of them, as we may be prompted by a present design or necessity. The word raises up an individual idea, along with a certain custom; and that custom produces any other individual one, for which we may have occasion. ... For this is one of the most extraordinary circumstances in the present affair, that after the mind has produc'd an individual idea, upon which we reason, the attendant custom, reviv'd by the general or abstract term, readily suggests any other individual, if by chance we form any reasoning, that agrees not with it. Thus shou'd we mention the word triangle, and form the idea of a particular equilateral one to correspond to it, and shou'd we afterwards assert, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to each other, the other individuals of a scalenum and isosceles, which we overlook'd at first, immediately crowd in upon us, and make us perceive the falsehood of this proposition, tho' it be true with relation to that idea, which we had form'd .... Before those habits have become entirely perfect, perhaps the mind may not be content with forming the idea of only one individual, but may run over several, in order to make itself comprehend its own meaning, and the compass of that collection, which it intends to express by the general term. That we may fix the meaning of the word, figure, we may revolve in our mind the ideas of circles, squares, parellellograms, triangles of different sizes and proportions, and may not rest on one image or idea. However this may be, 'tis certain that we form the idea of individuals, whenever we use any general term; that we seldom or never can exhaust these individuals; and that those which remain, are only represented by means of that habit, by which we recal them, whenever any present occasion requires it. This then is the nature of our abstract ideas and general terms; and 'tis after this manner we account for the foregoing

paradox, that some ideas are particular in their nature, but general in their representation. A particular idea becomes general by being annex'd to a general term; that is, to a term, which from a customary conjunction has a relation to many other particular ideas, and readily recals them in the imagination[1]). This is a not uninteresting description of abstraction. We are said to be able to vary our individual ideas, to repeat their identity through all manner of subsidiary differences, to recognize the same kind in a plurality, and to construct collections of kind. Hume neglects to give the grounds on which we recognize the characteristics of kind, and to explain why, although we are "seldom or never" able to "exhaust" the "individuals", we are yet able to know the general necessities and conditions binding them.

The quotation supplies the first practical instance in the Treatise, of Hume's theory that the ultimate 'explanation' of our consciousness of objects lies, not in the objects, but in the processes of consciousness itself. We can only be conscious of objects the consciousness of which we have constructed for ourselves. Abstract ideas give Hume an opportunity of practising that 'subjective description', which he is going to use to such good effect in the matter of external perception, and may serve to show something of the light, which can be thrown by 'description' on to a department of knowledge where 'definition' has been accustomed to reign.

Chapter IV.

The Ascent of the "Imagination".

§ 10. First appearance of Hume's notion of the "Imagination". A parallel between Causality and the Abstract Ideas.

The ingenious critic will recognize, when Hume wrote of its being "usual with mathematicians to pretend that those ideas which are their objects, are of so refin'd and spiritual a nature, that they fall not under the conception of the fancy", that it was in Hume's mind to say, and in his work to prove, that there were no objects in any sphere of which a man could be conscious, which did not "fall under the conception of the fancy". Hume's account of abstraction is interesting, not only as an instance of the means by which he sought

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 328—30.

to escape from the rational ontology, but also because it leads him to his first substantial formulation of that supreme Humeian faculty, the "Imagination".

The "imagination" is to grow into an active, 'genetic' faculty, responsible for our consciousness of objects in general, and of each set of objects in the domain to which they belong. We have to note the functions which Hume assigns to it in the sphere of ideas, and his rather ambiguous conclusion from these that almost the whole of consciousness 'originates', in a certain sense, from our faculty of external perception. "Almost the whole"! because Hume is content with an inconsequence. In one department of knowledge he becomes an ontologist. He allows the ideas of "quantitive relation" to be responsible for their own objectivity. He does this in the face of such a general description of the abstraction process as would seem to have made the exception impossible. The inconsequence is not the somewhat superficial contradiction of which Hume is guilty, of denying on the one hand that ideas were abstract, and asserting on the other that arithmetic and algebra could provide the enquiring mind with certain knowledge. For this inconsequence is so apparent, and concerns an opposition between fine terms, the absolute, namely, and the relative, whose antithesis becomes so quickly dialectical, that, if it cannot be set right, it can, without much harm, be disregarded. With a more radical inconsequence Hume conceives the possibility of our 'invention' of all the objects of our consciousness, of accounting in terms of consciousness for our consciousness of every variety of object, and every variety of objective sphere, except the ideas of quantitive relation. These are allowed to include their own explanation within their objectivity. The first inconsequence, which consists in an unjustified, or, at any rate, unexplained, differentiation between quantitative and qualitative abstractions, may be considered as formal rather than material. But the second inconsequence involves nothing less than a limitation of the subjective realm. By his exception in favour of the quantitative "ideas of relation", Hume seems to wish to imply that these will not submit to any explanation in terms of the subjective processes, and that these alone of all objects, and all ideas, are not 'originated' into consciousness by consciousness itself. The inconsequence is radical within Hume's philosophical system. But it is not without a parallel. There is one other fundamental inconsequence, which is exactly parallel to this one, and holds a similar position in the second of the two chief spheres of objectivity. It concerns causality. In the sphere of perception Hume again makes

one exception among the objects of our consciousness. While recognizing that our perception of each several object in the world, and of each element of that world, requires an explanation in the subjective terms of consciousness, Hume makes an exception in favour of causality. Causality, he tries to say, 'exists' really, in and for itself, and, itself, composes the real principle of conscious experience. But in this matter Hume cannot be taken to have succeeded. He is inconsequent here even within his inconsequence. Escaping from the real ontology, he offers a tolerable subjective account of causality, and explains how this causality is no less a "fiction" than the objective entities it is supposed to rule. There can be no doubt which side of this latter contradiction is nearest to Hume's heart. The grounds for taking Hume as an empiricist are as negligible as those for taking him as a rationalist. Both rest upon one contradiction, which, somehow, in each case, Hume, the courageous, lacked courage to resolve. Seriously to regard Hume as an ontologist in either sphere, to stress the admission to which he can be forced, to exclude the quantitative ideas, or real causality, from a subjective origin in our consciousness, from an origin in the "fancy", in the "association", testifies to a misunderstanding of Hume's work. Hume is to be blamed for not having extended his subjective account of "philosophical relation" to cover the quantitative, as well as the qualitative, ideas. He is to be blamed for having attempted to make causality the working principle of association, when he had already sought to account for our perception of causality by its means. The reader must recognize the exceptional nature of these hypostases, and return to his interpretation of Hume as the subjectivist.

§ 11. Hume's subordination of the Quantitative to the Qualitative Ideas implies that he does not consider them to be examples of analytical relation.

Although Hume allows that the quantitative ideas may be productive of "certain" knowledge, he subordinates them to the qualitative ideas, which produce "probable" knowledge only. Knowledge, for Hume, is chiefly a question of 'complexity'. He comes to regard all conscious apprehension beyond mere "sensation" as the recognition of a complex objectivity. This complexity is a compound of "ideas". The mind constructs complex ideas from simple ideas, by relating simple ideas to one another. "Knowledge", accordingly, consists in learning the "relations" of ideas. The prelude to knowledge

is a division of the kinds of relation which ideas can bear to one another. This division is made by classifying the "qualities' native to ideas, which render them susceptible to "association". As all simple ideas — Hume writes — may be separated by the imagination, and may be united again in what form it pleases, nothing would be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it in some measure uniform with itself in all times and places. Were ideas entirely loose and unconnected, chance alone wou'd join them; and 'tis impossible the same simple ideas should fall regularly into complex ones (as they commonly do), without some bond of union among them, *some associating quality*, by which one idea naturally introduces another[1]). This use of the word "quality" suggests that Hume considers that the justification of all possible complexity, or relation, of ideas, is to be found in the sphere of perception. The qualities, Hume writes, from which this association arises, and by which the mind is after this manner convey'd from one idea to another, are three, viz. Resemblance, Contiguity in time and place, and Cause and Effect[2]). These three "qualities of association" are meant to include all possible relation of ideas, and to contain the explanation of all complexity. Hume is faithful to this classification. Writing very much later (in Part III), he says, The principles of union among ideas, I have reduced to three general ones, and have asserted that the idea or impression of any object naturally introduces the idea of any other object, that is resembling, contiguous to, or connected with it[3]). He is just as consequent in his use of the word "quality". The word Relation, he writes, is commonly used in two senses considerably different from each other. Either for that *quality*, by which two ideas are connected together in the imagination, and the one naturally introduces the other . . . or, for that particular circumstance, in which, even upon the arbitrary union of two ideas in the fancy, we may think proper to compare them[4]).

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 319.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 319.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 393.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 322.

The quantitative ideas, those complex ideas which owe their relation to their common "quality" of quantity, appear as one of the seven kinds of qualities, which Hume enumerates: actually, (refer Part I. Sect. 5), as No. 4. All those objects, which admit of *quantity*, or *number*, may be compar'd in that particular; which is another very fertile source of relation[1]).

This inclusion of the 'rational principle' within the three general associative principles of the imagination, the description of the essence of the 'rational idea' as a quality, and its derivation from a source apparently common to every branch of 'knowledge', whether "certain" or "probable" only, testifies not only to Hume's general disinclination to regard Logic as the foundation of Philosophy, but also to a special view concerning the nature of logical truth. It is Hume's conviction that even those ideas whose relations provide us with certain knowledge are not examples of 'analytic' relation. This fact has often been disregarded by historians who have wished to endorse Kant's criticism of Hume. Ideas may be said to be related 'analytically' to one another, when the related ideas stand to one another as predicate to subject, the predicate being contained in the subject, and bound to the subject in such a way, that the conception of its not being contained in the subject, involves a violation of the principle of contradiction. But to this class of "relations of ideas", it is obvious that the Humeian relations do not belong. Resemblance, Contrareity, Degree and Quantity (see Part I. Sect. 5), may be considered as predicates of a subject, but they could by no means be said to inhere in their subjects in such a way, that their non-inherence would involve an contradiction. A relation of ideas can be a priori without being 'analytical', when their relation is such that it is given in the presentation of the two related ideas: such that when A. and B. are given, their relation, r, is necessarily given. It is to this class of a priori relation that the four Humeian relations belong[2]).

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 323.

2) This question of 'analytic relation' has been concisely treated by A. Reinach, 'Kants Auffassung des Humeischen Problems', Gesammelte Schriften, Halle a. S., 1921.

§ 12. Brief statement of Hume's contradictory attitudes towards Causality.

It is obvious that no statement of Hume's attitude towards causality can be complete, unless it follow, instead of preceding, Hume's final analysis of perception. No attempt can be made here to offer anything like an adequate account of Hume's treatment of causality, and this essay will not make it its business, even at its conclusion, to supply any such account. Hume's interpretation of causality has so often been considered as the pivot of his work, that no author need offer an apology for turning his attention to other matters in the Treatise. In so doing he is likely to escape many dangers of misinterpretation. For Hume himself did badly by causality, denying it, and making use of it, alternately. Whoever wishes, can find authority for regarding Hume as an empirical psychologist, or even as a species of physiologist. There is scarcely a moment, even in his purest introspective descriptions of the subjective phases of perception, when Hume does not lay himself open to empirical misinterpretation by some unwarrantable allusion to an efficient cause. Hume was inconsequent enough to expound a most uncompromising solipsism on the one hand, and to declare, on the other, that the individual is an objective "bundle" of causally related "experiences". Nothing could be more surprising than such a change as this implies from the extreme of absolute subjectivism to absolute objectivism. The same antipathy separates Hume's description of "association" in terms of principles depending upon consciousness for their operation, from his frequent references to association as a "gentle force", a "kind of attraction", etc. This use of the causal principle to designate the nature of association is a misnomer, as Hume's own descriptions of it show. The field of this description is consciousness. The operation of the imagination is governed by laws of consciousness. Into consciousness the "gentle force" enters without right. It is introduced through hypostasis to save the reality of the Person, which Hume throught he had impugned. The attempt weakens the consistency both of the objective and subjective world.

But Hume is not to be restrained. In addition to many attempts to impose the law of real causality on to the activities of consciousness, he made one notable attempt to impose the causal law on to the relations of objects in an objective but non-real sphere. In his remarkable theory of contradiction Hume proposes to rest the prin-

ciple of contradiction on a sensible uneasiness[1]). This theory has received from T. H. Green as much notices as it deserves.

Besides particular arguments, general passages are not wanting in the Treatise, where Hume's attitude towards philosophy has been vitiated by his notion of cause. . . . . as no real objects are contrary, he writes in a discursion upon the "production of thought" — I have inferred . . . . that to consider the matter a priori, anything may produce anything, and that we shall never discover a reason, why any object may or may not be the cause of any other, however great, or however little the resemblance may be betwixt them. This evidently destroys the precedent reasoning concerning the cause of thought or perception (a reasoning that "motion" could not be the "cause" of "thought"). For though there appear no manner of connexion betwixt motion or thought, the case is the same with all other causes and effects. Place one body of a pound weight upon one end of a lever, and another body of the same weight on another end; you will never find in these bodies any principle of motion dependent on their distances from the center, more than of thought and perception. If you pretend therefore, to prove, a priori that such a position of bodies can never cause thought, because turn it which way you will, 'tis nothing but a position of bodies, you must by the same course of reasoning conclude, that it can never produce motion, since there is no more apparent connexion in the one case than in the other . . . . you reason too hastily, when from the mere consideration of the ideas, you conclude that 'tis impossible motion can ever produce thought, or a different position of parts give rise to a different passion or reflexion. Nay, 'tis not only possible we may have such an experience, but 'tis certain we have it; since every one may perceive, that the different dispositions of his body, change his thoughts and sentiments[2]). Winding up the matter, he writes . . . . it follows, that for ought we can determine by the mere ideas, anything may be the cause of anything . . . . and as the constant conjunction

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 494. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 529—30.

of objects constitutes the very essence of cause and effect, matter and motion may often be regarded as the causes of thought, as far as we have any notion of that relation[1]). But even this passage is not unqualified. Beginning and ending on the theme, Anything may be the cause of anything, Hume plays ingeniously enough with the subjective and objective antithesis, and in the confusion is guilty of the suggestion of invalidating cause where it is valid, namely in the real world, and validating it, where it is invalid, namely in the psychical world. If any one tries to pin him to either of these assertions, he can wriggle out of it by quoting from the other. He has left himself room to claim that he is referring only to a psycho-physical parallellism, a contingent relation, a "constant conjunction" between the disposition of our body and the disposition of our thoughts and sentiments. If, in the face of Hume's assertion that we have no further notion of the causal "relation" than permits us to see in the "constant conjunction of objects" "the very essence of cause and effect", the empiricist finds in the statement that "matter and motion may be regarded as the causes of thought, as far as we have any notion of that relation", enough to support his empirical interpretation of Hume's treatment of consciousness, he is beyond the reach of argument.

Hume's employment of the causal principle is too frequent and too varied to permit of more than partial vindication. Those who will view the Treatise as a handbook to empirical psychology can find what they want in Hume's hypostases. For the rest, if Hume be claimed to have accounted for association in causal terms, we are also justified in claiming that Hume wished to explain our consciousness of causality in the terms of associative consciousness. Nor need we to lack for quotations: — 'Tis easy to observe, that in tracing this relation, the inference we draw from cause to effect, is not deriv'd merely from a survey of these particular objects, and from such a penetration into their essences as may discover the dependence of the one upon the other .... such an inference would amount to knowledge .... the necessary connexion depends on the inference instead of the inference's depending on the necessary connexion[2]).

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 532.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 388—89.

§ 13. Hume's ultimate division of the powers of Consciousness into Reason, Sensation and Imagination, is latent in his treatment of Causality.

One general faculty of consciousness emerges from Hume's treatment of causality to include all the varieties of experience, excepting only that limited faculty of 'reasoning', or 'relation of ideas' in the specific sense, which Hume allowed to be independent. Causality made its appearance as the third of the "philosophical", or "uncertain", "relations". In a moment of supreme significance it was given out as the ability of the mind to go beyond what is immediately present to the senses. The only connexion or relation of objects, Hume wrote, which can lead us beyond immediate impressions of our memory and senses, is that of cause and effect[1]). This "relation of objects" has just been described as an "inference". 'Tis .... by Experience only, that we can infer the existence of one object from that of another. The nature of experience is this. We remember to have had frequent instances of the existence of one species of objects; and also remember, that the individuals of another species of objects have always attended them, and have existed in a regular order of contiguity and succession with regard to them. .... Without any farther ceremony we call the one *cause* and the other effect[2]). The several faculties of consciousness are taken by Hume to originate in the different kinds of "relation of ideas" which create the only possible complexities in apprehended objects. (Refer sect 13.) All kinds of reasoning, he says, and means by "reasoning" no more here than the apprehension of objects in relation, consist in nothing but a *comparison*, and a discovery of those relations, either constant or inconstant, which two or more objects bear to each other. This comparison we may make, either when both the objects are present to the senses, or when neither of them is present, or when only one[3]). The last sentence needs only to be modified in one particular to provide a key to the whole Treatise, in the shape of a division of faculties which Hume carries into all his investigations. This modification is that Hume establishes it eventually, that

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 390.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 388.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 376.

a plurality of objects cannot be present to the senses at the same time. This modification made, the first state of consciousness ceases to be a "comparison", and becomes, to give it its final name, a Sensation. The other two states of apprehension remain as processes. The "comparison" when "neither" of the objects is present to the senses, i. e. when no object is present to the senses, is Reasoning. The "comparison" when "one" object is present to the senses is Imagination, or, as Hume calls it here, the causal "inference", or, in another place, the "natural relation"[1]). In this we presuppose Hume's analysis of the external perception. It will be established there, that whenever a plurality of objects seem to be present to the senses, i. e. in every case of external perception, the "natural relation" has already been at work, and imposed a complexity of imaginative ficta upon a simple sensation. In every perception both the sensation and the imagination have been at work. In the Humeian perception there is both an object "present to the senses", and a conclusion beyond the impressions of our senses . . . . founded only on the connexion of cause and effect[2]), which is the work of the imagination. Re-interpreting Hume's "when both the objects are present to the senses", to include the 'causal' "comparison", we get the name of that general faculty, which covers all the kinds of consciousness which the reason does not touch. When both the objects are present to the senses along with the relation, Hume writes, we call this perception rather than reasoning[3]) . . . . But it happens that the actual word "perception" is required, and afterwards used, by Hume in a different, and important, sense. It is to be recommended, accordingly, that Hume's present use of it, to denote all that sphere of consciousness which falls not under the 'reason', be forgotten. It is undesirable in any case, that the various faculties on 'this side' of abstraction, perception, memory, and the sensuous imagination, which share the common ground of 'direct' foundation in sense-experience, should be so little distinguished from one another as to be grouped, without further differentiation, under one title. Hume would have avoided many difficulties concerning 'perception' proper, had he been more particular about the varieties of 'sense-experience'.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 394 . . . tho' causation be a philosophical relation, as implying contiguity, succession, & constant conjunction, yet 'tis only so far as it is a *natural relation* .... etc.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 376.

3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 376.

Apart from its present name, this homogeneity of the whole body of experience, (excepting only the limited 'reason', and its division into that part of it, which is presented to consciousness 'ready-made' by sensation, and that part of it which is constructed by the imagination, and only afterwards 'presented',) lasts through the Treatise, and is of paramount importance. It is to be regretted that in the use of the term sensation, Hume makes no distinction between the faculty and its object, between the act of sensation and that which is felt in the sensation. When he comes to that element which is not presented ready-made to consciousness, but which the individual makes for himself, he does make use of the distinction. For in contrast to the creative process of imagination he sets the "fiction", which is that which the imagination creates. The meaning assigned to these words in conventional language must be forgotten. Humeian Sensation stands both for "what is immediately present to the senses", and for the apprehension of what is immediately present to the senses. Humeian Imagination stands for the power of consciousness, to work upon "what is immediately present to the senses", to create Fictions. Humeian fictions are the objects which the subject has constructed in consciousness for himself. When Hume calls the objects which we ordinarily perceive, "fictions", he is confusing the reflective with the ordinary objective attitude of mind. Fictions are objects in perception, and are not identical with the objects of perception, which are the realities in the real world. The introduction of this distinction can put Hume's scepticism to rights. Fictions are objects in consciousness. In the sphere of perception they are 'objects as they are perceived'. They are 'objects', then, only in a specific sense. We do not 'perceive' them at all, but become conscious of them for the first time, when we withdraw our attention from the objects of our ordinary consciousness, and use it in the introspective mode. The Humeian "imagination" is the 'means' of consciousness. To the 'activity' of this faculty in consciousness, and to the "fictions" which it constructs, the subject owes his consciousness of the objects which he perceives. In a corrected version of the Humeian doctrine, fictions are the equivalent of 'Phenomena'. Phenomena are objects as we perceive, remember, invent, abstract, intuite, prove, them etc. etc. and phenomena are the 'means' of our consciousness of all objects. Phenomena are the residua of the Cartesian dubito, through which the 'intention' of consciousness passes to objects themselves.

Chapter V.

The History of the "Impression" and the "Idea".

§ 14. A caution concerning Hume's use of the Impression-Idea antithesis.

In the light of the outline of Hume's general theory of the apprehensive consciousness, given in the preceding section, Hume's preliminary treatment of "impressions" and "ideas" requires some explanation.

Hume starts his reader on an apparently fundamental antithesis between "impressions" and "ideas", where, claiming to emancipate himself from Locke's unitary conception of consciousness, (I make use of these terms, *impression* and *idea*, in a sense different from what is usual .... Perhaps I rather restore the word, idea, to its original sense, from which Mr. Locke had perverted it, in making it stand for all our perceptions[1]), he seems to be returning to the ordinary, and presumably sound, distinction between perception on the one hand, and all the 'idealizing' faculties on the other. Hume's opening sentences may seem radical, yet they do not seem to desert the common distinctions of thought. They seem meant rather to establish these common distinctions upon root principles.

The reader has to open the book near its end to find the material from which the foregoing section has been taken. There he finds no comfortable, conventional division of faculties and objects, no impressions and ideas, but a conception of consciousness as a whole, where every variety of faculty seems merged under one supreme faculty, and every variety of objective is apparently obedient to one set of laws. He reads, in Part IV. Sect. VI, for example, about the uniting principles in the ideal world[2]), and discovers, presently, that this "ideal world" and its principles, actually includes what is usually called the 'real world'. In Part IV. Sect. IV, he reads about the Imagination, being the ultimate judge of all systems of philosophy[3]). In Part IV. Sect. VII, he finds it asserted that the memory, senses, and understanding, are .... all of them founded on the Imagination[4]). Returning thence, again, the reader must feel inclined to mistrust the conventional beginning of the opening sections, and suppose that

1) Footnote to Gr. & Gr. I, p. 312.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 541.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 510.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 545.

Hume's claim to forsake Locke's attitude is verbal rather than actual. Hume, indeed, is not less, but more, aware than Locke of the singleness of the genus which comprehends all conscious experiences. And if, with the impression-idea antithesis, he seems to divide the ground of human knowledge, it is in order that, by separating the kinds of our experiences, he may bring them together again, presently, the more effectually. In tracing the steps by which Hume converts his separation to consolidation, the express purpose for which it seemed that the impression-idea antithesis was set up, the derivation, namely, of our ideas from our impressions, altogether fails. As soon as the question of a possible derivation of ideas from impressions is raised, it is subordinated to another problem, that of the origin of the complexity of our objective consciousness. And in the course of solving this second problem, Hume decides that the derivation of ideas from impressions is impossible. Having asserted, as the first step towards this, that our ideas and impressions are all resembling, he sees that he has already gone too far. . . . . I find I have been carried away too far by the first appearance, and that I must make use of the distinction of perceptions into *simple* and *complex*, to limit this general decision, that all our ideas and impressions are resembling[1]). It is in this problem of the complexity of our experiences, qualified by Hume's failure to distinguish between impressions and ideas in anything more essential than the quality of their subjective vivacity, that the faculty of the imagination comes to play its first part in the Humeian doctrine of consciousness. A genuine understanding of the Treatise depends upon a critical reading of the early sections. For the true factors involved in Hume's interpretation of consciousness do not appear, except in disguise, until the later portions of the work. The three-fold division of consciousness is stated for the first time in Part. IV. Sect. II. Occupied, there, with the enquiry concerning the causes which induce us to believe in the existence of body[2]), Hume proposes to consider, whether it be the *senses*, *reason*, or the *imagination*, that produces the opinion of a continu'd or of a distinct existence[3]). The senses, reason, and imagination, are Hume's ultimate and inclusive division of the powers of consciousness. They must be learned as an introduction to the Treatise, and kept in mind

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 312—313.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 478.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 479.

throughout its length. For only under these three headings do Hume's various contributions to epistemology marshall themselves into conformity. It is to be regretted that Hume never offers anything like a definition or summary of the scope of these faculties. The fault is due largely to the fact that Hume started with no clear notion of their scope. He only came to determine it gradually as he set their several claims in opposition to one another. But his separation of the simple and complex objectivities provides a useful means of differentiation. Simplicity becomes the only existential reality. Simplicity is sensation itself, the actuality of sensation, and of that which is felt in sensation. Complexity is split up into two. One of its departments, that namely of quantity, is handed over to the reason. Objects which are complex by being the product of quantitative relation are ideas intuited by the reason. The rest of complexity is assigned to the imagination. All objects which are complex through any non-quantitative relation owe their complexity to the imagination. The "demonstrative" inference is accountable for all rational complexity, and the "natural" inference for all non-rational complexity.

The confines of the reason are quickly drawn. The limits of the imagination and the senses are drawn much more slowly. They are elaborated bit by bit, with frequent modifications, in the course of Hume's analysis of external perception. But the faculty of imagination appears already as a vague power, and not easily discernible, in Hume's first antithesis of impressions and ideas. The faculty of the senses is introduced when this antithesis has been finally dissolved. Only one fragment of what was the impression, sensation namely, then remains unabsorbed by the idea.

§ 15. Hume's Impression-Idea antithesis.

All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call *Impressions* and *Ideas*[1]). Hume proceeds quickly to a most confusing and varying use of each of these. He gives no 'definition' of either of them, but only such a general 'description' of each, as leaves their differences comparative, and permits of their being interchanged and reconciled in case of need. The difference betwixt these, he writes, consists in the degrees of force and liveliness, with which they strike upon the mind, and make their way into our thoughts and consciousness[2]).

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311.

Already there is much ambiguity. It is not clear whether Hume is talking of objects or of experiences. His use of the word "perception", and his phrase "striking upon the mind", would seem to refer to objects; but the difference "in the degrees of force and liveliness" which is given as their distinguishing mark, seems only capable of qualifying experiences. This latter opinion seems to be confirmed by other passages. I believe it will not be very necessary, Hume says, to employ many words in explaining this distinction. Every one of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking[1]). "Feeling" and "thinking" are certainly experiences, not objects. As far as the impressions are concerned, there would seem to be no further possibility of doubt, for we read this: — Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence we may name *impressions*; and under this name comprehend *all our sensations, passions and emotions*, as they make their first appearance in the soul[2]). We must be meant to understand that those particular "perceptions" called "impressions" are the "sensations, passions and emotions" themselves. These "sensations, passions and emotions" need not necessarily be regarded as 'real', they may be regarded as 'psychical', but it would seem quite certain that they cannot be anything except experiences. Moreover when Hume repeats this division of perceptions in Part III. Sect. VII, he seems to have experiences in mind. All the perceptions of the mind, he writes, are of two kinds, viz. impressions and ideas, which differ from each other *only in their different degrees of force and vivacity*[3]). This passage is afterward modified, in an Appendix to Volume III of the original edition of 1740. But the modification seems to confirm this opinion, and to extend it beyond impressions to ideas. When I say, Hume writes, that two ideas of the same object can only be different *in their different degrees of force and vivacity*, I believe there are other differences among ideas, which cannot properly be apprehended under these terms. Had I said that two ideas of the same object can only be different by their different *feeling*, I should have been nearer the truth[4]).

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 396.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 560.

As against this view, however, we find an explicit denial of the interpretation of the impression as experience. Hume writes, By the term of impression I would not be understood to express the *manner* in which our lively perceptions are produced in the soul, — but before the reader has time to conclude that, after all, Hume must be speaking of the objects of experience, and not of the experiences themselves, Hume adds this difficult sentence, — but merely the perceptions themselves, for which there is no particular name either in the English or any other language that I know of[1]). But had not Locke provided a precedent for the use of the word "idea"? Hume would seem to establish it, that impressions are neither experiences of objects, nor objects of experiences, for there is certainly no shortage of names for these in any language. What can he signify by the "perceptions themselves"? The question cannot be answered yet. Suffice it that the reader carry it in his mind, to ask again, and answer presently. This much can be deduced from Hume's vacillation. He was fully aware of the dual element in the concrete experience, of the object of the experience, and of the experience of the object, and willingly or unwillingly he embodied something of this differentiation in each of his two terms. He never used them, even on their first appearance, on a common level. Taking them together it is vain trying to decide what part of conscious experience Hume meant by them, for he meant a different part by each. But ostensibly they are to signify the same. They are introduced as of one kind, differing from one another only in degree. The difference . . . . consists in the degrees of force and liveliness with which they strike upon the mind[2]). But in effect Hume distinguishes in kind between them from the first. He uses the term impression to refer to an experience-element, and the idea to refer to an object-element. He helps himself with the conventional meaning of the words. When these words are used in the common sense, it is obvious that "impression" carries with it a reference to an object — I am impressed by an object; while "idea" is itself meant for an object, for 'what' I think, or dream, or fancy etc. The reader is as apt as Hume himself to be influenced by this ordinary meaning of the words, and to attribute to them each a different sense. He is puzzled by Hume's introducing them as if they were two varieties of objectifying experience. The fact is that, knowing

1) Gr. & Gr. I. Footnote to p. 312.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311.

that two elements are necessary to conscious experience, and that each of them is strictly complementary to the other, Hume makes them falsely independent and introduces them artificially, as if they were two discrete varieties of conscious experience, in order that he may show that each one taken separately must include the other. The impression and the idea are introduced, both of them, as "perceptions". But before long the impression and the idea have been shown to be the two elements in one perception. As the Treatise proceeds, the impression assumes to itself more and more of the meaning and function of experience of object, and the idea more and more of the meaning and property of object of experience. It is thus Hume finds the means to ascend into the subjective realm, and also to descend, by a variety of false deductions, into scepticism. And in this progress also the conventional meaning of the words helps Hume to his conclusions. "Impression" carries something of the significance of the word "sensation", and "idea" something of the significance of the word "fiction".

§ 16. The variety of functions actually attributed to the Impression and the Idea.

The stages are curious by which impressions and ideas pass, from being offered as two varieties of objectifying conscious experience, to being offered as complementary elements in one experience. Although, when they are once fairly included within the unity of perception, the impression absorbs almost all the functions of experience of object, and the idea almost all those of object of experience (the 'almost' represents Hume's failure to separate them clearly, and not any lack of wanting to do so), the allotment of function to each seems, in the early stages of their differentiation, to be driving in an opposite direction. The impression seems to be going to stand for object of experience, and the idea for the experience of object. This, again, is, no doubt, partly due to an everyday use of the word "idea". The word "idea" bears a certain signifiance of 'emptiness'. Compared to a real object, a chair itself, for instance, an idea of a chair seems rather 'empty', as if the idea could be assumed to be identical with my perceptive experience if the real object were removed. Hume is satisfied to let this natural, though fallacious, notion of the idea, play its part. It is the first sign he gives of the sceptical road he is going to take. By ideas, he says, I mean the faint images of these (i. e. impressions),

in thinking and reasoning[1]). Again, We find by experience, he writes, that when any impression has been present with the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea, and this it may do after two different ways: either when in its new appearance it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate betwixt an impression and an idea; or when it entirely loses that vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty, by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner, is called the *Memory*, and the other the *Imagination*[2]). And again, talking of impressions and ideas, he says, The one seem to be in a manner the reflexion of the other .... When I shut my eyes and think of my chamber, the ideas I form are exact representations of the impressions I felt; nor is there any circumstance of the one, which is not to be found in the other[3]). No circumstance, the reader is inclined to conclude, except that in the one case there is assumed to be an object beyond the experience, and in the other no object. The conclusion is false. The remembered object is just as much an object beyond the imagination, as the real object is beyond the experience of perception. The latter is a physical object, the former are ideal objects, but no more capable than the physical object of being absorbed into the experience itself. If Hume had recognized the objectivity of ideal objects, he could hardly have become a sceptic. For by changing one kind of existence for another, by calling the real world an hallucination, he did not escape the difficulty of accounting for our belief in the world's independent existence, but only added to his task the extra difficulty of explaining the nature of our consciousness of 'reality' in terms of our consciousness of the phantastical. Meanwhile, by playing with the division of elements in conscious experience, and assigning the object-element for a moment to the impression, and the experience-element to the idea, he serves to make the transition to the exact opposite a little easier, as a pendulum swings back more easily in reaction. But, even at the beginning, indications are not wanting of the way affairs will march. Much can be anticipated in the following! Everyone of himself will readily perceive the difference betwixt feeling and thinking. The common degrees of these are easily distinguished; tho' it is not impossible but

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 311. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 317. 3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 312.

in particular instances they may very nearly approach to each other. Thus in sleep, in a fever, in madness, or in any very violent emotions of soul, our ideas may approach to our impressions: as on the other hand, it sometimes happens, that our impressions are so faint and low, that we cannot distinguish them from our ideas[1]). As soon as Hume turns his attention to the impression, the balance of meaning swings the opposite way. The impression becomes the experience itself, the idea the object of the experience. This does not happen all at once, but demands most of the space of the Treatise for its completion. Analysing the impression, Hume finds that the object of the experience does not coincide with the object as it is experienced. Seeking to interpret this on what he conceives to be the ultimate and irrefutable basis of temporal reality, he concludes that the object as it is experienced is identical with the temporal experience, i. e. sensation. This he calls the impression. He concludes that the object of the experience is not a temporal reality at all, but a "fiction", which he calls the idea. In the process of this argument, the Humeian idea has become what Locke liked to call an "object", and the Humeian impression, although it ends as an actual sensation, has passed through a stage of being very like what Locke called an "idea". This it did while it was an act of the imagination. Passages can be found where the development of impressions and ideas are at midway. Both the object-element and the experience-element of the conscious experience are there combined, and possessed in half measure both by the impression and the idea. In Part III. Sect. VI, where Hume is expounding the causal principle as an "inference", the concrete object of the experience seems to be compounded of impression and idea, to be made of a mixture of both, half-real and half-fictitious. Witness such a sentence as the following: — Had ideas no more union in the fancy than objects seem to have to the understanding, we cou'd never ... repose belief in any matter of fact[2]). Part. III. Sects. VII and VIII present a similar view of the process in transit. In these Hume actually describes belief as an idea conjoined to an impression. The idea of an object, — he says — is an essential part of the belief of it ....[3]). But the stages are seldom clearly marked.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 311—12.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 393.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 394.

§ 17. Serving to connect Part I. Sect. III in the Treatise, with Part I. Sect. IV. What resulted from Hume's proposal to derive the Idea from the Impression.

Locke's tabula rasa theory, and Hume's attempt to derive our "ideas" from our "impressions", are both versions of the old Aristotelian contention, Principium nostrae cogitationis est a sensu. Although Hume did not share Locke's interest in the problem of innate ideas, he sympathised with Locke's conception of the priority of the sense perception above the other faculties of consciousness. Having divided the "perceptions" of the human mind into impressions and ideas, Hume notices a resemblance between them. The first circumstance that strikes my eye, he writes, is the great resemblance betwixt our impressions and ideas in every other particular, except their degree of force and vivacity. The one seem to be in a manner the reflexion of the other; so that all the perceptions of the mind are double, and appear both as impressions and ideas. . . . . Ideas and impressions appear always to correspond to each other[1]). But this universal resemblance is quickly modified. Upon a more accurate survey I find, Hume writes, I have been carried away too far by the first appearance, and that I must make use of the distinction of perceptions into *simple* and *complex*, to limit this general decision, that all our impressions and ideas are resembling[2]). The resemblance between complex impressions and ideas is partial. But in the case of the "simple" perceptions, he finds that the resemblance is both exact and universal. After the most accurate examination, he writes, of which I am capable, I venture to affirm, that the rule here holds without any exception, and that every simple idea has a simple impression, which resembles it, and every simple impression a correspondent idea[3]). That I may know on which side this dependence lies, Hume continues, I consider the order of their *first appearance*; and find by constant experience, that the simple impressions always take the precedence of their correspondent ideas, but never appear in the contrary order[4]) . . . . all our simple ideas in their first appe-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 312.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 313.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 313.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 314.

arance, he concludes, are deriv'd from simple impressions, which are correspondent to them, and which they exactly represent[1]). It remains for Hume to account for those of the complex ideas which have no correspondence with impressions. We find by experience, he writes, that when any impression has been present with the mind, it again makes its appearance there as an idea; and this it may do after two different ways: either when in its new appearance it retains a considerable degree of its first vivacity, and is somewhat intermediate betwixt an impression and an idea; or when it entirely loses that vivacity, and is a perfect idea. The faculty by which we repeat our impressions in the first manner, is called the *Memory*, and the other the *Imagination*[2]). In addition to the difference in degree of vivacity, Hume finds another difference between the memory and the imagination. . . . . the memory preserves the original form, in which its objects were presented[3]), but the imagination is at liberty to transpose and change its ideas[4]). .... the imagination, he writes, is not restrained to the same order and form with the original impressions, while the memory is in a manner ty'd down in that respect, without any power of variation[5]). 'Tis evident, he writes, that the memory preserves the original form, in which its objects were presented, and that where-ever we depart from it in recollecting anything, it proceeds from some defect or imperfection in that faculty[6]). But, concerning the imagination, the fables we meet with in poems and romances puts this entirely out of the question. Nature there is totally confounded, and nothing mentioned but wing'd horses, fiery dragons, and monstrous giants. Nor will this liberty of the fancy appear strange, when we consider, that all our ideas are copy'd from our impressions, and that there are not any two impressions which are perfectly inseparable. Not to mention, that this is an evident consequence of the division of ideas into simple and complex. Where-ever the imagination perceives a difference among ideas, it can

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 314. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 317. 3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 318.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 318. 5) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 318. 6) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 318.

easily produce a separation[1]). But this is the last that is heard of the special problem of the complex ideas, for, in the next moment, it is merged in a larger problem, which lasts to the end of the first Book of the Treatise. Hume says no word concerning his transition. Between the sentence last quoted and the one that follows it there is apparently no break. As all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, Hume writes at the beginning of Sect. IV., and may be united in what form it pleases, nothing wou'd be more unaccountable than the operations of that faculty, were it not guided by some universal principles, which render it in some measure, uniform with itself in all times and places[2]). In reality, in the empty space between the two sections, the problem has been changed. Hume is still concerned with complexity, but no longer with the complexity of ideas. Hume is concerned now with the complexity of "impressions". His lack of definition is deliberate. Now, for the first time, his confusion of the impression with the idea is explicable. In Section III impressions and ideas carry the sense which they were given at their introduction. ("Those perceptions, which enter with most force and violence, we may name impressions." "By ideas I mean the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning.") Each of them is supposed to stand for a concrete, objectifying experience of a different kind. But in Section IV, impressions and ideas have already been bound into homogeneity. They are complementary elements within the unity of one experience. When Hume says "as all simple ideas may be separated by the imagination, and may be united in what form it pleases", he means by ideas no independent entities, but "perceptions", i. e. that part of the perceived object which the imagination contributes in a perception experience, which is the whole of it that is not "sensation".

If Hume had wished his present terminology to be identical with his former, he would have given the title of Section IV, as "Of connexion or association in impressions". But being arrived at the conviction that an impression in the original sense contains an idea, or in later language, that a perception is composed of an impression and ideas, he calls his section, Of the Connexion or Association of Ideas[3]), and means "Of the connexion or association of ideas on to an impression in concrete perception". His problem is still a problem of accounting for complexity, but the com-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 318—19. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 319. 3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 319.

plexity not of ideas in the old sense, but of impressions. Impressions, in the old sense, stood for perceptions. Hume's present problem is to account for the complexity of our perceptions. It occupies him to the end of the Book. The problem arose for him because of his notion that sensation was essentially 'simple'. The imagination with its power of "association of ideas", is introduced to add complexity to the original simplicity of sensation, and convert our experience into perception proper.

Hume's transition from the problem of accounting for the complexity of ideas, to that of accounting for the complexity of impressions, was facilitated by the interdependency he had already tried to establish between impressions and ideas. But it was necessitated by the partial answer which he had given to the former problem. "Where-ever the mind perceives a difference among ideas, — he had said, in order to account for those complex ideas which were not copied from impressions, — it can easily produce a separation." It is to be presumed that the mind can only perceive a difference in ideas which are complex. It follows that those complex ideas, which are not copied from impressions, are created out of the complexity of ideas which are copied from impressions. But those complex ideas which are copies of impressions have been defined as differing 'properly' in no respect but degree of vivacity from the impressions from which they have been copied. Complex ideas which are copies of impressions are the ideas of memory. "'Tis evident", Hume said, "that the memory preserves the original form, in which its objects were presented, and that where-ever we depart from it in recollecting any thing, it preceeds from some defect or imperfection in that faculty." Since, then, the faculty of memory is liable to "imperfection", and since, even at its best, its presentations are less "vivacious" than the impressions which it copies, it were best that the complex impressions themselves, and not the complex ideas, were studied, as providing the compound material from which, by analysis and re-construction, the imagination creates its unprecedented, new, complex ideas. This is what Hume conceives. Instead of watching how the imagination dissects memories, to create from the components of these, new additions, "wing-d horses, fiery dragons, and monstrous giants", he will watch how the imagination dissects impressions. But as soon as he begins to consider complex impressions, he finds that the imagination can only dissect their complexity because it has already constructed it. Before Hume can explain the operations of the imagination in creating "fables", he

must explain its operations in creating "realities". The latter task absorbs him. Without any mention of the fact, Hume passes from a proposal to watch the imagination at work in the construction of ideas, to an actual contemplation of it at work in the construction of impressions. Or, using his newer terminology, having divided the concrete perception, into a. 'impressions' of the senses, and b. 'ideas' of the imagination, he will watch the "connexion", or "association" of the 'ideas' in their relation to the 'impressions'. Gradually the 'ideas of the imagination' will acquire, and the 'impressions of the senses' will relinquish, the greater part of the concrete perception.

As it assumes its new role, the imagination changes its character. It is no longer the poetic fancy. It becomes the genetic faculty in all consciousness. . . . I must distinguish in the imagination, Hume writes near the conclusion of his first Book, betwixt the principles which are permanent, irresistible and universal . . . . and the principles, which are changeable, weak and irregular . . . . The former are the foundation of all our thoughts and actions, so that upon their removal human nature must immediately perish and go to ruin[1]).

Chapter VI.

An Estimate of the 'Scepticism' to which Hume is led by his misconception of the Subject-Object relation.

§ 18. General estimate of Hume's conception of the Subject-Object relation.

Hume's discovery, that the perceived object does not coincide with the object-as-it-is-perceived, was a version of the Cartesian dubito, and provided him with his chief means of ascent into the subjective sphere. But unfortunately he tried to carry the perceived object with him into this sphere, and when it would not come with him, he conceived himself obliged to disown it. For the sake of the object-as-it-is-perceived he denied the perceived object altogether. For all we know, he argued, there is no object beyond the object-as-it-is-perceived.

Hume passed from the true premise, that the object of our perception is not the object as we perceive it, to the false conclusion, that the object-as-it-is-perceived is the object of our perception. He

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 510—11.

passed from the true premise, that the object of our perception is not our perception of the object, to the false conclusion, that our perception of the object is the object of our perception.

Hume did not drive his distinction far enough. He tried to make two distinctions do the work of four. He wanted to make the distinction between object-element and experience-element synonymous with the wider distinction between objective and subjective. Here he fell, as many have fallen since, into hypostasis. The distinction between object and subject originates on the subjective side, for it is made in consciousness. But it is an 'ultimate' distinction. It brings about a division of 'highest genus' [1]), so that, once created, the terms of the division must be taken to stand in an absolute antipathy. Each term, therefore, is capable of supporting within itself a subject-object distinction of a subsidiary kind. Just as the subjective must include an objective — for there can be no such thing as a 'subjective' which does not imply some reference to an 'object' — so the objective must be capable of including or 'expressing' a subjective — for every 'objective' inplies a 'subject' which made it.

To illustrate this in the matter of the perception. The perception can be regarded 1. objectively. But within that highest genus, the perception can be divided again, into (a), an experience, and (b), an object. A. observing B. perceive X. must distinguish between (a) B's perception of X., which is B's real psychological experience, and (b) the X. perceived by B., which is some reality in the world. But both the 'perception' and the 'object' are 'objective'.

The perception can also be regarded 2. subjectively. But within this highest genus, the perception can be divided again into (a), an experience, and (b), an object. A. observing his own perception under an introspection, must distinguish between (a) his perception of the object, Noesis (*νόησις*), and (b), the object as he perceives it, Noema (*νόημα*) [2]).

But Hume did not pursue his distinctions far enough. Crossing over from one genus to another, from objective to subjective, and from subjective to objective, without due precaution, he was at equal loss in both. Considering that the objective could properly contain no subjective species within its own genus, and the subjective genus no objective species, he sought, desperately, to solve the matter with

1) The expression is used in the Phenomenological Sense. See Husserl, Ideen. Bk. I, Part I, Ch. I, § 12: Gattung und Art.

2) Noesis & Noema. The terms are in common use by Phenomenologists. See Husserl, Ideen. Bk. I, Part III, Ch. 3, § 87 et seq.

a paradox, and asserted — it was his final position — that there was no object in the objective sphere, but only a subject, and in the subjective sphere, no subject, but only an object. The first half of the assertion amounted to the total denial of the existence of the real world, the second half to the "bundle of experiences" account of the individual.

In the end, in spite of all his efforts, Hume fails to account for the relation of the subject to his objective worlds. By proposing to derive the objectivity of the various spheres of the individual's consciousness from the one sphere of perception, he places all his fortunes on his analysis of perception. Here he comes near to his goal. He finds a 'Phenomenon', but because he does not know its intentional character, he disowns it, and converts it into an "image" in a representative theory. Then do what he will he cannot bridge the gap between consciousness and its objective. If the subject can be shown to create its own consciousness of reality, why should it be supposed that that reality exists? But if reality does not exist, how can a subject be conscious of it? Hume cannot frame an answer. Yet he had almost put the means of answering it in his own mouth. When he incorporated the impression and the idea within the unity of one perception experience, he was on the way to succeed. For there within the subjective sphere, he seemed to have enclosed the subject-object relation. He could have made the impression, Noesis, and the idea, Noema. Instead of this, he made the idea, an "image", and the impression, a real sensation, and his last chance was gone.

Towards the end of Part IV of Book I, it is noticeable that Hume ceases to talk exclusively of "perceptions". He reverts, particularly in his Appendices, to his original terminology. He goes back to his old impression-idea antithesis. He employs the word "perception", but he uses it now to mean "impression". He takes refuge once more in the fable of the temporal origin of our "ideas". All ideas — he says — are borrow'd from preceding perceptions. It is his confession that he has failed.

§ 19. Hume's 'Scepticism', harmless when it is absolute, false when it is partial. Hume's Comparative Subjectivism, cocerning A. the Objective World of Reality.

N. Kemp Smith has devoted two articles in "Mind"[1]) to vindicating Hume from any superficial charge of scepticism. His defence

1) Refer N. K. Smith: The Naturalism of Hume. Mind. 1905.

is based upon the deference Hume shows to his "natural beliefs". There is a great difference — Hume says — betwixt such opinions as we form after a calm and profound reflection, and such as we embrace by a kind of instinct or natural impulse, on account of their suitableness and conformity to the mind. If these opinions become contrary, 'tis not difficult to foresee which of them will have the advantage. As long as our attention is bent upon the subject, the philosophical and studied principle may prevail; but the moment we relax our thoughts, Nature will display herself, and draw us back to our former opinion. Nay she has sometimes such an influence, that she can stop our progress, even in the midst of our most profound reflections, and keep us from running on with all the consequences of any philosophical opinion .... I take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world [1]). Whether, or not, this division of the human powers against themselves is to be called 'sceptical', it is certainly characteristic of Hume. When we trace up the human understanding to its first principles, he writes, we find it to lead us into such sentiments, as seem to turn into ridicule all our past pains and industry and to discourage us from future enquiries[2]). I have already shewn, he says elsewhere, that the understanding when it acts alone, and according to its most general principles, generally subverts itself, and leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition, either in philosophy or common life[3]). He speaks with assurance of a sceptical doubt, which, both with respect to reason and the senses, is a malady, which can never be radically cured, but must return upon us every moment, however we may chace it away and sometimes may seem entirely free of it. 'Tis impossible, he adds, upon any system to defend either our understanding or our senses; and we but expose them farther when we endeavour to justify them in that manner ....

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 505.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 546.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 547.

Carelesness and inattention alone can afford us any remedy[1]). How then shall we adjust these principles together? he writes, Which of them shall we prefer? Or in case we prefer neither of them, but successively assent to both, as is usual among philosophers, with what confidence can we afterwards usurp that glorious title, when we thus knowingly embrace a manifest contradiction[2])? And later, The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason, has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or more likely than another[3]).

This opposing of the general faculties of man is a strange practice for a philosopher. But it can be converted into a position which aids, rather than hinders, Hume in his Subjectivism. It can be taken, (or could be taken, for Hume hardly takes it so,) as an expression of the differences which separate the Introspective from the Natural attitude. Hume's compromise, — Where reason is lively, and mixes itself with some propensity, it ought to be assented to[4]), until, nature herself . . . . cures me of this philosophical melancholy and delirium, either by relaxing this bent of mind, or by some avocation and lively impressions of my senses, which obliterate all these chimeras[5]) — needs but to be purged of the real hypostasis, to be turned, from representing two antagonistic, to representing two complementary, states of mind. The conception of causality will then no longer relate the two, and the worlds, proper to the different phases no longer vie with one another, but be reconciled within one complete unity.

Unfortunately, this naïf and original notion of the professions of the philosopher in meditation, and the philosopher turned practical in daily life, does not exhaust Hume's 'sceptical' theories. There is a set of arguments scattered about the Treatise, where Hume falls into 'comparative subjectivism', and expounds a vulgar and unworthy scepticism. These arguments originate in a misinterpretation of the distinction between the Primary and Secondary qualities in the

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 505.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 546.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 548.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 550.
5) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 548.

objective world of reality, and consist A. in a sceptical theory concerning the external world, and B. — the worst portion of the Treatise — in a sceptical theory concerning consciousness.

A. Hume's Scepticism concerning reality. We may observe, Hume writes, that there are three different kinds of impressions convey'd by the senses. The first are those of the figure, bulk, motion and solidity of bodies. The second, those of colours, tastes, smells, sounds, heat and cold. The third are the pains and pleasures, that arise from the application of objects to our bodies, as by the cutting of our flesh with steel and such like ....[1]). Of these he says, Sounds, and tastes and smells, tho' commonly regarded by the mind as continu'd independent qualities, appear not to have any existence in extension, and cannot consequently appear to the senses as situated externally to the body[2]). It is of this 'illusion' that the fig is offered, afterwards, as an example. ... whatever confus'd notions we may form of an union in place betwixt an extended body, as a fig, and its particular taste, 'tis certain that upon reflection we must observe in this union something altogether unintelligible and contradictory. For shou'd we ask ourselves one question, viz. if the taste which we conceive to be contain'd in the circumference of the body, is in every part of it or in one only, we must quickly find ourselves at a loss, and perceive the impossibility of ever giving a satisfactory answer. We cannot reply, that 'tis only in one part: for experience convinces us that every part has the same relish. We can as little reply that it exists in every part: for then we must suppose it figur'd and extended; which is absurd and incomprehensible .... we use in our most familiar way of thinking, that scholastic principle .... of totum in toto et totum in qualibet parte: Which is much the same, as if we shou'd say, that a thing is in a certain place, and yet is not there[3]).

Hume had no right to use the distinction between the primary and secondary qualities to deny an existence to the latter, which he

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 482.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 481.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 521—2.

was prepared to allow to the former; for Berkeley had established their 'equality' in the matter of existence. If an opinion was sceptical concerning the existence of the secondary, it must be sceptical also concerning the existence of the primary. There was nothing new in the form of Hume's argument. It is unsatisfactory. His use of the word "appearance" is ambiguous. "Sounds, and tastes, and smells, he says, appear not to have any existence in extension, and cannot consequently appear to the senses as situated externally to the body". The argument is circular. These qualities appear not, they cannot consequently appear; for appearance can only be appearance to the senses. What Hume applies to "sounds, tastes and smells" he applies also to "colours, sounds, heat and cold". Speaking of the "three different kinds of impressions" above given, Hume writes, Both philosophers and the vulgar suppose the first of those to have a distinct, continu'd existence. The vulgar only regard the second as on the same footing. Both philosophers and the vulgar, again, esteem the third to be merely perceptions ....[1]). The fact is, that Hume is aware of the invalidity of his arguments. Before he has done, he extends his judgment to include the primary with the secondary qualities in his denial .... 'Tis evident, he says, that .... colours, sounds, heat and cold, as far as appears to the senses, exist after the same manner with motion and solidity .... 'Tis also evident, that colours, sounds etc. are originally on the same footing with the pain that arises from steel, and pleasure that proceeds from a fire; and that the difference betwixt them is founded neither on perception, nor reason, but on the imagination[2]). (The word "imagination" is used here in a conventional sense). If colours, sounds, tastes and smells, be merely perceptions, is Hume's conclusion, nothing we can conceive is possest of a real, continu'd, and independent existence, not even motion, extension and solidity, which are the primary qualities chiefly insisted on[3]). If Hume realized that the primary and secondary qualities must be treated upon the same level of existence, he must have had some reason for allowing himself to treat them differently, before he treated them alike.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 482.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 482.
3) Gr. & Gr I, p. 513.

For the present contradiction Hume had two reasons. 1. Under the influence of the real hypostasis, he wished to use the primary qualities for a base on which the association could operate. This theory, which appears here and there in the earlier parts of the Treatise, reaches its final form in a version of the modern doctrine that the sense-data provide the imagination with a "real" foundation on which to construct its fictitious objects. 2. Hume wished to use the reality of the primary qualities to provide an explanation of space, of which he never managed to give any satisfactory account in the terms of the subjective imagination. Hume's treatment of space is in general very weak. Space appears in one part of the Treatise as a reality, in another as an abstract idea. But as neither the one nor the other is it compatible with Hume's final position. Space itself cannot be an abstract idea. Space is a reality. But as a reality it cannot explain our perception of it. Our perception of space, like every other element in the objective world of reality, requires explanation in the terms of subjective genesis. The Humeian imagination was quite capable in itself, of creating a perception of space, but Hume did not give it the opportunity.

When once Hume had extended his denial of reality to the primary as well as the secondary qualities, he could have converted his sceptical attitude into an attitude merely of Cartesian doubt. The real world would be perceived, even by the philosopher, in ordinary, practical life. It would only be excluded, for the sake of the subjective 'world', by the philosopher, at introspection, in his armchair.

§ 20. Hume's Comparative Subjectivism, concerning B. the Subjective world of Consciousness. The strange conclusion brought about by the relation of these two 'Scepticisms'.

When Hume's 'scepticism' had grown to include the whole of the objective world of reality, it might have been translated into a phenomenological idealism. This was prevented by Hume's 'sceptical' attitude towards the subjective sphere. From holding such notions as, at one time, that the primary qualities, at another, that space, explained our perception of them through the means of their own reality, Hume passed to give a similar account of some of the faculties of consciousness itself. This was the worst of Hume's inconsistencies. His method of approach to scepticism in the subjective sphere was similar to that which he had used in the objective sphere.

He begins by arguing from the comparative subjectivity of per-

ception itself. When we press one eye with a finger, he writes, we immediately perceive all the objects to become double, and one half of them to be remov'd from their common and natural position . . . . we clearly perceive, that all our perceptions are dependent on our organs, and the disposition of our nerves and animal spirits. This opinion is confirm'd by the seeming encrease and diminuition of objects, according to their distance; by the apparent alterations in their figure; by the changes in their colour and other qualities from our sickness and distempers; and by an infinite number of other experiments of the same kind; from all which we learn, that our sensible perceptions are not possest of any distinct or independent existence[1]). The argument derives its force from the real hypostasis. If our "perceptions" have not any distinct or independent existence, the real existence with which we qualify what we call their 'objects' must belong to the "perceptions" themselves. The notion delights Hume. In conformity with it he propounds his singular 'doctrine of meaning', that all our 'perceptions' must appear what they are, and be what they appear. There is no impression nor idea of any kind, he writes, of which we have any consciousness or memory, that is not conceiv'd as existent[2]). This being granted, Hume asks us to grant, that, . . . since all actions and sensations of the mind are known to us by consciousness, they must necessarily appear in every particular what they are, and be what they appear. Everything, Hume concludes, that enters the mind, being in reality a perception, 'tis impossible anything shou'd to feeling appear different. This were to suppose, that even where we are most intimately conscious, we might be mistaken[3]). And Hume says the same thing explicitly about the senses. Thus to resume, he writes, what I have said concerning the senses . . . . they cannot operate beyond the extent in which they really operate[4]).

This theory of consciousness is so out of line with Hume's significant work, illuminated by his conception of the imagination with its genetic function, of "ideas" which are objects in consciousness,

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 498.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 370.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 480.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 482.

that we may dismiss it without ceremony. Sufficc it, that if Hume had believed sustainedly what he wrote in this matter, concerning the identification of real, that it to say, spatio-temporal, being, with the ideal being of 'meaning' and consciousness, it would have been unnecessary for him to compose the major portion of his Treatise.

When Hume's comparative subjectivity is regarded as a whole, when his sceptical opinions concerning the objective world of reality, on the one hand, and the subjective world of consciousness, on the other, are brought into relation, they introduce a not uninteresting example of a sort of Berkeleyan Idealism, to which they compelled Hume. They come to be related in this way. The differentiation between the primary and secondary qualities suggests a parallel distinction between reality and appearance. Hume is content to suggest that there are varying degrees of objectivity in the world which we perceive. The explanation of the qualities of bodies, for instance, should not be looked for upon quite the same plane as their configuration, or their motion upon the same plane as their quantity. Hume implies that certain laws, which are generally considered as physical, derive their necessity from nothing physical, but from the perceiving mind. Hume may have found this suggestion in Locke's doctrine of "the conformity of ideas to the reality of things". Its first definite appearance in the Treatise, is in connection with "Substances". From the beginning, Hume treats substances, as if they were 'ideal' in nature. He conceives of them as relations of ideas to which no corresponding relations of real objects, or parts of objects, can be found. Hume thinks of substances as "complexities". He talks scornfully of the "idea" of substance. I wou'd fain ask those philosophers, who found so much of their reasonings on the distinction of substance and accident, and imagine we have clear ideas of each, whether the idea of substance be deriv'd from the impressions of sensation, or of reflection? If it be convey'd to us by our senses, I ask, which of them, and after what manner? If it be perceiv'd by the eyes, it must be a colour; if by the ears, a sound; if by the palate, a taste; and so of the other senses. But I believe none will assert, that substance is either a colour, or a sound, or a taste. The idea of substance must therefore be deriv'd from an impression of reflection, if it really exist. But the impressions of reflection resolve them-

selves into our passions and emotions; none of which can possibly represent a substance. We have therefore no idea of substance, distinct from that of a collection of particular qualities, nor have we any other meaning, when we either talk or reason concerning it. The idea of a substance as well as that of a mode, is nothing but a collection of simple ideas, that are united by the imagination[1]). The suggestion is unmistakeable. Not only cannot such objective characteristics as configuration, or quality, be supposed to exist on the same level as the 'object' figured and qualified, but the whole which expresses any object cannot be supposed to exist on the same level as the simplicity, or simplicities, to which it refers. Hume argues that the relation of the parts to the wholes is no more than a relation of ideas. Analyse any complex objective entity, separate, that is, your complex idea of that entity into the simple ideas which are its components, and if the realities represented by these simple ideas are really 'parts', we shall have an impression of their relation, i. e. of substance, and not only an idea of it.

There are no physical laws but only laws of "ideas". Instead of a physical world of objects related to one another by their characteristics, Hume offers us a psychical world of 'ideas' connected with one another by their qualities. The laws of this world of ideas are all expressed under the supreme law of a new 'causality'. To understand the nature of this 'causality', we must examine, not the characteristics of objects, but the qualities of ideas. Here, ... says Hume, we have three things to explain, viz. First, the original impression. Secondly, the transition to the idea of the connected cause or effect. Thirdly, the nature and qualities of that idea[2]).

§ 21. Hume's Scepticism concluded in a kind of Berkeleyan Idealism.

Our "perceptions" exist; they are the only existences. When we qualify what we take to be external and independent objects with the characteristics and qualities we suppose are usual to them, either we are inventing qualities and characteristics, which cannot be

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 324.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 385.

shown to have any real existence in objects, or we are attributing them to our "perceptions", to which they properly belong. The characteristics and qualities at our disposal are contained within the one characteristic of existence. Our "perceptions" exist. This theory of the existence of our "perceptions" brings with it many difficulties, from which Hume extricates himself with considerable agility.

Whatever the nature of our "perceptions" may be, how they may really be the stuffing, or filling, of Hume's indivisible moments of time, how the one of them may be able to 'cease' before the next one 'come into existence', all this can hardly be supposed to affect our attribution of existence to them. For, after all, the matter involves consciousness. To us these "perceptions" are moments of consciousness. Our "perceptions" possess content. Our "perceptions" are houses, and trees, and 'objects'. Outside consciousness this world, we will grant Hume to have shown it, does not exist. But inside consciousness the world is presented to us as, There! We may name these 'objects' of the 'world' 'perception-objects', and, thinking of 'perception-houses', 'perception-trees' etc., effect a compromise between the real and the subjective which Hume needs. Hume provides us with authority for the notion. Writing, not in the Treatise, but some years later in the "Enquiry", he says, ... philosophy .... teaches us, that nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception .... no man, who reflects, ever doubted that the existences which we consider, when we say, this house, and that tree, are nothing but perceptions in the mind[1]). We must be nice in our notion of "perceptions". As far as their real existence is concerned these perception-houses and perception-trees are the nature of certain indivisible moments of time. They are finite and discrete. We may call them perception-houses, and perception-trees, But it is not to these that we, the conscious subjects of perception, attribute existence. We attribute existence to perception-houses and perception-trees, i. e. 'moments' of our consciousness. And the existence which we attribute to them is not a complete and discrete existence, such as belongs to them as perception-houses and perception-trees, but a continous and continuing existence. We have to remember that, even here, there is no question of an 'independent' existence. I have already observed, Hume says, that there is an intimate connexion

1) Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Sect. XII.

betwixt those two principles of a *continu'd* and of a *distinct* or *independent* existence, and that we no sooner establish the one, than the other follows, as a necessary (and, as Hume implies, absolutely fictitious) consequence[1]).

As matters stand, there are the makings of a contradiction between the 'real' and the 'conscious' moments of our "perceptions". This is the crux of Hume's sceptical situation. He supposes that he has accounted for all the characteristics of the 'objects' of the real world except that of existence. If he cannot now account for their characteristic of existence, his work will have been vain. While granting that discrete existence belongs properly to perception-houses and perception-trees, we must yet be able to believe that our perception-houses and perception-trees are capable of sustaining the continuous existence which we attribute to them.

In order to reconcile this threatening discrepancy, Hume propounds an ingenious kind of Berkeleyian Idealism. Stating the problem, Nothing is more certain .... he writes, than that any contradiction either to the sentiments or to the passions gives a sensible uneasiness, whether it proceeds from without or within; from the opposition of external objects, or from the combat of internal principles. On the contrary, whatever strikes in with the natural propensities .... is sure to give a sensible pleasure. Now there being here an opposition betwixt the notion of the identity of resembling perceptions, and the interruption of their appearance, the mind must be uneasy in that situation, and will naturally seek relief from that uneasiness ... We must, therefore, ... suppose that our perceptions are no longer interrupted, but preserve a continu'd as well as an invariable existence, and are by that means entirely the same. But here the interruptions in the appearance (these "interruptions in the appearance" are the 'signs' of the real numerical difference of the "perceptions", and of their indivisible simplicity and isolation from one another, as they exist, really, in the uni-dimensional world of the separate moments of time), of these perceptions are so long and frequent, that 'tis impossible to overlook them, and as the *appearance* of

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 498.

a perception in the mind and its *existence* seem at first sight entirely the same, it may be doubted, whether we can ever assent to so palpable a contradiction, and suppose a perception to exist without being present to the mind. (He proceeds, now, to the solution of the problem.) In order to clear up this matter, and learn how the interruption in the appearance of a perception implies not necessarily an interruption in its existence, 'twill be proper to touch upon some principles . . . . We may begin with observing, that the difficulty in the present case is not concerning the matter of fact, or whether the mind forms such a conclusion concerning the continu'd existence of its perceptions, but only concerning the manner in which the conclusion is formed, and principles from which it is deriv'd. (Note the essential intimacy between the real and the conscious moment of the "perception".) 'Tis certain, that almost all mankind, and even philosophers themselves, for the greatest part of their lives, take their perceptions to be their only objects, and suppose, that the very being, which is intimately present to the mind, is the real body or material existence. 'Tis also certain that this very perception or object is suppos'd to have a continu'd uninterrupted being, and neither to be annihilated by our absence, nor to be brought into existence by our presence. When we are absent from it, we say it still exists, but that we do not feel, we do not see it[1]). Close upon this follows Hume's famous antithesis of the "philosopher" and the "vulgar man". It is essential that the grounds of this antithesis be recognized. The whole argument is 'sceptical', i. e. it takes place inside a comparative subjectivism. It takes for granted that the reader has allowed that there is no such thing as an absolutely independent 'object', an 'object' absolutely independent of the 'perception'. The 'object', which is supposed "to have a continu'd, uninterrupted being, and neither to be annihilated by our absence nor to be brought into existence by our presence", is a perception-object, a perception-house, perception-tree. It will have to be allowed, that Hume does some injustice to the character of the vulgar man by crediting him with so much subtlety. But the alter-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 494—5.

native of supposing the vulgar man to refer to absolutely independent objects renders the whole argument void. The vulgar man supposes that "Those very sensations which enter by the eye or ear[1])" are the perception-objects. The philosopher supposes that "those very sensations" are not the perception-objects themselves, but only 'images' or 'representations' of these. As this has not been generally recognized by Hume's critics, it may be well, before passing to his attempted solution, to interpolate a passage where Hume has given another description of the same problem. When we have been accustom'd to observe a constancy in certain impressions, he writes, and have found that the perception of the sun or ocean, for instance, returns upon us after an absence . . . . with like parts, and in a like order .... we are not apt to regard these interrupted perceptions as different (which they really are), but, on the contrary, consider them as individually the same, upon account of their resemblance. But as this interruption of their existence is contrary to their perfect identity, and makes us regard the first impression as annihilated, and the second as newly created, we find ourselves somewhat at a loss, and are involv'd in a kind of contradiction. In order to free ourselves from this difficulty, we disguise, as much as possible, the interruption, or rather remove it entirely, by supposing that these interrupted perceptions are connected by a real existence, of which we are insensible[2]). This passage leaves no doubt that the reference of continu'd existence is confined to perception-objects, and does not reach beyond these to any objects supposed existing by themselves. Speaking, then, of a "perception", Hume wrote, "When we are absent from it, we say it still exists, but that we do not feel, we do not see it." Speaking still of a "perception", he resumes: — When we are present, we say we feel, or see it. Here then may arise two questions; First, How can we satisfy ourselves in supposing a perception to be absent from the mind without being annihilated. Secondly, After what manner we conceive an object to become present to the mind, without some new creation of a perception or image; and what we mean by this seeing and feeling,

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 491.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 488.

and perceiving. — As to the first question, we may observe, that what we call a *mind*, is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions, united together by certain relations, and suppos'd, tho' falsely, to be endow'd with a perfect simplicity and identity. Now as every perception is distinguishable from another, and may be consider'd as separately existent, it evidently follows, that there is no absurdity in separating any particular perception from the mind; that is, in breaking off all its relations, with that connected mass of perceptions, which constitute a thinking being. The same reasoning affords us an answer to the second question. If the name of *perception* renders not this separation from a mind absurd and contradictory, the name of *object*, standing for the very same thing, can never render their conjunction imposible. External objects are seen and felt, and become present to the mind; that is, they acquire such a relation to a connected heap of perceptions, as to influence them very considerably in augmenting their number by present reflections and passions, and in storing the memory with ideas. The same continu'd and uninterrupted Being may, therefore, be sometimes present to the mind, and sometimes absent from it, without any real or essential change in the Being itself. An interrupted appearance to the senses implies not necessarily an interruption in the existence. The supposition of the continu'd existence of sensible objects or perceptions involves no contradiction. We may easily indulge our inclination to that supposition. When the exact resemblance of our perceptions makes us ascribe to them an identity, we may remove the seeming interruption by feigning a continu'd being, which may fill those intervals, and preserve a perfect and entire identity to our perceptions[1]).

The above theory of "idealism" expresses the extreme of Hume's scepticism.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 495—6.

Chapter VII.

Hume's Theory of Belief.

§ 22. Hume's general conception of Belief. Rational and Perceptual Belief.

What can it be, Hume was obliged to ask himself, which makes us believe that which we do believe, in the face of the fact, that it cannot be that which we do believe, which makes us believe it? That which we do believe, is, mainly, truths and realities of the physical world. But truths deceive us, for there are no abstract ideas and realities deceive us, for there are no physical realities. It may be said in favour of Hume's sceptical opinions that they drove him into giving a subjective account of belief. His attitude was original. This operation of the mind, he writes, which forms the belief of any matter of fact, seems hitherto to have been one of the greatest mysteries of philosophy; tho' no one has so much as suspected, that there was any difficulty in explaining it[1]). Hume sets himself to explain it. The account falls into two compartments: belief touching reasoning, and belief touching perception. If Hume were taken at his word, he would be supposed to have very little to offer concerning the rational belief, for he says, The answer is easy with regard to propositions, that are prov'd by intuition or demonstration. In that case, the person, who assents, not only conceives the ideas according to the proposition, but is necessarily determin'd to conceive them in that particular manner, either immediately or by the interposition of other ideas. Whatever is absurd is unintelligible....[2]). But Hume strikes the truth concerning all belief of whatever kind, when he says, we "are necessarily determin'd" to conceive our ideas in a particular manner. The word "assent", also, is exactly right. The explanation of all belief is that we first construct our consciousness of objects in a definite mode, and then "assent" to the objects as they appear in that mode. This is the sense of a "necessary determination" to belief. The word "assent" should signify 'assent to expectation'; for belief is not so much a moment of consciousness, as a constant attitude of mind. In the course of any reasoning, any perception, any dreaming, any imagination, we constantly 'expect' and are 'satisfied'. We expect the objects, which we

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 397. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 395.

apprehend, to continue in the same mode of their being, and either to develop themselves in accordance with themselves, or to give place to other objects in the same mode of being. Except in the cases of 'hallucination' or 'illusion' we are 'satisfied'. These exceptions illustrate the rule. For when, in the course of some conscious experience of perception, or reasoning, or appreciation etc., we find ourselves mistaken, our expectation which was disappointed does not cease, but continues on new lines. Expectation awaits the new conviction, and proceeds. Every moment of consciousness is accompanied with a 'protention' and satisfaction. The satisfaction produces a 'retention'[1]) of the memory, which induces a further 'protention'. Belief is an attitude engendered by and sustained with a continuous satisfaction of expectation. It can be explained only in the terms of the genesis of the objects in consciousness. The belief corresponds to the mode of consciousness in which the object is constructed, and is the completion of the processes of its construction.

Ignoring Hume's "The answer is easy", concerning the reasonable belief, he is found to have given a very fair account of it in his description of Abstraction. (Refer back to Section 10 of this Essay.) There he said: — When .... ev'ry individual of any species of objects is found by experience to be constantly united with an individual of another species, the appearance of any new individual of either species *naturally conveys* the thought to its usual attendant. Thus because such a particular idea is commonly annex'd to such a particular word, nothing is requir'd but the hearing of that word to produce the correspondent idea .... In this case it is *not absolutely necessary*, that upon hearing such a particular sound, we shou'd reflect upon any past experience, and consider what idea has been usually connected with the sound. The *imagination of itself* supplies the place of this reflection, and is *so accustomed* to pass from the word to the idea, that it interposes not a moment's delay betwixt the hearing of the one, and the conception of the other[2]). Again he wrote, After we have acquired a *custom* of this kind, the hearing of

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1) 'Protention' and 'Retention': the words are used in the Phenomenological significance. See Husserl, Ideen, Bk. I, Part III, Ch. 2, § 77.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 393—4.

that name revives the idea of one of these objects, and *makes the imagination* conceive it with all its peculiar circumstances and proportions. But as the same word is suppos'd to have been frequently applied to other individuals, that are different in many respects from that idea, which is immediately present to the mind; the word, not being able to revive the idea of all these individuals, but only touches the soul if I may be allow'd so to speak, and revives that *custom*, which we have acquir'd by surveying them. They are not really and in fact present to the mind, but only in power; nor do we draw them all out distinctly in the imagination, but keep ourselves in a readiness to survey any of them, as we may be *prompted* by a present design or *necessity*. The word raises up an individual idea, along with *a certain custom*, and that *custom produces* any other individual one, for which we may have had occasion . . . . For this is one of the most extraordinary circumstances in the present affair, that after the mind has produc'd an individual idea, upon which we reason, *the attendant custom*, revived by the general or abstract term, readily *suggests* any other individual, if by chance we form any reasoning that agrees not with it[1]).

This passage furnishes a tolerable account of our belief in the sphere of rational ideas. Its significance lies in the attempt, which Hume makes there, to explain the manner of our belief according to our construction in consciousness of the ideas and relations of ideas which we believe. Our belief depends upon our reasoning, our reasoning depends upon the relations of ideas; the relations of ideas depend upon the ideas themselves, but the ideas themselves depend, for us, upon our own construction of them in consciousness. The ideas are objective, but we have objectified them, i. e. abstracted them, and intuited them as abstracted. Locke vaguely pointed the way which Hume vigorously followed. If Locke asserted that reasoning was the bringing together and comparing of ideas, "Rational knowledge is the perception of the certain agreement or disagreement of any two ideas, by the intervention of one or more other ideas"[2]),

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 328—9.
2) Locke, The Essay, Bk. IV, Ch. XVII, § 17.

Hume pointed out that this "agreement or disagreement" of ideas depended ultimately upon the minds' own construction of those ideas in consciousness.

After a relatively short examination of belief in reason, Hume passes to a detailed examination of belief in perception. The question, there, assumes a characteristic shape: — The subject of our present enquiry — Hume writes — is concerning the causes, which induce us to believe in the existence of body[1]) . . . and it is presupposed that the "existence of body" cannot be the cause of our belief in it. The word "cause" does not imply a reference to physical causality. We shall be occupied with this "enquiry" during Part II of this Essay. It is Hume's special problem.

It is to be regretted that Hume did not compare the reasonable with the perceptual belief. When he wrote, "The answer is easy . . . ." with regard to the former, he did himself injustice, for he did take some trouble to explain the easy answer. But he did not recognize the extent of the problem. Hume was dealing with a world of "ideas". He wished to regard this world of ideas as divided into two compartments, on the one hand, the ideas of reason, on the other, the ideas of imagination. The former he regarded as out of relation to existence. In the rational sphere a man must believe anything that he can conceive. But the ideas of imagination were only related to a belief, which they did not themselves necessitate. A man need not believe, Hume thought, what he 'imagined'. What we 'imagine', Hume argued, we 'imagine' to be existent, 'and usually believe to be existent'. But this belief in existence is not inseparable from our 'imagination', as the belief in truth is inseparable from our conception. On the contrary, not only can we doubt our 'imaginative' or existential beliefs, but we are obliged to doubt them if we meditate on them. Hume's faculty of imagination included perception, and was, in Hume's more sceptical moments, identified with perception. To 'perceive' was to 'imagine'. Hume had to grant that, when we 'perceived', we believed what we perceived; but a little meditation, he argued, would convince us that we were not 'perceiving' at all, but only 'imagining'; and, while we recognized that we had only been 'imagining', we should no longer be constrained to believe. The Humeian perceptual beliefs are like 'agents', who presume on the carelessness of their masters, the rational minds, and induce them to believe in what they themselves know to be false. When their masters cease

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 478.

from their careless ways, and inspect these facts, they discover that their confidence has been abused. But when they accuse their agents of malpractice, these excuse themselves by urging that they could hardly be expected to have supposed that their masters were believing such and such facts to be so, when they had always known them to be otherwise.

If Hume had accepted the fact of the perceptual belief, as he had accepted the fact of the rational belief, and proceeded to compare the two, he would have found between the 'necessary' belief in reality, (perception), and the necessary belief in truth, (reasoning), a series of compound faculties and beliefs involving something of existence and something of truth. Such are the faculties of aesthetic appreciation, moral sensibility, the free fancy, the memory etc. Hume saw that there was some relation between the perceptual and the conceptual belief. 'Tis an established maxim in metaphysics, he wrote, that what the mind clearly conceives, includes the idea of possible existence, or in other words, that nothing we imagine is absolutely impossible. We can form the idea of a golden mountain, and from thence conclude that such a mountain may actually exist. We can form no idea of a mountain without a valley, and therefore regard it as impossible[1]). But the matter is not exhausted. The different faculties need careful differentiation. For all belief is not a belief in existence — witness the rational beliefs. And all existential belief is not a belief in present existence — witness, memory or belief in past existence; witness, imagination or belief in possible existence; witness, free fancy or belief in imaginable existence, etc. But Hume went wrong, chiefly, in supposing that belief could ever be 'unnecessary', or controvertible by the evidence taken from some different faculty. The value of evidence depends upon its being absolute in its own particular sphere. The perceptual belief cannot be invalidated by the reason, any more than the rational belief can be invalidated by the perception. Each is autonomous in its own realm. It is certain that I am no more free not to believe, when I perceive such and such objects in the external world, than I am not to believe, when I apprehend the truth of 2 plus 2 = 4. Only in the Cartesian and non-sceptical sense, I am free to 'doubt' them both.

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 339.

§ 23. Hume's particular account of the Belief which is general to Consciousness.

Hume, the sceptic, became metaphysical. Reason interfered with perception; but no faculty could be found to interfere with reason. In the face of the evidence of perception, reason denied that there were objects in any real world which possessed an independent and distinct existence. But yet the reason did not kill perception's belief. Still perception and reason remained in contrary activity, each faithful to his own conviction.

If Hume had done no more than provide an explanation of the rational belief, in terms of the construction of the objects of the reason, and an explanation of the perceptual belief, in terms of the construction of the objects of the perception, he would not have been able to explain how these two sets of beliefs, having no common ground, should conflict with one another; or how, if in some way they did come into conflict, either should ever have obtained even a temporary mastery. For not only can the mind not believe two opposite things at once, but having once seen the opposition, it cannot, unless it has some faculty of belief which has its roots outside both bodies of opinion, believe first the one and then the other, as Hume wishes it to do. The man must be able to say, definitely, "I believe . . . .". So Hume offers a general theory of belief which is independent of the two particular kinds of belief, the reasonable and the perceptual.

Every kind of belief must subject its objects to one mode. Hume's supreme belief must apprehend its material as of one kind of being. The mode which Hume considers can relate all the faculties of consciousness to one another, and compose both the subjective and the objective to a nondescript, is the mode of existence.

In his exposition of the supreme belief, Hume lays it down, A. that belief is *not* a belief in content, and B. that belief *is* a certain manner of experiencing objects.

A. Belief is not a belief in content. Hume's negative assertion is the condition of his asserting anything positive about belief. For, since belief is in every case a belief in existence, nothing but an existence can be the foundation of belief. But we cannot know the independent existence of anything objective, so there can be no foundation for a belief in content. Neither content, nor belief in content, can exist. Belief is not a belief in content. To establish this, Hume offers three propositions: — 1. *The idea of an object is an essential*

part of the belief of it but not the whole[1]), in which is implied, that we can have an idea without believing it, but that we cannot believe anything without having an idea of it. Turning this maxim through the medium of causality on to matter of fact, it is re-stated, where belief has become belief in existence. 2. The idea of existence is nothing different from the idea of any object[2]), in which is implied that there is no idea of existence (i. e. of pure or abstract existence, which would have required abstraction from a particular content), and also, that the idea of any object is not changed, as far as its content is concerned, by the belief that the object exists. But now in order to be able to pass to B., or the positive description of belief, Hume lays down his third proposition. 3. When I think of God, when I think of him as existent, and when I believe him to be existent, my idea of him neither encreases nor diminishes[3]), from which not only may be implied, as Hume desires, that belief can only be a subjective manner of experience, but also must be implied, (1), which Hume explicitly denies, that we can conceive of an object without conceiving it, explicitly at any rate, as existent, and (2), the first half of which he allows, that we can conceive of an object as existent without believing that it exists, and accordingly, that conception is separable from conception-as-existent, and conception-as-existent is separable from belief-as-existent.

Hume chooses to ignore these implications, and proceeds to his positive assertion.

B. Belief is a subjective manner of experience. All the perceptions of the mind, he writes, are of two kinds, viz. impressions and ideas, which differ from each other only in their different degrees of force and vivacity . . . . When you wou'd any way vary the idea of a particular object, you can only encrease or diminish its force and vivacity. If you make any other change in it, it represents a different object or impression . . . . So that as belief does nothing but vary the manner, in which we conceive any object, it can only bestow on our ideas an additional force and vivacity. An opinion, therefore, or belief, may be most accurately defin'd, *A lively idea related to or associated with a present impression*[4]).

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 394.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 394.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 395.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 396.

Of this theory, that belief is an idea, Hume makes an entirely sceptical use. He employs it to destroy the specific differences between perception and phantasy. The object of the impression is identified with the impression itself. "Object or impression" Hume says, and the impression is prepared for identification with the idea. He gets rid of the awkward externality of perceived existence. If all belief is an idea, then belief in external existence is an idea; but if the belief in external existence is an idea, then external existence itself is an idea also. The Humeian belief in external existence is an idea (the belief) of an idea (the external existence). The belief may be said to exist, but the external existence can only be said to exist in the belief. Perception can only be distinguished from phantasy, by a comparative "vivacity". It follows that there can be no difference between the objects of perception and the objects of phantasy. All the differences between these two are exhausted in a purely subjective difference of degree in vivacity. There being no such thing as external existence, the objects of perception exist in the same way as the objects of phantasy. Both exist in the existence of their experiences. The "present impression" is the only real existence. The object of the impression is a "lively idea which is related to the present impression", or, more strictly, the idea, of which that lively idea, the belief, is an idea. When Hume passes from asserting "that the idea of an object is an essential part of the belief of it", to assert, 'Tis certain we must have an idea of every matter of fact which we believe[1]), he means, that every matter of fact is an idea which we believe.

All belief whether it be rational or perceptual, is supposed by Hume to be a certain subjective manner of experience, which is, itself, a certain kind of "existence".

When, in Part III. Sect. VIII, "Of the Causes of Belief", Hume describes this manner of experience as a 'disposition' to pass along a chain of ideas — When any impression becomes present to us, it not only transports the mind to such ideas as are related to it, but likewise communicates to them a share of its force and vivacity[2]) — as a 'dynamic' belief, capable, like Locke's "Demonstration", of covering the intermediary ideas, what he says is applicable more widely than might be supposed. The disposition of belief, enlivening "related ideas" under the influence of a perceived Resemblance, a perceived Contiguity, and of

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 402. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 399.

an actual Causality, must be supposed to be operative not only in the examples of "probable reasoning", which Hume gives, the superstitions of the Catholic Church, the fervour of a Holy Man, etc., but also in the perceptive experiences of every day. Hume's I suppose there is an object presented, from which I draw a certain conclusion, and form to myself ideas, which I am said to believe or assent to[1]), is pertinent to perception. Not only when we are engaged in historical argument, or being put in mind of a friend by the sight of his portrait, but also when we are perceiving the house, which is before our eyes, must we be supposed to be 'acting' a transition of belief. We pass in perception from "that which is actually present to the senses" to the concrete object. The change of the objects is so easy, that the mind is scarce sensible of it, but applies itself to the conception of the related idea with all the force and vivacity it acquir'd from the present impressions[2]). The house which we perceive existing, distinctly and independently of us, is an 'invention' of our own, which we both perceive and believe in virtue of our disposition. We have passed from an original sensation along a chain of related ideas. The belief qualified the impression, and now qualifies the idea. 'Tis certain we must have an idea of every matter of fact which we believe. (This must be made relevant to perception). 'Tis certain that this idea (of the concrete object of our perception), arises only from a relation to a present impression (the original sensation, or real impression). 'Tis certain that the belief superadds nothing to the idea, but only changes our manner of conceiving it, and renders it more strong and lively[3]). 'Tis the present impression which is to be consider'd as the true and real cause of the idea and of the belief which attends it[4]).

Hume's account of the genesis of perceived objects in consciousness is falsified by his sceptical denial of the existence of objects outside consciousness. His theory of belief is an attempt to reconcile his scepticism with his subjectivism, and as such, it forms the crown of his Berkeleyian Idealism. It is also an attempt to account for existence itself. Apart from his theory of belief Hume has nothing positive to say about existence. Existence cannot be anything 'objective',

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 402.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 399.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 402.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 402.

because there are no objects which it can qualify. But Hume has nothing to say about existence in the abstract, about existence as an abstract idea. The idea of existence . . . . he says once, is the very same with the idea of what we conceive to be existent[1]). This is even less satisfactory than Hume's account of Space, as an idea, or Time. For he had something to say concerning the abstraction of these. He derived our idea of space from an impression of colour'd points dispos'd in a certain manner[2]), and of time from the succession of our perceptions of every kind, ideas as well as impressions, and impressions of reflection as well as of sensation[3]), of which succession it was implied that we could have an impression. Perhaps at the root of all Hume's misconceptions concerning existence was his separation of external existence from real existence. Discounting his sceptical conclusions, Hume may be said to have conceived, that external existence could be given an origin in the subjective genesis of objects in consciousness, but that existence itself was inexplicable in the terms of consciousness, as consciousness resolved itself ultimately into existence.

But in spite of his misuse of it, Hume was right in his notion that "belief was a manner of experience" common to all the fields of consciousness. Belief is the 'satisfaction', or, as Hume said, the "easiness" accompanying the fulfillment of the expectation, which precedes every 'moment' of consciousness. It is a synthesis of the 'processes' operative in consciousness. The 'processes' vary with the fields in which the objects are constructed, but a synthesis accompanies them all, and constitutes our 'belief' in them. Belief is the consequence of our consciousness, in conformity with itself, as it presents us with all the variety of objects, both real and ideal.

Part II.

Concerning Hume's Particular Problem.

§ 24. The Programme of Part II.

Having made a survey of Hume's general philosophy, and compassed its salient points about, we pass now to a consideration of his

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 370.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 341.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 341.

particular problem — the External Perception —, which as the vantage ground or key, we shall survey on a more detailed plan.

The subject .... of our present enquiry — Hume writes in Part IV. Sect. 2, of the Treatise — is concerning the causes, which induce us to believe in the existence of body[1]). And close upon this, follows his working statement of the matter in hand. We ought to examine apart these two questions .... Why we attribute a *continu'd* existence to objects, even when they are not present to the senses; and why we suppose them to have an existence *distinct* from the mind and perception. Under this last head I comprehend their situation as well as relations, their *external* position as well as the *independence* of their existence, and operation[2]).

Hume's treatment of external perception falls into two compartments. Hume offers 1. a statement and elaboration of Method; and 2. the construction of the Four Part System, quoted in our Introduction.

A. Hume's Methodic. Emergence of the Phenomenon.

Hume's Methodic serves to prepare the stage by bringing first into question, and then into prominence, the Phenomenon, or object-in-consciousness, the debate and settlement of whose Identity in the first two Parts of the "System" marks the climax of Hume's subjective work. .... we shall consider — Hume writes in the language which we have learned to expect — whether it be the *senses*, *reason*, or the *imagination*, that produces the opinion of a continu'd or of a distinct existence. These are the only questions that are intelligible on the present subject. For as to the notion of external existence, when taken for something specifically different from our perceptions, we have already (Part II. Sect. VI) shewn its absurdity[3]). In examining Hume's position that neither the senses nor the reason present us with the objects of our perception, but that these are the 'product' of the imagination, our chief interest must lie in the gradual development of Hume's conception of the object-in-consciousness.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 478.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 477.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 479.

§ 25. Neither the Senses nor the Reason present us with the objects of our Perception. Hume's estimate of Sense-data.

It is not to the senses that we owe our attribution of a continued and distinct existence to objects. Hume's examination of the senses is based on the supposition that they are a passive faculty. Kant, accepting the same premise, afterwards used the word "receptive", and contrasted the sensuous "Rezeptivität", wherein he supposed that the sense-data were passively received, with the "Spontaneität" of the apprehending consciousness. It is probable that Hume adopted the opinion from Locke since whose day it had been very commonly received. It has misled many enquirers into supposing that 'sense-data' supply a 'real' basis to perception. The actual stimulus which the physical body receives is mistaken for a 'feeling', or 'sensation'; and this 'sensation' is supposed to submit to categories from the apprehending mind. But the truth is, that while there are 'sense-data' which can properly be regarded as the foundation of perception, and as the 'original' material upon which the concrete perception is built up, these fall within, and not without, the conscious act of perception. 'Sense-data' are in no sense real. They are neither a part of the object of perception, nor of the objective perception. Sense-data are a part of consciousness itself. They are to be found only within the subjective sphere. Their presence in consciousness presupposes an act of perception, and can, therefore, only be revealed to an introspection. Sense-data can be described as what is 'felt', on the condition that 'feeling' be allowed to consist of consciousness.

Hume starts his examination of the senses with a tautology. To begin with the Senses, he writes, 'tis evident these faculties are incapable of giving rise to the notion of the continu'd existence of their objects, after they no longer appear to the senses. For that is a contradiction in terms, and supposes that the senses continue to operate, even after they have ceas'd all manner of operation[1]). It is, of course, self-evident, that the senses do not present us with objects when these objects are not present to the senses. But the only question relevant to the enquiry, as to how much our senses contribute to our perception of "continu'd existence", is one which Hume does not consider. Do the senses present us with

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 479.

continuing objects, while these objects are present to the senses? This question could not be answered except through the means of an actual and exact examination of what in the subjective consciousness is 'sensuous'. This exact regard we do not find in Hume. The denial of their presentation of "continuous existence" is followed by a denial of their presentation of "distinct or independent or external existence". These faculties . . . . Hume writes — if they have any influence in the present case, must produce the opinion of a *distinct*, not of a continu'd existence[1]) ; — But this also they cannot do. For . . . . all sensations are felt by the mind, such as they really are, and . . . . when we doubt, whether they present themselves as distinct objects, or as mere impressions, the difficulty is not concerning their nature, but concerning their relations and situation. Now if the senses presented our impressions as external to, and independent of, ourselves, Hume argues, both the objects and ourselves must be obvious to our senses, otherwise they cou'd not be compared by these faculties. The difficulty then, is how far we are *ourselves* the objects of our senses[2]).

That our senses offer not their impressions as the images of something *distinct* or *independent*, and *external* is evident, Hume continues, because they convey to us nothing but a single perception, and never give us the least intimation of anything beyond. A single perception can never produce the idea of a double existence, but by some inference either of the reason or imagination. When the mind looks farther than what immediately appears to it, its conclusions can never be put to the account of the senses; and it certainly looks farther, when, from a single perception, it infers a double existence, and supposes the relations of resemblance and causation betwixt them[3]). It is, of course, true that 'external situation in space' cannot be found among sense-data. We can enlarge Hume's view of the limitations of the sense-data by collecting a few quotations from different sources. . . . . my senses — Hume writes — convey to me only the impressions of colour'd points, dispos'd in a certain

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 479.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 479—80.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 479—80.

manner. If the eye is sensible of anything farther, I desire it may be pointed out to me[1]). And he writes again, with Berkeley in his mind, 'Tis commonly allow'd by philosophers, that all bodies, which discover themselves to the eye, appear as if painted on a plain surface, and that their different degrees of remoteness from ourselves are discovered more by reason than by the senses[2]). And again — an argument which we noticed in connection with Hume's comparative subjectivism — Sounds and tastes and smells, though commonly regarded by the mind as continu'd, independent qualities, appear not to have any existence in extension, and consequently do not appear to the senses as situated externally to the body[3]). All this could be corrected in expression, and interpreted to signify the facts of the case. When the various sense-data are separated into the fields which correspond to the 'originating' senses, the bare 'sight-field' is seen to present a two-dimensional field, the "pre-spatial" field, a certain configuration of 'points', in which there is no room for any real object, or for any object in motion, or any real identity of object. The field of touch is found to present a typically modified 'localisation', while the field of hearing, and the field of smell, present nothing even 'pre-spatial'.

But Hume is not sincerely devoted to an examination of the actualities of sense-data. In bringing forward somewhat random statements concerning the limitations of sense-data, he is concerned with his old difficulty of accounting for the transcendence of the spatial world. If there is any such thing as space, Hume argues, then the perceiving subject must be admitted to share it with the objects which he perceives. The perceiving subject has a body in space. Desiring to become intimate with any object, the subject can only utilize the means of space. He can approach the object, he can touch it with his hands, he can examine it beneath a microscope. But however near he come, he can never wholly comprehend it. He will always perceive it as There! in space, as having a back side and a front. He must always look at it from this face or from that, from above or from below, from near or far, in light or shade, in this perspective or in that, by itself or in relation to other objects. This omni-presence of space can be translated, Hume thinks, into a perfect non-existence. For, on the one hand, we are bound to admit that

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 341. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 361. 3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 381.

this same 'space' affects everything which we can know, both subject and object, and, on the other, we confess that we do not find it in our sense-data. Space then may be called a total "fiction". This doctrine unites with Hume's notion of Appearance. The effect of 'space' is to prevent our ever coming into touch with any object. We are limited entirely to appearances. Hume drives his 'scepticism' home. Everything, subjective and objective, is 'spatial'. But 'space' is not found among sense-data. Space, then, is a "fiction". It follows that the subject-object relation is not 'transcendent'[1]). There is no absolute difference between them.

We find ourselves, suddenly, face to face with "perceptions". . . . . since all actions and sensations of the mind are known to us by consciousness — Hume writes — they must necessarily appear in every particular what they are, and be what they appear. Everything that enters the mind, being in *reality* a perception, 'tis impossible anything should to *feeling* appear different[2]). Our "sensations" are the only "realities". We remember Hume's former theory. Here, through the expedient of merely identifying sense-data with real sensations, Hume has no objectivity left beyond our perception. What we perceive we perceive as spatial and external to ourselves. But Hume has shown that nothing external to ourselves is among sense-data. It follows that we do not perceive objects through our senses. Objects are merely perceptions. Perceptions are fictions. Fictions are the work of the constructive imagination. How does the imagination construct the objects of our perception? We have already detracted as much from the value of Hume's subjective work as it must lose, when the sceptical steps are considered, by which he climbed into the subjective sphere. We are not bound here to straighten the tangle of hypostases which Hume employs to liberate the senses from responsibility in the matter of perception. Our interest lies not in the false alternative by which Hume made "perceptions" exclude realities in the external world, but in the fact that, by false means or fair, Hume arrived at a conception of "perceptions". We wish to regard the Humeian "perceptions" as objects-in-consciousness, to whose genesis we are indebted for our perception of realities. We wish to regard the Humeian "perceptions" as pheno-

1) 'Transcendent', the word is used throughout in the phenomenological significance.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 480.

mena which are revealed to introspection. And we wish to regard the Humeian "imagination" as a name for the whole 'activity' of the pure consciousness, whose processes 'within' the Ego construct the ego's perception or apprehension of all kinds of objectivity.

To a consideration of the "imagination" we can quickly pass. For in the text, the reason, whose turn follows that of the senses, is dismissed at once from all efficiency or co-operation in perception. Hume pretends to no more definite conception of reason in this connection than the weighing of our opinions by any philosophical principles[1]). And respecting its uselessness in perception, he submits (1) that the vulgar believe in the distinct and continued existence of objects without making use of any 'reasoning', and (2) that if 'reasoning' is used at all, by "philosophers" for instance, it quickly produces a contrary and sceptical belief .... upon the whole, Hume says, our reason neither does, nor is it possible it ever shou'd, upon any supposition, give us an assurance of the continu'd and distinct existence of body. That opinion, he concludes, must be entirely owing to the *Imagination*, which must now be the subject of our enquiry[2]).

But with the examination of the senses, the externality of the perceived world is left behind .... we may observe, he writes, that when we talk of real existences, we have commonly more in our eye their independency than external situation in place, and think an object has a sufficient reality when its Being is uninterrupted, and independent of the incessant revolutions, which we are conscious of in ourselves[3]). This is the last which is ever heard of that part of the transcendence of the real world which is spatial. To this even the acutest portion of Hume's analysis of the imagination will contribute nothing.

§ 26. The "Imagination" in Perception. Hume fails to distinguish between Sensation and Sense-Data.

The problem, which has now become a question of accounting for the "distinct and continu'd existence" of our "perceptions", is reintroduced in connection with the imagination in rather curious terms. — Since all impressions are internal and perishing

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 483.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 483.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 481—2.

existences, and appear as such, the notion of their distinct and continu'd existence must arise from a concurrence of some of their qualities with the qualities of the imagination, and since this does not extend to all of them, it must arise from certain qualities peculiar to some impressions[1]). We are going to see the imagination rise into activity in the Humeian consciousness, and produce an object of its own. To its own 'object' the imagination will attribute the difficult qualities of existence. As Hume proceeds it becomes evident that the imagination's 'object' is intended for, and must be converted into, the phenomenon. But we need to limit Hume's conceptions.

The first requisite of our perception of continuously existent objects is the perception of them as distinct. But how can any perceived object be distinct from our perception of it? Hume's suggestion, that the solution of the problem lies in a "concurrence" of some of the "qualities" of "impressions" with the "qualities" of the "imagination", depends upon an invalid distinction between reality and fiction. The "impressions" are to be taken as realities, that is, as sensations, which Hume thought could be considered in and for themselves, as having no reference to an objective world. Hume supposes that our sense-impressions are always sensations, which appear as what they are, and are what they appear, moments of feeling, pleasurable or painful, severe or slight, "internal and perishing existences". Whenever we 'perceive' anything, he considers, either in the external or internal perceptions, we suffer these moments of sensation. But between these two kinds of perceptions there is none the less a difference. Hume takes it, that while the internal perceptions appear in consciousness entirely as feelings, and so as internal and perishing, the external perceptions appear in consciousness with the addition of a fiction, which makes them external objects with a continuing, distinct and identical existence. The organ of this fiction is the imagination. The objects, therefore, of the so-called external perception, are not feelings, not even objects of feeling, but imaginative ficta, which we only perceive because we have invented. But at this point, difficulties arise. It being pre-supposed that there can be no perception at all without a modicum or core of reality which is the sensation, how does it come about that sensations can differentiate themselves into two distinct classes of experience, the one class remaining, as Hume

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 383—4.

supposes, unadorned sensation, and the other so stimulating the creative imagination as to obscure itself under a fictitious objective? Hume puts the matter down to a "concurrence of certain of the qualities of the impressions with certain of the qualities of the imagination", and 'twill . . . . be easy, he says, for us to discover the qualities by a comparison of the impressions, to which we attribute a distinct and continued existence, with those which we regard as internal and perishing[1]). It must be suspected, that the task is not so easy as Hume supposes. Actually he begs the question even as he formulates it. He offers to discover the "qualities" which induce us to attribute a distinct and continued existence to certain impressions, by comparing them with those other impressions to which we do not attribute a distinct and continued existence.

But this is not the problem; for on Hume's own grounds we know that it is never to the impressions, i. e. the sensations, that we attribute the distinct and continued existence, but to the fictitious objects which we have been induced to imagine. These fictitious objects are not given us in the "impression", and if they were, we should not be able to 'imagine' them. Hume's problem should have been to discover what "qualities" of certain "impressions" sets the imagination operating to create objects for itself, which it believes to be distinct and continously existent. This he never considers. Hume never distinguishes effectually enough between the impression-element and the imaginative element which are compounded in the concrete experience of perception. Either he forgets that the objects of the external perception are fictitious, and speaks of them as if they were "impressions", or he forgets, that there is any impression-element concerned, and speaks as if the external perception were altogether fiction or imagination.

It is possible, in an analysis of the external perception, to separate the sense-data from the additions of the constructive imagination; but it is quite impossible to carry out this separation under the headings of real and ideal; for the 'object' whose distinct and continuous existence is in question involves no empirical sensation, but is purely the work of the "imagination", and as such, is itself a pure object-in-consciousness. Its sense-data are already within the consciousness. The opposite nature of the real and ideal prevents

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 484.

the terms or elements subsumed under them from being brought together into the unity of one experience. Sense-data do not correspond a wit more closely, under the title of reality, either to the perceived object in the real world, or to the real psycho-physical perceptive experience, than the additions do. So long as reality and ideality are the forms to be enforced upon the external perception, the analysis can go no further than to distinguish naively between the experience as a reality, and the experience as that which is experienced. This leaves the compound nature of the latter still compounded. Nothing can be more certain than that the subjective experience with its object-in-consciousness, or imaginative ficta, does not fall within reality. Hume did recognize at times that the division between real experience and subjective experience could not help him to understand the nature of perception. He saw that his whole business lay with the latter, and that the "qualities" of the one were irrelevant to those of the other. We may observe, he said, that 'tis neither upon account of the involuntariness of certain impressions, as is commonly suppos'd, nor of their superior force and violence, that we attribute to them a reality, and continu'd existence, which we refuse to others, that are voluntary or feeble. For 'tis evident our pains and pleasures, our passions and affections, which we never suppose to have any existence beyond our perception, operate with greater violence, and are equally involuntary, as the impressions of figure and extension, colour and sound, which we suppose to be permanent beings. The heat of a fire, when moderate, is supposed to exist in the fire, but the pain, which it causes upon a near approach, is not taken to have any being except in the perception[1]).

The expression is imperfect, though the meaning is clear. The "impressions" are to be taken as the real experiences, but it is not to them that Hume refers, when he says, "we attribute to them a reality and continu'd existence", but to the objects in, or as Hume would say, out of, the impressions. The qualities of our experiences, taken as real, can have nothing to do with the reality or ideality of the objects in those experiences. The experience, as a fact, must be real in every case, whether the object in the experience be an

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 484.

existent reality, or an idea; and, as Hume says, there is no quality of the factual experience which cannot qualify both a factual experience where the object of the experience is ideal, and a factual experience where the object of the experience is real. But, beyond this distinction again, the object of the experience, whether real or ideal, must be distinguished from the object in the experience, the object-in-consciousness, the phenomenon, which is in every case, and of necessity, ideal.

§ 27. The Three-fold division of Perception. Further Development of Hume's notion of the Fiction as the Object-in-Consciousness.

The fact is that the two-fold division of perception with which we have seemed hitherto, explicitly at least, to content ourselves, is quite inadequate to our present needs. Concrete perception consists of three main factors. In the perception of a tree, for example, there is first, my experience regarded as a factual reality, which begins and ends and is incapable of identical repetition; there is, secondly, the real tree itself, which I say I perceive; and there is, thirdly, the tree as I perceive it, a subjective 'object', having no existence in real space and time, but possessing an identity wihin the immanent sphere.

The philosopher's interest should lie exclusively with the third element. This element must be divided again into (a) Noesis, the experience of the object, and (b) Noema, the object of the experience. But these are divisions within the subjective sphere.

The two factual realities, the real experience and the real tree, are related to one another as being both in the world, and we may conclude, if it be profitable, that they are eventually causally connected to one another.

The ideal consciousness, on the other hand, or the tree as I perceive it, is related to the two realities 'contingently' only, for it is essentially a complete and self-sufficient whole, although it bears within itself the 'evidence', so to speak, of both the others, being always within itself, and ideally, the consciousness of an object.

Hume, at different times, conceived of each of these three elements of the whole conscious experience, but he never could conceive of them all at once, or find room for them all within the unity of one whole. He made them, largely, alternative to one another, either the one or the other, sometimes two together, but never three.

It was mainly by denying the real tree itself, that he arrived at the conception of the object-in-consciousness, or fiction, the tree

as I perceive it. In — Since all impressions are internal and perishing existences, and appear as such, the notion of their distinct and continu'd existence must arise from a concurrence of some of their qualities with the qualities of the imagination, and since this does not extend to all of them, it must arise from certain qualities peculiar to some impressions[1]); and 'twill be easy, for us to discover the qualities by a comparison of the impressions, to which we attribute a distinct and continu'd existence, with those which we regard as internal and perishing[2]), we have an example of his sinking the real object of the perception into the real perceptive experience. Hume here identifies the psycho-physical experience itself with the object which is in that experience, the object, as we say, in consciousness. As far as the internal perception is concerned, the supposition that the 'object' is entirely exhausted in the experience is an old fallacy, and not one peculiar to Hume. It is generally supposed, for instance, that a tooth-ache cannot be distinguished from the sensation by which we feel it. But this is false. Leaving out of consideration the difficult question as to how far the objects of internal perception are 'localised', in this case as to how far the pain may be supposed to be 'localised' in the tooth, it remains indisputable, that my experience is an experience of a tooth-ache, or, more generally, an experience of a pain. This 'pain' ought to be considered separately, as it is itself separate from the experience. In the experience of a pain, the three factors are still to be found; first the factual experience itself, which is not much better described as a sensation, than would be an external perception; secondly the other reality, the pain itself; and thirdly the object-in-experience, or fiction, namely the pain as I feel it, or am aware of it.

The difference between the objects of the internal and the external perception is commonly misconceived as lying in the dependence of the reality of the former, and the independence of the reality of the latter, on the psycho-physical experience in which they are perceived, But actually their difference lies in the different nature of the two perceived realities. The nature of the one is such, that it is directly perceptible to any number of persons, and of the other that it is directly perceptible only to one. Now Hume escaped the common fallacy at the price of falling into another.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 483—4.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 484.

Hume considered the reality of the objects both of the external and the internal perception to be dependent on the psycho-physical experience in which they were perceived. But he distinguished two elements in the object perceived in the external perception. This object was dependent on the perception, but in a double sense. It was dependent for its reality on the real part of our perceptive experience, namely on our sensation. But it was dependent for its 'character', i. e. for our perception of it, on the characteristic or 'conscious' part of our perceptive experience, i. e. on our consciousness or 'imagination' of it. It is this regard of the 'characteristic' nature of our perceptions, which makes Hume's analysis so illuminating. After a little examination, Hume writes, we shall find that all those objects, to which we attribute a continu'd existence, have a peculiar constancy, which distinguishes them from the impressions, whose existence depends upon our perception[1]). The 'objects' of the external perception differ from the 'objects' of the internal perception in possessing a "peculiar constancy"; but this "peculiar constancy" is not the constancy of independent realities in an external world, as appears most definitely in the next sentence. These mountains, and houses, and trees, which lie at present under my eye, have always appeared to me in the same order; and when I lose sight of them by shutting my eyes or turning my head, I soon after find them return upon me without the least alteration. My bed and table, my books and papers, present themselves in the same uniform manner, and change not upon account of any interruption in my seeing or perceiving them. This is the case with all the impressions, whose objects are suppos'd to have an external existence; and is the case with no other impressions, whether gentle or violent, voluntary or involuntary[2]).

Accepting Hume's sceptical premise concerning our inability to perceive a real, independent and external world, we are bound to recognize that he means by these imaginative 'ficta', these 'objects', these "houses and mountains and trees", objects-in-consciousness, or phenomena. For if Hume identified these 'objects' with the psycho-physical experiences in which they were perceived, he would be involved in the contradiction of asserting, that we are conscious only of

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 484. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 484.

internal and perishing existences, and, in the same breath, that we are conscious of houses and mountains and trees, which need not, certainly, be real, but which cannot be internal and perishing existences.

We find some confirmation of this view of 'objects' as in consciousness, and distinct from the psycho-physical experiences which we enjoy in perceiving them, from Hume's remarks concerning the "coherence" as well as the "constancy" of objects. This constancy however, Hume writes, is not so perfect as not to admit of very considerable exceptions. Bodies often change their position and qualities, and after a little absence or interruption, may become hardly knowable, but here 'tis observable, that even in these changes they preserve a *coherence*, and have a regular dependence on each other; which is a foundation of a kind of reasoning from causation, and produces the opinion of their continu'd existence . . . . This coherence, therefore, is one of the characteristics of external objects, as well as their constancy[1]).

These "external objects", which are coherent, are not the physical realities, "mountains and houses and trees" in the natural world, for these, Hume is convinced, we can never perceive, even if they do exist, which we can never know. But neither are these "external objects" confused by Hume, here, with our real perceptive experiences, for in a second comparison of the external with the internal perception, he draws a distinction between the regularity of the real experiences, and of the sensations which he takes to be identical with these, and of the coherence, or regularity, of the "external objects". We may observe, that tho' those internal impressions which we regard as fleeting and perishing, have also a certain coherence or regularity in their appearances, yet 'tis of a somewhat different nature, from that which we discover in body. Our passions are found by experience to have a mutual connection with and dependence on each other: but on no occasion is it necessary to suppose, that they have existed and operated, when they were not perceiv'd, in order to preserve the same dependence and connection, of which we have had experience. The case is not the same with relation to external objects. Those require a

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 484—5.

continu'd existence, or otherwise lose, in a great measure, the regularity of their operation[1]).

The external perception differs, Hume takes it, from the internal perception, by reason of the activity of the imagination. The internal perception is pure sensation. The external perception is sensation plus imagination. The imagination creates "fictions", and these fictions are the "external objects". The fictions, which Hume, driven by his sceptical prejudices, falsely supposed were 'perceived' in the stead of the real objects in the natural world, are none other than the objects-in-consciousness, which are discovered by introspection, and are the means, through the intentional character of consciousness, of our perception of the realities. These 'invented' "fictions", or phenomena, are constant and cohérent.

§ 28. 'Protention' and 'Retention', part of the Apprehension of all Consciousness.

Hume accepts the 'fact' of the coherence and constancy of 'objects' in the external perception as a basis on which to explain the genesis of their identity. But before proceeding to this question of their identity, he is led into attempting a description of the origin of their coherence, which is interesting because it is founded on a certain 'expectancy' which Hume sees to be characteristic of consciousness. We noticed this 'expectancy' in connection with belief. Hume makes use of the notion here to show how the imagination 'pre-constructs' what it subsequently apprehends. The description is the famous one of a man seated in his chair by the fire, receiving a letter brought from a foreign country, by means of a series of ferries and posts, carried upstairs by a porter, announced by the noise of the opening door etc. The receiver of the letter is described not only as presenting to his fancy all this elaborate paraphernalia of transport, but also of supposing both its present, and its continuous, existence.

There is scarce a moment of my life, Hume writes, wherein there is not a similar instance presented to me, and I have not occasion to suppose the continu'd existence of objects, in order to connect their present and past appearances, and give them such an union, with each other, as I have found by experience to be suitable to their particular natures and circum-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 485.

stances. Here then I am naturally led to regard the world, as something real and durable, and as preserving its existence, even when it is no longer present to my perception[1]).

In writing, thus, of the "continuous existence" of 'objects', Hume touches what is an essential part of the 'transcendence' of the real world which we perceive. Hume accounts for the mode of continuous existence in which the world appears to us, in the terms of an 'expectancy' in consciousness. And indeed this expectancy, by which we are enabled to overstep bounds of strict presence, and anticipate, and outline, an extension of the strictly present perception, is a faculty without which perception, in general, would be impossible. For in perceptive consciousness we are aware of scenes, which are by no means limited to, or enclosed within, the 'instant' of the present consciousness. This is the beginning of all temporal transcendence of object, that the object is from the very first moment of its conception, or perception, something essentially apart from the consciousness itself and that which is directly within the scope of the immediate consciousness. That which is 'present' in consciousness, that which is immediately There! under the intuition, includes a certain reference to a totality which extends beyond its instant. The connection of that which is immediate to consciousness with its own totality, extends, so to speak, both ways, through a certain 'retention', as well as a certain 'protention', of the conscious mind.

Retention and protention are in operation whereever there is consciousness at all. The conception of an abstract isosceles triangle, for example, is just as dependent upon a retention and protention of the constructive faculty, as the perception of any external reality; and the perception of any immobile external object is just as dependent on it, as the perception of some moving object, like a train. But retention and protention involve no element of real time. They themselves are rather the means, by which the constructive faculty of consciousness creates entire objectivities for itself, so that each single object appears before it, as a part of, and in relation to, the whole of the particular objective sphere to which it belongs.

The isosceles triangle, which the geometer sets before his mind's eye, must be present to him as a part of the whole interrelation of figures possible in geometric space, and itself involves, and is in-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 486.

volved in, the laws and relations of them all. The particular tree, which is perceived, involves, and is involved in, the entirety of the real world, real space, time and causality. Something, of course, of the relations of any real object, the tree to other trees in the garden, may be perceived with the tree. Something of the antecedent events of portage and distance, in Hume's example of the letter received, may have been actually 'present' to the mind of the receipient when he took and read the letter. But these are not the important factors in the matter. There is a question, here, as Hume recognized, of a fundamental 'continuity', which serves as an element on which all objects, of whatever kind, must move. It is a continuity 'prior' to any real contigencies, a continuity, which makes in the real world, for instance, causal relation possible, which makes relation, in general, possible in all spheres, mathematical, ethical, aesthetic, social, economic etc. Nothing less is in question than the fundamental protentive and retentive intention of consciousness, as the underlying structure of intelligence. This it is which gives us the order and nature of objects in their various fields. This it is which makes the 'fact' of transcendence, and, indeed, creates the very division between subject and object without which there could be no consciousness of any sort. Hume did well to describe our consciousness of the real world in terms of an underlying continuity for which the imagination was responsible.

§ 29. Hume's paradoxical 'Appearance-Theory'. That which it involves, and that to which it leads.

It must not be supposed that the conception of phenomena, into which we seek to convert Hume's "fictions", was ever held by Hume in the clearness and distinctness it deserves, or that it was held by him even confusedly with any consistency. But there are certain descriptive passages in the Treatise lit by the flash of a genius too penetrating to allow one to deny Hume the conception altogether. Hume may be said to have realized spasmodically the nature of objects-in-consciousness, and at such times to have treated his "fictions" as if they were these. The reader will recognize that Hume's obligation to acknowledge the quality of "continuous existence" in his "objects", a quality to which their coherence and constancy have led, will put his conception of these "objects" to the proof. If Hume's "objects" are phenomena, he need have no difficulty in ascribing to them a "continuous existence" of an ideal kind, such a continuity as

can permit them to possess their own identity, and allow the same "object" to be present in consciousness innumerable times. If, on the other hand, Hume's conception of phenomena, which his notice of the constancy and coherency of his "fictions" has induced, is weak enough to fade, as soon as his treatment of these qualities is done, and be transmuted back into the psycho-physical experiences which 'contain' them, and from which they have only with the greatest difficulty emerged, then it must be expected that Hume will be reluctant to allow them to be "continuously existent". Up to the present, Hume's doctrine that the mind is necessarily limited to its own "perceptions" has interested us chiefly by reason of its excluding the natural world of reality, either sceptically, or merely after the fashion of Descartes' dubito, from the attention of the philosopher. But, while still keeping in mind this, its first, consequence, it is obvious that the doctrine must interest us chiefly at the present because it forces a crisis upon Hume, and compels him to pronounce once and for all upon the nature of his "perceptions". While the discussion was still confined to the coherence and constancy of the "perceptions", it was not absolutely necessary to distinguish the "objects" of the perception from the perceptive experiences. For it was at least conceivable that the perceptive experiences themselves could be coherent and constant. But nothing can be more certain than that the perceptive experiences themselves, taking them as Hume always takes them, as being psycho-physical, cannot be "continuously existent". Hume must determine on one or other alternative. On the one hand, he is bound to acknowledge that we do perceive, or at least believe that we do perceive, something — "objects" or "perceptions" — which is continuously existent. On the other hand, he still believes firmly in the discrete nature of reality, and so is bound, either to identify his "fictions" with their psycho-physical experiences, and deny all possibility of our perceiving anything continuously existent, or, transforming his scepticism concerning the external world into the reflexive attitude relevant to the subjective plane of the argument, to adopt frankly the conception of his "fictions" as objects-in-consciousness, and admit that it is these phenomena to which the continuity of existence belongs. If Hume chose the latter alternative, it is obvious that the "continuous existence" will become a mere "identity", which will be proper to the "fictions". For, since phenomena do not 'exist' in real time, no more will be implied in asserting their "continu'd existence", than that they are "identical".

Weighted with the full load of his empirical prejudices, and with his habit of real hypostasis, Hume makes a final attempt in the form of a highly paradoxical Appearance-theory, to solve the problem of consciousness without an appeal to the pure subjective realm. Then, recognizing the contradictions in which he has involved himself, he passes fairly to the problem of identity, and, there, in one significant moment, confesses to the admission of a phenomenon in consciousness in the shape of an "idea", which he allows to be identical.

Hume's Appearance-theory amounts to the assertion, that, although 'something' must be admitted to appear to the perception as continuously existent, this 'something' turns out itself to be no more than an 'appearance', and consequently no 'reality'. Hume employs again his former notion of "relation", which the imagination contrives. If continuous existence 'is' anything, it is a "relation". But this "relation" is not an instance of the "causal inference". .... tho' this conclusion from the coherence of appearances — Hume writes — may seem to be of the same nature with our reasoning concerning causes and effects; as being deriv'd from custom, and regulated by past experience, we shall find upon examination that they are at the bottom considerably different from each other, and that this inference arises from the understanding, (the "understanding" is to be identified here with the imagination) and from custom in an indirect and oblique manner. For 'twill readily be allowed, that since nothing is ever really present to the mind besides its own perceptions, 'tis not only impossible, that any habit shou'd ever be acquired otherwise than by the regular succession of these perceptions, but also that any habit shou'd ever exceed that degree of regularity. Any degree therefore, of regularity in our perceptions, can never be a foundation for us to infer a greater degree of regularity in some objects, which are not perceived; since this supposes a contradiction viz. a habit acquired by what was never present to the mind[1]).

The imagination's "conclusion" concerning continuous existence may seem at first sight to be explained as being founded upon the "coherence of appearances". But upon inspection the plausibility

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 486—7.

of Hume's account vanishes. The difference, which he honestly admits between the nature of the present "conclusion" and the causal inference, seems too absolute to allow of the present conclusion being explained at all. Causality was a "relation" made by the mind between certain members of an unvaried sequence which it had perceived. But the present "relation" is described by Hume as being made between terms which the mind never has perceived. Hume's "any degree of regularity in our perceptions, can never be a foundation for us to infer a greater degree of regularity in some objects, which are not perceived", embodies two opposite assertions: 1. that — by some process as yet unexplained — the imagination creates the relation of continuous existence, and 2. that, in spite of the creation of this relation, we do not and cannot perceive anything which is continuously existent. Such an exposition of the result of "relation" would rob Hume's earlier accounts of it of all their value. For the significance of all possible explanation of our consciousness of objects by a description of the genesis of those objects in consciousness, rests on the supposition — which is, of course, true — that the objects in consciousness are a means to our consciousness of the transcendent objects. The mind constructs immanent objects, and, being intentional, produces thus for itself a consciousness of transcendent objects. While admitting that Hume never had any distinct notion of the relation of the immanent in consciousness to the transcendent beyond it, yet so long as he was prepared to admit that what the mind had constructed for itself it did perceive, we held it possible to make use of his subjective descriptions of the construction of objects in consciousness by the imagination. This we believed we could do by insisting on the difference involved between the natural and the philosophical or reflective attitude, and by introducing the intentional character of consciousness to relate the subjective to the objective. But were Hume to develop with any consequence the line of thought which he makes use of here, in a distinction between that which is "perceived" and that which is "imagined", we should have to confess that Hume's subjective conceptions were devoid of value.

Hume supposes that he cannot admit to any full consciousness of continuous existence, without admitting the independent reality of the external world; and we know that Hume was convinced that such an admission would destroy the validity of the doctrine on which he had built the Treatise, that the mind is limited to its perceptions. He seeks refuge in a distinction between "perception" and "imagination". He returns

to his identification of "real perception" with "sense-impression", using the former term now to imply that what is "perceived" is not "imagined", and that what is "imagined" is "imagined" merely, and not "perceived". Under this scheme, and for its sake, he is content a. once more to confuse within the one word "perception" both the psycho-physical experience and the object perceived, and b. to make an improper use of the notion of "appearance". When we have been accustomed to observe a constancy in certain impressions, he writes, and have found that the perception of the sun or ocean, for instance, returns upon us after an absence or annihilation with like parts and in a like order, as at its first appearance, we are not apt to regard these interrupted perceptions as different, (which they really are), but, on the contrary, consider, them as individually the same, upon account of their resemblance. But as this interruption of their existence is contrary to their perfect identity, and makes us regard the first impression as annihilated, and the second as newly created, we find ourselves somewhat at a loss, and are involved in a kind of contradiction. In order to free ourselves from this difficulty, we disguise, as much as possible, the interruption, or rather remove it entirely, by supposing, that these interrupted perceptions are connected by a real existence of which we are insensible[1]).

Hume is willing to argue, a. that the discreteness of the psycho-physical experiences excludes the possibility of our being conscious of anything continuous, and b. that we are limited in perception to the "appearances" of objects, which are themselves beyond the reach of our perception. These objects, which Hume is now supposing to be beyond our reach, are not, in this instance, the supposed realities of the external world. For Hume is arguing within the subjective sphere, and referring only to what may be found within the body of the "impressions". ". . . . 'twill readily be allowed — Hume had just written — that . . . . nothing is ever really present to the mind, besides its own perceptions." And now, he says, explicitly, we suppose "that these interrupted perceptions are connected by a real existence of which we are insensible." Hume's present distinction between "appearance" and "objects" is supposed to be valid within

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 488.

the subjective body of the "perceptions". It is only to 'objects' which are avowedly "fictions", that we are persuaded to attribute a "continu'd existence". The "fictions" of the "imagination" are constant and coherent. We presume them to be continuously existent. Hume's argument is the following: It is the nature of that which we perceive, to be perceived, and therefore to cease to 'be' anything at all, when it is not perceived. This table, therefore, which I, opening my eyes, perceive, is a perception, a perception-table, which ceases to exist as soon as I shut my eyes. When I open my eyes a second time, and again perceive a table, the table which I perceive is a table exactly resembling the table which I perceived a moment since, but not the same table, being in its nature a perception-table, and, as such, numerically different from the former perception-table. I never, therefore, really "perceive" the continuous existence of the perception-table, but owing to a native disposition in the mind, — as the mind is once in the train of observing an uniformity among objects, it naturally continues, till it renders the uniformity as compleat as possible[1]), — I am led to "imagine" it. But this distinction between what I "perceive" and what I "imagine" but do not "perceive", with its counterpart distinction between that which is all "appearance", i. e. that which I "perceive", and that which is "object" which never "appears", i. e. the continuously existent perception, which I "imagine" only and do not "perceive", is both invalid in itself, and an inconsequence within Hume's system. In the Treatise it is a curiosity which quickly sinks from sight. When Hume proceeds to the question of the identity of the "perceptions", he shows himself dissatisfied with his account of their "continuous existence". The fact is that all that we really "suppose", if we do suppose it and not perceive it, when we say that our "perceptions" are "joined by a continuous existence", is that they are entities possessed of an identity, which, when they recur, we recognize, and say, That is the Same!

B. Hume's "System". The Problem of Identity in External Perception.

First, to explain the principium individuationis, or principle of identity. Secondly, give a reason why the resemblance of our broken and interrupted per-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 488.

ceptions induces us to attribute an identity to them. Thirdly, account for that propensity, which this illusion gives, to unite these broken appearances by a continu'd existence. Fourthly and lastly, explain that force and vivacity of conception, which arises from the propensity[1]).

§ 30. Introduction To Hume's Principium Individuationis, or special problem of Identity in Consciousness.

Our review of Hume's work has made it evident, that the ultimate merit of the Humeian theory, must rest upon his treatment of identity. We have seen the steps by which Hume came to conceive of the problem of external perception in subjective terms, and we have made some estimate of the amount of truth and error involved in that conception. Although Hume's sceptical prejudices served to remove the discussion from the objective plane of the natural world, they have not as yet induced him to make any clear statement about the nature of the subjective field, where he is occupied. He has been content to employ the word "perception", and to leave its division into experience and object implicit and unanalysed. We have watched Hume's diverse uses of the subject-object relation in general. Its terms made their first appearance in Hume's ambiguous treatment of "impressions" and "ideas". Being once introduced they played a great variety of parts. At one time Hume would have them both comprehended within a quasi-real objectivity, at another within a quasi-ideal subjectivity. And forgetful, presently, of both attempts, he tries to make the subject-object relation synonymous with the conscious ego, and the natural world. Under this interpretation, he subsumes the differences between reality and appearance, and between sense-perception and imagination. But through all these attempts, and beyond them, the immanent subjectivity and the transcendent objectivity remain unreconciled and unexplained, positive still in spite of all negation, and supported by Hume's authoritative beliefs. The vulgar man, who believes both in his own existence and that of an independent real world, triumphs over the merely speculative philosopher. The sceptical and single meditative attitude gives place before the practical, which can embrace them both.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 489.

But Hume has still to make a last attempt in the subjective sphere to find a tolerant philosophy which will have room within it for the immanent origin of a really transcendent world. Whatever motives he may have had, Hume finds himself examining perception from the subjective side. The natural world has dropped out of sight with all its qualities, with the externality which Hume, so curiously, leaves out of his regard. The real world cannot explain our consciousness of it, our perception must explain it. But if we are to be occupied thus exclusively with consciousness, we must divide our perception into two elements, we must have both a perception of a world in consciousness, and a world in consciousness which is built up to be perceived. We must have a subject-object relation within the subjective sphere. We must have noesis and noema. We must have intentional consciousness that we may have a transcendent world. For all Hume's negative treatment of "perceptions", that they are not "external", that they are not "distinct", that they are not "continuously existent", that they are not even "perceived", but, only "imagined", he must still offer something positive, he must offer an 'object' in perception. If there is nothing more positive in consciousness, there is at least an object, i. e. there is an identity. There must be a 'pole' in consciousness, besides the conscious 'mind' or 'ego-pole', which can receive the "fictions" which the imagination invents. . . . . there are four things requisite, he writes by way of preface to his subjective account of perception. First, to explain the principium individuationis, or principle of identity. Secondly, give a reason why the resemblance of our broken and interrupted perceptions induces us to attribute an identity to them. Thirdly, account for that propensity, which this illusion gives, to unite these broken appearances by a continu'd existence. Fourthly and lastly, explain that force and vivacity of conception, which arises from the propensity[1]).

Of these four 'principles' the most significant is the principium individuationis, in which the second, as well as the first, of Hume's four requisites is involved. These two taken together form the climax of Hume's subjectivism. If Hume will allow, that there is in consciousness an identical object, he will have left in his system an irrefutable foundation on which a sane and conclusive philosophy can

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 489.

be built up. He will have left a subject-object relation in consciousness, a noesis and noema, which can create a transcendence out of immanence through the abilities of intentional consciousness. But the third and fourth of the requisites of the Humeian system read sceptical even in their presentation. Must Hume "account for that propensity, which this illusion gives, and explain that force and vivacity of conception, which arises from the propensity"? Then "identity" is an "illusion", and no 'fact', and there is no object in consciousness, and no subject-object relation within the subjective sphere, and Hume has failed, and is become, once more, philosophically at least, a sceptic.

But while on his own confession Hume does fail, and makes of identity in consciousness a mere "illusion", he does yet, in his very account of that "illusion", describe an object in consciousness, and an identity, which cries out against the name illusion, and is essential even to Hume's scepticism.

In an examination of requisites 1. and 2. of Hume's system, we shall show that Hume's position involves a positive philosophy. Hume calls identity an "illusion", and tries to explain it away as an abstract idea. But the "resemblance" from which Hume claims that the idea "identity" is abstracted, is itself perceived resemblance, and this perception of resemblance involves an identity, in the shape of an identical object. Hume distinguishes between "identity", which he calls an "illusion", and "unity" which he admits to be a 'fact'. He makes "unity" the basis of "resemblance". But the difference between "unity" and "identity" is one in name only; "unity" of object presupposes "identity" in object. When Hume refuses to recognize the 'fact' of the identity of the object in consciousness, the object-as-it-is-perceived, with which, even in his account of identity as illusion, he cannot dispense, he gives one the impression of wishing to use the notion of identity, rather as a stumbling block to positive thought, and an inducement to scepticism, than as a problem worthy of solution.

§ 31. Part I: Of Hume's System. Principium Individuationis.

I. Identity.

Hume starts his enquiry concerning the nature of our perception of identity with a definition of identity itself.

As to the principle of individuation; we may observe, Hume writes, that the view of any one object is not

sufficient to convey the idea of identity. For in that proposition, 'an object is the same with itself', if the idea express'd by the word, 'object', were no way distinguished from that meant by 'itself'; we really shou'd mean nothing, nor wou'd the proposition contain a predicate and a subject, which however are imply'd in this affirmation. One *single object conveys the idea of unity, not that of identity.* On the other hand, a multiplicity of objects can never convey this idea, however resembling they may be suppos'd. The mind always pronounces the one not to be the other, and considers them as forming two, three or any determinate number of objects, whose existences are entirely distinct and independent.

Since then both number and unity are incompatible with the relation of identity, it must lie in something that is neither of them. But .... at first sight this seems utterly impossible. Betwixt unity and number there can be no medium; no more than betwixt existence and non-existence. After one object is suppos'd to exist, we must either suppose another also to exist, in which case we have the idea of number: Or we must suppose it not to exist; in which case the first object remains at unity. To remove this difficulty, let us have recourse to the idea of time or duration .... time, in a strict sense, implies succession, and .... *when we apply its idea to any unchangeable object, 'tis only by a fiction of the imagination, by which the unchangeable object is suppos'd to participate of the changes* of the co-existent objects, and in particular of that *of our perceptions.* The fiction of the imagination almost universally takes place; and 'tis by means of it, that a single object, plac'd before us, and survey'd for any time without our discovering in it any interruption or alteration (Hume will presently explain in detail, how the imagination works in the manufacture of this fiction), is able to give us a notion of identity .... Here then is an idea, which is a medium betwixt unity and number .... and this idea we call that of identity ..... Thus the principle of individuation is nothing but the

invariableness and *uninterruptedness* of any object thro' a suppos'd variation of time . . . .[1]).

Taken by itself the definition is neat enough. "Identity" is the invariableness and uninterruptedness of any object through a supposed variation of time. Offered as an abstraction, it contains nothing objectionable. But when it is considered in connection with its derivation, the hypothetical element involved in the "supposition of a variation of time", which in abstraction could be taken as conceptual only, assumes a character of illusoriness, which invalidates the whole. Identity, the abstraction, becomes a fiction which can never properly be assigned to the real objects of the perception. Having admitted a distinction between "unity" and "identity", why should Hume find any difficulty in the notion of a single object or unity persisting through a duration of time? Hume is hampered by his earlier doctrine of particularity. It forces him to regard any 'single' object as something 'complete', taken both in, and by, itself. And with this absolute view of the particular, he considers himself bound to offer an explanation of identity in the terms of the relative subjectivity, which we have so often deplored. He wishes to make 'identity' itself dependent on our perception of it. The true subjectivist must recognize that he is not concerned with any object, but is limited always to as much of that object as can be supposed to be involved in our consciousness of it. Hume's business did not lie with identity itself, but only with our consciousness of identity, i. e. with identity in consciousness. By refusing to confine his attention to the subjective, Hume involved himself as usual in hypostasis, and brought empirical elements into the subjective sphere in which he worked. Starting from the false and irrelevant premise, that there is no such thing as a "real" persistence of any unit through a variation of time, Hume made identity itself dependent on our perception. He made identity a fiction in the sceptical sense, an illusion which, from the point of view of philosophy, we ought to dissuade ourselves from believing. Hume tries to explain our seeming perception of identity by a relatively subjective standard of comparison. And, under analysis, this relatively subjective standard turns out to be a comparison of a double set of objects. It is by comparing objects with our experiences of objects, according to Hume, that we win our notion of their identity, namely their fictitious persistence. By a fiction of the imagination, the really unchangeable

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 489—90.

object is supposed to participate in the changes of our perceptions. We find ourselves caught once more in the Humeian theory of simplicity and complexity, with its differentiation between that which is, and that which is perceived. That which is, is simple, and, by its nature, cannot participate in change. That which is perceived is complex, and may be supposed to change to the extent in which it may be compared to that which does not change. That which is, and does not change, is the sequence of the units which are our real experiences, which Hume supposes may somehow be retained singly, and yet in relation to one another, by some such faculty as memory. The idea of identity is said to spring from a comparison of perceived objects with perceiving experiences. But as Hume's explanation stands it is manifestly insufficient. It needs, in the first place, the explanation which Hume is reserving, as to how this comparison between objects and experiences actually takes place. But in the second place it needs an explanation, which Hume never gives, as to how the supposed single and unique object becomes separated from the supposed single and unique experience, so as to be able to be compared with it. A moment's consideration should convince any one, that the whole question of identity has already been involved by the time that this separation has taken place. The problem of identity is already contained in Hume's conception of unity. Hume should not have made any assertions concerning the single and unitary nature of the objects supposed to participate in the changes required by the sequence of our experiences, until he had investigated the nature of the original separation between experience and object. Had he made this investigation, he would have found that the unity, i. e. the object as distinct from the experience, was already identical with itself; and that this identity of the object with itself, was no mere tautological proposition, that is to say a logical duplicity to express a real uniqueness, but that it was a pregnant and synthetic identity, which the unit contained, as part of its title to be separable from the unity of the experience.

§ 32. Part II of Hume's System. Principium Individuationis.

II. Unity.

"In that proposition, 'an object is the same with itself', if the idea expressed by the word 'object', were no ways distinguished from that meant by 'itself'," says Hume, "we really should mean nothing, nor would the proposition contain a predicate and a subject, which

are however imply'd in this affirmation." Hume has his finger on a truth which he misinterprets. When we say, with reference to the real object, This table is identical, it cannot be doubted that we mean to assert, as Hume suggests, that this table is the same as t h a t table, which existed, and which we perceived to exist, in a past moment, and that this table is the same table as t h a t table, which will exist, and which we could perceive to exist, in a future moment. But this real table, which is thus really identical, is not the table or the identity with which Hume ought to be concerned. The expression, This table! is ambiguous. When we say, This table!, and express the subject of a judgment, we are already making an assertion of an identity which we do not actually express in the judgment, but which we could express without tautology. The truth is that This table!, which is the subject of the predicate real identity, 'overlaps' or 'coincides' in meaning with another This Table! which is also identical, and the object of the philosophical enquiry. The second This table! is not and could not be the subject of the predicate real identity, because it is not a real table. Real identity involves, as Hume suggests, persistence in time. The one real table w a s yesterday, and i s today, and w i l l be tomorrow. The real table has four legs: i. e. it had four legs, is having four legs, and will be having four legs. But this is not to say, as Hume wanted to say, that this table, which we assert to be the same with itself, i. e. to be identical, is different from itself, that is, that the T h i s t a b l e ! is o n e table, belonging to, and included in the moment of time A, and that the I t s e l f is a n o t h e r table, belonging to and included in the moment of time B, for such a proposition would have avoided tautolgy only at the price of being self-contradictory. When we say that an object is the same with itself, we mean that it is the same with, and not different from, itself: we mean that it is identical. In others words, while it is true to assert that the time element enters into real identity, it is false to make of this time a sequence of discrete moments, in which a real object could not persist, but only a plurality of unique objects corresponding to, and included in, these moments. Real time is such that real objects can persist in it, that is to say, be identical with themselves. Persistence is the characteristic of reality. When we say that objects exist, we mean that they persist. The real table, which has four legs, actually includes within itself a certain flux or continuum of time. The present existence of the table is a state of being, not an isolated 'moment', but a condition of past, present and future. Both the past and the future are contained in the real present. So much is this

continuous time nature essential to the existence of the real particular, that we ourselves are seen to come into a certain psychophysical and contingent contact with it, as perceiving subjects. Not only the object itself, but also the perception of the object, requires time, that is, 'takes place' in, or 'exists' in, time. And here we come again to a thought of Hume's. Hume recognized that it is due to our consciousness of the sequence of our experiences, that we are conscious of real time. He saw that our perception of time, like every other perception, was dependent upon the subjective, and that we only perceived it because we had already made it for ourselves. But from this notion he made his usual deduction, that if we had made time, and were as subjects responsible for it, time must be admitted to be a fiction. At any rate, time must be taken to belong exclusively to subjects, and cannot be supposed to belong to objects. But this argument of Hume's was fallacious. Again he misunderstood the nature of the dependency of time upon the subjective, which he took as his premise. Just as in the case of space he did not recognize that there was a subjective, or immanent, as well as objective, or transcendent, 'space', so, here, he does not recognize that there is a subjective as well as an objective 'time', these two 'times' being, like the two spaces, of a quite different nature, the one immanent and ideal, and the other transcendent and real. He sees that our perception of real time is 'dependent' in a certain sense upon the 'subjective', that, as he put it, we perceive real objects in time because of a certain "comparison" which we make between real objects and our experiences, but he misunderstands the nature of this "comparison". It is not by means of comparing real objects with our real perceptive-experiences of them, that we are capable of perceiving real time, but by means of certain ideal 'syntheses', which take place, not like our real experiences in real time, but in the ideal, immanent time of the pure subjective sphere. We can only perceive the real identity, the persistence of objects in real time, because we have constructed for ourselves an identical object in the ideal time. Hume, being limited to his conception of 'comparative subjectivity', conceived that 'subjective' time was real time. Indeed he thought that the only 'time' was this 'subjective', and uni-dimensional, sequence of real experiences, and that our only consciousness of 'subjective' time was our consciousness of this sequence . . But why did he not recognize, that this sequence of our real experiences, being indeed a part of real time, belongs to the objective and not to the subjective world, and that, therefore, our consciousness of the sequence of

these real experiences, is liable to all his own objections against our perceiving real, identical, objects in time? For in order to exist in real time at all, these real experiences, like other real objects, must be supposed to be identical. If Hume was to deny the existence of external objects in time, he should also have denied, and just as forcefully, the sequence, and our consciousness of the sequence, of our real experiences. For the whole of real time, like the whole of real space, is essentially transcendent to the subject. It is true, that there is a certain difference between the two cases, for while the existence of external objects in time requires their persistence, the sequence of internal experiences does not demand a similar persistence of the individual experiences. But this fact in no way alters the equal reality of the time involved in both; and this may be seen in the fact that the notions of persistence and sequence are strictly complementary to one another. Nothing can persist unless a sequence of something else is involved; and there can be no sequence unless something else persists. Time lends its name alternately to these two halves of its own complementary whole. In the first case when the object persists, time is the sequence, the object persisting through a sequence of moments of time; in the second case, when events, such as experiences or any other real events, follow one another, time is the persistence, or persisting element in which the sequence takes place.

Real time is a continuum, so that any moment of it contains both past, present and future. This is involved in the notion of real identity. But the whole of identity is not exhausted in the real identity which we perceive; there is a certain ideal identity in the perception, an immanent identity, which is involved in our perception both of the sequence of our experiences, and of the identity of a persisting object in the external world.

This identity is also an identity in time, but in subjective, and not in objective, time. Now the main differences involved in the distinct natures of objective or transcendent, and subjective or immanent time, may be summed up by saying that while, as we have seen, objective time is a continuum composed of continuing 'moments', each of which must be allowed to contain both a past and a future in their present, subjective time, is not a continuum but an entirety, in which each 'moment' is an entirety, and, as such, absolutely independent of any other moment. Subjective time is not a flux or stream, but is seen under each reflexion as a whole.

When the subject reflects upon the object as it is in conscious-

ness, he is reflecting upon an entirety, a whole, a unity, as Hume would have called it, or an identity which is perfect. From what has been said about the complementary nature of real time, and the distinguishing unitary nature of ideal time, it will be understood that, there being in this latter neither sequence nor persistence, but only the absolute present, all divisions involved in reality, and in particular the real division between the object perceived and the perception of the object, and the quality of 'change' involved in this division, will be absent from the subjective sphere. The very rule which the reflecting subject must follow, namely, that in reflection, he accept nothing which is not found in that strict moment or 'present' of consciousness, which he is examining, is enough to suggest the nature of the identity, which will be disclosed to him. It will be an identity of object of experience, and an identity of experience of object. Within the unity of the object in experience remain the differences between the object of experience, noema, and the experience of object, noesis, but these do not involve 'real' time or 'real' separation.

For there can be no identity of any kind, either real or ideal — and this is where Hume's conception of "unity" was at fault — which does not involve synthesis, or the relation of parts to a whole. Were there no synthesis within the unity of the ideal identity of the object in consciousness, there could be no knowledge of the identity of the object itself. The identical real object endures and is independent of our consciousness of it. But although the identity of the object in consciousness is such, that it can be 'repeated' in innumerable experiences, that is to say, the noema in a plurality of noesis's, yet it cannot be said of the identity of the object in consciousness, as it can be of the identity of the real object, that it is separable from our consciousness of it, for the noesis-noema relation is, in ideal actuality, an inseparable unity. And here we find the clue concerning the nature of the relation, or dependence, n o t of the real identity of the real object upon the ideal identity of the object in consciousness, and n o t of the real identity of the real object upon the real identity of the real experience, b u t of our perception of the identity of the real object, and of our perception of the real identity of the real experience, upon the ideal identity of the object in consciousness, i. e. the identity of the object as we are conscious of it. It is only because the object as we are conscious of it is identical, that we perceive the identity of the real objects in the world. In this there is the appearance of a paradox; for, it may be asked, if the identity of the object

in the subjective sphere is inseparable from our consciousness of its identity, why are we not conscious in ordinary perception of the identity of the ideal object, instead of the identity of the real object? In other words, if the identity of the ideal object is dependent upon our being conscious of it, how can it be identical when we are not conscious of it, and how can it, therefore, be the means of our perceiving the real identity of real objects in the world? But it is evident, that such questions as the above, are based on the misunderstanding of the relation of our consciousness of real objects to our consciousness of phenomena.

These do not conflict with one another, or dispute for the attention of consciousness. That they are both involved in any concrete experience becomes obvious in a moment, when it is considered that the real objects of the real world, and among these our bodies and all our organs, hands, eyes, ears etc., are not sufficient to produce a consciousness of themselves in any subject, are not, in fact, sufficient to produce any single 'subject'. Neither the physiologist nor the physicist can discover any 'property' of real objects, by which these could produce consciousness. If we are to be conscious of these objects, it is obvious that there is need for consciousness as well as for objects, of the 'existence' of consciousness, if that word is to be used, as well as the 'existence' of objects. Consciousness, then, as well as real objects, has a nature of its own; and consciousness, as well as reality, is capable of an ontology.

Setting out, then, from the side of the subject — we being subjects — there is nothing contradictory in the assertion, that not the objects, but the consciousness, is responsible for our consciousness of objects. And to confine ourselves exclusively to perception, there is nothing contradictory in saying, that not the real objects and their qualities, but the ideal 'objects', i. e. the objects as they are in consciousness, and their 'qualities', are responsible for our perception of real objects. For it is presupposed in this saying, that, when we perceive, we are not conscious of consciousness, or of any objects in consciousness, i. e. of the objects as they are in consciousness, but, on the contrary, of the real objects which, therefore, we say that we perceive. In perception we perceive real objects: and when we are conscious of consciousness, that is of objects in consciousness, we are no longer perceiving, but are living in that subjective reflexion, which is necessary to the intuition of phenomena.

If, therefore, we perceive the qualities of real objects, there can be nothing contradictory in saying, that we only perceive those objects

and those qualities, not because the real qualities of those objects are what they are, or because the real objects are so qualified, but because the ideal objects in consciousness 'are' what they 'are', and 'have' such and such 'qualities'.

And, to return to the present issue, it is not contradictory to say that we only perceive the identity of real objects because the objects in consciousness are, according to their natures, identical. And now, turning to the explanation, which Hume is reserving, as to how the idea of identity, according to the account he has given of it, is 'invented', since it is not 'perceived', by the subject, we shall find, as we have insisted, that even he should in consistency have admitted, that the subject is only enabled to invent identity, owing to the 'fact', that the object as we are conscious of it 'is' identical, or, in other words, that there is an identical 'moment' in consciousness itself.

§ 33. Survey of Hume's Arguments to the Establishment of his account of Identity.

In the Second Part of his Four-part System, Hume's business is to show that 'identity', whose definition he has given in the First Part, comes to be attributed to objects in perception. This explanation amounts to a concession that the object in consciousness is identical. But the concession is made reluctantly, and is never expressed in the form of a definite admission. On the contrary, no sooner has Hume made the concession, than, in the Third and Fourth Parts of his System, he proceeds to retract it. Identity is acknowledged as an identical "image" only to be quickly dethroned and relegated once more to the dismal obscurity of an unexplained abstract idea, while Hume proceeds unhindered to his famous 'sceptical' conclusions. But Hume's recognition of the identity of the object in consciousness, shortlived though it is, makes this portion of the Treatise supremely important. Here Hume comes nearest to a true conception of consciousness itself, and of subjectivist philosophy. For in spite of the devious and often unjustifiable ways by which he travels, in spite of his making use of a representative theory of perception, which he has himself shown to be invalid, Hume does arrive here, for one moment, at the conception of an identical object in consciousness. He misreads the nature of this object. He calls it, falsely, an "image". But Hume has unveiled a phenomenon; and, cleared of its spurious label, this phenomenon can provide a foundation for positive, and non-sceptical, subjective idealism or Phenomenology.

Hume has to explain how the subject attributes identity, in the sense of persistence, to what he perceives. From his own position, Hume has to account for the fact, that although our "perceptions" are not identical, we do, in the ordinary course of experience perceive them and believe them to be such. But, lover of paradox that he is, no amount of ingenuity can help Hume in this case. Even his clever theory of belief, which has served him so often before in dealing with a variety of 'objects' and their 'qualities', now avails him nothing. We cannot possibly perceive an identity unless we perceive something identical: and we cannot perceive something identical unless that something 'is' identical. As much as this, which is, of course, everything, Hume finds himself obliged to allow. Having allowed it, Hume does his best to cover his retreat by confusing two levels of 'objectivity' or 'subjectivity' — it does not matter which they are called, for by this time each is involved in the other within the introspection. But the distinction between "image" and "object", which Hume seeks to draw, will not bear inspection. There is no room within the pure subjective sphere for any such discreteness. And even as these two appear in Hume's own account, we can find no grounds of difference to separate them. The identical "image" is an identical 'object' in consciousness. This, as soon as he abandons his idle representative theory, Hume is bound to admit.

The stages of Hume's argument are three.

1. He asserts that our "perceptions" themselves are not identical, and seeks to bring in the testimony of the vulgar man to support the assertion. But the vulgar man himself can be shown to hold no such opinion. Hume misjudges him. He is not capable of the subtlety which Hume imputes to him. Hume is himself at fault. Hume only succeeds in establishing the non-identity of our "perceptions" by confusing together, a. the real objects of the physical world; b. our real psycho-physical experiences, and c. the ideal objects in consciousness, i. e. phenomena.

2. Hume makes use of a distinction between resemblance and identity. He compares two examples of experiences supposed to be different, the first supposed to be an example of a perception of 'real' identity, wherein Hume examines what he calls *the disposition of the mind in viewing any object which preserves a perfect identity*, and the second, a perception of 'false' identity, wherein Hume examines what he calls an instance of *some other*

(i. e. non-identical) object, that is confounded with it, by causing a similar disposition[1]).

But Hume's distinction in these two examples between 'real' and 'false' identity is not valid. The identity of the object in each case is in fact the same. It is not 'real' in any physical sense, for it is an identity of objects in the subjective sphere. But it is not 'false', for it is a perceived identity. Moreover the examples themselves do not differ as Hume supposes, and will not support the differences between resemblance and identity.

3. Hume propounds his notions of the "disposition" of the mind, and of the "idea" in the mind. When these are dissociated, the one from its empirical connection with the psycho-physical experience, the other from its connection with the notion of "image" employed in representative theories of perception, they can sustain the synthetic differences of the intentional noesis-noema character of consciousness, and offer a foundation for a true Phenomenology.

§ 34. Hume's Seven Definitions of a "Perception". Part II of Hume's System.

I now proceed, says Hume, to explain the second part of my system, and shew why the constancy of our perceptions makes us ascribe to them a perfect numerical identity, tho' there be very long intervals betwixt their appearance, and they have only one of the essential qualities of identity, viz. invariableness[2]). That I may avoid all ambiguity and confusion on this head — he continues — I shall observe, that I here account for the opinions and belief of the vulgar with regard to the existence of body; and therefore must entirely conform myself to their manner of thinking and of expressing themselves. Now we have already observ'd, that however philosophers may distinguish betwixt the objects and perceptions of the senses; which they suppose co-existent and resembling; yet this is a distinction which is not comprehended by the generality of mankind, who as they perceive only one being, can never assent to the opinion of a double existence and representation. *Those very sensations, which enter by the eye or ear, are with them the true*

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 492.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 490.

objects, nor can they readily conceive that this pen or paper which is immediately perceiv'd, represents another, which is different from, but resembling it. In order, therefore, to accomodate myself to their notions, I shall at first suppose; that there is only a single existence, which I shall call indifferently *object* or *perception*, according as it shall seem best to suit my purpose, understanding by both of them *what any common man means by a hat, or shoe, or stone, or any other impression, convey'd to him by his senses*[1]).

We shall concern ourselves in the next section with the character of the vulgar man whom Hume introduces; our present business lies with what Hume has to say concerning the nature of the "perceptions" whose identity is in question. To this, three additional quotations are relevant.

Hume says, The persons, who entertain this opinion concerning the identity of our resembling perceptions, are in general all the unthinking and unphilosophical part of mankind, (that is, all of us, at one time or another) and consequently *such as suppose their perceptions to be their only objects*, and never think of a double existence internal and external, representing and represented. *The very image, which is present to the* senses, is with us the real body, and *'tis to these interrupted images we ascribe a perfect identity*[2]). Hume says again, 'Tis certain, that almost all mankind, and even philosophers themselves, for the greatest part of their lives, *take their perceptions to be their only objects*, and suppose, *that the very being, which is intimately present to the mind, is the real body or material existence.* 'Tis also certain *that this very perception or object is suppos'd to have a continu'd uninterrupted being*, and neither to be annihilated by our absense, nor to be brought into existence by our presence[3]). And again Hume says, *'Tis* indeed evident that as the vulgar *suppose their perceptions to be their only objects*, and at the same

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 490—91.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 493.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 495.

time believe the continu'd existence of matter, we must account for the origin of the belief upon that supposition[1]). Now although these quotations leave no doubt that it is to nothing but "perceptions" that we all of us, at one time or another, ascribe that real identity which is characteristic of the continu'd existence of the objects of the external world, they do, at the same time, leave us in the greatest doubt, as to what these "perceptions" actually are. For we find it asserted in them, that perceptions are a. "those very sensations, which enter by the eye or ear", b. "what any common man means by a hat, or stone, or shoe, or any other impression convey'd to him by his senses", c. "the only objects" which we perceive, d. "the very image which is present to the senses", e. "the real body", f. "interrupted images", and g. "the very beings which are intimately present to the mind". Moreover there is discrepancy in this variety. Only one of these definitions appears as quite unqualified. The assertion c., that our perceptions are the only objects which we perceive, appears in each of the four passages. One other appears twice. In two of the passages Hume lays it down, e. that our perceptions are considered as real bodies. The rest make but a single appearance.

When these assertions are grouped together, according to their significance, they fall into two groups, which, at the price of avoiding contradiction within themselves, seem to contradict one another. The first group is composed of the following:

Group I.

Our perceptions are

c. our only objects,

b. what any common man means by a hat, a stone, or shoe,

e. the real body,

and according to the interpretation which is given to it,

g. the very beings which are intimately present to the mind.

The second group makes up the deficit:

Group II.

c. our only objects,

a. those very sensations, which enter by the eye or ear,

d. the very image which is present to the senses,

and according to the interpretation which is given to it,

g. the very beings which are intimately present to the mind.

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 497.

It appears that the definitions in Group I are spatial, but in Group II, non-spatial. This differentiation should not induce the reader to forsake the subjective sphere, in which the whole discussion takes place, as the subjective nature of Hume's conception of space is already known. Definition g., "the very beings which are intimately present to the mind", would seem to belong more naturally to Group II, owing to the non-spatial significance which it is usual to attach to the word 'mind'. But with a certain straining of the meaning, it could no doubt be made to fit Group I, if that were necessary. Hume himself was, doubtless, aware of the two tendencies, in his definition, and it may be presumed that he had this distinction in mind, when he said, "I shall at first suppose, that there is a single existence, which I shall call indifferently object or perception, according as it shall seem best to suit my purpose". Adapting the Humeian terminology to our classification, we should qualify Group I with the name of "objects", and Group II with that of "perceptions". In Group I, perceptions as objects, there is nothing remarkable to observe. But in Group II, perceptions as perceptions, the notion of 'representation', contained in the word "image" in definition d., is to be remarked, first because it seems difficult to reconcile with the valid definition c., that our perceptions are our only objects, and secondly, because it is a notion which Hume works to its full extent a little later.

§ 35. Vindication of the Vulgar Man from the opinion that our "perceptions" are "interrupted".

We have seen that although Hume's purpose was to contrast the vulgar with the philosophic point of view, in order to ascertain from their conflict, what might be the essential nature of our "perceptions" themselves, he was not able to avoid a certain discrepancy, or difference of opinion, even within the vulgar body of opinion. The truth is that Hume is not desirous of avoiding it. For he wants the vulgar man to endorse his opinion that our "perceptions" are not themselves identical. By confusing "perceptions" defined as objects with "perceptions" defined as experiences, he is able to saddle the former with what he supposes to be the discrete character of the latter. But if the vulgar man is to be credited with the opinion c., that our "perceptions" are our only objects, he must assert and believe contrary to Hume, that our "perceptions" are identical. No doubt we do injustice to his character, when we

credit the vulgar man with so subtle an opinion. But we have Hume's authority on our behalf. For nothing is more certain than that, if the vulgar man were to be thought as simple as his name, he could not have been of any service to Hume. For the simple man could not have been supposed able to debate in the subjective sphere, where Hume's argument takes place. But Hume wishes to have the authority of the vulgar man, in asserting that our "perceptions" are "interrupted". .... We have already observed, — Hume writes, — that however philosophers may distinguish betwixt the objects and perceptions of the senses ..... yet this is a distinction, which is not comprehended by the generality of mankind[1]). And 'Tis indeed evident, — he writes later — that as the vulgar suppose their perceptions to be their only objects, and at the same time believe the continu'd existence of matter, we must account for the origin of the belief upon that supposition[2]).

To enter, therefore, — he now proceeds — upon the question concerning the source of the error and deception with regard to identity, when we attribute it to our resembling perceptions, notwithstanding their interruption; I must here recall an observantion, which I have already prov'd and explained[3]).

This observation concerns the notion of resemblance. Hume's reference is to Part II. Sect. 5, where the "relation" of resemblance was discussed. Our next section will be devoted to the present use which Hume makes of it. Before passing to it, we have to vindicate the vulgar man. For when Hume talks of "the error and deception with regard to identity, when we attribute it to our resembling perceptions, notwithstanding their interruption", he is making a presupposition concerning the nature of our "perceptions", which the vulgar man would not admit. Concerning the nature of "perceptions" in general, it is obvious that the vulgar man would be prejudiced in favour of the definitions of them, appearing in Group I, rather than those in Group II. He could, no doubt, be brought to accept these latter definitions, when the nature of the inevitable conjunction between the senses and their objects had been described to him. But he would certainly insist upon regarding this conjunction as an

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 491. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 497.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 491.

actual inseparability, and the difference as something verbal and artificial. For the one opinion to which the vulgar man must cling is that his perceptions are his only objects. The vulgar man would, of course, be able to distinguish quite clearly between his "perceptions" and his perceptive experiences. He would not hesitate to say, "I saw a rainbow yesterday", where such a distinction is actually asserted. But it is not this distinction which is here involved. The question is confined here to the possibility of recognizing two elements in the objective character of the perceptive experience. Now, as against Hume, it seems to us, that the vulgar man world assert staunchly that he refers exclusively to one object when he has a perception; that is to say, the he refers all the 'qualities' perceived in the perception, 'qualities' such as extension, reality, distance, identity etc., to one single object, the 'perception', namely, and does not hold, as a 'philosopher' might, that his 'perception' is merely something like an 'image', which represents some object outside the 'perception', some object, that is, not perceived, to which certain of the qualities involved — we cannot talk here of 'perceived' qualities — must be attributed.

If the vulgar man believed, as Hume says, that his 'perceptions' were hats, stones, shoes and such like, he would not admit for an instant, that his perceptions were "interrupted". He would acknowledge readily enough that he does not always perceive his 'perceptions', that he sees his shoes this evening, and that he will see them again tomorrow morning, but that during the night he will not see them. But this "interruption" he would attribute unhesitatingly to his real perceptive experiences. He would say, My boots, my "perceptions", exist equally during the night, as during the day, it is only that I do not see them. If they did not exist during the night, I should not be able to see them again tomorrow morning. It is indeed probable that the vulgar man would take objection to the word "perception". While willing perhaps, for Hume's sake, to forsake his ordinary and naif standpoint, and to enter the subjective sphere, and make no mention of any absolute reality conceived without reference to some subjectivity, he would none the less dislike the suggestion in the word "perception" that the existence of the perceived object is indistinguishable from the act of its being perceived. If I agree to call my shoe a "perception" — he might urge against Hume — you must allow that this "perception" has a reality of its own. While admitting that the objects which I perceive are 'dependent', in a certain fashion, on the consciousness by means of which I perceive them, I can and must recognize that these "perceptions" have a nature of their own.

Different "perceptions" have different natures. I can distinguish between a pair of shoes which I perceive, and a pair of shoes which I only dream that I perceive, etc. The vulgar man would refuse to acknowledge that his "perceptions" were interrupted. If he were a man of unusual perspicuity, and had succeeded in understanding the pure nature of the subjective sphere, he would object to Hume's use of the word "interrupted" in connection with "perceptions". Our "perceptions" have an ideal existence only, he would say, they are not 'real' in the same sense as our perceptive experiences themselves, and cannot therefore be supposed to be "interrupted" in the same real, discrete, and temporal sense as our perceptive experiences. The question which we are discussing, he might continue, does not concern any real identity, and cannot depend upon any real interruption. We are not met to decide what is the nature of the identity or non-identity of any real object itself in any real external world. Our business is to determine how it is that we come to 'perceive' the identity of the real object in the external world; or, if you like it better, how we come to 'imagine' the identity of the real object in the external world, etc. It is interesting to note that Hume falsifies the opinions of the vulgar man, exactly when, and to the measure that, he confuses these two questions with one another. It is when Hume thinks that the nature of reality excludes the possibility of a real thing being identical, and therefore also excludes the possibility of our perceiving an identical real object, that he falls into the fallacy of making the vulgar man attribute the characteristics of reality to his "perceptions". It cannot be asserted too frequently, that the characteristics of reality have no bearing upon our 'perceptions'. If it were true that the nature of reality is such that no real thing can be identical, this would not, by itself, be sufficient to prevent our perceiving the identity of real things.

From his own 'sceptical' point of view, Hume contradicted himself in this matter, for he could not truly assert both that the nature of reality excluded the possibility of its being identical, and that reality was for ever beyond the reach of perception. For if he had not perceived that reality was not identical, on what grounds could he assert it?

§ 36. The Re-appearance of Hume's notion of the "Idea".

Passing to consider the principle which Hume has already established, but which he considers himself bound to bring into further prominence, we find the following: N o t h i n g i s m o r e a p t

to make us mistake one idea for another, than any relation betwixt them, which associates them together in the imagination, and makes it pass with facility from one to the other. Of all relations, that of resemblance is in this respect the most efficacious; and that because it not only causes an association of ideas, but also of dispositions, and makes us conceive the one idea by an act or operation of the mind, similar to that by which we conceive the other. This circumstance I have observ'd to be of great moment; and we may establish it as a general rule, that whatever ideas place the mind in the same disposition or in similar ones, are very apt to be confounded. The mind readily passes from one to the other, and perceives not the change without a strict attention, of which, generally speaking, 'tis wholly incapable[1]).

We are arrived at the first stage of Hume's argument, where he will draw a distinction between a 'genuine' and 'spurious' identity, based upon a confusion between identity and resemblance. The first observation of importance, which any reader should draw from reading the passage just quoted, is the re-appearance of Hume's old word "idea". "Nothing is more apt to make us mistake one idea for another", Hume said, "than any relation betwixt them, which associates them together in the imagination, and makes it pass with facility from one to the other," and again, "Of all relations, that of resemblance is in this case the most efficacious; and that because it not only causes an association of ideas, but also of dispositions, and makes us conceive the one idea by an act or operation of the mind, similar to that by which we conceive the other."

What does Hume mean here by calling the perception an "idea"? The notion recalls the vaguest of the definitions, definition g., "the very beings which are intimately present to the mind". Accepting the reference, to which Hume alludes in the text, and going back to an earlier part of the Treatise, (namely to Part II. Sect. 5), we find the word "idea" there commonly in use. That section starts to concern itself with abstract ideas such as space in general, and the idea of a vacuum, but it proceeds to wider interests. We find a repetition of the conception of the relations of resemblance, contiguity and causation, as *principles of union among*

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 491—2.

ideas[1]), and the following curious notion, I shall .... observe, that as the mind is endow'd with a power of exciting any idea it pleases; whenever it dispatches the spirits into that region of the brain, in which the idea is plac'd; these spirits always excite the idea when they run precisely into the proper traces, and rummage that cell, which belongs to the idea. But as their motion is seldom direct, and naturally turns a little to the one side or the other; for this reason the animal spirits, falling into the contiguous traces, present other related ideas in lieu of that, which the mind desir'd at first to survey. This change we are not always sensible of ....[2]).

This might stand as a physical and contingent parallel to Hume's present notion of the "association of dispositions", and the mind being placed in a "disposition" by its "ideas". But the conception becomes almost identical with the present, as the context continues, under the heading of resemblance: viz. Of the three relations above mention'd that of resemblance is the most fertile source of error; .... Resembling ideas are not only related together, but the actions of the mind, which we employ in considering them, are so little different, that we are not able to distinguish them. This last circumstance is of great consequence and we may in general observe, that wherever the actions of the mind in forming any two ideas are the same, or resembling, we are very apt to confound these ideas, and take the one for the other. Of this we shall see many instances in the progress of this treatise[3]). We may remember what an important part the conception of the "idea" plays in Hume's doctrine; how he inherited the notion from Locke, and how he modified it and gave it the supremacy in his own philosophy. When Hume said, ... I content myself with knowing perfectly the manner in which objects affect my senses, and their connections with each other, as far as experience informs me of them. This suffices for the conduct of life; and this also suffices for my philosophy, which pretends only to explain the nature and causes of our perceptions, or impressions

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 364. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 365. 3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 365.

and ideas[1]); he was really expressing his subjectivism in terms of the Lockeian idea, although he there uses the three words, "perception", "impression" and "idea" indiscriminately, and as if they were interchangeable with one another.

At last, in the present connection, we have an opportunity of ascertaining Hume's most definite conception of the "idea". Hume brings his principle of resemblance to bear on the question of our perception of identity. He describes its operation in two examples, the first being offered as an instance of the perception of a comparatively 'genuine', and the second as an instance of the perception of a comparatively 'spurious', identity. In order to apply this general maxim, he says, we must first examine the disposition of the mind in viewing any object which preserves a perfect identity, and then find some other object, that is confounded with it, by causing a similar disposition. When we fix our thought on any object, and suppose it to continue the same for some time; 'tis evident we suppose the change to lie only in the time, and never exert ourselves to produce any new image or idea of the object. The faculties of the mind repose themselves in a manner, and take no more exercise, than what is necessary to continue that idea, of which we were formerly possest, and which subsists without variation or interruption. The passage from one moment to another is scarce felt, and distinguishes not itself by a different perception or idea, which may require a different direction of the spirits in order to its conception[2]).

It is to be observed that Hume is now employing a three-fold division of elements within the subjective perception, where we know that there is room only for a two-fold division into noesis and noema. Hume speaks I. of a "disposition of the mind", II. of an "idea or image", and III. of an "object". There is only one set of theories which makes use of such a tripartite division in consciousness. These are the varieties of the representative theory of perception. We are obliged to conclude that, in spite of his own most effective criticism of representative theories in general, Hume is himself now going to make use of one. The word "image" gives the whole matter away. It is true that the representative theories which Hume re-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 367—8. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 492.

futed were such as bore a reference to the real, transcendent world, in so far as the 'object' represented by these was a reality existing in the transcendent world. But, nevertheless, a representative theory, conceived of as operating within the subjective sphere, where the object 'represented' is not a transcendent reality, but a perception-reality, perception-houses, perception-trees, etc., is open to precisely the same objection, as those relating to reality. This is the objection, which Hume himself brought against those others, namely that we do not perceive two sets, but only one set, of objects. Just as, when the object perceived is taken to be a reality, what is perceived is not the representation of a reality but the reality itself, so, when the object perceived is taken to be a perception, what is perceived is not the representation of a perception, but the perception itself. But Hume talks as if our perceiving a perception was dependent upon our perceiving an "image" or "idea" of the perception. His three-fold division of the elements of perception is made to support an operation, or effect, of each upon the other.

"The mind being in a certain 'disposition' surveys an 'idea' which is an 'image' of the 'perception'." There can be no doubt that a representative theory is here involved of the kind which Hume himself has already refuted.

§ 37. Hume's "Philosopher" examined.

In making use of a representative theory within the subjective act of perception, Hume was guilty of holding the opinion characteristic of the Philosopher whom he professed to despise. This character we will now examine. It is not improbable that some one may have objected to our exposition of the views of the vulgar man, on the ground that according to our interpretation he does not differ from the philosopher. But in reality, although our version of the vulgar man shared with Hume's philosopher a conception of the subjective nature of consciousness, he differs from him in two important respects. Hume's philosopher was a comparative subjectivist, while the vulgar man was not: and the vulgar man would not hold a representative theory of perception, as Hume now wishes him to do. The philosopher is introduced as belonging to a class of men differing from the vulgar precisely in this, that they believe in a certain duplicity of objectivity . . . . however philosophers may distinguish betwixt the objects and perceptions of the senses; which they suppose co-existent and resembling, Hume

writes, yet this is a distinction, which is not comprehended by the generality of mankind, who as they perceive only one being, can never assent to the opinion of a double existence and representation[1]). And Hume says .... Philosophers .... distinguish .... betwixt perceptions and objects, of which the former are supposed to be interrupted and perishing, and different at every different return; the latter to be uninterrupted, and to preserve a continu'd existence and identity[2]). And again, This hypothesis is the philosophical one of the double existence of perceptions and objects; which pleases our reason, in allowing, that our dependent perceptions are interrupted and different; and at the same time is agreeable to the imagination, in attributing a continu'd existence to something else, which we call objects[3]). Now whatever Hume may have read into the notions of the philosopher, it is manifest, that, if he is to be true to his part, the philosopher must be supposed to start all his arguments within the subjective sphere. Unlike the vulgar man, the philosopher does not have to be weaned from a natural reference to reality. He starts his theories from the standpoint of the comparative subjectivist. He believes that there is such a thing as reality, but he believes that we cannot know anything about this reality apart from our perceptions. We are always confined, he believes, to the perception of images of realities, so that we can never perceive the realities themselves. The philosopher lives his life in the contemplation of reality, by means of the images of it which he believes himself to perceive.

When the philosopher is asked to join in the discussion he is told, that he must leave aside all reference to reality. But though he resigns his ordinary indirect reference to reality through images, he carries with him his representative theory, and this theory, being translated into the new subjective terms, convinces him that he perceives his images of reality only by means of certain "ideas", which, in their turn, represent those images. Let anyone who thinks that we are doing the philosopher injustice, consider Hume's statement, that the philosophical hypothesis has no primary recommendation, either to reason or the imagination[4]), but

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 491.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 499.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 502.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 499.

acquires all its influence on the imagination from the vulgar one[1]). Hume supposes that the philosophical hypothesis owes its origin, as he falsely supposes the vulgar hypothesis also to owe its, to the acceptance of a representative theory of perception. In other words, Hume considers that the representative theory involved in the philosophical hypothesis is based upon, and depends upon, the representative theory which he believes to be involved in the vulgar hypothesis.

Hume stands in the whole matter, therefore, in this curious situation, that all the arguments, which he brings against the philosophical hypothesis and its origin, can be, and should be, brought also against his own account of the origin of the vulgar hypothesis, which he professed to hold and which we attempted to rectify. In criticising the philosopher, Hume was unwittingly criticising himself.

§ 38. Hume's Example of the comparatively 'Genuine' Identity.

We have now to examine the details of Hume's account of our perception of the comparatively 'genuine' identity. Nothing is more apt to make us mistake one idea for another — Hume writes — than any relation betwixt them, which associates them together in the imagination, and makes it pass with facility from one to the other. Of all relations, that of resemblance is in this respect the most efficacious; and that because it not only causes an association of ideas, but also of dispositions, and makes us conceive the one idea by an act or operation of the mind, similar to that by which we conceive the other . . . . The mind readily passes from one to the other, and perceives not the change without a strict attention, of which, generally speaking, 'tis wholly incapable[2]).

We may suppose, then, that I am looking at an inkpot. I look at it continuously for some minutes, without taking my eyes off it. Under these conditions I perceive what we may agree to call an identical inkpot. Being convinced that if the real inkpot were to be identical, it would have to be continuously existent, and, as such, existent independently of my perception of it, Hume passes, through a misunderstanding of the nature of the dependence of the 'objective'

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 500.

2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 491—2.

upon the 'subjective', to the conclusion that I could not perceive any such independent object. From thence, by a confusion of premise and deduction, Hume passes further to the conclusion that no such independent object could exist, and arrives, by these most doubtful means, at the sphere of the subjective. The inkpot, then, which I perceive, and whose identity, together with the perception of whose identity, is in question, is a "perception". The gist of Hume's description is as follows.

In my perception of the identical inkpot a chain of 'events' is taking place. I am suffering a sequence of uni-dimensional sensations, or real perceptive experiences. These sensations resemble one another. They are exactly alike in everything except their individual singularity. Each of these sensations, or perceptive experiences, produces in my mind an idea, that, perhaps, which is "intimately present to the mind". This idea is an "image" of an "object". But the conscious mind has a natural tendency towards laziness. When, therefore, I notice how exactly resembling these individual singular experiences or sensations are, I cease to allow each one to produce its own particular idea, and make the "idea" produced by one of them, persist, or, as Hume says, "subsist", and serve the turn of all the rest. But since this "idea" is the "image" of an "object", when the "idea" persists, the "object" which it represents, appears to persist. "The faculties of the mind repose themselves in a manner, and take no more exercise than what is necessary to continue that idea, of which we were formerly possest, and which subsists without variation or interruption."

Hume's description is ingenious, but it is based upon a variety of distinctions which it is difficult to preserve. Although Hume's sceptical conclusions should have the effect of altogether excluding the objective world of reality from the discussion, much of the force of the description rests on an assumption of the real discreteness of the inkpot which we perceive. But the inkpot whose identity Hume ought to be discussing is not a real inkpot. The inkpot with which his business lies is a "perception". Nothing Hume has established up to this point argues against the possibility of a perception being identical. On the contrary, the fact that we perceive an identical inkpot, would, by itself, seem to entail that the object in consciousness, the perception-inkpot, was identical. Not being aware of the intentional structure of consciousness, Hume persisted in making his account of the subjective genesis of our perceptions an alternative, and, as it were, a second-best, to accounting for them in terms of objective reality. He will let the

word 'perception' cover both the real object which is perceived, and our perception of that object, with the object in consciousness on which that perception rests. The need of offering a subjective account of our perceptions only arises, Hume thinks, in the event of our suspecting the reality with which they present us.

Hume's empirical prejudices affect his present position in two ways. They affect his attitude, and his method. They spoil his attitude by engendering a false motive. Only because Hume believes that there can be no such object in the real world as an identical inkpot, does he consider himself bound to explain our perception of it. They spoil his method by making him rest even our perception of the identical inkpot upon a basis of reality. Hume's only reason for denying the identity of the perception-inkpot is that he thinks its identity is incompatible with the plurality and discreteness of the real experiences in which we perceive it. He returns to his old notion of the "fiction", and of the 'blind' imagination which has created it. Even the perception-inkpot cannot be identical. The only thing which is identical is our "image" of the perception-inkpot. The mind is lazy and contents itself with one image, instead of entertaining the number corresponding to the number of our real experiences. And when the "image" subsists, the perception-inkpot, which it represents, 'appears' to "subsists". There Hume makes use of his paradoxical appearance theory, to distinguish between the subjective appearance and the subjective 'reality' of a perception. For this use of the distinction there is, of course, no ground. If an inkpot, which is admitted to be a perception, appears to subsist, then it must be supposed 'really' to subsist, for the nature of a perception is to be perceived[1]). Hume's use of the real discreteness of our perceptive experiences, to deny the identity of the perception in those experiences, is a case of the empirical hypostasis. The 'one' perceptive experience of my looking at an inkpot for some minutes without interruption, can no doubt be divided from the objective point of view, into a number of different real experiences corresponding to the number of real units of time which it occupies. But the number of

1) Hume's attempt to distinguish between the 'appearance' and the 'reality' of a perception, must be contrasted with the proper division of the whole of the subjective perception into noesis and noema. Hume's attempt is improper because it rests on the notion of a division within the noema into appearance and reality, which is foreign to it. The whole perception can be divided into noesis and noema, perception of object, and object of perception; but neither of these will suffer any further division of the kind which Hume attempts.

units contained in the real period of time, and the consequent number of real perceptive experiences which I may be said to have enjoyed, cannot influence the unity of the purely subjective experience with which I am dealing when I am concerned with the perception-inkpot. In the same way, the number of the several different perceptive-experiences, which, as we shall see, are involved in Hume's example of the comparatively 'false' identity, cannot affect the essential unity or 'sameness' of the subjective perception, which ensues from the identity of the subjective experiences. Hume's notion of the "fiction" compels him to employ a representative theory, whose validity he has himself already denied. The "fiction" rests on a real basis of sensation. It cannot therefore 'be' identical. It can only 'appear to be' identical. In other words, it can only he a 'representation' of something which does not 'exist'. The nature of the representative theory which Hume employs cannot be considered, until Hume's second example of the perception of identity, his description of our perception of a comparatively 'spurious' identity, has been considered. To this we shall now turn. We shall find that Hume's blameworthiness for using a representative theory is mitigated by the impossibility of recognizing any difference separating the "idea" or "image" representative, from the represented "object" or "perception".

§ 39. Hume's Example of the comparatively 'Spurious' Identity.

Now what other objects, Hume writes, besides identical ones, are capable of placing the mind in the same disposition, when it considers them, and of causing the same uninterrupted passage of the imagination from one idea to another? This question is of the last importance. For if we can find any such objects, we may certainly conclude, from the foregoing principle, that they are very naturally confounded with identical ones, and are taken for them in most of our reasonings. But, tho' this question be very important, 'tis not very difficult or doubtful. For I immediately reply that a succession of related objects places the mind in this disposition, and is considered with the same smooth and uninterrupted progress of the imagination, as attends the view of the same invariable objects. The very nature and essence of relation is to connect our ideas with each other, and upon the

appearance of one, to facilitate the transition to its correlative. The passage betwixt related ideas is, therefore, so smooth and easy, that it produces little alteration on the mind, and seems like the continuation of the same action; and as the continuation of the same action is an effect of the continu'd view of the same object, 'tis for this very reason we attribute sameness to every succession of related objects. The thought slides along the succession with equal facility, as if it considered only one object; and therefore confounds the succession with the identity[1]).

It is to be observed that, in the opening sentence of this passage, Hume is guilty either of denying, or of disguising, what he has but just established. "What other objects", Hume says, "beside identical ones, are capable of placing the mind in the same disposition etc.?" But the whole sense of the description which Hume gave of our perception of identity lay in Hume's premise that the objects perceived, the perception-inkpots namely, were not themselves identical. We are supposing no such absurd view, as that Hume should, by the word "objects", be referring now to objectivity itself. That sphere is excluded from Hume's consideration, once and for all, by the fact of its non-existence. Hume knew that no real identical inkpot existed in a real external world. His business was to discover whether there was such a thing as an identical perception. And only on the ground of denying that there was an identical perception-inkpot, was he impelled to a representative theory, and the supposition of an identical "image" of a perception. Not the perception itself, Hume asserted, but only the "idea" or "image" of a perception, is identical. We might take his present admission of the identity of the object in question, namely the "perception", as an argument to add to our inability to distinguish between the "idea" or "image" and the "object" supposed to be imaged, and our consequent inability to deny the identity of the "perception" itself.

But Hume was impelled now by a fresh consideration to allow the identity of the 'objects' which in the previous example he had denied. In basing all our perception of identity upon a recognition, or perception, of resemblance, Hume had left himself no means of accounting for any direct perception of resemblance. For, according to his account, whenever the "mind" noted a re-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 492—3.

semblance among the "images" or "ideas" before it, it contented itself forthwith with one "image", which it allowed to stand for those that came after it. But how, then, should we ever perceive objects which we pronounce to be "resembling", and yet deny to be "identical"? Our "mind", being lazy in its "disposition", will never allow us to contemplate a series of resembling "objects" through a series of resembling "images" to which it can so easily put a stop. It would seem as though the "disposition" of our "mind" would effectually prevent our ever perceiving a resemblance. For an answer to this objection the reader must search Hume in vain. At one moment he seems to wish to solve the difficulty by the simple process of denying (as we have seen) the point on which his former explanation rested. At another, he seems to recognize that he owes his reader some more plausible account. This reasoning, it must be confest — he observes — in a footnote to this section — is somewhat abstruse and difficult to be comprehended ....We may observe, that there are two relations, and both of them resemblances, which contribute to our mistaking the succession of our interrupted perceptions for an identical object. The first is the resemblance of the perceptions; the second is the resemblance, which the act of the mind in surveying a succession of resembling objects bears to that in surveying an identical object[1]). Hume's explanation of our perception of the 'spurious' identity is to rest on the resemblance of a state of mind, rather than on a recognition by the mind of the resemblance of its images. The state of mind of coming to perceive a 'spurious' identity resembles the state of mind of coming to perceive, or, possibly, of perceiving, a 'genuine' identity; and the recognition by the mind of this similarity of its two states induces it to accept one image, instead of a sequence, with the perception of identity which this acceptance produces. But here again Hume finds himself obliged to admit the actual identity of the object as it is perceived. He speaks of the state of the mind "in surveying an identical object". Hume is hard pressed. Unless he can preserve some distinction between his first and second examples, he has no ground left for distinguishing between identity on the one hand and resemblance on the other. He wants to deny the identity of the perception, and to that end, is obliged to make that identity a "fiction", and to ex-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 493.

plain our perception of it in terms of a perception of resemblance. But once this explanation is given, he becomes aware of having endangered the very distinction between identity and resemblance of which he supposes himself to have made use. He finds, in fact, that either all perceived identity must be perceived resemblance, or all perceived resemblance perceived identity. As quickly as possible, then, Hume drops the means of his former account, and proceeds to his second example, as if he had allowed, from the beginning, that the first perception was an instance of an identical perception.

But, even forgetting this inconsequence, Hume has not escaped from his difficulty; he has only changed its orientation. If he suppose himself to have accounted for our perception of identity, he cannot suppose himself to have explained the nature of our perception of resemblance. For if, in the first example, we perceived an identical object, it was its perceived identity, and not its perceived resemblance, which induced us to be satisfied with one "image" instead of a series of "images". The resemblance of the so-called "images" can have been produced by nothing except their "identity". It is obvious that the explanation of our perception of resemblance would cause Hume just as much trouble as, from the other stand-point, the explanation of our perception of identity. From the one point of view, having perceived a resemblance, why should the mind go on to perceive an identity? From the other point of view, having perceived an identity, why should the mind work backward to perceive a resemblance? This latter problem Hume does not attempt to solve. He could indeed have made no progress in that direction, until he had examined introspectively the assertion of the "unity" of an object, which he considered as a tautology, "An object is the same with itself". This "unity" of the object in consciousness is the foundation of its ability equally to be identical with, and to be resembling to, other objects. This "unity" is no other than the perception or "idea" when it is purged of its association with any "image", and is allowed to be present itself to consciousness within the reflective perception. That it is always identical with itself means that it can be present to consciousness on more than one occasion; and, that it can resemble other perceptions means that it can be retained in consciousness as an identity by the memory.

As Hume's two examples do not differ from one other, as he wishes it to be supposed, by being, the one a perception of a 'genuine', and the other a perception of a 'spurious' identity, we can accept

them as being, what they are in fact, two versions of a perception of a similar kind of identity. What really differentiates the examples from one another is not the quality of the perceived identity, but a difference in the circumstances from which the identity is perceived. His first description, that of the processes involved in "viewing any object which preserved a perfect identity", is applicable to a man perceiving an identical object within the unity of one real perceptive experience, as when he gazes uninterruptedly upon any object for the space of some definite time. His second description, that of the processes involved in "viewing a succession of related objects", is applicable to a man perceiving an identical object through the variety of several real perceptive experiences, as when he opens and shuts his eyes successively upon one object. Concerning the circumstances of his second instance Hume is explicit. We find by experience, — he writes, — that there is such a *constancy* in almost all the impressions of the senses, that their interruption produces no alteration on them, and hinders them not from returning the same in appearance and in situation as at their first existence. I survey the furniture of my chamber; I shut my eyes, and afterwards open them; and find the new perceptions to resemble perfectly those, which formerly struck my senses. This resemblance is observ'd in a thousand instances, and naturally connects together our ideas of these interrupted perceptions by the strongest relation, and conveys the mind with an easy transition from one to another. An easy transition or passage of the imagination, along the ideas of these different and interrupted perceptions, is almost the same disposition of mind with that in which we consider one constant and uninterrupted perception[1]).

The different angle from which the two experiences are described, might, perhaps, be made to account for the discrepancies between the descriptions, of which there are not a few.

But we are not concerned with the details of these, except in so far as they are pertinent to the exactness of two conceptions, which reside in these examples, and are of capital importance.

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1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 493.

§ 40. Hume's notions of the "disposition of the mind", and of the "idea", set free from the results of his Empirical Prejudice.

The worst consequence of Hume's sceptical premise, that there was in general no such thing as a transcendental world of reality, was that it forced him to find a place for reality as it were 'within' the subjective sphere, and eventually to identify consciousness with reality through the means of sensation. Sensation appeared to him to offer a means of crossing from things psychical to things physical, and vice versa. But for this hypostasis, Hume's scepticism corrected, as he allowed it to be, by a mere change from a philosophical to a practical attitude towards life, might have been wholly commendable, as having had the fortunate effect of driving his enquiries into the realm of the subjective. As it is, Hume's empirical hypostasis is apt to spoil his most intuitive observations of consciousness in 'action' by originating some reference of them to reality. There is no more valuable and suggestive notion to be found in the Treatise, than Hume's present notion of the identical "idea", falsely called "image", and of the "disposition" or "act of the mind in surveying an identical object". When these two notions are purged from their empirical associations, the "idea" which is the product of the "disposition" can be converted into the "phenomenon", which is the product of the purely conscious "act". The "disposition of the mind" has to be rid of its connection with the "animal spirits" of which Hume speaks, and of its connection with "causality".

The "idea" has to be dissociated from Hume's notion of the "object", which always bears with it an empirical reference on the one hand to that external world of reality which Hume denies to exist, and on the other hand to the act of sensation regarded in physiological terms. Beyond this again, the "idea" has to be dissociated from Hume's present connection of it with an "image", which is to be the middle term of his representative theory. This is not difficult to do. We have to cling fast to the "idea" as the identical "perception", which is produced by the disposition and processes of the "mind". The "idea" in the examples is the identical inkpot-as-it-is-perceived by the perceiving subject. The "idea" is that identical object which is left, the noema in noesis, when the real inkpot-of-the-external-world has been excluded from consideration.

Hume himself was not able to identify the "idea" with his representative notion of the "image", except in most confused and

obscure terms. The words "idea", "image", "perception", and "object", are used so carelessly, and so freely interchanged with one another, that after the most careful examination of Hume's two sets of descriptions, it is quite impossible to be sure whether he supposes the image to 'represent' the object-in-consciousness, or the object-in-consciousness the image.

In the first of the two examples we are supposed to notice the "resemblance" of the "objects" perceived, and so, being lazy, to content ourselves with one "idea". The "idea" is here falsely connected with the "image" of the "objects", instead of with the "object" itself. "When we fix our thought on any object" — Hume wrote (Refer back to p. 130) — "and suppose it to continue the same for some time; 'tis evident we suppose the change to lie only in the time, and never exert ourselves to produce any new idea or image of the object." This must imply that if not the "objects" themselves, then at least our consciousness of those objects, has the power to produce an "image" of them. But this involves a complete revolution of the system of representation: for whoever heard of an object representing an image, instead of an image an object?

As Hume explains his example, three processes seem to take place. First, thanks to an image, we perceive an object, then, thanks to perceiving the resemblance of a sequence of objects, we content ourselves with one image which we allow to 'subsist', and thirdly, thanks to this one subsisting image, we perceive one identical object. But this is absurd. If it is only by means of an image that we perceive the object at all, we cannot contrive to alter the number or kind of the images by means of a direct reference to the objects. If, therefore, we perceived any resemblance before we perceived the identity, it would necessarily be the resemblance of the images, and not the resemblance of the objects, which we perceived. And, similarly, we could not perceive the identity of an object, until we had first perceived the identity of an image. But if we perceived the identity of the image, we should not need to perceive the identity of the object, for there would be no means of distinguishing the image from the object. These would, in fact, be not only identical with themselves, but also identical with each other.

What applies to the first example, applies equally to the second. There is no room within Hume's explanation for the distinction between image and object. His own criticism of representation in general, that we do not perceive two sets, but only one set, of objects, is applicable to the present instance. We do not perceive an identical

image and an identical object, but only an identical object. That, therefore, in Hume's explanation, which is allowed to be identical, namely, the "idea" or "image", becomes the identical "object" or "perception", and, as such, must drop the alternative title of "image"; for there is no sense in talking of an idea as an image of itself. The idea is the perception, and the identical object in consciousness.

Induced partly by his sceptical prejudices, and partly by an original conception of the subjective sphere, Hume convinced himself, in his attempt to account for our perception of identity, that the "perception" which was identical was a subjective object in consciousness, the object namely, as the subject perceived it, which is a phenomenon, or, as Hume called it, an "idea". Working from this conviction, Hume may be said to have discovered phenomena by a reflective observation of the processes involved in consciousness in the act of perception. His actual descriptions of these processes are inaccurate and often clumsy. The distinctions of which Hume makes use, in his account of how a perception of resemblance leads to a perception of identity, are difficult to preserve. His descriptions are seldom free from a conception of 'activity' which is drawn from the physical world of reality. His empirical hypostases tend to convert the subjective "disposition of the mind" into something physiological or psycho-physical, and to connect the phenomena or "ideas" which this "disposition" produces, with the utterly useless and fallacious notion of "images" employed in representative theories of perception. The representative theory, to which Hume considers himself driven, in spite of his previous condemnation of it, is itself the result of his empiricism, which not only made him sceptical concerning the existence of the external world, but left him no means of connecting a subjective consciousness with the same. But, in his inability to relate the subjective with the transcendental, Hume suffered from a lack common to all philosophers until the time of Brentano, the lack namely of the conception of intention, and the intentional character of consciousness.

§ 41. Hume deserts the Phenomenal sphere. Identity is converted into an Abstract Idea. Parts III and IV of Hume's "System".

The tripartite division of the subjective act of perception, to which Hume was led in his attempt to explain how we are able to perceive identity, carried with it this much at least in its favour, that

it could be translated, by the suppression of its middle term, into the proper division of the conscious act into noesis and noema. But in the Third and Fourth parts of his System, for the sake of giving some account of our belief in the continued existence of objects, the perception of whose identity he has established, Hume sees fit to hypostasise a modicum of the "disposition of the mind" into a real psycho-physical experience. Thus it is that he turns a three-fold division of perception, which was not beyond the reach of subjective conversion into phenomenology, into a four-fold division which carries him ever further and further from the phenomenological bias. As he goes he abandons his representative theory. But along with that he flings to the winds his notion of the "disposition" and the "idea". We hear no more of these.

The change of attitude is made with astonishing rapidity. Even in the summary he gives of his account of our perception of identity, which precedes his consideration of continuous existence, he rejects all the careful distinctions on which that account was based. The persons, who entertain this opinion concerning the identity of our resembling perceptions — he writes — are in general all the unthinking and unphilosophical part of mankind (that is, all of us at one time or other) .... The very image, which is present to the senses, is with us the real body, and 'tis to these interrupted images we ascribe a perfect identity[1]). In this crude language Hume merges all his terms. He actually speaks here of "interrupted" "images" which are "present to the senses"! But Hume is urged now by another need. Just as he founded his problem of identity upon the seeming irreconcilability of the interruptedness of our experiences with the identity of our perceptions — and for the sake of keeping up their irreconcilability was willing to confuse the differences of significance contained in the one word 'perception', and to misrepresent the vulgar man — so now, in order to found the problem of continued existence upon a seeming contradiction, he is willing to forget his solution of the problem of identity, and having but just reconciled interruption and identity, is willing to set them once more by the heels.

The very image, he writes, which is present to the senses, is with us the real body; and 'tis to these interrupted images we ascribe a perfect identity. But as

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 493.

the interruption of the appearance seems contrary to the identity, and naturally leads us to regard these resembling perceptions as different from each other, we here find ourselves at a loss how to reconcile such opposite opinions. The smooth passage of the imagination along the ideas of the resembling perceptions makes us ascribe to them a perfect identity. The interrupted manner of their appearance makes us consider them as many resembling, but still distinct beings, which appear after certain intervals. The perplexity arising from this contradiction produces a propension to unite these broken appearances by the fiction of a continu'd existence, which is the third part of that hypothesis I propos'd to explain[1]).

Nothing is more certain from experience, Hume continues, than that any contradiction either to the sentiments or passions gives a sensible uneasiness . . . . . Now there being here an opposition betwixt the notion of the identity of resembling perceptions, and the interruptions of their appearance, the mind must be uneasy in that situation, and will naturally seek relief from that uneasiness. Since the uneasiness arises from the opposition of two contrary principles, it must look for relief by sacrificing the one to the other. But as the smooth passage of our thought along our resembling perceptions, makes us ascribe to them an identity, we can never without reluctance yield up that opinion. We must, therefore, turn to the other side, and suppose that our perceptions are no longer interrupted, but preserve a continu'd as well as an invariable existence, and are by that means entirely the same[2]).

But the "opposition", betwixt the notion of the identity of resembling perceptions and the interruption of their appearance, was no more 'difficult' than the parallel notion of the 'opposition' between the identity and the interrupted appearances of real objects in the transcendent world. Hume's "smooth passage of our thought" turned out to be not a transition of perception from resemblance to resemblance, but simply the perception of an identity. In the case

1) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 493—4. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 494.

of the perception of objects in the transcendental world, it has to be granted that the identity which we perceive in them is inseparable from the perception of their continued and invariable existence. The perception of any 'object' whatsoever is inseparable from the perception of its identity. To say that our perception of the identity of the objects in the transcendental world is dependent on our perception of their continued existence is to put the cart before the horse. It would be better to say that our perception of their continued and invariable existence is dependent upon our perception of their identity. For unless we perceive its identity (Hume's "unity") we cannot perceive any object at all. Continuous existence happens to be the mode in which a certain set of objects, namely, realities, in the transcendental world, 'exist'.

When Hume turns to the other alternative, and instead of supposing that our perceptions are interrupted and therefore not identical, supposes that they are identical and therefore not interrupted — "our perceptions are no longer interrupted, but preserve a continu'd as well as an invariable existence, and are by that means entirely the same" — he is again at fault in presuming that our perceptions cannot be both at once, but must be either the one or the other. It is obvious that an object cannot both appear and not appear to the same subject at the same time. But that is not relevant to the question whether an object is exhausted in its appearance, so that if something 'like' the same object appear again later, the subject is justified in believing that it cannot be the same. A distinction must be drawn between noesis and noema, so that a man may say, the identical perception is now before my consciousness, and is now no longer before, it, and is now before it again, etc. Hume would appear to realize, where the difficulty lies, when he says . . . . as the *appearance* of a perception in the mind, and its *existence* seem at first sight entirely the same, it may be doubted, whether we can ever assent to so palpable a contradiction, and suppose a perception to exist without being present to the mind. In order to clear up this matter, he proceeds, and learn how the interruption in the appearance of a perception implies not necessarily an interruption in its existence 'twill be proper to touch upon some principles, which we shall have occasion to explain more fully afterwards. The reference is to Part IV. Sect. 6., where we are left in no doubt, that Hume misinterprets the material in his hands. In this latter

section identity is conceived as an abstract idea, a "fiction" in the worst sense of the word. There is no such thing anywhere as identity, nor can we ever anywhere perceive such a thing. But yet, Hume supposes that we are able to believe in identity, owing to the nature of our disposition. In order to satisfy its lazy desire to convert a plurality of resembling entities into a single entity, the mind treads from one contradiction to another, until it reaches a stage of invention, where they seem to be resolved. This interpretation of Hume's conception of identity as an abstract idea may be confirmed by some further quotations from this section. We have a distinct idea of an object, Hume writes, that remains invariable and uninterrupted thro' a suppos'd variation of time; and this idea we call that of *identity* or *sameness*[1]). It is this idea by which we falsely qualify, the objects which we perceive, whether these objects are supposed to belong to the external world, or to our individual selves or ego's. Hume treats these two sets of 'objects' separately, but in both cases he speaks of the attribution of identity as a "mistake". He says, Our propensity to this *mistake* is so great from the resemblance above-mention'd, that we fall into it before we are aware . . . .[2]). He even refers to it as an "absurdity". In order to justify to ourselves this *absurdity*, we often feign some new and unintelligible principle that connects the objects together, and prevents their interruption or variation[3]).

In one sentence we find the conception of the subjective faculty of genesis in consciousness, which we have tried to guard so jealously, abandoned in a now avowedly sceptical use of the "imagination". . . . . we *feign* the continu'd existence of the perceptions of our senses, — Hume writes — and run into the notion of a soul, and self, and substance, to disguise the variation . . . . . we may farther observe, that where we do not give rise to such a *fiction*, our propension to confound identity with relation is so great that we are apt to *imagine* something unkown and mysterious, connecting the parts, beside their relation[4]).

Hume sums up the matter in a passage which leaves no further room for doubt. Thus the controversy concerning iden-

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 535.
2) Gr. & Gr. I, pp. 535—6.
3) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 536.
4) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 536.

tity — he writes — is not merely a dispute of words. For when we attribute identity, in an improper sense, to variable or interrupted objects, our mistake is not confin'd to the expression, but is commonly attended with a fiction, either of something invariable or uninterrupted, or of something mysterious and inexplicable, or at least with a propensity to such fictions[1]). It is to be presumed that Hume makes his reference to a "proper sense" of the attribution of identity, not for the sake of preserving any memory of his former virtues, but merely to keep for himself the pretension, at least, to some means of distinguishing objects which appear to be identical from those which appear to be resembling only.

§ 42. A concluding Estimate of Hume's position.

It must always be regretted that Hume confined himself to the perception, and did not seek to extend his problems to the other activities of consciousness. He speaks of identity in general, as if the whole problem were set within the faculty of perception, and as if the only 'objects' about whose identity any question could be raised, were the reality in the external world, and the psycho-physical ego. And, having no proper notion of space, Hume was free to treat these two upon the same level. The objections which he brought against the identity of the former, he could bring equally against that of the latter. Hume did not succeed in touching the true generality of the problem. How is an identical object possible in consciousness? Hume should have asked; or, What is identical in consciousness, when I say that I perceive an identical object? The question which Hume did ask, What is the difference between the "appearance" and the "existence" of the perceptions? should be converted into: How, within the subjective sphere, can the object of which I am conscious be distinguished from the experience in which I am conscious of it? Hume's "existence" should have become the identical 'object', the object of the intention of the consciousness, the "idea", falsely called "image", whereto the "mind" can return innumerable times, and always to an exact identity. Hume's "appearance" should have become the experiential or pure 'psychological' 'experience', the 'conditions' and 'moments' of the "mind's" consciousness of its object. The problem might have been extended to cover all the fields, the logical,

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 536.

for instance, as well as the perceptive. Hume might have considered the identity of a judgment. How can the proposition $2 + 2 = 4$, be separated from the 'moments' in which it is apprehended, and remain the proposition $2 + 2 = 4$, whose identity can be re-apprehended innumerable times? Hume might have extended his problem to the aesthetic. What constitutes the identity of a Beethoven Symphony, he might have asked, that it is separable from all the scripts which contain it, and all the representations of it by orchestras which I can hear? The answer to these questions lies open to the introspective gaze, and may be expressed in a description of the processes of consciousness which are there revealed.

Hume's 'sceptical' prejudices concerning the external world need not — we have often asserted — have spoiled his subjective observations of their value. Even had the philosophic doubt grown strong enough to overcome the opposite assurance of everday, Hume's impeachment, had it grown to such, of the authority of the conscious intuition, need not have robbed his philosophy of its value. In concluding that, when we practise our accustomed perception of the external world, we are not receiving the fullest evidence of our perceptions, since a little examination reveals their 'falsity', Hume would by no means have escaped from the problem of identity. The question, What is identical in consciousness? would have remained to be solved, albeit in the terms of hallucination rather than perception.

We can find a parallel to Hume's suggested falsity of perception, in other spheres. Suppose that the proposition $2 + 2 = 5$, be present to the mind. If the mind believes it, the proposition is a "fiction" in Hume's sceptical sense. It represents something which cannot 'be' as it appears. We must conclude that the intellectual apprehension was not made with the fullest evidence, since a little examination reveals its falsity. But, taken as a 'false' or 'imaginary' proposition, it has an identity which may usefully be investigated and described. The mind can return to the proposition $2 + 2 = 5$ innumerable times. The mind can 'mean' it, in its identity, as often as it will. A parallel could be given of a memory which has been qualified and shown to be inexact by some other person, The memory would have been shown to be 'false', but it could be remembered itself, for all that, and believed either to be true or false. From the philosophical point of view Hume supposed perception to be deceptive and illusory; but he needed still to examine the nature of that perception. He did examine it, and found it consistent with itself, within itself, although it seemed to contradict the dictates of his reason. So

Hume could do no more than leave the attitudes of everyday and of philosophy at loggerheads, and profess to be alternately credulous and a sceptic. But he needed not to have made a battleground of his faculties. Each faculty must be allowed to be autonomous with regard to its own data. If the perception present us with a consistent world, we must believe it, and practice in it as we can. Indeed, as Hume simply said, we do believe it. The "studied principle" cannot prevail. In the sphere of perception the reason has no rights. Let the perception be taken in full evidence, and, beyond the possibility of the Cartesian doubt, I cannot question it. For, in fact, as Hume urged, where the processes synthesize in consciousness, the belief naturally follows. Belief, Hume realized, is nothing but the result of synthesis. There is protention in consciousness. The "mind" expects and is satisfied, and, where the satisfaction is perfect, it cannot doubt.

But now, instead of using his opportunities, Hume constrains himself to contradict himself, and become empirical, and and profess a comparative subjectivism and the novelty of 'scepticism'. Hume interprets the "existence" of "perceptions" and their "appearance" in a real sense. The world itself is made out of "perceptions" he says. The world is an "idea". The individual is a "bundle of experiences".

But our business does not lie with Hume's conclusions. Although they are usually taken as the epitome of Hume's contribution to philosophy, they lie outside of, and are foreign to, his subjective conception of the philosophical problem. The task of this essay is already done. The second half of the Third Part of Hume's System, concerned with the objectification of the perceptions, and the attempted "proof" that a perception of being may be sometimes "present to", and sometimes "absent from" a "mind", without implying a necessary "interruption in its existence", has been quoted, (Refer back to p. 125 et seq.).

The supposition of the continu'd existence of sensible objects or perceptions, Hume writes, implies not necessarily an interruption in the existence. We may easily indulge our inclination to that supposition. When the exact resemblance of our perceptions makes us ascribe to them an identity, we may remove the seeming interruption by feigning a continu'd being, which may fill those intervals, and preserve a perfect and entire identity to our perceptions[1]). The price at

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 496.

which such a 'solution' is reached is the sacrifice of all the distinctions which were involved in Hume's treatment of identity. When the perceptions were identical, they were subjective perceptions, perceptions of a subject with an object in the perceptions; but now that they are continuously existent, they are no longer perceptions in the subjective sense. It is no longer objects in perception, which are perceived to be either identical or continuously existent; but the perceptions themselves, as objects out of perception, are supposed to be both the one and the other.

The belief, accompanying this very remarkable 'perceptive-experience' is re-introduced as a mode of "vivacity". Hume says, It has been proved already, that belief in general consists in nothing, but the vivacity of an idea; and that an idea may acquire this vivacity by its relation to some present instance[1]).

But now, by confounding all his previous distinctions, by confusing "fictions" with "realities", "objects" with "perceptions", and all of them with psycho-physical experiences, Hume succeeds in deriving the vivacity of the belief in identity, in body, and continued existence, from "some lively impressions of the memory". Our memory — Hume writes — presents us with a vast number of instances of perceptions perfectly resembling each other, that return at different distances of time, and after considerable interruptions. This resemblance gives us a propension to consider these interrupted perceptions as the same; and also a propension to connect them by a continu'd existence, in-order to justify this identity, and avoid the contradiction, in which the interrupted appearance of these perceptions seems necessarily to involve us[2]).

But it is time to forego the examination of these contradictory 'conclusions', in which Hume involves himself, and in so doing departs ever further from the former virtues of his subjective idealism.

1) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 496. 2) Gr. & Gr. I, p. 496.