

All Phenomena Facts of Consciousness.

Continued from 1st page.
tation; if all vegetal life were also extinct, these vibrations would continue to affect the earth, producing innumerable changes on sea and land. But without consciousness and the organs through which it is differentiated in feeling, there would be no sound and no hearing, no luminousness and no seeing, no fragrance and no smelling.

We know and distinguish objects by the states of consciousness which, through the senses, they produce in us. What things are in themselves, apart from their effects upon us and from the conscious states to which they give rise, we do not know. The external world, as we conceive it through our forms of perception and modes of thought, may have no resemblance whatever to the absolute reality. Between the internal and external order there is congruity, but resemblance cannot be affirmed.

The conclusion of all psychological analysis is, as Huxley says, "that all phenomena are, in their ultimate analysis, known to us only as facts of consciousness."

What are phenomena? What appears. In other words, the appearance of the real, the effects upon consciousness of that which is.

That which is, is "the thing in itself"—that which is independently of the perceiving self. This is the "unknowable," the "inscrutable," the "unpicturable," and the "essence of being."

My Agnosticism is based upon the inability of the human mind to transcend the condition of cognition. We can know things only as they are related to us. What being is except as it is in relation to us we do not, we cannot know. Therefore I call myself an Agnostic.

For the word Agnostic, as used by those who say, "I don't know whether there is a God or not," I have no use. I think such use of the word indicates the A B C state of thought. Agnosticism proper, is only in regard to the nature of ultimate being, of that of which phenomena are manifestations; of the essence of "matter," or of "spirit."

Study of philosophy can lead to no conclusions of value without study of the psychology of the senses. Popular materialism and popular spiritualism are archaic; they belong to intellectual childhood.

Mr. B. F. Underwood's Lesson in Psychology.

Right glad are we to welcome Mr. B. F. Underwood to our columns and as an original contributor to the gallery of great, fundamental articles we are accustomed to print on our first page. The lesson he gives is one exceedingly necessary. It is that we in fact sense, perceive and know things by the co-operation of

the "objective" and "subjective", which are the two sides of consciousness, cognition — nay, of our very existence. The first and most necessary step in all acquisition of truth and knowledge is to get a clear conception of what belongs to each of these two sides and elements of perception. Goethe used to say "the eye brings more than it sees". This is well explained by Mr. Underwood. The trouble is that with very many people the eye brings much more than it sees, and sometimes, in excited or abnormal cases, EVERYTHING, and will then insist that simply "seeing is believing". Hence we have a world of spiritism (that of Swedenborg, for instance), with lots of subjective spooks etc., so well attested that it will deceive "the very elect" unless they be "scientific" like Mr. Underwood. Of course the healthy position is to keep these two sides of perception, cognition, conception, etc., healthy, well-balanced and always critical of each other, and subject to constant cross-examination. Or as Goethe says it better than we, thus:—

"Den Sinnen hast du dann zu trauen;
Kein Falches lassen sie dich schauen
Wenn dein Verstand dich wach erhält.
Mit frischem Blick bemerke freudig,
Und wandle, sicher wie geschmeidig,
Durch Auen reich begabter Welt.

"Thy senses also hast thou to trust;
Nothing false will they let thee see—
If thy understanding keep the awake:
With freshen'd glance then joyfully
OBSERVE,
And so rove, safely because pliantly,
Through the fields of the richly-gifted
world."

This is the healthy, common sense basis of the whole business of right living. And may this article of Mr. Underwood's help us all, big and little, thereunto!

And now, "Friend of my better days", a word of warning:—I pray thee, drop that word "Agnostic", and beware of the "Ding an sich"! The first word, Agnostic, is simply a dubiousity, and has so many meanings, good and bad, that it has no meaning except as it is constantly re-defined and applied; and even then it always has a suspicion of uncertainty and want of sincerity. Let us all be SCIENTISTS—Truth-seekers, and let that be enough. Then as to that "Thing in itself", "Being, in itself", etc., etc., beware! Your final sentences are dangerously like that; and can we forget how the pet tame goose wandered off and was shot with the wild ones? Think not that the like danger is past because that old Blucher of Materialism, Dr. Buchner, he of "Matter and Force", is now of blessed memory in the Choir Invisible, whence he never ceases, however, to ring out his rhythmic chime of that fearful

"Ding, Ding, Ding!
Das Ding an Sich!"

There is no safety because he is gone; for there is Dr. Paul Carus, another "Chiel amang us takin' notes"—also from Germany. He

came over years ago with a kind of mathematical, spiral-bored, intellectual rifle, such as they make in the German Universities, but in order to bring down more game he has bored out the barrel so as to "make a terrible sort of American smooth-bore shotgun"; and there he sits on the ramparts of Chicago ready to send buckshot and murder after "Agnostics," or wingy "Dings" of any sort,—and with what execution the last edition of his "Fundamental Problems" shows alas! too well. The only safety is to extend correlation into his logic of "Forms", so as to measure and equate everything and every change scientifically by its BEFORE and AFTER. This eliminates the spook "thing in itself", and leaves us certainty and plain sailing for the rest of our lives.

But let us not tempt him by the echoes of our old battles materialistic, but invite him as a Monist to join with us and the German class of the Liberal University, in their chant of another healthy verse of Goethe, to-wit:—

Vielfach is der Menschen Streben,
Ihre Unruh, ihr Verdruss;
Auch ist manches Gut gegeben,
Mancher liebliche Genuss;
Doch das grösste Glück im Leben,
Und der reichlichsste Gewinn,
Ist ein guter, leichter Sinn.

Manifold is Man's striving,
His unrest, his vexation;
Yet many a good is given,
Many a lovely joy is here;
But the greatest Luck in Life,
And the richest gain to find
Is a sound and cheerful mind.

T. B. W.

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