IDEAS IN KNOWING AND WILLING

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It has been remarked by Mr. Laird that "the word 'idea' is probably the most ambiguous in the whole realm of philosophy." Locke's "way of ideas" which determined one general direction of the term's meaning, rested upon the assumption that every article of furniture which belonged to the mind (or the understanding) and could be discerned to be present in or before the mind, possessed some essential common characteristic. It is in virtue of that common characteristic that all of the contents or immediate objects of the mind were designated 'ideas,' so that ideas are by Locke defined as "the immediate objects of the understanding in the widest sense." Locke never, so far as I know, concerned himself with any further analysis of what this common characteristic might be, the possession of which entitled an entity to be designated an idea, beyond just the character of being an immediate object of the understanding. I propose to begin my inquiry by asking whether we can discover any significant feature common to two processes, which, admittedly in any theory, belong to minds—i.e., the processes of knowing and willing. It will be observed that, in framing this question, I use the concept process, rather than the Lockian phrase, "*object* of the understanding, or mind," and this difference is not unimportant.

Contemporary science and philosophy have made us familiar with the concept of *event,* as the most inclusive and pervasive term which we possess, descriptive of any and every entity which is perceived to exist in the one all-embracing world of nature. All of the "concrete facts of nature are events exhibiting a certain structure in their mutual relations and certain characters of their own." It is thus that Mr. Whitehead,[1] to whom in large

[1] *The Concept of Nature,* 167.

measure is due the current philosophical usage and significance of the term, summarizes the arguments which lead him to give to the concept 'event' its central importance. Whether Mr. Whitehead is right in supposing that all of the conceptual and static entities of mathematics can be defined in terms of events when subjected to the Principle or Method of Extensive Abstraction, appears to me gravely doubtful, but this question need not here concern us. What we perceive in nature and in our minds, in history and in our selves, are, in any case, tissues of events.

The fruitful application of the concept 'event' to physical nature has proved to be, in our time, both for physics and for the philosophy of nature, profoundly significant and, in some sense, revolutionary. It has necessitated a restatement of the relations between space and time, and the relations between these and the matter which both for common sense and traditional thought has heretofore been supposed to exist in space and time, as a thing *par excellence* or a complex of elementary and atomic things. But with reference to the kind of fundamental concept which is most aptly descriptive of minds, and of their knowing, willing, and feeling, the situation is somewhat different. Here, the presence of some sort of continuous process, a fruition which must needs be displayed in time, hence describable as an event or process rather than a thing, was earlier and more easily grasped. It was largely the prestige and success of atomistic and mechanistic theories in the physical sciences in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which led to the dominance in psychology of similarly mechanistic habits of thought, a kind of "mental chemistry" and the development of associationism. We must ascribe to this influence Locke's predilection for talking about ideas as if they were objects rather than processes. The subsequent emergence of a different type of psychological analysis and prepossessions, the central importance which James, for instance, ascribed to the stream of thought, and the whole later criticism of psychological atomism was really the recovery and

restatement of a point of view which was certainly not foreign to an older philosophical analysis and teaching.

I begin then with the observation, as little likely to be challenged as any, that every instance of knowing or willing is an event of some sort. Before raising the question as to how events like knowing and willing differ from other events, such as the erosion of a hillside or the growth of a flower, we shall do well to note two types of question which may be asked universally about any and every kind of event. These two questions are made necessary by two characteristics of an event, i.e., its internal complexity and its existence within a wider and more inclusive system of events. Within the boundaries of every event something happens; that something is to be analyzed and described. Not only is every actual event analyzable into lesser events which are included within it, but an event possesses characters or predicates which are not themselves events. Did not events admit of analysis both into smaller events and also into complexes of characters, no significant descriptions of events could be given, and no knowledge of an event would be possible. Besides this internal complexity, every event exists within a matrix of surrounding events, which may for some purposes be spoken of as a single event. The charge of the Light Brigade was both a single event and inclusive of many events, and the same may be said of the Crimean war within which the charge of the Light Brigade occurred. It is the peculiar advantage of the concept 'event,' that it so easily brings before us the common origin of these two questions, the one as to the internal complexity, the other as to the outlying and surrounding tissue of happenings, with respect to any one event. All events equally have, then, their internal diversity of content and their setting within a more inclusive event or texture of events. Accurate, scientific knowledge of any event demands an inquiry in each of these two directions. The simpler an event is, the more does scientific investigation expend itself in discovering the outlying and preceding events with which it is continuous. On the other

hand, the richer in internal structure and characters, the greater the internal diversity which an event contains, the interest in discovering causes tends perforce to be crowded out by the necessity of mastering the inner wealth of content, and the more do we feel that we are dealing with an individual structure holding within itself an inexhaustible wealth of detail. The study of mechanics and of history may be taken as illustrations of these two extremes. But for us, the important thing is that no event, no matter how individual, how richly diversified its internal life may be, is really isolated. The category of causality is but an expression of this character of the world of events, whereby each event is surrounded by and embedded within other events, and infinitely so. The events of knowing and willing, no less than that of the falling of rain and the melting of snow, have their internal diversity, they are inclusive of component events and characters, and they have their causes and effects —other events, continuous with them, which reach backward, forward, and outward.

Would an adequate knowledge of the essential nature of any and every event be had, if one possessed a knowledge both of its inner content and of the surrounding events, including in such knowledge an understanding of any laws or principles which the events exemplify? This question lies across the threshold of any inquiry into the nature of knowing and willing. Of traditional shibboleths in philosophy, naturalism appears to me the least fraught with ambiguity. Nature is a world of events. If knowing and willing are essentially nothing but events, they too belong wholly to nature, even if their specific character as events be as much unlike other natural events as you please, and such is the central thesis of philosophical naturalism, of which behaviorism is, I suppose, the most fashionable type, at least in this country. To assert that knowing and willing, as events which transpire in the life history of certain 'body-minds'—(I welcome Professor Muirhead's suggestion)—do *not* wholly belong to nature, to imply that they are non-natural, is indeed a hard saying. What

it means, in the sense at least which I should be willing to defend, is that knowing and willing are not describable merely as events not owning any unique essential characters not possessed by other kinds of events, but that you have to ask questions about knowing and willing which are nonsense if you ask them about natural events, and which cannot possibly be answered when you view them merely as events. Two such questions may engage our present attention. We ask, with respect to conscious events, what it is that this knowing, willing, and feeling expresses, what it is that finds utterance in events of this kind? And we have to ask, secondly, upon what objects are those events directed, what is it which is known, willed, or felt? Conscious events—or, if one prefer, events belonging to minds, express some interest or purpose, and they are directed upon objects. The nomenclature which Royce has made familiar is pertinent. The purpose, intent, or interest which is expressed by and in a conscious event is its internal meaning; the object upon which the event is directed is its external meaning. Every conscious event, which possesses both an internal and external meaning, thus lies between, as it were, the interest which it expresses and the object upon which it is directed. The meaning which a conscious event possesses, either by way of expressing an intent or purpose, or by way of pointing to and intending an object is generically different from any describable relation of two observed events. Nor is such meaning any intrinsic describable character of the conscious event as such. No describable, contemplated, or observed event, or complex of events, possesses meaning in its own right. If we say that some specific physical event—the falling of an apple—means some mechanical law of which it is an expression and embodiment, no such assertion is merely the residue of our observation of events, of their internal complexity and their relations to other events. Likewise, to say that a red sunset *means* a clear day on the morrow, expresses one of two things. We may mean merely that the one occurrence, the red sunset, is a temporal or causal antecedent of the other occurrence, the good

day. In this case, the category of meaning merely duplicates the relation of causal or temporal sequence between two events. If, on the other hand, to say that a red sunset means a good day does more than just duplicate the describable relation between two events, we are making use, explicitly or not, of the kind of meaning which only conscious events can have—that namely of intending or knowing an object. In this case the relation of meaning is *in toto* different from the relation of causality. To assert that the symbol π represents or means the ratio between the diameter and circumference of a circle, is to invoke a relation and a category which has nothing to do with the relation between events as such. The symbol neither precedes nor causes the ratio which it means, as the red sunset precedes the pleasant day.

A conscious event is, then, an event which has a meaning, either because it expresses an intent or purpose, or because it is directed upon an object which it intends, and to say of a conscious event that it has a meaning, in either or both of these two senses, is to do something other than to describe what the event is, *qua* event, or to observe its setting in a sequence or complex of events, merely as such. Now, the term 'idea' is the most familiar, and the best adapted to denote an event of this sort—an event which is more and other than a mere event. Ideas are, to be sure, events which occur in the life history of minds, or body-minds, and like all events they have an internal content and structure, an inner diversity, and also a setting within wider systems of events. But when you know what they are *qua* events, you do not know them as ideas, and conversely, when you know them as ideas, you know them as being more than just events. This *more* lies in their capacity of expressing prior intents and purposes, their internal meaning, and their capacity of intending and knowing something transcendent to themselves—their external meaning. Both these capacities of ideas whereby they become invested with meaning, undoubtedly have their analogues in other types of events and at lower levels of being. But we can discover such analogues only after we

have first experienced in our conscious life the meanings which conscious events alone possess.

We put then, with respect to conscious events such as knowing and willing, certain questions which simply have no meaning when they are asked concerning other events which we do not qualify with the adjective conscious. It is only of conscious events, or events at any rate which belong to minds, that we ask, what intent or purpose does this event express, and upon what is this event directed as its target or its object. Now these two questions have a common implication and they converge upon a common category. We interest ourselves, namely, when talking about conscious events, with the question as to their *validity,* and we never raise any question of validity about mere events—events which are just events. It is meaningless to inquire as to the validity of the physical events now visibly occurring in my fireplace—the combustion of coal and wood, and the generating of heat and light. These events just are, and when they are known for what they *are,* when their internal complexity and their surrounding events are described, there is nothing further to say. The fire is not valid; it simply exists. But my knowing of these events, or my willing their continuance, alteration or cessation, are not just events which transpire, as are the flames, the objective heat and light which I see and feel. My knowing and willing are not only real events, but they possess their own measure of validity or invalidity. My knowing, as an event—which it is—is just as real as that of my friend, the physicist, but how little valid it is in comparison with his, is only too apparent to both of us. Nor does the existence of such things as forged decretals or forged wills and checks disprove my statement that we never ascribe validity or invalidity to any events or objects which are external to minds. The invalidity of these objective documents is a consequence of and an incident of their having been forged; they defeat and contradict the intentions and purposes which they purport to serve and to represent. They set themselves up as being something which

they really are not. They make a claim which is not valid, or rather, they embody a claim which some conscious interest has made with respect to them, and a claim which is invalid. I have just used a term which indicates the peculiar and defining characteristic of such conscious events as willing and knowing, viz., the term claim. A conscious event is an event which sets up a claim, and I am prepared to hold that wherever you have an idea, you have, over and above its existence as a describable event, this which I call the making of a claim. Neither my fire, nor the multiplication table, nor stars nor atoms make any claims at all. Conscious events do, and that is what we mean when we call them ideas. Here then, I should say, is a common positive characteristic of ideas. So far from being, as Locke supposed, objects immediately present to the understanding, ideas are events whose essential nature is not confined to what is immediately present; this common feature lies in the reference which the idea has either to an internal intent, or to an external object. Such reference is essentially a claim to mean something other than what the idea simply is as an immediately present object or event.

Now to set up any claim whatever, familiar and inescapable as it is, conceals a paradox and a difficulty, one indeed which sets the central problem for both the theory of knowledge and the theory of value. To make a claim, theoretical or practical, is always to appeal to something which is not immediately and obviously present and in one's possession. It is to trade on credit, or it is making a promise. To make a claim always implies a confession of not—at the moment when the claim is set up—being in complete, recognizable possession of the object to which claim is laid. If you fully possessed the object so that your possession could by no possibility be challenged, you would lay no claim to it. That one does make a demand or claim, is in so far a confession of incompleteness and lack. For this reason, mysticism distrusts ideas and seeks a knowledge of God in which there is no unfulfilled claim, no demand unrealized, no idea which

transcends immediacy. The same notion, the recognition that an idea is a claim which surpasses the boundaries of immediate possession, and the desire to escape such incompleteness and lack, lends favor to every type of realism in which known existences are supposed wholly to coincide with literally present data.

I turn then to an analysis of this one common aspect of knowing and willing, and I shall urge that in each of these two mental processes, in all cognition and all conation, there is present not merely a sequence of natural events occurring in the body-mind and its environment but a quality, an aspect or function of claim-making, and that this quality is a property of an idea which is always present in both knowing and willing. Let us take the processes of willing and conation first. What I propose to show here is that in desire and endeavor there is both a present felt want, tension, and incompleteness, and *also* an aspect of claim, of judgment, of ideality, and transcendence, and that there are two different and distinguishable features of the idea present in desire.

It is clear that any object of my desire, as long as I am desiring it, is not in my possession. I have the *idea* of something that I want, but the object itself is absent and at a distance. When it is attained, the idea vanishes or is absorbed in something more immediate; direct possession replaces the mere idea. The idea of what it is that I want, as that idea exists in desire, is a sign of incompleteness and lack. It is also something more. It signifies not only a felt want but also a claim. I urge the necessity of making a clear distinction between these two aspects of an idea which is present in desire, because I think that failure to make this distinction opens the way to serious errors both in psychology and in ethics. There is first, then, the discrepancy and tension due to the fact that some objects or objective state of affairs is not experienced or possessed *in persona propria,* but is present only in idea. The presence of the idea signifies the absence of the object. Once the desire is fulfilled, the idea,

in which the want or conation is expressed, vanishes because something better supplants it. When I am hungry and can find nothing to eat, I must content myself with the idea of food. But that idea, which is all I have until my desire is satisfied, being something which I cannot eat, is but the symbol and definition of my discontent. But secondly, the idea of food not only witnesses to a felt want, not only does it express a tension and disharmony, it also utters a claim, and there are two different things. The idea of the object of my desire or my striving claims to be the idea of that which, did I possess it instead of its surrogate, would satisfy me. To make this claim is not the same thing as to express the incompleteness of my present state and to contrast it with a more complete condition of my being. And the satisfaction of a desire is not merely the closing in of a gap, the overcoming of a tension, the filling in of a want as if it were a hole conscious of its vacuity. If there be any such thing as *wholly* blind impulse, void of any idea, yet conscious, perhaps this is what we would have to imagine it to be like. The stone rolling down hill, the released spring, any series of events which move from less to more equilibrium, endowed with feeling but with no idea of the end to be reached,—this might be a pure impulse. The satisfaction—can we call it such—of a pure impulse would be merely the transition from a state of greater to one of less tension and incompleteness, or rather the echo, in feeling, of such a transition. In the satisfaction of a desire, there is present an added element. This additional factor has commonly been described as an awareness or idea of the end whose attainment signifies the conclusion of a "vital series" and the restoration of equilibrium. It is this statement which seems to me not untrue, but inadequate. For the idea, whose presence distinguishes desire from impulse, is not only an anticipatory awareness of the end which will terminate a condition of stress, incompleteness, and disharmony. The idea of the end, in so far as desired, embodies the claim that the end when attained will yield satisfaction. The idea present in desire is the

bearer not only of a theoretical claim, that namely of being the present representation of an absent, a possible, a future, or even a non-existent state of affairs, that which would be given in answer to the question, *of* what is the idea. The idea which desire involves is also the bearer of a practical claim, the claim, namely, that the object desired will yield satisfaction and is good. The idea of the desired end implies a judgment of value, just as every theoretical idea which is more than a bare event in the mind, more than an image, involves a theoretical judgment, a reference to some order of reality, and implies a claim to be true. *Nihil appetimus nisi sub ratione boni.* The distinction which we are here urging, the difference between the coming to consciousness of a state of tension and incompleteness plus an awareness of what will *as a fact* resolve the tension and fill out the incompleteness, and, on the other hand, the setting up and recognition of a claim, may become clearer if I contrast our analysis of desire with two current types of theory. The issue hinges upon the analysis of the nature and rôle of ideas in conation and desire, and the relation which is thought to subsist between the two factors which we have spoken of as tension or incompleteness on the one hand, and the setting up of a claim, on the other. One type of theory, represented by Mr. Santayana, regards the claim set up by the idea in desire, the claim that its object is satisfactory and good, as a sheer projection of the *de facto* interest, want or bias, which is whatever it may chance to be. To make a judgment of value, to assert that X is good, is here said to be merely another way of saying that such and such interests, resident within a living and active creature, happen to exist. The judgment of value adds no new element to the descriptive and existential judgment as to the occurrence of certain events and structures within the organism. What language betrays us into saying, namely, that some object is good, conceals the real import and the real situation to which the judgment—only apparently normative—really makes reference. That situation is wholly factual, and it exists within the organism

or subject making the judgment, rather than in the specious object of the value judgment itself. The claim made by the idea that the object of desire is good merges with the existence of the desire or interest as a factual event or structure in the life history of some center of vital interests. Now so to do is precisely analogous to the essential identification, in theoretical ideas, of mental image and meaning, an identification which led Berkeley to deny the possibility of framing 'general notions' or abstract ideas, from which all particular predicates have been removed. The apparent claim which an image makes to mean something quite different from itself is absorbed in the existence of the image as an event or item, in the stream of thought. Just as, in the corresponding analysis of the rôle of an idea in desire the claim which the idea makes to mean the good is absorbed into and identified with the existence of the underlying interest or bias as an existent event. Notions common to both nominalism and naturalism are here in evidence.

There is another respect in which the analysis of theoretical ideas in the tradition culminating in Berkeley and Hume bears a close analogy to the contemporary naturalistic account of the rôle of ideas in our practical interests. In traditional empiricism, ideas are viewed as faint replicas of impressions. The sharpness of contour and the 'vivacity' of sensations and perceptions become washed out, as impressions fade away into images or 'ideas.' This carries with it the necessary implication, of course, that the content of ideas is poorer than that of impressions, and that ideas can contain nothing whatever which is legitimately autonomous. In so far as ideas do present the appearance of novelty or autonomy, in so far as they are anything more than projections of impressions in a medium which accounts for their poverty, they are sources of error and objects of distrust. I shall return to a consideration of this tradition later on. Here, I point out that if this account of ideas be carried over into the analysis of the part played by ideas in desire, we have something like the following assertions. Corresponding to sensations and

perceptions, there are interests. Both are given; both are wholly factual. They are events and structures which occur or exist. And just as a theoretical image or idea is said to be a faded replica or projection of an impression, without any legitimate content of its own, so the idea of something as good is said to be nothing but the projection of a prior interest or bent. An idea or judgment of the good, which is only some *de facto* interest or want projected in the medium of language, is vested with no legitimate content or autonomy of its own. It results that the only function which ideas, judgment, reason, may legitimately perform in our practical life is first to express and to clarify the ends which are set wholly by our factual interests, and secondly to discover the technical means and instruments for their most efficient and economical achievement. Such is essentially the familiar program of the ethics of positivism. It has its roots in the orthodox tradition of empiricism, and in the theory of the nature of ideas to which that tradition was committed. That tradition rests upon the premises, first that ideas are nothing but events and episodes in the individual's 'stream of thought,' and secondly that all of the legitimate character or content of ideas is a derivative of more primary and prior impressions on the one hand and, on the other, the interests and desires of the organism. Reason provides, as Hume put it, "only a mere artful and more refined way of satisfying" these, originally, *de facto* interests.

We have argued that an idea is not only an event, but that it is an event which sets up a claim, and that this, its imperative or imperious character, is not capable of resolution into any mere factual occurrence or event. With respect to practical ideas, what this means is that the idea of something as desirable and good is always more than the projection of a matter of fact lack and incompleteness, or the echo in feeling, of the process in which this want and disharmony are relieved. I am doing no more here than to restate a very old theory, one which lies at the root of the insight into the theoretical inadequacy of hedonism.

Hedonism sees no more in the good than the expression in consciousness of a process in which what is incomplete becomes less so, one in which organic equilibrium is restored. The good is this, but it is something more. It is the recognition and satisfaction of a claim, and a claim is always more than a fact or an event.

That it is possible to divorce these two aspects of a practical idea, an idea present in desire of that which is good, may be seen in the "Principia Ethica" of Mr. Moore, and his analysis yields a different theory, with which the view we have reached may be briefly compared. The complete separation between the idea of the good as the projection of an interest and as the setting up of a claim, which his analysis exemplifies, is, in my judgment, erroneous. It results from separating off into disparate realms, what are only abstractly distinguishable aspects. None the less, the merit of his enterprise lies in the demonstration that there is more in the idea of the good and the desirable than the *mere* expression of the kind of factual event in the history of organisms or minds which we call having a desire. What Mr. Moore has done is to take this additional aspect of the practical idea, that aspect which we have called its claim-making function, and to dissolve away the lineaments which unite it to the conations and interests of our practical life. He severs the external meaning of the idea of the good from its internal meaning. His fallacy is the converse of the naturalistic fallacy which denies that the idea of good does anything more than to duplicate, in the dimension of discourse, the lack of vital equilibrium whose deposit in consciousness is what we know as wanting and desiring.

I turn now from willing and conation to knowing and cognition. The theory that an idea is not only an occurrence in the history of a mind, but that it is an event which asserts a claim, and that this character of an idea is not a mere duplication or sheer projection of a prior factual situation, holds of our theoretical ideas as well as of our practical ideas. And here, at

least, we are on more familiar ground, and may appeal to the wide recognition given to the thesis that wherever there is a genuine theoretical idea, there is present, explicitly or implicitly, a judgment. For what I have called the assertion of a claim is just what occurs in the making of a judgment. The idea of X is the judgment either that X is real, or that X *really* possesses certain attributes and is truly to be characterized, i.e., judged so and so. And this judgment, whether explicit or implicit, is the declaration of a claim that what is immediately present, given and indubitable, really means more than just what it is as an event. In other words, the theoretical judgment X is real, and hence the idea of X never coincides with the affirmation that something is just given. An idea is never just an image. Reality is never the given, in any sense which I am able to attach to either of these perplexing terms. Every idea assumes a risk because it transcends immediacy and asserts a claim. Ideality, over and above facts and events, givenness and immediacy, is born with the birth of consciousness. I am prepared, notwithstanding certain unresolved perplexities, to maintain this thesis with respect even to that category of conscious life, of *Erlebnis,* where it seems prima facie excluded, i.e., in the case of feeling, as primitive, blind, and organic as it may be necessary to assume. Even here, some quality of ideality and transcendence of the given, some work of thought and some witness of the presence of ideas, is, it seems to me, in evidence. Nor is it otherwise in the case of bare impulse and blind conation, the moment these are qualified by the adjective conscious. How far back the beginnings of such conscious impulse in feeling lie, I do not know. Once they have emerged, we are in a world not only of events which occur, but of events which assert a claim—and imply ideas. Just as the practical idea of something as good never entirely coincides with the occurrence of a factual or given impulse or conation, but always implies a judgment or claim, so the theoretical idea of something as real is not wholly resolvable into the occurrence and presence of an event in the mind, or mind-body. This is as much

as to say that the widely accepted distinction in kind between immediate and mediate knowledge, between direct acquaintance with and descriptive knowledge about, between knowledge so certain and so immediate that all risk and claim are absent, and knowledge characterized by the element of belief, mediated by ideas—this whole familiar contrast needs fundamental revision. And the kind of revision called for does not—if our argument be sound—lie in assimilating knowledge which uses ideas to the immediate compresence of knower and known, conceived on the analogy of the physical contact of two objects in space, as is done by Mr. Alexander. Nor does it lie in resolving the entire knowledge situation into the existence of a class of terms in relation, all lying within a one-dimensional world of events or entities (one-dimensional in respect to the relation of knower and known), as is done by Mr. Russell (at times) and by the Neo Realists. Both of these attempts are motived by the desire to get rid of the *ideal* side, the ideality of ideas—and their proponents rightly see that this is tantamount to the denial of ideas outright. Instead of such attempts to escape the genuine perplexities of the knowledge situation, instead of trying to bridge the apparent gulf between immediacy and knowledge involving ideas by assimilating the latter to the former, I am driven to hold that ideas are present in some manner in the most primitive immediacy which has anything to do with knowledge at all, and out of which the higher types of knowledge develop. In this sense, I must say that there is no such thing as immediate knowledge. At best, the concept of immediate knowledge—knowledge lacking ideas and ideality—is an ideal lower limit to be found at the vanishing point of consciousness itself. This is, of course, no novel heresy. To say nothing of Plato or Kant or Hegel, the position here maintained was argued for, in the interests of purely psychological analysis, by Mr. Stout in the early chapters of his Analytical Psychology. That analysis and the argument it supports has never, I think, been superseded or bettered. In no instance are we entitled to say that perceived

or known objects are contents of consciousness, modifications or parts of the stream of our individual conscious experiences. I may quote Mr. Stout's own statement of the situation in which the thesis appears most difficult to maintain:

> If it is under any conditions possible for the object of thought (e.g., object known) to be present in the consciousness of the thinker when he thinks of it, it ought to be possible in this case (e.g., when we think of a sensation as such). If it is not possible in this case, it is difficult to see how it can be possible at all. If introspective knowledge is not immediate, then no knowledge is immediate. Now it will be found on examination that whenever we try to think of an immediate experience of our own, we can do so only by investing it with attributes and relations which are not themselves immediately experienced at the moment. For example, I may think of a momentary appearance in consciousness as an occurrence in my mental history, an incident in my experience. But neither my experience as a whole, nor the position and relations within that whole, can be given as the content of momentary consciousness. The momentary consciousness is only one link in the series which constitutes my experience. We are able to "look before and after and sigh for what is not" only because thought can refer to an object which is not present in consciousness.[2]

Our interest in this analysis and this thesis does not lie in the refutation which it affords of subjective idealism, of the Berkeleyan principle that *esse est percipi*—a refutation which, as Mr. Muirhead has justly told us, is no longer seriously needed. It lies rather in lending support to the view here maintained, as to the indispensable presence in all knowledge, even the most apparently immediate, of an idea. Ideas alone are the bearers of claims, and the vehicles of meanings. I have argued that knowing and willing, cognition and conation are not analyzable into bare events, but that they are events which set up a claim, and that this is an integral part of their nature as conscious events, i.e., as occurrences and achievements in the life of the mind. We thereby gain at least this much, that we discover a principle of unity, and a common bond between the life of knowledge, and the life of practical endeavor and will. That common bond is the presence, in each, of *ideas,* of thought, and of judgment.

[2] *Analytic Psychology,* I, 44.

The essential unity of the human spirit, in spite of the seeming antithesis of knowing and willing, of theoretical and practical, is, so far at least, assured. To this extent we find ourselves in substantial agreement with Bosanquet who says that "you cannot study thought and not be led to will and feeling, nor will or feeling and not be led back to thought."[3] And Mr. Stout comes to essentially the same result: "Belief, desire, aversion, volition, enjoyment, grief, regret, etc., are all special modes of reference to an object. They must all be regarded as specific determinations of thought."[4] Wherever there is any transcendence of the given, any reference to an object, there is an idea, or expression of an intent or want parallel to the making of a claim, and there too is thought and judgment. The presence of these, in some mode and in some degree, is coextensive with the entire range of consciousness and the life of the mind. But supposing this to be admitted, we are faced with a fresh problem, and at a deeper level. The antithesis of internal and external meaning remains, threatening to destroy the unity of knowing and willing which seemed to be assured by the discovery in each of ideas and ideality. The kind of claim which is set up by the idea of the good, by the ideal object of our willing, appears altogether different from the sort of claim which is made by the idea of the real. The two ideas seem to point in two quite divergent directions. A practical idea, a purpose, the idea of a Good, lays claim to nothing objective, but solely to some real or total system of interests which belong wholly to us, and which are marshalled and sustained against an indifferent and opposing world. A theoretical idea, the idea of the real, the regulative principle of all our genuine knowledge and science, needs to be purged of all distorting, partial, and selective practical interests. Not otherwise, it would seem, can our ideals and our purposes portray and realize our own nature and needs, nor our theoretical ideas, our knowledge, reflect the nature of things undistorted. With respect to our knowing, we must be realists, and we must be idealists in respect to our willing and our practical interests.

[3] *Principle of Individuality and Value,* 39. [4] *Ibid.,* 46.

In knowing, the mind follows reality, while in willing, reality is molded by mind. I should like, in conclusion, to say but a word with respect to this question and barely to suggest what seems to me a fruitful line of approach, not unrelated to our earlier analysis.

And first I would point out what seems to me to be a major underlying assumption of this divorce between the system of our human interests which every practical idea or purpose claims to embody and, in some degree, to represent, and the system of our theoretical ideas which claim to portray the nature of the real. It is just that assumption to which reference was earlier made that the mind's contents, all of the material which comes to birth within the life of the mind, must, of necessity, in the course of its progressive internal development, show an ever greater divergence from the primitive stuff borrowed, as it were, from the storehouse of nature. I am speaking loosely and in figures, and in far broader terms than I can here hope to justify in technical detail. This steady divergence of what grows up within the mind from what exists in nature and in the real, this increasing separation of the internal and external meaning of ideas, may be pictured as a process of decay, of the gradual fading out of the definite contours and rich content of immediately given sensations and impressions. Images, ideas, thought, are remote and detached from the real because they have lost the vivacity, the warmth and intimacy of impressions, and immediate contact with the real. Or, this severance of the life of ideas from their roots in the real independent world may be conceived in a different way. Instead of contrasting the poverty of ideas with the richness of immediacy and of impressions, a poverty which increases as the process of decay and fixation proceed, ideas have been supposed to add something to impressions and the material of sense, erecting superstructures upon them to which nothing in the real world corresponds. Around the nucleus of the given and the real, there supervene in the mind psychic additions, secondary qualities, merely human or mental constructions, interests, sentiments, and ideals, creatures

of the mind, and in no sense clews to the nature of the real. In the former case it is the poverty of ideas, in the latter, their artificiality which results from the acceptance of this assumption. In both cases, the structure and life of ideas is severed from the real world. Their significance and import is wholly internal and human, not external and metaphysical. The premises from which either of these results are reached are first, the belief that ideas are nothing but events which occur in the mind, and second, the assumption that the mind is just the aggregate of these existential and quasi-substantive, ghostly entities, these impressions, these ideas, whether faded or elaborated, these 'contents of consciousness' and presentations.

Our earlier analysis supplies us with a different point of view. Ideas *are* events, but they are more. As *conscious* events, they make a claim, and they embody a judgment. A trait of ideality, or trenscendence of the given, and a reference to an object, is the ineluctable and pervasive characteristic of all that minds do and are. And this necessarily leads to a radical revision of the thesis that you know what an idea is when you describe it as a presentation, a substantive content and modification of consciousness. You do not know the nature of the idea until you know something about the nature of the object upon which the idea is directed, and in reference to which lies the life of the idea itself. Once you sever the idea from its reference to something objective, and imagine that you have left an internal presentation or modification of consciousness, a unique substantive entity encased within the confines of the mind, you are pursuing a phantom and distorting the facts of experience. The temptations so to do are many and powerful. The new "way of ideas" initiated by Descartes and Locke never wholly succeeded in withstanding these temptations, thrust upon us as they are, by the terms we are compelled to use. "Impression," "image," "inner," and "outer," and many such, suggest that the mind, as the locus of ideas, is a hidden storeroom wherein are housed only the shadows and counterparts of what exists in the free spaces of the unsheltered world outside. Instead of this the

lesson to be learned from the varied currents of recent and contemporary philosophical realisms, pragmatisms (and even behaviorisms) is that a mind, no less than a plant or an animal, lives in the open, sharing in the rhythm and the structures which things, as they really are, themselves possess. The wealth and significance of these objective structures, though never displayed and disclosed till mind appears upon the scene, are not for that reason artificial and adventitious 'psychical additions,' resident solely within mind and foreign to the objective nature of things. But, it by no means follows that cognitive ideas possess *only* an external meaning, and that they can be understood in complete independence of the structures, interests, and conations which belong to the mind. Perceptual experience is dependent upon the activities of the organism, its incessant and active exploration of the objects within its environment. An alertness, a prospective attitude of expectation, attention itself even when involuntary, without which no perceptions as we know them would be possible, imply that our perceptions are moments within the conative activities of the mind-body organism. That they are *also* in some measure cognitive, that they genuinely disclose objective events and characters in the environment need be no less true because they are thus caught up in the life activities of the organism. Passing to higher levels of cognition and following the clew which such an analysis of perception yields, we should have to say that the more unified, more remote structures and systems disclosed to science and philosophy are 'ideal constructions' fashioned in the interests of ideals which have an internal meaning. "Is it too much to say," asks Mr. Eddington, "that mind's search for permanence has created the world of physics?" We can never afford to forget that all science and knowledge is an achievement of the human spirit; no more can we afford to suppose that because it is such, it is devoid of objective meaning —truth. I say these things here not because I suppose them to sound convincing but because they indicate the direction in which, as I think, we may and must go, in viewing our theoretical ideas, not only as directed upon subjects transcendent to them-

selves, but also as expressing the interests and the life of the mind, in which, as events, they occur.

When nature produced the first simple eye spots of coelenterates, she had presumably in view—if such anthropomorphic language be permitted—the need and requirements, the practical interests of a specific organism living in a specific environment. Nature had no intention of disclosing to that lowly creature the wealth of her secrets which lay hidden in wave and sunlight, in rocks and sand, in the myriad of other living forms, and in its own body. But the simple and dim sensations which make their entry here or later could not serve the needs of the organism unless they conveyed, in elementary form, some information about the world in which the animal finds itself, scaled down of necessity to the poor capacities of a simple and momentary mind. The sensations which come to birth in the animal's mind—or which are the rudiments of what only after long ages can be called a mind—share in the structure and life of things, at the same time that they serve the vital needs and interests of the living creature. Sensations and perceptions, like the sense organs themselves, *do,* in a sense, stand between us and our world, but not to shut us off from it. Eyes and ears belong to the body; but, when they function, they lend themselves to and, in more than a Pickwickian sense, they belong to the continuous system of nature's energies and processes which reach out from us into remote and hidden depths. At least on this level, minds are not alien to nature, nor is nature alien to minds. But if we are entitled to hold that cognitive and theoretic ideas possess an internal meaning as well as that external reference and meaning by virtue of which we accord to them the function of knowing, are we likewise entitled to hold that our practical ideas and ideals have any sort of external meaning? It does seem to me necessary to say that some manner of linkage with what is real, some objective reference, characterizes the *entire* life of mind, its practical interests and ideals no less, in principle, than its theoretic interests all the way from sensation, perception, and impulse to ideas and ideals. Did time permit,

I should wish to expand some such schematic statement as the following: The instincts of the higher animals and man are more or less specific adaptations to more or less specific stimuli in their physical enviroment. And "less" rather than "more." Generalized and diffused inherited capacities are progressively defined and molded by specific physical objects and situations which act as stimuli. You cannot adequately even name an instinct without specifying its objective reference, its incorporation of and response to some definite physical object. Similarly, at a higher level, what have come to be designated as our *sentiments,* are likewise evoked, and defined, not, to be sure, by the objects of our physical environment, but by the objects and structures of our social environment. Every sentiment, love and hate, dissent and loyalty, carries within it some objective reference to that which elicits it and provides it with content—which makes it the specific thing it is. Our sentiments have grown up with the structures which comprise the objective world of our social heritage and social environment. But I do not think that we can stop here as, for instance, does the French school of Durkheim and his followers. Besides instincts and sentiments we have ideals, the idea of the Good. If now we see that an instinct is defined by and makes reference to an objective physical thing, and a sentiment is specified by and makes reference to an objective social structure, are we to say that our reflective ideals, in the light of which we criticize and transcend our sentiments, are suspended in a vacuum, and have no objective reference whatever? This is a *possible* view, and the answer to this question is contingent upon ultimate metaphysical hypotheses. This much seems to me clear. If there is nothing objective to define and to constrain our ideals, both theoretical and practical, an objective real, other and deeper-lying than the particular physical objects which determine our instincts and our perceptions, and the particular contingent social structures which determine our beliefs and our preferences, I can see no genuine validity which attaches either to our knowing or our willing, and I can see no ground for our concerning ourselves seriously either

with truth or with goodness. For—and this is one way of stating the results of our analysis and argument—you have an idea—or an ideal—when you have an event which is not merely pushed into being from behind, by preceding events, but which is determined by something objective to which it refers. Not determined causally, to be sure, but none the less determined, with respect to its meaning, its reference, and its validity. The object of a conscious event can never, in my judgment, be said wholly to coincide with and to be identical with its cause. This holds for sense perception just as well as it does for memory, and for thought. The table which is the object of my perception is not identical with the sensory and critical processes and whatever else which generates my perception of the table. The *cause* of an idea lies on the opposite side of it—so to speak, from the *object* of the idea. My idea of the multiplication table is not any idea of the causes which are responsible for the existence of this, my idea. It is this capacity of having objects and of being determined by them, in a sense wholly different from being caused by prior events, which lends to ideas the quality of being true or false. Just so with our preferences and our ideals. These are of course generated by causes, they are events preceded by other events in a determinate and knowable manner. But they too are directed upon objective structures, and the measure of their significance and validity lies in the response which they make to such objective structures.

Thus is the entire life of mind, whether theoretical or practical, permeated by ideas. An idea is an event occurring in the life history of an individual body-mind. Unlike all other events, a conscious event or idea is one which embodies an intent, a specific point of view, perspective or purpose, its internal meaning, and which also bears upon and makes reference to something objective, its external meaning. In all knowing and striving, in theory and practice there are displayed in the life of the mind, in infinitely diverse patterns and proportions, both the specific interests of fortuitive, contingent, individual creatures, and the universal and objective structures of the real world.