

[No Title]

[1] If I understand the object of this paper, before the Philosophy Comm. I am to give an account of my previous studies, of how I think Psychology ought to be taught, and of its value for philosophy and life. That is what I have studied, how I would teach it, and what it is good for (to put it so as to bring out its unity). It is not everyone who has the opportunity to write his own letter of introduction, and I appreciate the privilege.

My studies in philosophy go back to my boyhood, when I used to wander about the streets of San Francisco at night speculating about the problem of life, and the eccentricities of human nature. My philosophic interests at this time, if I may dignify them, centered naturally about the problems of religion. I picked up my material everywhere, but chiefly from my inner consciousness. The amount of a priori system building in those days still makes my empiricist soul shudder. I remember especially my introduction to ontology. I happened to read Max Miller's introduction to a volume of selections from Kant, in which he defined the chief problem of philosophy as the origin and nature of being or something to that effect. When I had grasped the ideal I reached for my hat, and went outdoors to speculate on the origin and nature of being myself. It was about this time I think that I undertook to read Spinoza's ethics and got through several pages of it before I discovered that I knew nothing of what he was talking about. This naive philosophizing came to an end shortly before I entered college. About this time I was introduced to the natural [2] sciences and immediately became oblivious of everything else.

When I recovered consciousness philosophically speaking I found myself reading Huxley's essays with a pleasure that repetition has not diminished, and an appreciation and admiration that subsequent philosophic studies have only increased. From Prof. Huxley I learned the untenability of materialism, and the difference between real science and the a priori dogmatizing about force, law and cause that so often masquerades in its clothes. From him I obtained also my first insight into the real problems of knowledge, and the relation of consciousness to brain activity, and the questions at issue between religion and science.

This revival of my interest in Philosophy was thus accompanied by a change in point of view. It centered now about the problem of knowledge rather than the problem of religion. But what my philosophy lost my psychology gained. From Huxley I had learned the anthropological view of religion, and had eagerly entered upon the study of religion from the standpoint of the psychology of feeling. My early interest in human nature as I would then have termed it, had never flagged, and it was then my intention to study physical science only long enough to become thoroughly accustomed to its methods, and then to devote myself to psychology, — a purpose which I gave up later only to return to it still later with more enthusiasm. [3] My work had been in the Psychology of character, or the individual rather than in general psychology. I had ransacked most of the popular literature upon the subject. Had read phrenology, physiognomy, and

graphology, and even astrology, in search of material for the study of character. Now I turned to the anthropological and biological side and sought material for the study of the psychology of feeling in the customs and beliefs of races, savage and civilized, and the laws of development.

In philosophy on the other hand I was wrestling with the doctrines of autometism and psychophysical parallelism, as I found them discussed by Clifford, Huxley and Tyndall, and endeavoring to clear up my mind on the problem of knowledge. Here my attitude was, as it still is, that of a defender of natural science. I found the philosophic arena members in possession of a school of thought that claimed to undercut science in a sense, and to have a kind of knowledge possessing a higher order of certainty. Into these claims I had to examine. My attitude toward metaphysics was thus necessarily epistemological and polemical.

This was my position practically on coming to Harvard four years ago. My interest was twofold. On the one hand I had a purely human interest in psychology. Not a metaphysical interest, nor a strictly scientific interest in the narrow sense, but the interest rather of the novelist and historian. An interest in the understanding of human nature [4] as a factor in life. On the other hand there was my interest in the philosophy of science. Yet these two interests were not as disconnected as might seem. My study of science had always had a psychological element in it. I was studying the mind of the scientist, seeing the world through his eyes. I was in love with the scientist's method of thinking and working, with that superb stoicism that enabled him to give up the large problems for the sake of doing the small ones thorough with the infinite patience and care with which he elaborated his theories, his unwavering devotion to truth that would not allow him to claim knowledge where in fact he had none, — in love too with that beautiful structure which the unselfish cooperation of many great intellects had raised up, a monument to human genius and industry. And this method of science I sought to make my own in the study of science psychologically and psychology scientifically.

My study of philosophy had then two springs. My first attitude toward any theory was that of the defender of science against all comes what is the claim of this view of the world to belief. It is more certain than science, and thus able to dictate to us, or is it less certain and therefore not entitled by right to our serious attention. Having satisfied myself on this score my interest in the theory waned, to be revived again from the psychological standpoint. Here was a theory that [5] had satisfied the reason and the ideals of a great man. As a psychologist it was my duty to understand why and how. If his reasoning did not appeal to me, I must enter into his point of view and see it within his eyes. Within this alternation or repulsion and attraction my studies in philosophy have always proceeded. Repelled by what from the standpoint of a scientist seemed a lack of rigor in the argument, I always returned to the charge attracted as a psychologist by the chance to comprehend a point of view.

My studies in Philosophy have therefore been mostly from the standpoint of the theory of knowledge, or from that of psychology. My object has been primarily to clear up my own mind as to what is true and what is false to know how far my scientific studies are really valuable, what I really know, and what it is permissible for me, as a rational being, to believe, and how I ought to act. All this from the standpoint of the man, rather than of the student, or the prospective teacher. Secondly as a psychologist I wished to be in sympathy with the various possible points of view, irrespective of their actual truth. The history of philosophy I have studied, in so far as I have studied it, as a part of history, rather than as a part of purely philosophic study. In this way I have obtained I think a fairly good insight into the chief problems of philosophy, have formed my opinion upon most of the mooted questions, and may understand something of their historical importance. [6] If my study of philosophy had been from a single point of view, — forced upon me as a scientist, rather than sought by me as a philosopher, I think I may claim a reverse procedure in the case of psychology. In philosophy my interest in a certain small group of problems has compelled me to advance into the broader field of general metaphysics. In psychology it is my interest in a wide circle of problems that has constantly driven me into the central field of conventional psychology.

The modern movement in Psychology has always appeared to me to be very complex thing. It is part of a general movement manifest in a great variety of subjects. The development of psychophysics is only one small phase of the whole. From the modern psychological novelist to the vivisector in his laboratory, there is apparent a growing intellect in man as a fact. Our age is intensely humanitarian, not only in its ethics but in its interests. It is as part of this great movement of thought that I have tried to comprehend psychology in my studies. It is needless to remark that of course I have not been able to do justice to the many departments of thought in which psychological questions are coming to the fore, and that I do not expect ever to. But a lawyer once told me that the real problem is not to know the law, but where to find the law. The same is true of the scientist's relation to facts. The main thing is to know where to find them when needed. This is what I have sought to [7] accomplish in my studies in psychology. To get some idea of the extent of the field in which psychological observations may be made, in which material may be collected, and applications sought. This effort has naturally led me over a large field. I have already spoken of my excursions into the popular literature of character study. In recent years I have been concerned mostly with comparative psychology, especially morbid psychology. From this I have obtained more than from any other subject. The comparative anatomy of the nervous system is suggestive, but more as to the possible future of psychology than its present needs and problems, and the same applies to the physiology of the nervous system to a large extent. Anthropology I have found rather more suggestive, pedagogy and child study less so. In the general field of literature I have always found an abundance of material for the study of the psychology of the emotional life. Such material has of course to be completely worked over, but when all is said and done, the fact remains I think that poets and novelists often have a wealth of

psychological experience which can not be neglected, — though of course the psychologist cannot tax it at their valuation. I have not found it possible to establish a constant relation between these subjects and psychology, whereby the one always appears as a field of application of the other. It has rather seemed to me that they must all be developed together within certain limits. At one time psychology will draw help from one of these alike subjects, [8] at another time the reverse relations occurs. I have been able to see no way for the psychologist to avoid the duty of knowing something about these subjects, impossible as it is for him to do justice to all of them.

An equally broad view seems to me to be necessary in the teaching of the subject Psychology should be taught from the standpoint of what it hopes to be, a central discipline to all the anthropological studies. Its function is to gather together all the scraps of information that have been obtained by biology, medicine, anthropology, philology, socials, and pedagogy and bind them together in one science of mind, to elaborate them into one central conception of man's nature. In doing so it must neglect nothing, from the latest results of vivisection to the sublimest insights of the poet, — in so far as these represent concrete human experience. Of course this is the statement of an unattained ideal, but it seems to me a great mistake to confine instruction in a science to the attained. It is equally important to represent the goal toward which the science is working, and to stimulate the interest of the student by constant suggestion of new field to be conquered.

Psychology is often made it seems to me unnecessarily abstract. A very clever woman once complained to me that she read a certain well known treatise upon psychology, but had been unable in most case to tell just what experiences the writer had in mind. He constantly alluded to mental processes that exhibited some special peculiarity of which he was speaking[9] but never told what they were. This is surely a travesty upon science. Theories in science only exist for the sake of facts, and to give theories without facts is the acme of bad science. Psychology is not the study of books but the study of the human mind. The great need of Psychology teaching at present I feel is more qualitative experiments to exhibit types of mental processes. To take an illustration of the sort of thing I mean. You have all heard of the hysterical woman whose sense of touch was being investigated, and who not only informed her physician when she felt the touch, but also, though her eyes were shut, when she did not feel it. That this woman was not necessarily perceiving is well known to students of nervous disease. But I have had exactly the same answer practically in the laboratory. A subject touched with a number of balls near together, and commended to state the number, has told me that there were three though he could only feel two. He knew the other was there but he could not feel it. It was a perfect imitation of an hysterical anaesthesia. Now a simple experiment illustrating this would do more to give a student an idea of what an hysterical anaesthesia is like, than a whole chapter of description. After such an experience the student would be ready to understand and appreciate an account of hysteria as it appears in the hospital, in so far as it involves this element. The

application is then easy to the whole subject of intuitions, clairvoyance, and similar phenomena which in turn admit of being treated from the standpoint of history [10] and religion. This discussion of every phenomena from the widest possible basis of concrete experience and observation might of course be pushed to an extreme by a careless reasoner, but can hardly be too much aimed at so long as analogies are not stretched to the point of breaking. In the psychology of feeling both materials and applications must often be drawn from allied subjects, our laboratories not having as yet proved equal to the task of producing emotions very successfully at will yet. Here it seems to me not only anthropology and morbid psychology may be used, but literature also. Descriptions of emotional states as they occur in literature, are not of course of anything alike as much value to the psychologist as those other materials, but they will often serve I am inclined to think, to give the student that basis of personal experience, which is essential to the proper understanding of any psychic condition. It is easier to recognize our own experience in the slightly exaggerated descriptions of the poet, than in the very much exaggerated caricatures of mental disease.

For a brief illustration we might take the psychology of the will. We start out with a purely empirical and objective view of the will, as the entire mechanism of action. Experimentally we show the motor power of ideas, and thus dispose of the positive side of the question in part. [11] We then see that the will in so far as this is something more than an idea, is concerned with inhibition, rather than with its production of acts. With this analysis of will into inhibition and ideas we can turn to the phenomena of insanity or hypnotism to illustrate the more extreme form of ideomotor will. The phenomena of insanity may now be introduced to show the various possibilities of action arising either from defective inhibition or insistent ideas. Here we come strongly upon a third element that we must take into account in the positive side of the will, namely instinct. The problem may now be brought home to the student by the aid of literature. Abundant examples may be found here of men doing things not from having long intended to do them, but from having failed to distinctly decide not to do them. A fair case is found in Daniel Deronda in Gwendolen's marriage. A more tragic one in Adam Bede. Arthur does not intend to do wrong, but he failed to make up his mind firmly and definitely not to. Failing this the mere fact that he did not make up his mind not to do wrong was no preventive. Instinct and the motor power of ideas looked after that. An excursion back into the realm of insanity taking up especially moral insanity and the general subject of criminology would now be in order. The neurological view of the problem ought now to be introduced, at least as much of it as expressed by the idea of different levels of brain activity, and the [12] inhibitory character of the motor centers. The significance of inhibitors for natural selection may now be considered, its function in the adaptation to the environment, and the relation of the civilized man to the savage in this respect. The theory of the mob might follow here as the combined result of increase in the power of ideas, with the removal of inhibitions from fear, and of responsibility etc. and the development of the individual with the advance of civilization. As outlying phenomena partially connected we might here consider the survival of customs from the lack of

any good reason for inhibiting them. The ethical aspect of the problem naturally comes last. The stoical idea ought to be considered from the standpoint of the worshipper to the power of inhibition. This leads naturally to the consideration of the pedagogical aspect of the problem, the proper method of developing and strengthening the power of self-control. I have said little so far about the detailed psychophysical mechanism of inhibition. Of course any suggestions the lecturer has to make in this line has are supposed to be introduced. But they ought never to take the place of this concrete representation of the phenomena in all its richness of content and coloring. Any theory of the will more detailed than this, if correct, ought to make this representation of the facts easier and clearer. That is its primary purpose. To help such [13] a correlation of the facts. The development of such a theory therefore can only bring into still closer connection the various aspects of the problem. The importance of this correlation, of the presentation to students of the whole group in their living reality as experiences will always remain the prime object of empirical psychology.

In that distant time however when Psychophysics has so far progresses to represent the entire operations of the brain as a series of chemical transformations mathematically calculated, the detailed theory of the phenomena will have a value for philosophy in general, apart from its correlating function in the particular science of mind. To bring this out a slight digression is necessary.

Assuming psychophysical parallelism, what is the interpretation of it. From the standpoint of the philosophy of science there can be but one it seems to me. The conceptions of the world with which physical science deals, the mechanical view that is, is a mere hypothesis for explanatory purposes. It is an elaborate symbolism for representing the unknown world. What this outer world it describes really is we can not know, unless we can find the key to our symbolism. Having described the world in terms of matter and motion, and perhaps a few other things the question arises what really is matter and motion and space. If in [14] a sufficient number of cases we know both the reality and the symbolic expression, we might translate all our symbolic descriptions into reality as the archeologists reads ancient inscriptions when once he knows the meaning of a few of them. Now this is just what Psychology does for us. Here reality in the form of actual experience meets its own description in the symbolism of science. The parallel physical and psychical series are nothing but the real facts, and their abstract description, as part of the external world, in the language of science. Here then is the Rossetti stone that is to interpret the hieroglyphic of force and matter, and tell us the real meaning of the world.

If we did not know our fellows were conscious, or rather if we did not believe it, we would regard them as cunningly devised automatons, and we would explain their actions from the standpoint of physiology, and never dream there was anything there but atoms and ether moving about in space. Our friend's brain would simply be a part of the external world described in the same symbolism, though its changes would have a peculiar value for us. Now we suddenly find that in fact these changes are

accompanied by the sudden appearance of a new thing, a color, a sound or what you please. Surely there is no call for doubling things up and assuming that there is both moving atoms and the color. The color is [15] [illegible] the very thing which we have always been describing in terms of atoms and motion. They are not the two aspects of the same reality, they are the reality and its name in the language of science.

Of course all this is on the assumption that parallelism can be worked out and shown to be true. Whether it ever will be is I suppose still an open question. Nevertheless it is well to realize the importance of psychology for our whole knowledge of the world, in the event of its being worked out sufficiently to enable us to begin the task of interpreting the world by its aid.

We do not however have to wait that long to demonstrate the importance of psychology for philosophy. On an entirely different side it is able to render aid. Philosophy begins where men discover a conflict between their opinions, and begin to look around for some lacking principle to decide the issue. Now I am willing to admit that strict logic has perhaps nothing to do with Psychology, but before we can argue with each other it is necessary for them to have some common ground of belief, a common standard of truth. Now this is just the thing that there has been most difficulty about. Now if a man says he believes a certain proposition, that he is sure of it, and that it is idle to try to convince him that it is false for there is no higher principle [16] that he recognizes from which you can start out in your proof, what are you to do. Obviously you cannot convince that man that the proposition in question is false, — but you may perhaps convince him that he does not really believe it; or rather so help him to study himself that he will see that he is mistaken in thinking that he accepts this as the highest truth. I can see no way out of this apparently irreconcilable differences of opinion among philosophers, except a more thorough psychology, which shall enable us to better understand each others point of view, and true meaning, and better able to find out our own real thoughts. Most of our judgments are particular, and we often get at what we call our ultimate standard of truth by self-questioning, which would certainly be helped by a sound psychology. In ethics and aesthetics this is of course even more marked than in metaphysics. Whether such fundamental differences as exist between the empirical and metaphysical schools of thought may be completely overcome by a better understanding of each other I do not feel sure; but that psychology may at least bring about a mutual understanding that will aid greatly in clearing up the differences, and reduce them to a minimum, I feel sure. At least it can bring about a greater mutual respect, which is surely a consummation devoutly to be wished. We are all of us a little of everybody.

[17] To understand one's fellows' mind is to find it in our own. To see why your opponent holds a given opinion, [is to find a similarity (illegible: faded)] in yours. When you have once got the two opposing views clearly in your head the task of finding the view that reconciles them is half accomplished. Most peoples opinions constitute a system, and the entire system is usually an expression of the personality in large degree. Now when one has [illegible: faded] view of the relation of his own personality to his opinions,

and relation to another set of opinions, and the personality with which they are related, they ought to be prepared to eliminate the personal element entirely and form his opinion upon rational grounds alone. Unless there exist real difference in the standards of truth which are not also what the individual himself would recognize to be prejudice or haste, surely a clear knowledge of the psychology of opinion ought to lead to truth valid for all men.

It is the mission of psychology to make philosophy self-conscious. To explain to it why it holds on so consistently to certain views. To formulate in fact the entire personal opinion of reason, we need a logic which will tell us not only the fallacies of inference, but the fallacies of judgment, which will help us to free our reason from the tyranny of temperament. I can see no other chance for philosophy.

[18] If a proper understanding of our neighbors is necessary for a healthy intellectual life, it is doubly necessary for a healthy moral life. If we err in interpreting our fellows' opinions in the forms of our own thought, how much more is this true in our judgments of his character, and his moral value. In claiming for psychology a high place in our ethical life, I am aware that I may seem to be in opposition to a view which has been recently expressed very emphatically. The opposition is not I think as thoroughgoing as it might seem. I must ask you to remember that I found the essence of Psychology not in the psychophysical descriptions that are formulated in its aid, but in the concrete reality which they aid us to comprehend. That the abstract descriptions of a science have in themselves no value I would of course readily admit. But they have in themselves no value for science either. Their use is to explain facts, to help us to appreciate the relation between facts, and to discover new facts. Thus indirectly it enlarges our knowledge of the concrete world of reality, and helps us to take up a just attitude toward it. The ethical life is everywhere dependent upon true perception for its life. A human being is not a thing that wears clothes and talks, but another mind to be first understood, and to be valued. The valuation and appreciation of our fellows demands a proper [19] understanding of them, and there is nothing that is so sure to bring affection and appreciation as true insight into the character of our friends. I know there are some people who cannot take the psychophysical attitude toward anyone they care for. This is a temperamental attitude that I can sympathize with, and appreciate, but I cannot admit it to be an ethically necessary one. I protest that I find no conflict between the two attitudes, and take my friends to places without feeling that I am intruding, or spoiling them for practical relations. On the contrary the truer understanding that I obtain always enriches my friendship. There is always so much more to love in a friend when one has looked deeper into his heart For my own part, the study of character saved me from pessimism, and every day I grow more surprised at the large number of nice people there are in the world. If it is a crime to melt the armor of reserve about a friend's breast, and lay bare the heart of gold within I must plead guilty. I know of nothing which so enriches life, which so helps us to practice charity in our judgments, which makes sympathy and affords so easy, and so



true insight into people's natures. This idea has been very beautifully expressed by Olive Schreiner in one of her allegories.

[20] A man is miserable because he hates. He tries to forgive but cannot. The memory of his wrongs is too vivid. God sends an angel to help him. He does not argue with him, but he shows him his enemy from the inside. He shows him the structure of the human soul, and makes him see his enemy as he really is;— not merely the outer deed, but the inner life, and the man who hated says, How beautiful my brother is.

How beautiful my brother is! This is the real lesson of psychology, its message to the human heart. And not only how beautiful my brother is, but how beautiful life is, when we see it from the standpoint of character: when we have learned not merely to look *at* it but to feel *with* it.

It is not only in this softening influence upon our judgments that a true insight into our neighbor's hearts has its effect. Still greater is the enrichment of our own moral life. Most people are suffering more or less from moral and intellectual starvation. They are trying to solve the problems of life with too few ideas, and too few ideals. Within this already narrow circle they try to distinguish the true from the false, the good from the bad. The attempt is doomed to failure because there is not great enough richness of content. Intellectual problems can often only be solved by the introduction of new ideas. The struggles of the moral life need bigger ideals and more of them, far more than they [21] a suppression [sic] of some already there. Souls are not to be saved with the pruning knife. They need sunlight and air and a rich smell. They need to grow. They need sympathy even more than criticism. I do not mean blind sympathy, the simple love for one's fellow creature because he is a fellow creature, though doubtless this amiable affection has considerable social utility. I mean the sympathy that is founded upon a true insight into the individual, that goes direct to the spots in his character that need appreciative and sympathetic help. Human beings need something more than to be loved in a bunch, and they need something more to develop their own sympathy and affection than love for man in the abstract. For both sides of human relations both for what he give and what we get a real insight into character is necessary, and the study of psychology ought to help us get it.

There is one more point that seems to me worth emphasizing in this connection because of its bearing upon ethics and religion. The regulation of one's conduct by an inner standard has a great danger. Continuous examination into one's motives is not only inimical to a healthy moral life, it is opposed to the spirit of true morality. The moral life ought to be objective. To think constantly about one's self, and about the effect of one's actions on one's character is to miss the spirit of morality for the letter, and yet if one's conduct [22] does not spring naturally from pure motives, how else but by constant watching can the end of acting rightly be obtained. The solution I think is obtained by taking our standards of conduct from the complete acts as we observe them in others. In our own conduct the motives are unduly prominent as compared to the act itself. In the acts of others it is the act that stands out in relief, and the motives are only

inferred sympathetically. We are thus able to pass an aesthetic judgment upon the act in its wholeness, upon the complete synthesis of motive feeling and act. This seems to me to be a truer method of realizing our ethical ideals than the analytic one, with its danger of morbid self-consciousness. By studying others we enrich our moral life with patterns of beautiful conduct which are to be imitated in their wholeness. There is thus a more direct appeal to the immediate appreciation of beautiful conduct and a more objective point of view it gives a richer moral life.

I might sum up my view as to the relation of psychology to life, by saying that I regard an understanding of one's fellows as the very essence of our entire social life, and I believe that this understanding is increased by a proper study of psychology.