PERCEPTIONALISM

A System of Philosophy

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Reprinted from CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

NEW YORK
WILBUR B. KETCHAM, PUBLISHER
2 COOPER UNION

Christian Thought.

PERCEPTIONALISM: A SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY.

[Delivered before the American Institute of Christian Philosophy, August 11th, 1891.]

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THE word "perception," in its ordinary meaning and widest application, signifies the correct apprehension of fact or truth. On this basis, that philosophy which examines and explains perceptions as such, may be styled PERCEPTIONALISM. Let us discuss this name and give some reasons for the use of it; and let us consider the nature of the philosophy which it designates.

The Latin preposition "per," like its English equivalent "through," often indicates instrumentality, or agency, as in the maxim, "Qui facit per alium, facit per se"; but "per" never has this meaning when used as a prefix in the composition of words. It then signifies either movement through or over some place, as in the verbs *peragro*, *perambulo*, *permitto*, *perrumpo*, or else thoroughness in the performance of some action, as in the verbs *pereo*, *perfero*, *perficio*, *pernego*, *pernosco*. This last thought—thoroughness—is the ordinary signification of "per" as a prefix, and is that belonging to it in the words "perceive" and "perception."

The verb "percipere" and the noun "perceptio" originally meant any thorough taking of a thing, so as to bring it within one's possession. In the seventeenth chapter of Cato Major, Cicero speaks of the "perceptio fructuum," or harvesting of fruits; and, in the same chapter, he says "Themistocles omnium civium perceperat nomina"; that is, Themistocles had learnt, or mastered, the names of all the citizens. These quotations illustrate the transfer of the word from a physical to a psychical

application. But "percipere," as indicating intellectual apprehension, does not always, nor even generally, include memorizing; as it does when Themistocles is said to have learnt the names of his fellow-citizens. Ordinarily with the Romans this word signified simply the cognition of fact or truth; and especially, when they spoke of perceiving a thing by the senses or by the mind, they used language just as we do: they meant that psychical operation by which one comes to know that a thing is, or what it is, or that it would be, or what it would be. And this is a very natural use of language; for when we have gained the knowledge of any fact or truth, we may then be said to have taken something into our possession, whether we retain it afterwards in our memory or not.

In short, perception and cognition are two names for the same process. They differ in that perception emphasizes the thought of the process more than that of the result, while cognition emphasizes the thought of the result more than that of the process. But perception always terminates in knowledge, and is therefore cognition; no act or process is called perceptive except on the assumption that it produces absolute and well-founded conviction.

These statements will be confirmed if we consider the different modes of perception which occur in our daily experience. There are three simple modes of immediate cognition. Men perceive their own bodies and bodily affections and the immediate causes of these affections; and such cognition is the beginning of all sense-perception. They perceive their own souls as in activity, as thinking, feeling or willing; and this we call consciousness, or internal perception. Then, in connection with bodily and mental phenomena, they perceive spacial, temporal, causal and other relations; and, along with these relations, certain fundamenta on which they rest, such as spaces, times and changes. All such cognitions may be distinguished as concomitant perceptions, because they accompany those of sense-perception and consciousness. Thus, there are three simple modes of immediate perception.

We also form compound immediate perceptions, especially of external objects; and these prepare the way for inferential, or

"acquired" perception. The boy born blind, who obtained sight through a surgical operation, could not at first distinguish the cat from the dog visually, though he could tactually. Catching the cat one day he passed his hands over her, and identified what he felt with what he saw. Then he set her down and said, "So, puss, I shall know you another time." Here a concomitant perception compounded the cognitions of sight and touch; and evidently a basis for subsequent inference was secured by means of that compositional cognition. Hereafter, whether puss be seen in the day-time or handled in the dark, the same knowledge will be obtained through one sense which originally resulted from the use of two. All our ordinary sense-perceptions are more or less "acquired"; and some of them, such as determinations by the eye of the distance, size and shape of remote objects, are quite complex judgments.

More evidently, though not more really, inferential than the ordinary discriminations of sense are those rational perceptions by which things are seen as necessarily or probably or possibly consequent upon given antecedents. Here, perhaps, it would be more literal to say that a thing is inferentially perceived when it is necessary, and that, in other cases, we only perceive that it may probably or possibly exist; yet, even in these cases, we speak of perception if the judgment be made correctly. Because we may *know* that a thing is probable or possible.

All rational perceptions are related to our presentational cognitions, and seem consequent upon them. For in the immediate cognitions of fact we perceive, not merely simple fact, but also, by a concomitant cognition, various necessary relations according to which one fact is conditioned upon, or connected with, another. This prepares us for logical inference; so that afterwards, when a necessitant, or a necessary condition, appears, we can infer a necessary or a possible consequent, such as the case calls for.

Then, too, we must mention that important mode of rational perception which takes place even in the absence of any antecedent. For the mind, using that marvellous power of conception which deals with things that are not as if they were, makes inferences from supposed or imaginary premises. Therefore we

recognize hypothetical as well as actualistic perception, and hypothetical as well as actualistic knowledge.

Now, as every mode of perception—whether it be presentational or inferential, whether it be actualistic or hypothetical—claims to be a mode of cognition and to result in knowledge, it is plain that the doctrine which explains perceptions as such must assert and maintain the reliability of our perceptions. In other words, Perceptionalism must teach that what men call their perceptions are true perceptions, and that what men know they truly know, and that these positions are justified by the most thorough examination of both thought and fact.

It may cause astonishment to some that any system should set forth such teaching as distinctively its own. It may be asked, "Do not all philosophers accept the perceptions of mankind as veritable cognitions? Is it not presumptuous in one school to assert that this doctrine is specially and pre-eminently the result of its own investigations?" We reply that the past history of philosophy, and the condition of philosophy at the present time, warrant the statement that all the more celebrated systems, both of ancient and of modern days, conflict more or less with the ordinary convictions of mankind; and by far the greater part of the speculative talent of the existing generation not only rejects the radical idea of Perceptionalism, but considers that idea a mark of intellectual shallowness. The popular philosophies of to-day, while differing from each other, are wonderfully agreed in explaining away various fundamental beliefs. Who are more antagonistic than the Associationalists of England and the Idealists of Germany? Yet both teach that we have no proper knowledge of an external and material world; both declare that space and time are mental products, and not things which have independent natures of their own; and, according to both, substances, powers, the relation of cause and effect, and necessitudinal connections generally, are merely forms of conception.

Then, too, particular schools of philosophy, in their very points of variance from each other, are at variance also with the judgments of mankind. Materialism, in saying that the soul is composed of a multiplicity of molecules, and that its life is the

action of these molecules, denies that unity of the human spirit in which all men believe; on the other hand, Pantheism denies the well-known multiplicity of agents and objects in the universe, asserting that there is one only substance.

In view of the history of speculation, the student of theories might even question whether there is any thorough-going system which maintains the reliability of human cognitions. But, at the same time, if he were convinced that there is such a system, he could not refuse it the name Perceptionalism. In every scheme of metaphysical philosophy, the theory of knowledge is the fundamental part, and that from which it is most expressively designated. We advocate the name "Perceptionalism," not only on the ground that there is a philosophy which should be known under this title, but also because we believe that the system thus distinguished is likely hereafter to receive more prominent consideration than has been accorded to it heretofore.

In ancient times there was no such system. Aristotle asserts that the beginning of all knowledge is that "natural power of judgment which is called perception" (*δύναμιν σύμφυτον κριτικήν ἣν καλοῦσιν αἴσθησιν*); but he did not investigate our first cognitions so as to determine their content and establish their correctness. The Stoics held that *αἴσθησις*, or the immediate perception of fact, is the origin of knowledge and the criterion of truth; and this same doctrine was taught by the Epicureans. Moreover, both these schools, agreeing with the Aristotelians, declared that man's *rational* perceptions are reliable; though they allowed that reason may err, and taught that mistakes in perception are to be attributed, not to the senses, but to judgment, or inference. Both also went farther than the Aristotelians in exalting *αἴσθησις*—in this connection signifying specifically presentational perception—as the source of knowledge; and, with this doctrine, they opposed Platonism on the one hand, and Skepticism on the other. Yet neither the Stoic nor the Epicurean system attained a permanent success; neither proved sufficient to resist the Neoplatonism and Mysticism of the first centuries of the Christian era.

In subsequent times Scholasticism, applying Aristotelian ideas to the doctrines of the Church, showed great dialectic power,

but added little to scientific knowledge. Finally, after the theological awakening of the sixteenth century came the speculative activity of the seventeenth; and towards the close of the seventeenth century, in the year 1689, John Locke gave to the world the beginning of a great philosophy.

Locke founds all knowledge on "experience," and has, therefore, been styled the founder of an "empirical," or associationalist, philosophy; but erroneously. By "experience" Locke means simply *presentational perception*—the αἴσθησις * of Aristotle, and of the Stoics; and "sensation and reflection" are the names which he gives to the outward and to the inward modes of this perception. Moreover, he teaches that the perception of necessary relations occurs in connection with the cognition of simple fact, and is absolutely and objectively intuitive. These initial principles of Perceptionalism were obtained by Locke from the critical observation of the phenomena of mind. Yet his "Treatise on Human Understanding," defective in the development and yet more in the expression of its thought, did not save the eighteenth century from the Associationalism of Hartley, the Idealism of Berkeley, and the Skepticism of Hume.

In opposition to these destructive theories, the "Essays" of Thomas Reid, the Glasgow professor, were written towards the close of the eighteenth century. In these the natural force of the ordinary convictions of mankind was powerfully directed against the subtle errors of that day. But the thought of Reid is lacking in theoretic discrimination and construction. He often assumes first principles; sometimes leaves difficulties unexplained; and can scarcely be said to have produced a philosophic system. His excellence and his deficiency are both expressed when he is characterized as "the apostle of common sense." Mightily defending the truth, he left it as he found it, without analysis and without systematization.

*Αἴσθησις with the Greeks referred pre-eminently, but not exclusively, to sense-perception. Aristotle speaks of reason as a higher kind of *αἴσθησις*; and also of the moral faculty in the same way. Thus, in his Ethics we read: "*Τουτο πρὸς τἆλλα ζῶα τῶις ανθρωποις ἰδιον, τὸ μόνον ἀγαθῦν και κακου και δικαίου και ἀδίκου και τῶν ἀλλων αἴσθησιν ἔχειν.*" The verbs *αἴσθανομαι*, *sentio* and *perceiv* all have about the same significance and the same breadth of application.

During this nineteenth century some advance has been made by eminent philosophers, who have called themselves Intuitionalists. Their writings thoroughly discuss both original (or presentational) and acquired (or inferential) perception; and also throw much light on those immediate cognitions of necessary truth which, because they take place hypothetically as well as actualistically, and in the absence as well as in the presence of objects, have been called "the intuitions of the mind." Nevertheless, so far as we can learn, no teacher of Intuitionalism has succeeded in founding a school in which, like the patriarch, "he will command his children after him." Ambitious pupils, however carefully instructed, do not become permanent disciples. They read and study further—as they ought to do—and then are more or less influenced by some imposing and skillfully constructed system of error.

We ascribe this to the narrowness and incompleteness of Intuitionalism. Correct, so far as it goes, it is but the commencement of a philosophy. Its teachings regarding the immediate perception of fact and the necessary relations of fact should be united with others, equally important, concerning the rational and discursive intellect, and concerning thought and conviction in general. In short, with sincere respect and consideration both for ancient tradition and for modern theory, we assert the need of a new and comprehensive elaboration of mental science.

The name "Intuitionalism" of late years has been very properly abandoned as the designation of a system of philosophy; it is not only confined in its suggestions, but is also affected with an obscurity arising from the ambiguities of the word "intuition." And the name "Realism," which some propose, is yet more unsatisfactory. This title belongs historically to the doctrine of the reality of "universals"—a doctrine rejected by those who would now call themselves Realists. It also furnishes ground for quibbling controversy. For those philosophers who reject the ordinary beliefs of men do not admit that they deny reality. They say, "The question is not, 'Is there reality?' but 'What is it?' and 'How shall we think about it?'" And they protest against the settlement of such questions dogmatically, or in any other way than by a process of critical investigation.

Moreover, it is to be remembered that a most important class of human perceptions—including general judgments, and among these axioms, or the principiated intuitions of necessary sequences—do not, properly speaking, assert reality, but only hypothetical truth.

On the whole, Perceptionalism appears to be the best designation for a philosophy which teaches that man's immediate or intuitive convictions are never mistaken, and that, under certain conditions and limitations, even his inferential conclusions may be relied upon. For us, this name defines a system of doctrines to which scientific method leads, and which, we believe, is destined to be generally accepted by thinking men. At the same time we are far from saying that the doctrines of Perceptionalism have reached perfection or completion; that would be too great a claim. We assert only that many leading positions have been established, and that the future of this system is assured beyond a peradventure.

Some learned professors condemn this confidence of ours as that of "a rustic philosopher who has never adequately studied the deeper phases of the cognitive problem"; and many others regard a system which prefers the views of the vulgar to those of illustrious theorizers to be of very dubious value. It must even be acknowledged that a certain presumption against our philosophy is natural and reasonable. We trust, however, that we shall not be excluded from a candid and attentive hearing while stating some doctrines in the connected assertion of which Perceptionalism may—as we think—not only claim to be a system, but also challenge comparison with other systems. We shall simply state these doctrines, without discussing them at any length.

First of all, we need scarcely say that Perceptionalism agrees with assertive, and differs from skeptical, systems in holding that there is such a thing as knowledge, and that some things are self-evident, or immediately cognizable. For, as Aristotle says, it is folly to seek proof for everything. If there be knowledge at all—if we have absolute and well-founded conviction about anything—some knowledge must be immediate, or "intuitive"; and other knowledge must be consequent upon that. Therefore

earnest thinkers seldom ask, "Is there knowledge?" but "What is knowledge?" and also, "How do we know?" and, "What do we know?"

Again, Perceptionalism teaches that cognition—and, in particular, cognition by the senses—is an extremely different thing from sensation. Cognition is an intellectual operation; sensation is a feeling—a psychical commotion—produced by the action of the nerves upon the spirit. Sense-perception is conditioned on sensation because it involves a cognition of the sensation, but it does not include the sensation. The cognition of the sensation, but not the sensation itself, is an element in sense-perception. In order to perceive the acidity of a lemon, this juicy fruit must be applied to the tongue so as to produce a specific feeling. Thereupon—and in one and the same act—we perceive the sensation and its causal correlative.

The thought, or conception, of a sensation should not be identified with the sensation. The thought of the feeling of sourness, or of the feeling of hunger or thirst, or heat or cold, or hardness or softness, is a different thing from that feeling; so, likewise, the cognition of a sensation is not the sensation. Therefore, the act of sense-perception does not include the sensation, but only the cognition of it, together with that of its cause.

Some corporeal sensibilities—especially the visual—are so delicate and so intellectual in their use that their character as feelings is eclipsed by their service as the instruments of perception; yet, even in such cases, we distinguish the feeling from our cognition of it. For example, the pleasure derived from certain sensations of color arises from feeling rather than from perception.

But if thought and sensation are things radically different, then the teachings of Sensationalism must be rejected; for this doctrine affirms that cognition, memory, conception, imagination, and intellectual activity of every kind, are either bodily feelings or the reproduction and refinement of such feelings. Not only so, we must reject also that more specious theory which speaks of "the sensational elements of knowledge," and according to which sense-perception is the combined action of the reason and the sensibility. The error involved in this theory

is double, and is the beginning of further error. For no one can rightly explain sense-perception if he do not see both that sensation is not, and that the cognition of the sensation is, a constituent part of the perception; and no one can correctly understand the nature of thought in general who fails to see that sense-perception, though conditioned on sensation, is wholly intellectual, and contains no sensational element whatever.

In the next place, Perceptionalism distinctly recognizes that mode of cognition which we have called concomitant perception. Our bodily parts and things in contact with them become known to us in sense-perception, and this originates our knowledge of material substances and qualities. Consciousness reveals the soul and its powers in various states and operations; and thus our acquaintance with the spiritual world begins. By concomitant perception we learn of things which are less directly, though not less immediately, perceived than are the objects of sense-perception and consciousness. For example, the relations of both material and spiritual things, and those portions of space and time which are immediately related to one's body and one's soul, are perceived concomitantly.

Neither this mode of perception nor the objects of it can be properly recognized by those who hold that sense-perception and consciousness are the only modes of immediate cognition, and who confine the former of these to things that can be touched or felt, and the latter to the experiences of one's own spirit. But many authors, following Locke, say that space and time, and the relations of space and time—as also quantity and change and their relations—are truly perceived along with the more direct objects of our cognition. These writers teach also that space is known in connection with sense-perception, and time in connection with consciousness. All such should welcome the doctrine of concomitant perception as an improved statement of the truth. For time is not perceived exclusively in connection with consciousness, nor space exclusively in connection with sense-perception. Both are perceived along with both modes of cognition, and by means of a cognition of their own.

This concomitant perception does not differ from that which it accompanies in its nature, but only in its objects and in the

fact that these are viewed, as it were, obliquely. The cognition of these objects, like all other cognition, takes place when we both conceive of them and recognize their reality. For spaces, times, changes, and relations, though insubstantial and powerless things, are objects, or entities; for they exist, and their existence is perceived as truly as that of substantial agents and of the powers and operations of such agents.

Concomitant perception may be easily illustrated. Let a man grasp a warm wooden ball with one hand, and, at the same time or soon after, a cold metallic ball with the other hand. He now perceives, not only the sensations of weight and touch and temperature, and the balls as causative of them, but also each hand and the ball in it as in contact with one another. He perceives, further, that his hands and the balls in them have separate positions in space. He compares and contrasts, as to their points of likeness and unlikeness, the facts given by his right hand with those given by his left. And he recognizes that the parts of this experiment take place contemporaneously or successively, as the case may be. Moreover, not only the hands and the balls, but also all the relations observed, together with the space and time and other relata, are as truly and as surely perceived as are the sensations of weight and touch and temperature. By this perception of those entities and relations which are immediately connected with his own personality, man becomes qualified for the knowledge of the Universe.

Thus, teaching concomitant perception, we oppose the doctrine that space and time and change and relation, and even substance and power, are not entities at all, but merely modes of thinking ; and we challenge the advocates of this doctrine to show either that concomitant cognition is not as much a fact of experience as any other mode of cognition, or that there is any good reason for distrusting its most positive assertions.

In the fourth place, Perceptionalism teaches that every cognition, however simple, contains two elements, which may be distinguished as thought and belief, or as conception and conviction.

Here terms are used technically, though as nearly as possible in conformity with common usage. By thought, or conception,

we mean that intellectual activity in which we have the idea of a thing, and also of its existence or of its non-existence ; and in connection with which we may, or we may not, believe in its existence, or in its non-existence. By belief, or conviction, we mean that confidence in the existence, or in the non-existence, of a thing which, under certain conditions, arises in the mind either intuitively or inferentially.

That there is a radical distinction between thought and belief, as thus described, seems clear enough ; but most philosophers fail to see this distinction. Very often conviction is taken to be either a vivid and persistent mode of conception or a peculiar combination of conceptions. Many, adopting a teaching of Aristotle, make existence to be a conjunction, or a relatedness, of things, and belief a corresponding synthesis of thoughts. The truth is that belief is an intellectual activity wholly *sui generis ;* it is not thought, though it is conditioned on thought ; it is a confidence which may, or may not, accompany an idea or combination of ideas.

This confidence admits of a variety of degrees, but it does not have that marvellous correspondence with the nature, or form, of things which characterizes thought, and which may be styled "the objectivity of thought." The lowest degree of conviction is presumption, or guesswork ; the highest, absolute certainty. Knowledge (of which cognition is the initial act) is absolute and well-grounded certainty.

Moreover, there are two modes of conviction, the actualistic and the hypothetical. The former of these is belief in the primary and literal sense ; the latter is a preparatory and provisional confidence in connection with the thought of a consequent as related to the supposed antecedent. These modes of conviction differ radically. The hypothetical knowledge that a thing would be so is even entirely consistent with the actualistic knowledge that it is not so. Those philosophers who misapprehend the distinction between thought and belief sometimes also fail to distinguish hypothetical from actualistic knowledge.

This brings us to another point in Perceptionalism, namely: the essence of belief lies in the mental assertion of the existence, or of the non-existence, of something. Every belief may

be expressed by a proposition ; and there are two kinds of propositions, the presentential and the inherential. The former asserts the existence, or the non-existence, of the subject of the proposition ; for example, "Bread exists" and "Bread does not exist," or, as we more frequently say, "There is bread," and "There is no bread"; the latter asserts the existence, or the non-existence, of the predicate. For example, "The bread is sweet" and "the bread is not sweet." For these sentences assume the existence of the subject, and assert the existence, and the non-existence, of the predicate in its relation to the subject.

It is astonishing that this account of propositions, though self-evident in its simplicity, is not to be found in the writings of any authority, whether ancient or modern. All logicians, from Aristotle down, have been inaccurate in their analysis of assertive thought. Their theories have been preparative to this doctrine, which, we think, must be accepted as a final statement.

It should be noticed that existence and non-existence, though not things, or entities, are not mere thoughts, but, in their own way, objects of thought. For if a thing exists, it is a fact that it exists; and, if it does not exist, it is a fact that it does not exist. This last statement does not mean literally that an entity is ever non-existent ; for in order to be truly the subject of an assertion an entity must exist ; and it would be absurd that what exists is at the same time non-existent. It is only asserted that non-existence may be a fact in a case in which an entity might be supposed to be ; which idea is also expressed occasionally by the term "non-entity."

Let us note also that the word "non-existence" is only a relative designation and does not indicate a compound nature. Non-existence, no less than existence, is an absolutely simple objectuality. It is named "non-existence" because its whole importance lies in its diversity from existence, and not in its own nature.

The definition of belief as the mental assertion of existence or non-existence applies also to our knowledge of fact or truth, knowledge being absolute and well-founded belief. This same definition, also, explains judgment, the initial act of belief, and cognition, the initial act of knowledge. For philosophers necessarily use the words belief and judgment in a very comprehensive sense.

If, now, the essence of belief, judgment, knowledge, and cognition be the assertive use of existential thought, what shall we say of the theory that perceptive judgment, or the cognition of fact, is a synthesis of representations (or appearances) under some category of conception, whereby the experiences of the mind are reduced to this or that mode of unity? What of the definition that "the union of representations in one's consciousness is judgment"? (Mahaffey's Kant.) And of Kant's own words, "So finde ich, dass ein Urtheil nichts Anderes sei, als die Art gegebene Erkenntnisse zur objectiven Einheit der Apperception zu bringen"? Does not this theory miss the point altogether?

A synthesis of thought may often precede judgment; but it is not judgment. A synthesis may be perfected without any judgment asserting that synthesis; and, when such judgment takes place, it is not a uniting of things in thought; it is the assertion that things do—or do not—exist in the combination conceived of. Such is the ordinary perceptive, or cognitive, judgment; and other forms of judgment—the hypothetical and the problematic—are to be explained in a similar way. The essence of all judgment is not synthesis, but assertion.

Another important teaching of Perceptionalism relates specially to inferential judgment, and may be stated as follows: The fundamental principle of inference and reasoning is that of Antecedent and Consequent; and the metaphysical basis of this principle is the Law of Conditions.

By a condition we mean a necessary condition—a *sine qua non*—that without which a thing cannot exist, and which, therefore, is logically necessary if the thing conditioned exist.

Necessary relations—and therefore, also, conditions—belong to the very nature of things, and consequently pervade the constitution of the universe. Conditions are either causal, constitutive, or concomitant. All things within the universe exist both as conditioning and as conditioned. But space, time, and God, which are conditions of the universe, are free from causal conditions.

When any condition of a thing is known to exist, we say that the thing is possible so far as that condition is concerned;

and we call that condition, or whatever may contain it, an antecedent of possibility. Thus if a man be rich, or in any way a man of property, he may own real estate, or personal property, or both.

Necessary conditions, though not necessitative, may be said to have a necessitative force ; for logical necessitants are constituted from them. Thus, a coat would certainly be made if there were not only cloth, buttons, thread and other materials, but also a tailor and his implements and proper opportunity and inducement. A logical necessitant, or whatever contains it, is an antecedent of necessity. For example, if a mineral specimen be metallic, of a certain specific gravity, of a certain color, and have certain chemical qualities, we conclude that it is gold.

It matters not, for the purposes of inference, whether a necessity be absolute or relative—whether it belong to the nature of things or to some instituted arrangement. But demonstration from relative necessity presupposes that no adequate power interferes to prevent the sequence ; under which state of things the relative becomes the absolute.

Necessity, widely conceived, is of two modes ; the necessity to be and the necessity not to be. Each presents a fact unalterably connected with an antecedent fact. But negative necessity is commonly distinguished as impossibility. So also impossibility, widely conceived, is either impossibility to be or impossibility not to be, the latter of these being commonly called necessity.

Probability arises when an antecedent of possibility is certain to be completed into an antecedent of necessity in one or other of a plurality of ways, no one of which can be expected more than another, and when a given proportion of the possible alternative consequents have a common character. The consequent of probability is conceived of and asserted as having that character,

Contingency, as distinguished from possibility, is an indeterminate probability, the ratio of the chances not being settled. Both contingency and probability arise from a combination of necessity with possibility; for there is a general necessary consequent which must be realized in some one of a number of possible forms, called chances.

Let us note, also, that universal propositions respecting logical classes indicate laws of necessary sequence, while particular assertions set forth contingent sequence. Logical classes are creations of the mind, and have their chief use in the statement of laws of inference. Hence, the "quantity" of propositions should be explained as a secondary expression of necessity and contingency—or, as logicians say, of modality.

Our general survey of the doctrine of belief has brought before us a number of fundamental conceptions, each of which should be assigned its proper place in a theory of knowledge. These conceptions mostly present themselves in pairs, and may be expressed antithetically. For example, conviction is either actualistic or hypothetical, the former of these being pre-eminently belief and knowledge, and the latter a preparatory and ministerial kind of confidence. Then, actualistic conviction is either presentational or inferential; and inferential actualistic conviction is either apodeictic or problematic; the problematic being either in possibility or in probability.

Necessity and possibility are the primary bases of inference. Probability and contingency result from a combination of these two bases. Necessity and impossibility are radically of the same nature with each other. and may be regarded as two aspects of the same thing.

Hypothetical conviction is essentially inferential. It differs from actualistic inference in that the antecedent is supposed, and not presented as real; so that the consequent is only hypothetically asserted. The form and the sequence of thought are the same in hypothetical as in actualistic inference. Both modes of conviction alike relate to existence and non-existence; but, in the one, these are merely matters of conception; in the other, they are facts, or realities, or are believed to be such.

An hypothetical sequence becomes actualistic if the antecedent be asserted as real; this takes place in "hypothetical" and "disjunctive" syllogisms, which, therefore, are actualistic in their total operation.

Hypothetical assertion may be either individual or general, according to the character of its antecedent, or subject. All general principles are hypothetical sequences; and they are either nec-

essary or contingent. They are expressed, in categorical assertion, either with the "must" and "may" of the "modal" proposition, or by the "all" and the "some" of the "pure" proposition. "Quantity," universal and particular, is only an expression of modality.

This exposition of the forms of thought employed in judgment seems plain enough. But clearly, if these forms have been rightly presented, they are not so many co-ordinate, independent, and ultimate modes of conception, but the various and variously related factors of a system. They do not lie side by side like the panels of a door or the panes of a window; they resemble rather the unequal branches of a genealogical tree, or the parts of a complicated machine.

Therefore, also, we say that Kant's twelve "categories" cannot be accepted as a tabulation of the ultimate forms of judgment. Had they been proposed as a primary and tentative enumeration of assertive modes of thought, with a view to the commencement of scientific analysis, they might not have been altogether worthless. But as the result of "an analysis of the elements of human reason," that table of categories in four sets of three each is an egregious blunder. It is not only founded on the false theory that judgment is the faculty which gives unity to our ideas by bringing them together under certain general forms of conception, but it miserably fails to classify judgments according to their true differences. Mistaking the superficial for the fundamental, it is defective and misleading in the extreme, and is the beginning of an endless and hopeless confusion.

Yet again, Perceptionalism teaches that general ideas are the product of generalization, and general principles of principiation, and that there is no exception to this rule. Principiation is the generalization of sequences, and it involves more than the generalization of ideas, for it pertains only to illative propositions and is accompanied by an hypothetical belief.

The law according to which principiation takes place is that which justifies "reasoning from example," and may be called the homologic principle. It is that the same (that is, an exactly similar) consequent may be inferred upon the repetition of an antecedent already known to have that consequent. This pre-

supposes that the human mind can perceive, in individual cases, the relation between antecedent and consequent, and also what elements are essential to the antecedent.

Induction, or the generalization of "the laws of nature," is one species of principiation: the formulation of ontological principles is another. Metaphysical and mathematical axioms are generalizations from the perception of absolute necessities in individual cases; and these axioms are called self-evident because they are conceived and asserted with little consciousness of any mental process.

The doctrine that all things which exist are individuals, and that general objects and truths are forms of thought constructed from individual perceptions, was more definitely advocated by Locke than by preceding philosophers; but it has always commended itself to sober-minded thinkers. According to this view Reason is not the birthplace of general notions and principles, but rather the workshop where they are manufactured and stored. It is an endowment of mental strength manifested, first, in the clear penetrative apprehension of individual facts and relations, and then in the analysis, generalization and logical development of the knowledge thus obtained. This conception of the Rational Faculty may be humbler than that of the *Νοῦς* of Plato, or the "Pure Reason" of modern Idealism; yet, if it be the true conception, it is noble enough for us, and to be preferred to even the most venerable philosophical myth.

These views of Reason and its objects consist with that distinction which many make between *φαινόμενα* and *νοῦμενα*, provided the former be taken to signify all observable actualities (including substances, powers, spaces, times, and relations), and the latter to signify all the objects of rational cognition or conception. For then *νοῦμενα*, when they are individual, are simply *φαινόμενα* rationally and clearly understood; and, when they are general, they are merely abstract conceptions derived from the perception of the *φαινόμενα*. But, if by *φαινόμενα* be meant only things which can affect the senses, and the implication be that no other are immediately perceived, and if by *νοῦμενα* be meant the objects of rational conception, and the implication be that these are things of a different description

from objects immediately perceived, then we discard both *νοῦμενα* and *φαινόμενα* as metaphysical fictions and the embodiments of error.

Finally, we claim that Perceptionalism is the basis of a reliable ontology. In other words, it introduces satisfactory theories concerning "the nature of things"—concerning the constitution of the Universe—and concerning God. This success is the result both of the positive, and of the negative, doctrines of this system. Those who find the beginnings of knowledge in immediate presentational cognition build on a firm foundation; and when, in addition to this, they ignore all *a priori* assumptions of every kind, they may be confident that patient investigation will enable them to distinguish truth from falsehood.

Some ontological principles, obtained from our immediate perceptions, have been already mentioned, as, for example, that individuality is the necessary property of everything that exists, generality being ascribable only to certain thought-objects which have no existence. We have seen also that all things are subject to "conditions," so that the Universe is permeated with a network of necessary relations. And we have found that the Law of Conditions is the philosophical basis of possibility and impossibility, of necessity, contingency and probability.

We now add that Perceptionalism necessarily obtains the categories, or supreme genera, of Being from the analysis of our immediate individual cognitions, these being the origin and ground of all human knowledge; and it proposes the following eight Categories, namely, Space and Time, Substance and Power, Action and Change, Quantity and Relation. All these, together with their negations, are perceived in connection with one's own spirit and one's own body; and nothing can be conceived of that is not either one of these or a combination of more than one; nor can anything exist except according to the nature and laws of these eight forms of entity.

Moreover, as these kinds of entity differ from one another, we cannot say that, because each is an entity, therefore there is only one mode of entity, or only one entity. In like manner those who perceive two forms of substance—the spiritual and the material—and many separate individuals of each form, can-

not allow either that there is only one substance or that there is only one kind of substance. When we think, in the general, either of entity or of substance, we think one thought; but the oneness of that thought does not prove that there is only one entity, or only one substance. Yet, ever since the dawn of philosophy, this fallacy has had a wonderful attraction for metaphysical speculators. It has given many the fundamental doctrine of a religious creed, as well as the central teaching of their philosophy. For the old Eleatic identification of the One, the Ex tent, and the All (*τὸ ἕν, τὸ ὄν, καὶ τὸ πᾶν*), and the demand of modern Pantheists that "the antithesis between the unity and the multiplicity of Being must be reconciled," both rest on the paralogism that Entity is one because the thought of Entity is one.

Perceptionalism, escaping such delusions, recognizes a boundless variety of entities, and at the same time asserts the existence of one all-pervading and eternal Spirit. It finds the Universe arranged and governed by an intellect not its own, and ascribes that intellect to a self-conscious Being.

We have now named a philosophy, and illustrated its doctrines. Our aim in this has been, in the main, expository. But the inculcation of truth is the refutation of error; and the only refutation that can be full and final. Therefore we oppose the principles of Perceptionalism to those of the Sensationalism, the Materialism, the Idealism, and the Pantheism, of our age. For no one grounded in the right doctrine can allow that cognition is merely refined sensation, or that spirit is a development of matter, or that thought can be identified with its objects, or that there is only one substance. We believe that the inadequacy of these views will become more and more apparent as the analyses of Perceptionalism shall be more thoroughly considered. We even venture the hope that certain philosophers, who occasionally suggest that their theories would be accepted universally if only ordinary mortals had the ability to understand them, may be aided, by the teachings of Perceptionalism, to a clearer comprehension of the truth.

BELIEF OR CONVICTION,
is either

ACTUALISTIC — Asserting fact.

OR

HYPOTHETICAL. — Differing from actualistic, not in the form of thought and sequence, but by reason of its peculiar provisional mode of conviction; it is all inferential, but from a *supposed* antecedent.

PRESENTATIONAL. — (*e. g.*, This line is white and straight.) The perception of presented fact; primordial cognition.

INFERENTIAL.

APODEICTIC. — (*e. g.*, That coin must be gold. That line is, and must be, the shortest.) From an actual antecedent.

PROBLEMATIC. — (*e. g.*, That coin may be counterfeit.) Contingent inference from an actual antecedent.

INFERENCE OF POSSIBILITY. — (*e. g.*, He may have entered by that door.) From the existence of a condition, or of conditions, of a thing.

INFERENCE OF PROBABILITY. — From the perception of chances.

PROBABILITY PROPER. — The ratio of the chances being determined more or less definitely.

CONTINGENCY PROPER. — The chance-ratio being undetermined.

INDIVIDUAL INFERENCE.

APODEICTIC. — (*e. g.*, If that man sin, he will suffer.)

PROBLEMATIC. — Differs from actualistic problematic inference in having antecedent and consequent hypothetical. (*e. g.*, If that man be wounded he may die.)

POSSIBILITY. — N. B. All hypothetical inference is to be explained by reference to actualistic.

PROBABILITY. — To be divided in the same way as actualistic probable inference above.

GENERAL INFERENCE. — Essentially Hypothetical as setting forth some law of logical connection and rational sequence.

HYPOTHETICAL IN FORM.

APODEICTIC. — (*e. g.*, If one sin he must suffer.)

PROBLEMATIC. — (*e. g.*, If one be wounded he may die.) Subdivisible in the same way as problematic inference, actualistic and hypothetical, above.

CATEGORICAL IN FORM.

MODAL OR CONDITIONATIVE.

APODEICTIC. — (*e. g.*, The sinner must suffer.)

PROBLEMATIC. — (*e. g.*, A wounded person may die.)

PURE OR DOGMATIC.

UNIVERSAL. — (*e. g.*, All sinners suffer.) Essentially apodeictic.

PARTICULAR. — (*e. g.*, Some wounded die.) Essentially contingent.

The foregoing is a tabulation of judgments—or modes of belief and knowledge—such as Perceptionalism calls for. (See page 17 of the preceding article.)

In explanation of it the following remarks may be serviceable:

1. The term judgment is used in its wide logical sense for the act of the mind in forming any kind of conviction from mere presumptive or probable belief up to, and including, absolute knowledge.

2. The table assumes that every judgment or cognition is (not a synthesis of conceptions), but a putting forth of mental confidence—the formation of belief or conviction—in connection with the thought of a thing as existing or as non-existent.

3. Every judgment in the table may be either affirmative or negative, and, in another and more complex relation, every judgment, whether affirmative or negative, must be either true or false.

4. The table illustrates the philosophical importance of inference. Every judgment in it, excepting only the presentational, is illative and follows the law of antecedent and consequent.

5. Moreover, all these inferential judgments in their essential nature are modal and set forth an apodeictic or a problematic sequence from antecedent to consequent. Even the pure categorical judgment, as expressing a general truth or law of inference, sets forth necessity when it is universal, and when it is particular, contingency. The pure categorical, therefore, must be explained from the modal and not the modal (or the hypothetical) from the pure. These principles involve a considerable modification in the theory and treatment of the Aristotelian syllogism.

6. With the foregoing table compare that of Kant, who says that "the function of thought in a judgment can be brought under four heads: (1) QUANTITY, either (a) *universal*, (b) *particular*, or (c) *singular;* (2) QUALITY, either (a) *affirmative*, (b) *negative*, or (c) *infinite;* (3) RELATION, either (a) *categorical*, (b) *hypothetical*, or (c) *disjunctive;* (4) MODALITY, either (a) *problematical*, (b) *assertorical*, or (c) *apodeictical;*" and who teaches that these twelve modes of judgment result from the synthetic use of twelve modes of *a priori* or transcendental conception which he calls "*categories.*"

7. In the foregoing article some of the leading doctrines of Perceptionalism are stated rather than discussed. The object has been simply to claim for them an attentive consideration. It is hoped that persons interested in philosophy may find time thoroughly to compare these doctrines with those of existing systems.

Letters from professors concerning any topic in the psychology, metaphysics, or logic of Perceptionalism, will be welcomed by Dr. Hamilton, and may be sent to him in care of Wilbur B. Ketcham, 2 Cooper Union, New York.

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