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## The nature of freedom

Peter Archibald Carmichael

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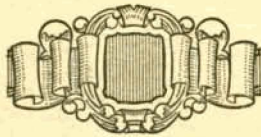
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# The Nature of Freedom

PETER A. CARMICHAEL

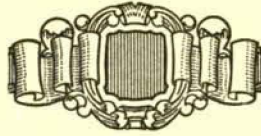


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DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHAPEL HILL

# The Nature of Freedom

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## FOREWORD

Once more the Department of Philosophy invites its friends to stop a moment and consider a problem in civilization. This thesis is done by Mr. Peter A. Carmichael. Mr. Carmichael is a native of Georgia; a graduate of Johns Hopkins; a Master of Columbia; a Doctor with us.

That Dr. Carmichael devotes himself to the problem of freedom is interesting. This will surprise the ultra-scientific; is not freedom shown to be a dream? It will excite hopes in the conservative; is not right conduct grounded in freedom? It will appeal to the philosophical; are not fundamental problems eternally challenging?

If Philosophy is the process of truth, the beginning in any case must be with the first moment in this process. The student of mathematics does not begin with calculus. Why should the philosophical student expect to begin with Spinoza, Kant, Hegel? Dr. Carmichael does not commit this blunder. He begins at the beginning. What is the first moment in knowledge? If philosophy is the process of truth, then it must find itself in terms of itself, the moment of identity. Dr. Carmichael sees this and states it impressively. The Hindus made this discovery. They saw the moment of identity as absolute, as ultimate, as reality. They saw this moment with such clearness that they boldly denied difference. Dr. Carmichael is on sound ground as he magnifies the moment of identity.

Life, civilization, exhibits difference, variety, change. Then Philosophy must find itself in terms of change. The problem of freedom is born. If reality is absolute identity; if life is variety, then what is the individual? If the moment of identity is ultimate; if there are individuals; then the problem of relation is a major problem.

The student of *Logic* will find the steps taken by Dr. Carmichael in his thinking, of interest and value.

H. H. WILLIAMS.



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## INTRODUCTION

The problem of freedom is still one of the great concerns of philosophic thought, in spite of the many attempts to solve it and of the resolve of some to abandon it as insoluble or as unworthy of further attention. Even the nature of the problem—the sphere it occupies, the questions it brings up—to say nothing of the nature of freedom itself, rests in uncertainty. Is freedom an attribute of man only, or does it belong to other beings as well? Is it a matter for ethics and politics exclusively, or does it involve other branches of study also? It is frequently assumed that the subject pertains to man only, and more especially that it concerns relations between man and man and so is strictly a practical problem. Some are of the opinion that a theoretical or metaphysical solution is unnecessary to the wise conduct of affairs,<sup>1</sup> but others would think it an evasion of fundamental and ultimately inevitable questions if the problem were thus left to the give and take of everyday life.<sup>2</sup>

It is evident, however, that if freedom were only a problem of legislation and social intercourse it would scarcely have been elevated to the high speculative plane which it has long occupied. Leibniz reckons it a fundamental problem of thought, "the special perplexity of philosophers,"<sup>3</sup> and Kant puts it among the "inevitable problems of pure reason itself."<sup>4</sup> Others in fields removed from philosophical speculation have held a like view, Milton seeing in discourse upon free will and necessity one of the joys of Paradise<sup>5</sup> and Carlyle pronouncing that freedom is "the one purport, wisely aimed at, or unwisely, of all man's struggles, toilings and sufferings in this Earth."<sup>6</sup>

In undertaking this inquiry the writer was motivated by the desire to find out what freedom meant, not with respect to conventions, "rights," and legislative arrangements, but with respect to the free being as such and to the other beings from which he was free. It was not the purpose to study the perfect state but to understand in ultimate terms, so far as possible, the significance of the idea that anything is or may be what we call free. I wished to know not only what it meant for man and other creatures to be free but also what it meant for God or the universe to be free. To state this ambition is at the same time to give indication of the difficulties which lie in the way of its achievement, and of the danger of winding up in failure. More significantly still, it is perhaps to admit an ambition worthy only of much greater training, experience, and powers than the writer has.

It might have been open to me, since I was interested in the general problem of freedom, to make a study of the different doctrines which are held or have been held on the subject, or to sum up arguments for the conflicting doctrines, or to compare the theories of one man with those of another or with the rest of his own system of thought. There were two objections to that. First, it was evident that in any case I should have to acquaint myself with the leading doctrines in the history of the subject and that in doing so I would gain the benefits that a general survey would yield. Secondly, it appeared that if I should attempt to compare and evaluate these doctrines I would require something besides the reiterated doctrines themselves as a basis for judgment; I would require, namely, an apprehension either of the problem in general or of some phase of it such that judgments could be made by reference thereto. But if I could find such a grounding or instrument as that, it seemed that it would itself be, all things considered, more fundamental than this or that doctrine that came

<sup>1</sup> Sidgwick, e.g. Cf. *Methods of Ethics*, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Probably all determinists, and many indeterminists.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Robert Latta, *Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings*, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Critique of Pure Reason*, Max Muller's trans., 2d ed. rev., p. 3n.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Archibald Alexander, *Theories of the Will in the History of Philosophy*, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *French Revolution*, Boston, 1838, vol. 1, p. 183.



up to be judged, and would accordingly be something which it was desirable to investigate and set forth. On the other hand, if I could not discover something of that kind I would be unable to attempt an evaluation of the theories of others and so could not satisfy the ordinary requirements of investigation. In pursuing the inquiry I saw that these theories, and indeed any theory so far as I could conceive, were always caught up into a web of implications, from which it appeared that implication itself was the central feature, and indeed that a satisfactory theory of freedom would either have to set out from that which lay at the basis of implication or else submit itself to it for judgment in the end. Thereafter it seemed clear that the whole question of freedom at this level of regard was a question in logic and metaphysics.

A number of the problems of these two branches of philosophy arose, some of them threatening to be disastrous and all of them receiving treatment far beneath that demanded by their import and dignity, as could have been expected. More than this, it presently became evident that a thorough and adequate treatment of freedom would call for a complete metaphysic and logic; for freedom, I perceived, is the same thing as these—or the same thing as metaphysics if it be more precise to see the two as one. This realization was more embarrassing still to the undertaking on which I had entered, as it meant that whatever the results, they were bound to fall short not only in separate detail but also as a whole. But at the same time it was manifest that to confine the study to some marked out portion of the whole, even if the alternative was nothing better than a skeletonized or telescopic view, would be correspondingly to limit the insight to be gained, and not only that but to leave every ultimate question in doubt as well, since certainty of understanding could not be hoped for from a standpoint which was partial. Thus restricted the study, aside from its other limitations and its faults, gave little promise and in the end, I am afraid, as little realization.

A single principle is the basis and guide of the inquiry. This is the logical principle of identity. When we judge we employ categories termed laws or principles of thought, but before we judge we must understand. Judging is a process, but understanding, as I apprehend, is not a process but the ground of process, beyond the time and change of the phenomenal world, and also of the noumenal world, reflected therein. This ground, or understanding itself, I take to be the principle of identity, to which the other principles of thought reduce, and itself the same as being.

The task, so it seems to me, in any fundamental inquiry is to see the subject at every stage and in every respect in the light of this principle; for it is the universal criterion, the court of last resort. But to apprehend this requirement is one thing, to fulfill it another—so at least it has been for me. If, however, it is my privilege to state, after recognizing its many flaws and shortcomings, a claim in behalf of the investigation, it is that the principle aforesaid may provide ground and guidance for more thorough and more extended study of this and of other problems of basal character.

Without the indulgence of the head of the Department of Philosophy, Professor H. H. Williams, under whose direction I have written this paper, and by whom I have been permitted to seek and to do for myself rather than exclusively to labor over the remains of others, I could not have undertaken and proceeded with a subject so presumptuous as this. The presumptuousness is of course mine only. I regret that the risk taken was not also mine only, and that it is no better justified than by the results attained.

## I

### THE MEANING OF "NATURE"

As the term "nature" is subject to a great variety of interpretation, having had something like a hundred meanings, I believe, in the course of its history, I will



state the sense in which it is used in this inquiry. It is a term which is synonymous with fundamental or first principles, as used here. To know the nature of anything is to know its first principles.

"First principle" itself is a term, however, which invites questions. Although an elemental concept in philosophy since the time of the Greek physiologists at least, it nevertheless may leave the mind not entirely satisfied as to its signification. In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle inquires into being as such, an inquiry all-inclusive, and arrives at first principles: substance, form, cause. But the mind, if motivated by a *nisus* to something more ultimate still, refuses to stop here and demands to know what are these principles and what are first principles as such.

This might, however, be said to be a question which is not answerable, for the reason that whatever is reduced to ultimate terms is no further definable. Persistent questions, once this bottom stage had been reached, would be said to have significance only as they related to something other than that about which they were asked. For instance, to ask what an irreducible thing would be, on this view, to ask what it was in relation to something else, such, for example, as the knowing faculty; for as it was in itself, it would be definable in its own terms only. Indeed, so it would be said, it could in strictness not be defined but only designated.

Nevertheless, the persistent inquirer would wish to know more about these ultimate terms, or things-in-themselves. As he could think of infinite divisibility, so he would incline to think of infinite definability. But Kant concluded that things-in-themselves are unknowable, and Aristotle's investigations might be interpreted as leading to the same conclusion. How, then, do we know they are unknowable? What first principle—evidently it would have to be such—tells us that? These are questions which we cannot attempt to answer here, though we hope to find insight into them in the course of our inquiry.

Of first principles one which will concern us is that of relation. By means of it everything of which we have knowledge is connected with other things and through these with yet others, until a consilience of them all is to be inferred. It is this intelligible bond that makes it possible for a philosopher such as Descartes to begin his speculations with the simplest element and proceed to the most complex, as it likewise is for a mathematician such as Bolyai to disregard the traditionally accepted character of space and conceive a new geometry. The method is that of explicating the implicit, or dialectic. It is the method of thought rendered explicit.

In inquiring into freedom the category of relation and hence the tracing of implications must be of primary importance. But that is not the only category or first principle that we are to investigate and employ. We must have a universal and an individual as well and then we must see what their relations are and what is the ground that conditions all three. The problem of freedom is the problem of understanding these four things, separately and together.

## II

### THE UNIVERSAL

Implication itself, from the standpoint of the act of inference, implies a ground. In virtue of what are we able to say that given one true proposition, all others follow? What makes it possible to assert that the crushing of a grain of sand reverberates throughout the universe?<sup>7</sup> To these questions it may be replied that implication,

<sup>7</sup> For general statements of principles in this connection the following may be consulted: Plotinus, IV, 9:5. Leibniz, *Monadology*, 61; letter to Arnauld in Montgomery's *Leibniz: Discourse on Metaphysics*, p. 141. F. H. Bradley, *Principles of Logic*, vol. II, p. 489. A. E. Taylor, *Elements of Metaphysics*, 6th ed., pp. 35, 53. J. G. Hibben, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, p. 170.



considered in itself rather than as a particular act, is a bond connecting and identical with all particularity. It is the system of all inference, one and universal, the pattern and sum of apprehension. This is evident in two ways: (1) *A priori*, from the nature of thought itself, which *ipso facto* is a unity self-ordered and self-sustained. (2) *A posteriori*, from the final unification to which discursive or inductive operations point. In (1) we see this through reflection on reflection itself, or through immediate awareness of what reasoning signifies and is. In (2) we see it notably in scientific experimentation and speculation.

The experimental attitude, however, by confining attention to particulars, is often disposed to disregard or to deny this immanent ground. Yet the experimenter comes from his data with hypotheses, theories, or laws, which are far from being the same thing as data alone. Then he may suppose that these results, even though termed laws, are not attributes of the data but strictly subjective creations applied to the data. But this subjectivism, if pressed home, would have to defend the proposition that the mind or the sensorium creates not only the laws but also the physical data themselves, since both, so far as they are apprehended, are apprehended by mind. On the other hand, it is supposed by experimenters with a different turn of mind that the role of intelligence is passive so that, instead of itself operating upon the data, and especially of imposing *a priori* categories upon them, it simply records and represents. This latter view may even be carried so far as to take in the fundamentals of mathematics, holding then that mathematical operations postulate objects to fit them.<sup>8</sup>

Are we more certain that  $7+5=12$  when we add seven objects to five others than when we perform the operation in our minds only? By no means; for the addition is strictly an abstract logical act or insight, itself the standard of reference, whereas the objects, as someone has suggested, may come out more or less than 12 in case any are broken or some consolidated in the process of getting them together. We might go farther and say that addition as we know or understand it is altogether conceptual, that when we add we do it in our minds regardless of whether the first adding we ever did was done in the presence of objects to illustrate it or not. Objects may in this case illustrate, but it is not themselves but something else, namely a form of thought of which we are now being made aware, which they illustrate. The conflicting views on this matter give rise to epistemological questions centering about the question of what is *a priori* and what is *a posteriori*. As we have already indicated and as we hope to make clearer farther on, the two merge, the *a priori* absorbing the *a posteriori*.<sup>9</sup>

In supposing that thought postulates objects corresponding to it the experimentalist overlooks the fact that to postulate calls for and presupposes something more than a faculty made up of impressions of objects only. What, we might ask him, is it that postulates? Not the memory—memory of objects already experienced—surely, but a power that looks beyond objects. What, further, is a postulate? It is a principle of thought, which comprehends objects but is far from being representative of objects exclusively. Save in so far as thought and thing are one, it is then erroneous to maintain that thought merely signifies objects, but on the other hand, if the two are ever one, it is further wrong to speak of separating them and setting one over against the other. If the empiricist is asked to state what corresponds to the square root of  $-1$  he will answer by a roundabout way leading back to 1 and then be primed to show us that the number always stands for a thing. But does it? What is the

<sup>8</sup> Cf., e.g., H. C. Brown in *Creative Intelligence*, by John Dewey and others, p. 145. For the contrary view see R. P. Richardson and E. H. Landis, *Fundamental Conceptions of Modern Mathematics*, p. 140, and J. B. Shaw, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Mathematics*, p. 157.

<sup>9</sup> So in principle argued Spinoza in his controversy with Boyle. Cf. Richard McKeon, *Philosophy of Spinoza*, ch. IV, and Spinoza, *Correction of the Understanding*, IV, VII, XV. In the same connection see Montgomery, *ibid.*



number 1? Whatever it is, it is conceptual, since it is something that the mind applies, and applies universally without its being in the slightest affected whether used to designate a whale or a toothache or whether simply held in thought. It cannot be in the object sensed, unless we are to say it is in sensation. But neither can it be in sensation, since it is applied to sensation; were it there, we should then be justified in abstracting some of the other things there, such as color, sound, and taste, and applying them universally also, with the result that we would speak of brown virtue, salubrious biquaternions, etc.

The concept of law, whether it be law as conceived by reason or law as described by empiricism, is the same as the concept of consilience. It contemplates reality, or being, from the standpoint of activity. But the manner or principle according to which the activity goes on is distinguishable from the process itself, as the actor is distinguishable from his action. The one is subject, the other predicate; the one ground, the other grounded. On a closer view ground and grounded are seen to be merged, constituting a single whole. This would be clear from reflection on the nature of distinction. To distinguish is to separate or divide—in this case to look now at the actor and now at the action—but before there can be division there must be a whole to divide. The whole, in the most general terms, is being itself. It is the subject of all predication, and any particular predication is a division of it; not an absolute division, as we shall see later on, but one nevertheless which on a partial and specious view will appear absolute. Possibly Montesquieu was thinking of this when he wrote: "I have laid down the first principles, and have found that the particular cases follow naturally from them; that the histories of all nations are only consequences of them; and that every particular law is connected with another law, or depends on some other of a more general extent."<sup>10</sup>

Whatever is, is of this totality of things or being and is thereby rendered relative to and homogeneous with all other members of the whole. It results that nothing is absolutely unique and singular, unless it be the whole itself. The whole may be apprehended, as we said before, either discursively or immediately. The discursive apprehension of it is the same as Kant's synthetic unity of apperception. The immediate apprehension is the opposite of this, an original insight comprehending ground and grounded at once rather than piecemeal. This is simple awareness of the principle of identity, from which all reasoning proceeds and with which it is identical throughout; a principle which is the same as being. It is not a *prius* nor a *posterius* but an *esse*, being as such, the universal center wherein knower, knowing, and known are one, and not simply a center but a circuit, the universe itself.<sup>11</sup>

Apprehension of this identity is immediate union of knower, knowing, and known. It is not other-regarding nor self-regarding, but immediate identity. Of this identity nothing is predicable except itself or its parts, and in either case predication is privation—separation, partitionment. This is the same as to say that apart from the whole nothing is conceivable.<sup>12</sup> Further, it is to say that all predication, aside from being privation, is tautology.

In all judgments and in all criteria of judgments we have ultimate reference to this absolute identity. The laws or principles of thought—identity, non-contradiction, excluded middle—are, except the first, but partial ways of stating it, though they clearly imply it. Categories of the understanding are instances of it, each reducible to it.

Let us consider Kant's categories in the light of this statement. All these categories, quantity, quality, relation, and modality, are partial, incomplete, and unexplicated forms which merge when brought under the light of understanding. Under quantity Kant sets down unity, plurality, and totality. Now the unity here is not

<sup>10</sup> *Spirit of Laws*, tr. by Thomas Nugent, Preface, xliii-xliv.

<sup>11</sup> Cp. Hegel's *Science of Logic*, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 212.

<sup>12</sup> Spinoza, *Ethics*, I, 15.



unity unless regarded as completely discrete. But so to regard anything is to regard it partially and, we may say now, speciously. The act of comprehending it requires understanding to begin with, that is, it requires something more than the thing itself, and once understood, the thing is rendered homogeneous with the understanding and so no longer is discrete. The same applies to plurality. It also applies to totality, the totality here being totality of quantity and not of being. Under the category of quality he lists reality, negation, and limitation. But reality is not a subdivision of anything. It is a term applicable universally and therefore synonymous with the identity in terms of which everything whatever is conceived or understood. Its contrary, "unreal," is a fiction of the privative view and is not conceivable, since it is without any signification and since conception occurs only within the realm of signification, or reality. Negation and limitation, the two remaining categories of quality, are identical, unless to the former we are expected to assign a meaning equivalent to the supposed meaning of "unreal," which would be no meaning at all. They are, again, finite devices and apart from the finite standpoint are unthinkable, since absolute limitation, and likewise negation in the same sense, would produce something absolutely discrete, which it is beyond the power of understanding to grasp, unless we are to say that understanding itself, with what it entails, is discrete.

The purest kind of limitation, we may presume, would be number. The number 2, it would be said, is utterly cut off from the number 3. But if that is the case, then there is a space between them. More specifically, there is a space between the point where 2 may be said to end and the point where 3 begins. But there is no such intervening space, just as there is none between the point where Sunday ends and Monday begins. The difference between the whole 2 and the whole 3 is another matter, being the difference between the point where 2 ends and that where 3 ends. We have, that is to say, a continuum, divisible infinitesimally if at all, and when we think in terms of infinitesimals we thereby cease thinking in terms of units between which there are gaps and think in terms of continuity. There is no discrete 1 (unless in the sense pointed out before) or 2 or 3, as there are no discrete objects. But all of them may be employed privatively, and then all are categorical.

But it may be objected that numbers do not relate to continuity. From the foregoing it is evident that such objection cannot stand so far as the series of numbers is concerned, although with respect to the number 1 the case may appear to possess justification. Let us see. The number 1 seems to comprise in itself the entire nature of number. It appears to be the same as the pure identity which we have found both in understanding and in being as such; from which, to repeat, reasoning sets out and with which it is always identical. In virtue of this character, it is universally applicable, as may be seen from the fact that it serves to designate even the numbers greater than it.—We speak, for example, of one 5, one 6, etc.—Numbers greater than it appear to be repetitions of it taken in groups, which groups are each a one. On strict examination 5 would turn out, on this view, not to be conceived in itself; for what could it be other than one group of repetitions of 1? If it were absolute in itself then it would be discrete, separated off from 4 and 6, with an intervening space. But this we found to be unthinkable.

The remainder of Kant's categories yield to the same kind of criticism as that directed in the foregoing against the first two sets, and we need not dwell on them. It is clear that categories, save that of identity, are devices of privative thought. Accordingly there appears no justification for restricting them to twelve as Kant did, or to ten as Aristotle did, or to four as the Stoics did. But if we do have them we begin to duplicate as soon as we pass beyond one, as Kant's table shows, which is itself evidence that one is all there is.

The doctrine of the synthetic unity of apperception enabled Kant to overcome the divisions which he had created with his categories. He went even farther, apprehending that, on the noumenal side at least, there is a prior and original unity as this passage shows:



Pure understanding must be distinguished, not merely from all that is empirical, but even from all sensibility. It constitutes therefore a unity independent in itself, self-sufficient, and not to be increased by any additions from without. The sum of its knowledge must constitute a system, comprehended and determined by one idea, and its completeness and articulation must form the test of the correctness and genuineness of the component parts.<sup>13</sup>

If this noumenal unity is admitted and if it is admitted that it has any reference to phenomena, then as soon as we presume to cut it off from phenomena we contradict the admission that it referred to them. We are then left with either a subjectivism or a parallelism, and in the case of the one we deny phenomena altogether and have no right to speak of them, while in the case of the other we assume a ground or identity which holds the two together, which, on close analysis, is not a parallelism at all but a unity.

If we admit a dualism between knower and known, then not only will things-in-themselves be unknowable, but so also will things-outside-themselves. There will be no occasion then to speak of things-in-themselves or of any other things, since this will be a world of isolated, solipsistic units, none able to pass without or to know anything except itself. But supposing we do admit this dualism and supposing a given thing is known only by the impressions which it makes, how do we know that *it* makes the impressions, since impressions will be wholly subjective and since it is itself, according to the doctrine, different from its appearances or phenomena? How, since we are going on impressions, do we know that *it* is out there at all? We shall have to posit it as being there, but to do this implies that we had it before we could posit it. Then why posit it? If you have a coin in your pocket you will have to posit it there and then you will have to posit the hand that put it there, the mind that posited the hand, and so on until you posit yourself. But you do not *posit* yourself; you *are* yourself—which, after similar considerations, Kant admits.<sup>14</sup> Hence the dualism vanishes.

For analytical and special purposes it is thought useful to distinguish between the self and the experience of the self, or between thought and thing. From earliest times thinkers, proceeding discursively and attempting to translate the apparent discreteness of physical things to the realm of metaphysics, have tried to parcel out man and the world, only to find it subsequently necessary to invent devices to bring them back together. But the mind remains unsatisfied with the results. It starts out with unity and is not content until it resolves all opposition and contradiction and returns to this unity, or, as Hegel terms it, to itself. This is not an exact way of stating the process but rather one which is expressive of the privative view; for the mind does not leave itself and so does not return to itself, and if it did, we should fail to describe the occurrence by means of such language. Nothing leaves itself, since it would still have to be itself in the act of leaving—would have to go along too. What would it be, supposing it did leave? Which would be the self, the part that departed or the part that stayed behind? If either, then the other would not be the self, and so we could not have it in both places, or, more specifically, have it in one place and yet not have it there. If both, then there would have been no sundering, and the self would have remained one and undivided throughout. In order to conceive the separation as described, we must be able to conceive of a thing's being and yet not being at the same time, and that, since it violates the one principle of all conceiving and understanding, namely, the principle of identity or non-contradiction, is impossible. But dualism is founded on the assumption that it is possible; so dualism is inconceivable. Likewise with pluralism.

Through a subtlety, however, it is held that the doctrine just criticized does not mean that the self is completely differentiated at the several stages of the process but that it remains itself, one and entire, in each of them. Between or within the uni-

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 52-53. But see p. 747n.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, Supplement XIV, especially 25.



versal and the particular, according to Hegel, is a unity, which constitutes the individual. The universal "simultaneously contains the particular and the individual. Again, the particular is the different or the specific character, but with the qualification that it is in itself universal and is as an individual. Similarly the individual must be understood to be a subject or substratum, which involves the genus and species in itself and possesses a substantial existence."<sup>15</sup> The universal, then, is identical with the particular and the individual, and each of these is identical with the two others. To speak of the universal as leaving itself, passing into the particular, and then returning to itself as the individual, appears to be figurative, since there is identity throughout. The task of having to account for unity in diversity is avoided by terming the several stages of the process moments rather than strict differentiations. But if a moment is absolutely the same as the whole, then there is no distinction between the two, unless it be a subjective and privative distinction made by ourselves and not by the process. On the other hand, if the two are not absolutely the same, then it is wrong to call them one. We are told that the mind categorizes, and so requires moments, or mediation,<sup>16</sup> to which we must reply that although it does so in discursive thought, it does not in understanding. There the differentiations are seen to be specious, resolving into unity and immediacy. Did we confine ourselves entirely to particulars, we would not apprehend this or any unity, but to do that is not possible, since thinking transcends such limitation. In the transcending it is something other than the particulars transcended, and so far as it is that, it is this unity, or understanding. Complete understanding is complete transcendence in this respect.

The Hegelian doctrine comes finally to a unity in which the particularizations are absorbed.

Intuition shall be one with understanding, "Reflexion" shall be fused with *Anschauung*. Immediate experience shall breathe the breath of its life into the forms of reality separated by reflexion, and these shall of themselves become the single living soul which is the Absolute. The activity of reflexion shall be endowed with the actual vitality of concrete experience. Thus, just as in life there are no gaps, its whole process forming so thorough a continuity that even to name a distinct element is in a way to falsify its nature, so the single process which is to systematise experience shall simply reproduce that indissoluble continuity which is its inalienable characteristic.<sup>17</sup>

This unity of knower, knowing, and known is of the same character or indeed the same thing as that which had come down prior to the time of Hegel under the various monistic concepts of One, substance, Nature, and pantheism.

As the ultimate issue of discursive knowing is immediacy, so also is the beginning. All knowing subsequent to the beginning is an elaboration of this original. In mathematics we see what may be taken to be a recognition of this in the identification of the entire subject with logic.<sup>18</sup> In other fields—the sciences, art, ethics—a like recognition is made when unity—order, harmony, coherence—is established as a standard. An example which might be supposed to disprove this thesis is history. Where is the unity in history, where is the unfolding of original identity? it would be asked. An answer to this question is given in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, in which history is conceived as moving toward unity (spirit), and it might be maintained on logical grounds that if it is thus moving, a unity is already present in it, namely, a unity of direction or a unity of process (which is all that is necessary to establish the rest of the argument, as such unity implies its own predetermination, or original). In order to establish the opposed theory that history is chaotic or purposeless it would be necessary first to disprove the existence of relation, which, as we shall see, if it is not already manifest, implies and in fact is unity; it would also be necessary to

<sup>15</sup> Hegel, *Logic*, tr. by William Wallace, 2d ed., pp. 294-295.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. J. B. Baillie, *Origin and Significance of Hegel's Logic*, p. 330.

<sup>17</sup> Baillie, *ibid.*, pp. 330-331.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 5; *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, p. 194.



establish some correlative doctrine of atomism, such as the Epicurean. On the other hand, if history is admitted to be logical or teleological, then the unity is *eo ipso* admitted.

To the empirical mind the doctrine of unity would probably reduce to the question of whether we are identical with the objects we know. Before me lies a book and I know that it lies there and think that I know it itself. Is it the same as I?

Outwardly it is not the same, but outwardly we know no more about books than books know about one another, since in that respect we stand to them as does any object other than ourselves. When I look at it or touch it I enter into connections with it, but still am far from being one with it. When I think the book, however, I bring it into a still closer relation. In fact I bring it into that sphere, namely, thought, where everything that is, is ultimately reducible to the principle of identity. There the book and I are one.<sup>19</sup>

The immediacy of understanding and being is such that predication, which would contradict it by differentiating it, does not occur. What is to be predicated? Utterance is tautology, repetition of what, being immediate, requires no repetition. Awareness of this immediacy is awareness of a state beyond the privations of time and change. But it is a state in which awareness, itself a form of privation arising from a specious division of the whole against itself, no longer exists, and in which that which was aware has come to rest in eternity. This unity, present from first to last and in which distinctions vanish, is what we understand by the universal.

### III

## RELATION

In relation we have term A and term B brought into connection by a component R. We wish to know whether R is distinguishable as are A and B, and so to be regarded as itself a term. In other words, is it internal or external?

If it is external a serious if not fatal consequence follows, namely, that inference becomes impossible, because in all cases relation will have to be apprehended separately, the same as the terms related. A second apparently serious consequence, pointed out by Bradley in a famous exposition,<sup>20</sup> also follows, which is that between relation and term there will be required the addition of another relation, and to this the addition of yet another, and so on interminably.

In the first case all particularity would be absolutely discrete. Process would be impossible, or at all events inexplicable, and nothing could intelligibly happen. Knowledge would consist in the representation of discrete things, including relations, which would have to be blocked out as if to fit a straitjacket. But though they have physical embodiments, relations are conceptual, and whatever is conceptual is not parceled out into mutually exclusive sections but unified into one system. External relations, simply standing in their places and having nothing apprehensible to do with the things which they were supposed to relate would accordingly fall outside of intelligible experience. If we should find, as we do, that the right relations always attended the right terms without ever catching hold of them, we would have to account at least for the compresence. To say that they had a habit of appearing just there would be only to admit that they were not discrete, or external; for what could that habit be if not the attachment of which we speak? Why would not the wrong relation turn up as frequently as the right, with the consequence that reason would have vanished and the world turned into chaos?

<sup>19</sup> Cp. Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 4, 7; Spinoza, *Ethics*, II, 7, 8, 13, *Schol.*; M. C. Carroll, *The Principle of Individuality in the Metaphysics of Bernard Bosanquet*, in *Philosophical Review*, vol. XXX, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, 2d ed., pp. 32-33.



The same difficulties challenge Bradley's criticism. If new relations must be interpolated between relation and thing related without end, we go no farther toward refuting externality by showing the absurdity (supposing it such) of that process than we do by showing absurdity where only one relation is considered, since externality is just as unthinkable after  $n$  interpolations as it is at the outset. To argue that endless regress suffices to invalidate is, in addition to being itself a questionable tenet, to pass over the point of all the difficulty, which is that of whether relation and thing are intelligible without a juncture.

We must admit another point against this contention of the brilliant thinker. It is that we have in fact no reason to suppose that externality opens the door to this regress. If anything, it forbids such a chain of new links, since no mediation is prescribed between the relation and the thing. At any point in such a series we are relatively just where we were when we set out, the relation being still external to the thing, and the problem remaining untouched.

Still another difficulty arises. The regress is the same as infinitesimal division. But such division implies a continuum; hence the relation is continuous, which means that it is continuous with the terms. Then it is internal, not external, and so not the kind of thing that Bradley criticizes.

If by relation we mean anything, we mean something that does relate, not something that runs out into an endless chain and never connects at either end. We mean not an infinitude of links which never connect, but one link that does connect. Supposing we do have the endless chain, how do we know it is a chain and not a jumble of unconnected links? But if it is a chain there is already some connection between any two links of it, and then there can be no call to go beyond that in order to learn what it is.

If, for externality, relation is real, then it is also discrete. But then it is not needed, since the terms related, being also discrete, will have no need of anything external to help them remain discrete. Moreover, relation would not then be conceived or grasped at all, and so could never be found. From this the conclusion must be that it is not external.

Reflecting the finite tendency to separate knowledge into the intelligible and the empirical, a division of relation is attempted by various thinkers, such that on the one hand we are said to have immanent relation and on the other hand transeunt relation. Taking cause and effect as the type of transeunt relation, let us see whether it does not reduce to immanence.

To be aware of causal sequence is equivalent to being aware of an identity in the process in which it is apprehended. The process is *in se* unique and could theoretically be represented as a line is represented mathematically by an equation. If at any point in it absolute passage occurs, which would be the same as absolute destruction and absolute creation coincidentally, we should have a violation of the principle that into nothing, nothing can pass, and of its correlative that out of nothing, nothing can be created.<sup>21</sup> More particularly, we should have at that point both the existence and the non-existence of the process, or the simultaneous being and not-being of a thing, as in the paradoxes of Zeno. But that would violate the principle of identity, without which no apprehension is possible, and so it could not be conceived.

The inevitable rejoinder to this is that passage does occur, time and change are real. The answer of the understanding to this empiricism is that cause and effect are identical, and this is shown in the following way. Any instance of causation is expressible in a proposition, such as, Sunshine produces growth. More strictly, this

<sup>21</sup> The Epicurean principle. Cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, tr. by R. D. Hicks, vol. II, p. 569.



falls into the form, If sunshine, then growth. It may also be put alternatively, Either sunshine or no growth.

Now for any judgment there must be a ground. Between the "if" and the "then" of hypothetical judgments and the "either" and the "or" of disjunctive judgments, extending not only across the apparent gap between the terms but also through them, there lies a ground which is partitively represented by such judgments. Without this ground, judgment could not occur, since there would then be nothing to bind the terms together. (But also, without partitive, finite minds and objects to break it up, there would be no occasion for judgments, since everything in that case would be seen to be immediately identical, so that predication, if it did occur, would be nothing but tautology.) This ground is all that the judgment expresses, and all that makes the expression of anything possible. In virtue of it hypothetical and disjunctive judgments, as well as categorical judgments, are seen to be statements of identity. It is likewise, as may be readily seen, with modal judgments.

Accordingly it is evident that the import of judgments, or propositions, is identity. Nothing else would be expected, since we know that the principle of identity is the criterion of all judgment; a different result would require us to abandon that principle, but as soon as that was done, judging would cease and so there would not be a different result in the first place. But whereas the principle of identity might on first consideration have been thought an abstraction, it is now seen to be one with reality, or being. At this stage it illustrates our previous statement that the ultimate issue of discursive thought is identity, and also our statement that any judgment implies this identity. Consequently a judgment of cause and effect is a statement of the identity of the two.

By confining attention to terms, however, and failing to take into account their relation and its significance, we never would apprehend the identity of them. This is a habit contrary to reason and from it there inevitably arises a paradox as soon as the reason asserts itself; for appearance says one thing and reason another and contradictory thing. But we know that the appearance implies the other and could never present itself save in virtue of a system of relations which is one with the other. So time and change are caught up within, and rendered homogeneous with, the timeless and changeless.<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps this reduction of causation to identity will be condemned on the ground that it is possible only by confining consideration to a single point in a causal sequence, whereas it could never pass to another point and there get in its deadly work, for the reason that in order to reach the second point it would have to resort to the empirical process which it denies. The condemnation is ineffectual, however, since the identity does not require to be passed from one point to another, being at all points at once. It is not an identity confined to one point; it is the whole universe of being, reflected, in this case, at any given point.

After these considerations we are led to conclude that the distinction of causation into immanent and transeunt is not sustained. It is a distinction which requires us to suppose that the world is divided into discrete units and that causation is correspondingly divided so that one kind is confined within these units and the other kind operates upon them from without. External causes could not operate upon these units if a barrier, such as the division creates, always separated the two. But if they do operate upon them this barrier vanishes *eo ipso* and we then have not two

<sup>22</sup> Modern physics tends to abandon the empirical view of time. Its aim is "so to reduce the time-interval to a minimum as to say, 'X now causes Y now.'"—C. Lloyd Morgan, *Emergent Evolution*, p. 278. A kindred and more general statement is to be found in W. K. Clifford: "The facts of one time are not the cause of facts of another, but the facts of all time are included in one statement and rigorously bound up together."—Quoted in the same, p. 276. In the same connection interesting remarks will be found in J. M. E. McTaggart, *Nature of Existence*, vol. II, p. 187.



spheres of operation but one, and not two kinds of cause but one, which from the standpoint of pure understanding, or of universality, may be regarded as immanent, whereas from the standpoint of appearance, or particularity, it will be thought transeunt.<sup>23</sup>

Before leaving the subject of causation we may state the view to which we are conducted on the subject of final cause. We find it unnecessary to distinguish final cause from prior or efficient cause. Cause as such is stated categorically, hypothetically, or disjunctively and may, as we have seen, be conveniently taken hypothetically, so that in any instance we can say, Given A, B follows. But if we know that B follows from the bare statement of A, then it is unnecessary to state it, since the two are bound up together. A could not be without B, but since we start with A, we have no call to go beyond it. On the other hand, if the two are to be separated we can as legitimately take the standpoint of one as we can that of the other, and then B will have equal status with A. In the understanding this distinction is not made; for there the ground of them both is identity, as clearly and certainly as the ground of the sum  $7+5=12$  is identity.

This identity is immanence, and that is relation as such, as our previous consideration of relation has led us to see. Out of this identity flows all particularity, in a series of corollaries. But as we cannot deduce particulars from universals<sup>24</sup>—it is evident that relation is the universal—we know that all particularity is also universality, however we may adhere to the partitive view that sees only discrete particulars. If we nevertheless do, after taking the particulars as things unique, attempt to connect them with bonds of relation, we are then carried off into the vast universe of relations which is entailed by any one of them. Thereafter it is of little service to distinguish this universal system into immanence and transeunce, and even if that is done, we see at once that either the immanence or the transeunce is the same thing as the identity, or as being as such, the universal. And since transeunce and immanence are varieties of relation, the latter is itself the universal.

Professor A. E. Taylor takes a view with which this interpretation conflicts. He says: If you pay excessive regard to the aspect of unity and interconnection, you will naturally be tempted to dwell on the relations between your elements to the exclusion of the various elements themselves; if you think solely of the aspect of variety, it is equally natural to treat the elements as real and their relations as fictions. But in either case you arbitrarily concentrate your attention on a single aspect of the experienced fact taken in isolation from the other, and are thus led to results which are bound to collide with the whole facts. A true view, if possible at all, can only be got by impartial adherence to the whole of the facts.<sup>25</sup>

To the present view this is no more than saying that relations are relations and elements are elements, and each cut off from the other. Supposing we do have relations and elements, and they are unlike; how is it that they embrace? This we cannot answer until we abolish the disparity between them and allow a fusion. If it is maintained that the related elements retain a character different from the relation, then how does that character stand with respect to that part of the elements which enters into relation? If no fusion here, then no explanation; for the relation and the character still stand apart and the whole problem is but repeated. If relation is thought of as an intermediary like Kant's schema, with something resembling a hook at each end wherewith to take hold of the elements related, there is still to be explained the character of the connection itself, or the state of the case just where the hook grasps the element. Should there be a fusion at this point, then we would have not two discrepant terms, but an identity; if not, we would have the same discreteness as before. Furthermore, if at any point there is not this fusion, or identity,

<sup>23</sup> Cp. C. D. Broad, *Perception, Physics, and Reality*, pp. 104-105.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1087a25.

<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 145.



no matter whether it be the most external or the most internal point about the element, then we still are left with an intolerable disparity. On the other hand, if any fusion is granted, then the whole of it is implied and the whole element is absorbed by it. But the fusion must be granted, since it already exists by virtue of the element's being brought even into the relation of thought; hence the disparity, and the case for it, vanishes.

It is now manifest that relation is the ground of all propositions, and inclusive of their terms. Its simplest statement is the principle of identity, which is the self-identity of being as such. Since this identity is the universal, relation and universal are the same.

#### IV

### THE INDIVIDUAL

We shall consider the problem of the individual from three standpoints. First, we shall undertake to see what can be said for absolute individuality. Secondly, we shall consider how the individual stands with respect to the universal. Finally, we shall inquire whether individuality combines both the absolutely unique, supposing there to be such, and the universal.<sup>26</sup>

Any single thing, and especially any living thing, appears to have characteristics which mark it off from other things. On account of being singular it is differentiated from other things, apparently, in at least two respects: (1) It excludes them. (2) It is excluded by them. We wish to know whether its individuality is ultimate and to find out if we can the principle or principles of it.

If matter is the principle of individuation we may ask how members of a species are then to be distinguished from one another, since all will be of the same kind of matter. Until we differentiate the matter we have nothing distinguishable as individuality, but as soon as we do differentiate it a new factor is called into consideration. This is form.<sup>27</sup> The material principle then yields to the formal, and we say form is the mark of individuality. It does not suffice to say, as Aristotle appears to do,<sup>28</sup> that there is one form for the species which determines all the particulars; we might as well say there was only one material for all, but in neither case would we have accounted for variations from individual to individual, even supposing them to be nothing more than variations in material.

If now we adopt form as our principle of individuation we are little better off. Should we call this form a Platonic Idea we would have to say the individual partakes of it. Should we conceive it as some other form absolute and unique we would have to subscribe to pluralism, since the world would then be made up of self-sufficient units. In the first case we should be called upon to explain what participation means: Is the participant identical with the Idea? If so, then it must be identical with the prime or universal Idea (the Good), and so not a distinct form. If not, how is the difference to be explained? In the second case we should be driven to a stage of incomprehensibility, since an absolutely unique form, like anything else cut off entirely from all connection with other things, would lie beyond our understanding, as we have seen.

Matter and form having been found wanting, let us see whether other principles suffice to validate the concept of an absolute individual. One that has been advocated

<sup>26</sup> Compare the historical divisions of the problem outlined by Professor E. Jordan: "There is definition of the individual first, in terms of distinctness, or what it *is not*, or rather what is *not it*; second, in terms of its content, or what *is* involved in it; and third, in terms of intent, or what *may be* in it or what is *meant* by it."—*Philosophical Review*, vol. XXX, p. 567.

<sup>27</sup> We assume that any differentiation would be in terms of form. Qualitative distinctions would be properties of matter *per se* or else formally determinate.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. W. D. Ross, *Aristotle*, p. 170.



by some<sup>20</sup> is vitalism.<sup>20</sup> Supposing vitalism to be a unitary characteristic of individuals, we should have to account for the unitariness, which would mean that we should have to find within it some "autonomous agent" such as Driesch's entelechy. The question of whether an entelechy can rightly be regarded as completely self-sufficient would then have to be answered, affirmatively. But even if this entelechy did constitute absolute individuality, what could we say of non-vitalist elements present in individuals and related to external elements and hence, by relation to the vitalism itself, negative of this absolute individuality?

Some<sup>21</sup> have posited mind as the distinguishing characteristic of individuality and others<sup>22</sup> have tried to show that it is spirit. These theories prove inadequate, however, when tested under the light of the foregoing considerations. The same is to be said of mechanical and purposive theories such as those proposed by Professor Warner Fite.<sup>23</sup>

It will have been clear from what we found to be the nature of universality and relation that the concept of absolute individuality was destined to be rejected. We could not know such individuality without entering into relationship with it, and once we could not know such individuality without entering into relationship with it, and once we did that its supposed isolation would be surrendered and its windowlessness turned into transparency of a degree corresponding to our knowledge of it, since one relation involves another and that another, and so on until all that is meant by the concept of the whole thing is universalized. If we take up the viewpoint of complete privacy we are led beyond it as soon as we reflect, passing not merely to species and genus but to the whole system, or summum genus, to which the supposedly private individual belongs. But the passage is difficult, and our assurance that it is complete is more likely to come *a priori* than *a posteriori*, arising from an original apprehension of the unity of being as such, an apprehension, however, which may be had either from a grasp of the principle of identity and its significance or from clear insight into what is implied by any act of thought or any portion of knowledge. Such an apprehension, if I understand them, was Hegel's *der Begriff*, Spinoza's substance, and probably the Pythagorean One.

The foregoing considerations seem sufficient to show that the concept of an individual completely independent of all that lies beyond it cannot (unless it be the identity of being) stand. Nevertheless we venture to look somewhat more closely into the meaning of absolute independence for the sake of resolving doubt. We wish to inquire briefly into the idea of negation, since it is negation that underlies or is the same as the power which is thought to make an individual absolutely independent. By negation the individual would shut off all that lay outside of it, and by the latter it would itself be correspondingly shut off; that is to say, negation here means exclusion,<sup>24</sup> though we shall see that it has another and deeper meaning also.

We wish to know what is the meaning of the proposition, A is not B. In common speech it is that A is not the same as B, or is not identical with B. This tells us little about negation itself, however, since it still leaves the *not*, which is the center

<sup>20</sup> E.g., Bergson (*Time and Free Will*) and Driesch (*Problems of Individuality*).

<sup>21</sup> Voluntarism, in so far as it offers a theory of individuation, might be considered under this heading, but since we give separate consideration to it under the form of free will in the next section, it is omitted here.

<sup>22</sup> E.g., Royce. Cf., J. H. Philip, *Principle of Individuation in the Philosophy of Josiah Royce*, p. 58. Also Gentile, *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, Eng. trans. by H. W. Carr, p. 108.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., Plotinus (cf. W. R. Inge, *Philosophy of Plotinus*, vol. II, p. 85), Hegel (cf. W. T. Stace, *Philosophy of Hegel*, p. 311), Bosanquet (*Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 132; *Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 72; *Psychology of the Moral Self*, p. 9), and Bradley (*Appearance and Reality*, 2d ed., p. 498).

<sup>24</sup> In his *Individualism*, lectures I and II.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Bosanquet, *Logic*, 2d. e., vol. I, p. 286.



of the whole problem of negation, without an explanation. But it gives us a ground from which to advance.

When we say A is not identical with B we make a very narrow statement. Identity, we saw in considering the universal and relation, is the ultimate predicate of all conceivable things taken together and the prior condition of understanding them. It is not, to repeat what we have said before, recognized by the partitive, discrepant way of regarding individuals, but it is implied by even that point of view and it comes to light whenever implication is understood. We therefore would not need to go any farther than this to refute negation; we might even insist that A must be B before one could even declare it not B, and then show as before that the separation of the two is an arbitrary and specious act. Nevertheless we shall consider two additional points.

First, it is evident from what we have just said that A and B are particularizations and that "not B" is, so far, not meant to be the indefinite "not-B" of sophistic notoriety. But if they are particularizations, then they are particularizations of *something*, and that, we know, is the universal. Such particularizations, to repeat once more, fade before the light of understanding, although the closer we are to the state of bare perception, the less likely we shall be to recognize this and the more likely to arraign it as fancy.

Secondly, we wish to discover if possible what significance attaches to the word "not." This will lead us somewhat afield.

To take the most general case, let us ask what not-being means. Little reflection is necessary to conclude that this is without meaning. All meaning lies within the sphere of being, beyond which sphere we have no power to go, and from this it follows that anything which would lie outside would be wholly without significance for us. Such a thing we appropriately designate nothing. Were we to conceive of "nothing" we should then conceive of being and not-being together, which is impossible. This is illustrated in mathematics by multiplications with 0. When we multiply 5 by 0 we get not 5 but 0, and not five zeros but only zero as such. The meaning of the operation is itself nil and for that reason is designated by the symbol therefor, 0; otherwise there would be no accounting for the presence of the 0 rather than the 5 on the product side, or, in other words, no accounting for the annihilation of the 5. Perhaps we should not say annihilation of the 5, since the number itself always remains after all operations, but we cannot avoid the conclusion that the meaning here is annihilation and that if the process were performed, annihilation is what we should get.

But the mind cannot comprehend this absolute destruction, since comprehension goes on in terms of being only. We might say in consequence that any individual which was thus negative would be incomprehensible, whence it would follow that negation in this sense was not applicable to individuals. The meaning of "not" in their case is left at nothing more than the particularization of which we spoke before. It is on account of this dichotomy of being and not-being, and of the necessity of the union of the two if the latter is to be thought by the former, that the mind has no definite apprehension of "nothing." Thinking and objects thought are always in terms of being, so that "nothing" is automatically excluded from all intelligible experience.<sup>25</sup>

Yet being is so general a term that it might be thought to include contradiction and so take in "nothing." Then if it did, it could not be thought, as we have found. Denied this interpretation, we might say that being and not-being are two adjacent realms, so that all being falls within one and all not-being within the other. But if that is so, we cannot comprehend it, as the example in arithmetic indicated. Comprehension is confined to the one realm of being.

It is sometimes supposed that Hegel identified being and not-being and so let in contradiction. It appears, however, that by "nothing" he meant only the absence of

<sup>25</sup> Cp. Kant, *ibid.*, pp. 236-237, and Bradley, *Principles of Logic*, vol. I, ch. III; Bosanquet, *ibid.*, pp. 277-293; Sigwart, *Logic*, Eng. trans. by Helen Dendy, 2d ed., vol. I, ch. IV.



particularization. Now this absence is not the same thing as the absence of being, as Hegel himself implies by giving originally a positiveness to being. It is not required that in order to have clay we must have bricks, nor that in order to have a luminiferous ether we must have luminous bodies. Just the reverse is required, and that is in fact what Hegel starts with. Moreover, if being is the same as nothing, then clearly we do nothing when we introduce nothing into being, since that would be but to introduce being into itself—an operation for which the proper name is verbiage. Consequently the dialectic would never get under way.<sup>96</sup>

The dialectic takes being as its source, introduces differentiation of being, and winds up with being. The differentiation is accounted for by the application of "nothing" to being, which gives becoming, and the process—for thus it is a process—goes on until the circuit, so to speak, is completed and we are brought back to the place whence we set out (the return of the Notion [*der Begriff*] into itself, as Hegel calls it). Now the whole journey manifestly depends upon something to make it go, some engine to put life into the characterless being. What, we inquire, is this engine? It is "nothing." And what is that? If you please, it is being. Being, it appears, is identified with an ambiguous "nothing," which now is not-being and now not-differentiation. The fact that the successive moments involve a process is indicative of a chronological bent and hence that the dialectic is tinged with empiricism. In metaphysics there is no call for moments; beginnings and ends, and hence time, find no place there—triangles, for example, do not come into being, nor cease to be, nor acquire any new traits. The identification of each moment with the others implies that their separate consideration is only an artifice of appearance, that in reality they are not distinct from one another. But when we identify the moments we no longer have any need of their distinction, since then we have passed out of the world of incomprehensible division into that of the understanding; nor can the two hold on together, any more than being and not-being can.

It will be said that the Hegelian dialectic admits contradiction only in the sense of a given thing's being both itself and, in virtue of its relation to other things, not itself.<sup>97</sup> This is far different from absolute contradiction and is not only tenable but inevitable, as our examination of relation must have shown. It deprives us, however, of any "nothing" with which to produce differentiations, since all that it allows is being. Consequently a process that purported to go on in terms of differentiations or moments would have to be relegated to that privative sphere of experience which we have found to fall short of understanding, and such a process, if we grasp the accounts of it, is the dialectic.

Having found that nothing stands in absolute isolation from other things and that the idea of absolute "nothing" is untenable, we may now return to the main course of our inquiry. We wish now to see if we can in what relation any thing called individual stands to the realm beyond it. This is the question of the relation of the individual to the universal, the second of the questions which we were to consider under the general problem of what constitutes individuality. It is the question also of the one and the many, the classic antinomy, which even after all the contributions which have been made toward its resolution by the great philosophical thinkers, one must still approach with misgivings.

As yet we are not certain as to what constitutes individuality, though we see that it cannot be total independence, and we accordingly cannot specify exactly what is meant by "individual" when we speak of the individual as bearing some kind of relation to the universal. This need not deter us, however; if we knew fully and exactly what the individual was we should not have to proceed with the inquiry. Since we do not know, it is by proceeding that we may hope to find out, and in doing this we are

<sup>96</sup> On the meaning of "being" and "nothing" in the dialectic see W. T. Stace, *op. cit.*, pp. 135ff., and Edward Caird, *Hegel*, ch. VII.

<sup>97</sup> Cf., e.g., Caird, *ibid.*, p. 136.



entitled to let the individual be what it will, or have what meanings thinkers may please to give it, and then undertake to test these meanings in the light of established principles and so determine their validity. It is such a test that we have just been applying with respect to the doctrine that individuality is independence.

It is clear that to say the individual is the universal and vice versa and there to leave the matter, is but to pass over the central difficulty in the whole problem, namely, the difficulty of accounting for unity in diversity. If we have two things, then how can we call them one, and if only one thing, what right have we to call it two? We need to ascertain in what sense the two are identical and not identical. Is the universal in the individual just where the two separate? If so, and if we yet are to say that the two are distinct, then we make there a distinction without a difference; for if the boundary between them is universal, how does it happen that it shuts off what lies beyond it, that is, the rest of the universal? If this exclusion is not made, then there is no difference between the two at the line of demarcation—no difference between inside and outside—and hence we have no inside and outside distinguishable as such but only one universal continuous thing. On the other hand, if the boundary does exclude, how can we say that inside and outside are the same? This is the crux of the whole problem of individual and universal. Either we have the individual discrete, in which case it is contradictory to call it universal, or else we have the universal eliminating the supposed individual, in which case it is contradictory to speak of an individual.

But we have already seen that relation is the same as continuity, or universality, and since relation is required in order to have individual and universal at one, we are now left without any boundary line. We can imagine the skeptical asking, hereupon: Then is a saw the same as a sonnet, or a square the same as a circle? To this we answer, first, that if one contemplates a saw in itself, it is manifestly a very different thing from a sonnet contemplated in itself. But we can also say, secondly, that we have no conception of what the experience of contemplating either of these absolutely in itself could be. To contemplate them is *ipso facto* to do so in certain terms, which are the terms of thought, which are the terms of universality. We can be more specific and, taking the circle and the square, say that at every stage of constructing either of them or, conversely, of analyzing either of them, we employ the principle of identity and, so far as pure understanding is concerned, nothing else but that principle. Further, when we regard either of them not in its elements but in its totality, or, again, when we regard the whole intelligible system of which they and the saw and the sonnet and all else are members, we do so in terms of this principle. We may, it is true, introduce elements of regard, such as emotion, which appear far removed from anything so cold and abstract as a principle of logic, but that is only appearance, itself a long way off from understanding. Nevertheless understanding, and so this principle, comprehends even such elements as those; more specifically, the latter reduce to the former.

This might appear wholly fanciful had it not been said, sometimes haltingly, it is true, and sometimes only by implication, over and over in the history of thought. But apart from history, it is an inevitable conclusion from the nature of relation; the fundamental inference to the absolute, as Bosanquet puts it.<sup>28</sup> If we think, our thinking implies it, and the question is then only one of how far we are conscious of what it means to think. If we deny it, the only ground we shall have to stand on will be a denial of the validity of implication, or inference, and that would be a denial of that by means of which we did the denying, namely, thought itself.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 262-268.

<sup>29</sup> On the question of the nature of identity, involved in this and in some of the previous discussion, the following may be consulted: Bosanquet, *Essays and Addresses*, ch. on The Philosophical Importance of a True Theory of Identity; Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 348ff; G. S. Fullerton, *On Sameness and Identity* (Philadelphia, 1890); Richardson and Landis, *op. cit.*, pp. 5ff.



Doubtless it will be pointed out that even supposing this identity real, it can be contemplated as existing in only the dimmest and emptiest region, in the "night in which all cows are black." We reply, on the strength of what we have said in the preceding paragraph and in our consideration of the nature of universality and of relation, that it is true that the identity is found in only the one respect, but then we add, repeating what we have already said, that this respect is inclusive of all others. When we speak of universality we are speaking of something which we know *prima facie* to be, in its completeness, beyond any but a completely universal mind, which would be the same as omniscience. Without further consideration we apprehend that things of which our knowledge is imperfect would not stand in the same light to omniscience as they do to us. Nevertheless by apprehending first principles, and especially by pursuing them so far that we cannot question them without at the same time questioning being itself, we come into possession of an instrument which we cannot doubt to be universally operative even though we ourselves fail to succeed, in some instances, in making it disclose the knowledge which we desire.

It will be asked, If everything is universal, how is it that our minds are not? If mind is ever finite, is not the infinite thereby contradicted? To this we answer as to the other instances of finite things which we have considered: From the finite or partitive standpoint itself mind, like anything else, appears finite, but from the infinite or universal standpoint it does not; any instance of knowledge implies all other knowledge, or omniscience itself.<sup>40</sup>

We come, then, to the conclusion that the individual is universal. Forthwith it will be objected that we have obliterated the individual and left in its place a ghost. This we fail to see. We have argued that if you take the individual to be discrete and independent in any sense, then it must lie outside of cognition and so not be a subject of discourse, although we allowed that such an individual does appear to bare perception. We also argued that if you say the individual is in some respects discrete and in others universal, then you but slur over the problem, which remains in fullness wherever you undertake to separate the one from the other, and, further, that at the point of separation you must think a contradiction in the form of an identity of being and not-being. From the standpoint of unreflective experience, the isolated, self-sufficient individual is left undisturbed, but from that of understanding it is seen to be universal. We may add that in the understanding independence and also dependence are without signification; for there we find only being as such, and nothing for it to be either dependent upon or independent of. This is a point of some importance in the more direct consideration of freedom, to which we are coming.<sup>41</sup>

It remains to consider the idea of concrete individuality, the third and last that we proposed to examine. According to this, the individual is a synthesis of different elements, all of which are elements of the whole of things, and in so far as he is those elements he is universal, while in so far as he is their synthesis he is both universal and individual.

Synthesis involves union of disunited elements, and specifically union of a certain kind. (If this is denied, then we must reply that there is no synthesis, but only

<sup>40</sup> For the views which are held as to the nature of finite individuality, see H. W. Carr in *Contemporary British Philosophy, 1st Series*, ed. by J. H. Muirhead, pp. 118ff. It is to be observed, however, that the resolution of the antimony of whole and part there recounted (p. 120) is hardly to be regarded as a settlement of the difficulties. It is not enough to say that individuals are separate and yet are united by a common character. This leaves them partly discrete and limits the reach of the universal, and so fails doubly to meet the problem.

<sup>41</sup> Among those who identify the individual with the universal may be mentioned the following: Bradley, who says, "For me, if the individual by himself anywhere is a fact, the whole Universe is wrecked" (*Ethical Studies*, 2d ed., pp. 434-435); Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 270-271 (see also M. C. Carroll, *loc. cit.*, p. 10); Royce (quoted in W. H. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 87; and especially Nicolas of Cusa (see Richard Falckenberg, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Eng. trans. by A. C. Armstrong, Jr., pp. 20ff). Professor Jordan, among others, leans strongly to the same view (*loc. cit.*, pp. 581, 583-584). But see his *Forms of Individuality*, pp. 137, 138.



analysis; or at least that the synthesis is only assumed after the analysis has been made.) It implies an agent to bring it about and it embodies, or, is, a formula, according to which it has already been brought about. We now ask: Were the elements discrete prior to synthesis? What was the agent that wrought them together? What is the nature of the synthesis itself, or of the formula above mentioned?

We know to begin with that if there were original elements they could not have been discrete except on the assumption that some power, such as the agent mentioned, subsequently performed a miraculous operation upon them and changed them from discrete to continuous; for if they had been discrete they could not, by the meaning of the term, have combined of themselves.

If the agent of the synthesis was some power from without, we have no means of apprehending what it was or anything about it. All that we have is the concrete thing and the realm in which it belongs—the individual aforesaid and the universal. Together they comprise the whole of conceivable being, and any attempt to go outside of them must involve the impossibility which arises when we try to pass from being into not-being. It may be answered that the agent is, or was, intrinsic; that it did not come into them from without but was in them from the first and remains in them now. But hereupon the question falls, since if the agent always was in the things united, say in the form of relation or universal, then they never were discrete but always were, as now, one with the agent.

In any case we are less concerned with questions such as the foregoing than with that pertaining to the nature of the synthesis. They are questions which are unintelligible, since they call upon us to go beyond the sphere of conceivable things in order to answer them, whereas the question of the nature of synthesis, or rather, as we prefer to say, of formula apart from any idea of genesis such as is involved in the idea of synthesis, is a question not only intelligible but also important in a fundamental inquiry. Accordingly we shall devote some attention to an attempt to discover the meaning of a formula such as we should have in an accomplished synthesis.

Any singular thing—a book, a man, a wave in the sea—is an instance, or we may call it the meeting place, of a great number of relations. In fact, if we drop for the moment the empirical idea of place, we may say that it is the compresence of all relations whatever. Each relation implies all the others and each point in any one of them, if we choose to think of them as having points, is the center (to continue the analogy with physical extension) of the entire relational system. All this follows from the fact that singular things involve relation, that relation is universal, and that the universal is immediately one with any of its members.

A wave in the sea, for example, has a formula which exactly represents it and which is metaphysically the same as it, but which also represents all else. Without question, any considerable formula that might be given for a wave, apart from any metaphysics, would not stop with a simple specification of water in a certain configuration. It would have to specify much more than simple shape and undefined content, and accordingly would include such details as the chemical formula, temperature, and fluidity. Each of these would entail a set of other formulas, and these other sets still, until, for the complete expression of what a sea wave was, we should require the formula for the universe itself. Needless to say, no one thinks of attempting to find such a formula as that. Nevertheless no reflective person would deny, we may presume, that at those points where we conveniently but roughly break off our definitions there is a continuity. But once this is granted, there is no stopping place this side of infinity, and such demarcations as are made, are demarcations of the man making them, not of the world to which he ascribes them.

What we ordinarily have in mind when we speak of an individual wave or of any other individual thing is undoubtedly something in some respect cut away, which we would describe, whether in literary or scientific terms, by means of a formula that we have abstracted from or cut out of the whole in which the individual was found. We can scarcely fail to admit now that such cutting away is arbitrary, practical, and far



from capable of supplying us more than a glimpse either of the individuals so blocked out or of the system of which they were members. It is worthy of remark that this sundering of the whole into fragments for the sake of practical convenience is entirely an abstract proceeding, and consequently that the hard practical man who looks upon "the abstract" as the idle and ridiculous is himself the individual who has most traffic with it.

It will be inquired, How then do we come by these fragments? The only answer that we are able to give to this is one that we have already fallen back upon many times, the twofold answer that in bare, unexplicated perception we are by nature thus confined to the partial and fragmentary, but in understanding we pass beyond this confinement and comprehend in principle the totality which fragmentariness implies. Though it is natural for perception to stop with the thing, it is equally natural for understanding not to stop with it, and, furthermore, understanding is such that it is able to see in the thing the whole character of the universe. This we found to be so in considering the nature of the principle of identity, again in inquiring into the meaning of number, and a little while ago in referring to a point in extension, but it is most manifest in the statement that any proposition implies all other propositions. Any discrete thing, according to this view, is like one of Leibniz's monads, with, however, the qualification that while such a thing reflects the whole in which it belongs, it by no means excludes other discrete things.

The whole problem of form, or formula, might be put, with a slight resort to imagination, somewhat as follows. The realm of being is a continuum with knots in it—or as Clifford somewhere remarks, with ether kinks in it. These knots appear to perception as individuals sufficient unto themselves, and to perceptive abstraction as formulas. To understanding they appear in a quite different light; for as soon as it is laid down that they are in a continuum understanding knows that there are no gaps between them, and hence they are not knots.

With a string and a piece of chalk (to give another illustration) one can draw a straight line, an ellipse or a circle. But he can also draw triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons, not to say curvilinear figures of every degree of eccentricity, without ever exhausting the variety. Of this we are sure, on the strength of the idea of continuity and that of infinite divisibility, both of which it may be observed, are particular ways of stating the principle of identity and hence of saying that at any given point being is never not-being. Ordinary experience, however, would hardly tell us that such figures could be drawn without ever exhausting their number, and this for the reason that ordinary experience has to do with only a relatively few different figures and does not, in addition, require or make use of the concept of continuity. Such experience accordingly would regard formulas, as it regards things, as constituting absolute demarcations. But understanding would never pass beyond such demarcations if it looked at them in that way; it would then be the same as the bare perception which we have spoken of before.

Forms and formulas are changeless and timeless, but this is due not to any absolute independence in them but to the identity, expressed as the principle of all understanding and as the concept of continuity, in virtue of which they exist. It follows that the idea of origin has no application to them, which is readily seen when we try to think of the origin of such a formula, for example, as that of a circle. Conversely, the idea of destruction is likewise inapplicable to them.<sup>42</sup> Individuality therefore does not originate with physical existence nor cease with the cessation of such existence; hence the saying of Spinoza that a free man, that is, an understanding man, thinks of nothing less than of death.

Having now considered the three factors which we found to be involved in the con-

<sup>42</sup> Yet we learn that in atomic theory one may postulate destruction, as of a negative charge by a positive charge, and not merely in the sense of subsumption but in that of "complete annihilation." Cf. P. W. Bridgman, *Logic of Modern Physics*, p. 94.



cept of synthesis, namely, the elements to be synthesized, the synthesizing agent, and the forms to be realized by synthesis, it remains for us to formulate the general conclusion to which these considerations point. After doing that we shall turn to a brief examination of spirit as an aspect of individuality associated with synthesis and then, having considered the three views of individuality according to which it is (1) discreteness, (2) universality, and (3) synthesis, we shall have completed our discussion of the subject.

Since the synthesis implies disconnected elements to synthesize, which elements we neither find nor can conceive; since it further implies a synthesizing agent, which, there being nothing to synthesize, we do not find; and since, finally, synthesis involves a formula according to which the operation shall be or has been performed, which formula we find only in the timeless identity of universality itself and so apart from the temporal character implied by synthesis; for these reasons we must reject the view that individuality consists in synthesis. That view, we may add, apparently takes rise from an original false step. To say that there are discrete things which shall be put together implies an analytic judgment whereby an antecedent whole has been broken up, else the concept of a whole to be produced through synthesis must be regarded as a foreign importation for which no plausible justification can be given. But if a whole is conceived to begin with, the process of sundering it and then piecing it back together must be pronounced superfluous. Such a process provokes the question, Why break up the whole in the first place? and the just reminder that it is for doing this that the experimental scientist is taunted with the charge of murdering to dissect.

Turning now to spirit, we may first recall that we have already found occasion to deny it as a principle of individuation on the ground that it fails, when taken by itself, to comprehend all that is meant by individuality. But here it is not taken by itself but rather as the expression of a synthetic whole and hence the mode in which all that constitutes an individual is found. As we stated before, this allows individuality to only a small portion of what we ordinarily take to be the individuated world, and on that account it is subject to the same objection as that previously raised. Disregarding this, however, we might ask what justification there was for assuming spirit rather than some other characteristic, such as rationality, as the mark of identification of an individual. Perhaps it would be replied that spirit was not an attribute of human beings exclusively, but was to be found in any single thing, such as a stone or the number 5, for example. If that is the case, then it is not the same feeling, moving thing as human spirit but is, if we grasp what meaning there is then left to it, not different from the principle, or form, or unity of the thing in question. But the principle, or form, so far as we know, is sufficiently accounted for in other terms, so that nothing remains to be explained by spirit in these cases. The same could fairly be said of the human being as well, since spirit, so far as we understand it, denotes nothing about a man that would not be included in the full statement, or formula, of what he was; in fact it appears to denote much less than that, with the consequence that we find reappearing the original objection that it is partial and inadequate.

Taking spirit at its best, which, we will suppose, is where it is thought of as a transcendent faculty exalting the individual above synthesis and things synthesized to a higher unity, let us dwell shortly on some of the troubles which then meet us. What is higher unity? We find none. All that we find is a unity which is not higher but immediate, and not transcendent but immanent. What is transcendence? That, also, we do not find unless we are pleased to denominate as transcendence that empirical view which passes discursively from one thing to another and then to another, arriving ultimately, perhaps, at the ground of all understanding, namely, the principle of identity. But that is nothing transcendent; it is the principle from which reflection sets out and from which it never departs, instead of a goal of some kind to which it would take flight. Again, is spirit real? If so, it falls within the realm of reality and is then subject to such principles and limitations as we find there; if not, it is



inapprehensible and so not a subject for discourse. There are no wings on which a man can take flight from reality, nor is there any place of which we can conceive for him to go to if there were such wings. Transcendence such as we know of is not a flight from reality to non-reality but a step from one real to another real. Were it the former we should have to think of extinction in order to conceive it, since it would involve the union of being and not-being; but that is impossible. If, on the other hand, it is not the former but the latter, then we are left to our non-mysterious domain of perception and understanding.

We find no short-cuts within reality and no escape from the universal criterion, understanding. We do find, however, that through reason we can traverse the whole realm of being, and we find also that through an original apprehension of the principle of identity we possess in fine and immediately all that can be possessed of being, apart from which nothing is conceivable. This transit, and still more forcefully this principle, is therefore inclusive of all that might be claimed for an apprehensible spirit. The principle, though not a *clavis* to unlock immediately every secret of the universe which might be thrust before us for accounting, is yet the frame into which all explanation fits, and so may be declared the means, when sufficiently specialized and applied, for the disposal of all questions.

This concludes our discussion of the individual. We have found that isolated and independent individuality is unthinkable, that any instance of being when regarded from the standpoint of understanding is seen to be in all respects universal (though when regarded as a being arbitrarily exclusive it may appear self-sufficient), and that the attempt to make individuality a synthesis of other and discrete individualities breaks down. Individuality, therefore, we define as universality.<sup>48</sup>

## V

### FREE WILL

It is not the design of this investigation to go at length into this ancient and venerable problem. There exist many inquiries and much speculation concerning it, and an abundance of surveys and interpretations of these, to which we could scarcely hope to add anything that is not already to be found. Our concern is to see, in brief compass, whether by an application of the principles which we have arrived at in the foregoing we can so far overcome the main difficulties of the problem as to clear the way for a comprehension of the nature of freedom itself.

Will, itself a subject of much disagreement among investigators, appears to be a form of choice, ranging from bare adoption, or approval, to resolute determination. Sometimes it is supposed that will always signifies resolution, but this is evidently not the case, since we will many things which we never resolve to enforce. One might maintain, however, that it is improper to speak of anything but such resolves in terms of will; to which it would be replied that there are degrees of resolution, as of will, running from simple adoption to complete surrender. On the other hand, it might be said that in its lowest degree will does not even amount to approval, but begins where changes in thought or awareness begin; where what is now in consciousness gives way to what next comes in. This would be to identify will and act, which has often been done in modern philosophy. Nor is it clear how it can be denied unless on explicit grounds of expediency. If we do not draw a line between what may be called the lowest and highest manifestations we shall be driven on into physiology and kindred fields, which, though the proper course for a philosophy of will

<sup>48</sup> It may be noted that a number of writers have concluded that individuality is indefinable. These include Aristotle (*Metaphysics*, 1040a10, 1075b35), Bradley (*Principles of Logic*, vol. II, p. 655— but see p. 656), and Haldane (in Muirhead, *op. cit.*, p. 134).



to take, is quite beyond the reach of this inquiry. On this account it appears warrantable to come up the scale to the point where approval appears and regard that as the lowest stage of willing. We may remark that this is an arbitrary demarcation within a continuum and subject to the same criticism as that which we have taken occasion to direct, in previous considerations, against such demarcations found elsewhere, but under the circumstances we will suppose it justifiable.<sup>44</sup> With this as our concept of the character and field of the will we may proceed to inquire into whether it can be said to be free.<sup>45</sup>

Two assumptions underlie the doctrine of free will: (1) that the will is not determined by antecedent circumstances, and (2) that it may embrace any one of a plurality of alternatives regardless of any consideration as to them, and, by corollary, that there are such alternatives. As the first of these entails the second (since whatever should be without antecedent determination would thereby be without such determination to any alternative), it will suffice for us to consider that one alone, although we shall need to take separate account of the idea that alternatives ever appear. We take it for granted that what is here assumed as to antecedent determination must likewise be assumed as to teleological determination, since determination future is as contradictory of free will as is determination past.

If will is independent of antecedents, then we must explain how it comes into connection with consequents; for on one side it will be beyond causal sequence, and on the other side in it. Supposing it a power, we should wish to know its sources, since we have no knowledge of anything able to exert force which does not itself require other force before doing so.<sup>46</sup> But if will has sources, then it is not independent of antecedents.

If (to take another view) will is not an agent but the starting point of agency, still it must be allowed able to make the agent go, or else it will be nil. But if it can make the agent go, it is causal, and the question as to its source comes up anew. Again, if it is only a point, that leaves us no account of the action itself. Also, supposing it causal, what can be said about its willing with respect to itself in the future—can it will now that it shall will thus and so in time to come? If it can, then it is not free when that time comes. But then it would not have been causal in its previous act, and so again it would be nil.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, if it cannot thus will about its future willing, or will that at a given future time such and such a course shall be followed, then it is not free now.

If it be said that it is free to will not to will or to will to will, then we soon pass into an infinite regress,<sup>48</sup> in addition to having from the beginning a *causa sui* to account for. But here an infinite regress means that we have gotten beyond will, immediate here and now, and into the unintelligible; likewise with *causa sui*. In this connection it would be said that God is the example *par excellence* of *causa sui*,

<sup>44</sup> Compare the definitions of will in Jonathan Edwards, *Careful and Strict Inquiry* etc., p. 1, and in Locke, quoted in the same, p. 2.

<sup>45</sup> For the history of doctrines concerning will, see Alexander, *op. cit.*, and J. E. Creighton, *The Will*. Professor Thilly gives a bibliography in his translation of Paulsen's *System of Ethics*, p. 452. On will as the principle of individuation, see Schopenhauer, *World as Will and Idea*, Section 18. See also J. A. W. Haas, *Freedom and Christian Conduct*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>46</sup> Radioactivity might be supposed to contradict this. But this would require us to suppose that the radiating substance and the act of radiation were totally without prior connection, or source, *i. e.*, *ex nihilo*. It is noteworthy, however, that Aquinas supposed intellect able to move will and vice versa. Cf. Etienne Gilson, *Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, pp. 239-240.

<sup>47</sup> As Sidgwick says, "if by a present volition I can finally determine a future act, when the time comes to do that act I shall find myself no longer free."—*Op. cit.*, p. 74.

<sup>48</sup> Martineau shows (*Study of Religion*, vol. II, p. 247) that the idea of free will as such does not open the door to a regress, since the very idea precludes that. But what we refer to is a different thing. Of willing now with respect to acts performed now there is nothing that would lead to this regress, but of willing now or at any other time with respect to yet other time, the same is evidently not true.



meaning, however, not self-creation (since that would require him to have existed prior to his act of creating himself, and so would beg the question) but independence only. Such an example, however, would tend to disprove rather than prove free will; for it would not be maintained that God acts capriciously, irresponsibly, and unintelligibly, as the doctrine of free will requires, but rather that he acts in just the opposite way and hence contrary to the manner contemplated by free will.<sup>49</sup>

Much of the argument for free will doubtless arises from a repugnancy to what is commonly thought to be its opposite, namely, materialistic determinism. Such determinism, however, though incidental to it, is far from constituting the opposing doctrine. Determination of the will means not simply certain combinations of brain elements but, rather, logical sequence. No one appears to hold that its validity rests on a demonstration of such combination, that being conceded practically impossible, yet many are convinced of its truth. If we ask what is the ground of their conviction we are not long in apprehending that it lies outside of experimental data and in the *a priori* nature of thought itself. It goes back to the principle, *ex nihilo nihil*, which rests, as we saw before, on the fundamental principle of all understanding, the principle of identity, or non-contradiction. That is to say, it is impossible to conceive of will as arising from nothing (though it might be capriciously imagined as so arising, and yet not for long could it thus be held in mind, since even imagination soon falls under the sway of thought). To think intelligibly of it is to think of it as connected and therefore not, in the sense commonly intended, free.

Arguments like this are met, however, by the contention that thought may not correspond to its object; that it is not infallible, and so we must resort to the facts. But that contention does not pertain to the present case. We have here no theory or hypothesis—which are not, we may observe, pure reason but speculations about things which are yet to be brought within pure reason—nothing subject of itself to experimental verification, but the principle of all understanding and of all experience, a principle on which experimental verification itself depends. As will is, furthermore, not a phenomenon sufficiently tangible for direct experimentation, neither determinism nor indeterminism can be established thereby. On the other hand, all that experimentation might show indirectly would, it goes without saying, fall within the terms of cause and effect and hence outside those of free will.

Supposing it to be real, free will is an attribute of the individual whom it exercises, and that individual is then independent. But such an individual, we concluded in the last chapter, is not to be found. It might be answered that we err in taking it for granted that free will is an attribute of individuality, and that we should rather call it an independent power on which the individual, in willing, is dependent. That, however, is beside the mark; for then it would not be the individual who did the willing but, instead, this superior power, and, further, the individual would be to this power as he is to external physical powers, that is, he would be subservient to it; which is contrary to what is signified by the idea of free will.<sup>50</sup>

Here an issue is drawn between the intelligible and the unintelligible, between what we know *a priori* and what we do not know at all nor, so far as experience goes to show, ever can know. On the one hand we have a principle expressive of understanding and to which all understanding must conform, which is flatly contradicted by the idea of absolute origination, or free will; on the other we have this contradictory idea of a power completely independent and unaccountable. The principle is that of identity, or non-contradiction, which here takes the form of causation and is known since the

<sup>49</sup> Yet Descartes believed that God might have willed that the radii of a circle should be unequal, or the angles of a triangle not equal to two right angles, or contradictory statements true at the same time. Cf. Leon Roth, *Spinoza, Descartes, and Maimonides*, p. 34.

<sup>50</sup> On the relation of the will to the individual cf. Joseph Priestley, *Theological and Miscellaneous Works*, vol. III, p. 461.



time of Leibniz as the principle of sufficient reason. In an attempt to justify free will Thomas Reid argued that this principle would make man a machine, that foolish actions were proof of the absence of sufficient reason, and that cause and effect when used to explain conduct did not prove the absence of free will.<sup>61</sup>

The deterministic or rational view which Reid would deny does not, however, make man a mere machine if by that is meant something devoid of feeling, virtue, and intelligence. It holds that man and his world are rational in the broad sense of everywhere presenting an order and connection. It contemplates not a machine but a harmony, although this is a harmony which does not conform to privative and unreflective ideas about what constitutes harmony, and thinks of the converse as nothing short of chaos. Deficiency of knowledge is for it no proof that the world is short and to be rounded off with miracles, but only the occasion for renewed application of the powers of understanding in order to meet the lack. Knowledge, education, justice, morality all postulate it, being inexplicable on any other ground.

The argument that foolish action is disproof of the principle of sufficient reason mistakes the meaning of sufficient reason, which is that for every event there is a cause, and by no means that every event is confined within limits set by a restricted view of what constitutes rationality. The restricted view when explicated would, according to this, coincide with the principle itself; for such a view rests somewhere on the principle of non-contradiction, and that, elaborated, is the same as the principle of sufficient reason.<sup>62</sup>

To Reid's other contention, that a man's being the cause of his own actions is no proof of the absence of free will from him, it must be replied that if the will is identified with the man it is thereby brought into the realm of intelligible relations, whereas if it is not identified with him, then he is not the cause of his own actions but is subservient to the power of the will just as he is to physical forces; which is the opposite of the sense conveyed by the term "free will," as we were saying a little while ago.

We must look somewhat farther into indeterministic arguments, but before doing so it is desirable to state the meaning, as we find it, of choice, which is fundamental to the whole question of free will. It may be assumed that any case of choosing, however abrupt and apparently unaccountable, is capable of analysis into a case of deliberation. The alternative to this is to say that it is an instance of chance, which we shall consider presently.

Now deliberation is weighing of values, a form of judging. It is a concourse of forces, one of which calls up or implies another, this another, and so on, within the bounds set up by the deliberator, consciously or unconsciously. These are tried against one another, and the outcome of the trial is choice. Sufficiently analyzed, the entire process could be stated in a series of propositions.

The concurrence of forces is not, however, all that is involved in an act of deliberation. There is the place of concurrence, namely, the mind of the deliberator, and there are rules according to which the forces meet, both conditioning what goes on; in other words, the man who chooses, instead of supinely submitting himself to these forces (as think those who look upon a human being as neutral territory on which foreign forces meet, the victor capturing such territory), conducts the contest according to his own code. This code consists of principles, often weak and uncertain but determinate to a degree nevertheless.

It is clear that choice thus considered presents no indifferent stages. One stage

<sup>61</sup> Cf. his *Essays on the Intellectual and Active Powers of Man*, vol. II, pp. 462-464.

<sup>62</sup> This identification may be questioned, although we find it established by such considerations as those with which we were occupied in connection with it while discussing the nature of the universal and of relation. See, however, Latta's *Leibniz; The Monadology*, pp. 60-62, 189, and Ueberweg, *History of Philosophy*, Eng. trans., vol. II, p. 116.



leads to another without any lapse and without the importation of anything unintelligible. This being the case, the indeterminist can get no support here. He can do one of two things, however: either maintain that choice is supervenient upon the process at some particular point and wholly independent of sequence, or, denying that the completed process is choice, hold that choice is a faculty which lets us say yes or no indifferently at the conclusion of the process. In either case his resort is to chance.

Chance, if consistently maintained, is that of which there is absolutely no accounting or explaining. But what is that—to what does this “that of which” refer? Before the understanding, it refers to nothing, being entirely without meaning and hence without place in intelligible considerations. Absence—absence of explanation—is all that can be set down to its credit. And that is just the sense in which it is used by those who fall back upon it; for they say that certain occurrences have no explanation, and this lack they use the term, chance, to signify.

This is no doubt very well, so long as chance is not reified and made to do service, so long, that is, as it is left standing as a symbol of the lack of information or understanding. But to put it forth in that condition as a component factor in the course of events is gratuitous, and to maintain, as the consistent tychist would have to do, that because we lack knowledge of some point about a given occurrence, therefore no knowledge of it is possible,—this is but to beg the question. More particularly with respect to choice, it is but an admission of ignorance and the equivalent, so far as explanation goes, of no statement at all, to say that free will (which is now the same as chance, which is the same as nothing) is a positive factor in the course of events leading up to the choice, and all the more so to say that it is choice itself. So if there is to be free will, it must abide outside the sphere of understanding, but since that sphere is co-extensive with being, there is nowhere left for free will except the imaginary world of not-being. The reply might be made that understanding does not embrace the entire world of being, and this, if it meant that not every detail of that world was understood, would manifestly be correct, but that would by no means signify a disparity between the two. That knowledge is not complete is no proof that it is not possible to have it so, or that between knowing and known there is discrepancy. Yet in order to have free will it would be necessary to have this discrepancy; and such, as we early saw, we do not find and cannot conceive.<sup>53</sup>

That the world and man are intelligible is a postulate of all rational action; that they are unintelligible is a postulate of the doctrine of free will, or chance. Under that doctrine we could find no justification for education, morality, justice or, so it appears, any of the values most cherished by men. Incentive to action, even in the conduct of the most ordinary affairs, would be deceptive and moral exhortation vain, since there would be no assurance of accomplishment. Strange must it seem, then, when the tychist, for from the meek and humble quietist whom we should expect, comes forth bold and flashy and tells us to be “hard” rather than “soft,” to abandon our idle speculations and get up and be doing. But the defender of inconsistency is doubtless entitled to the privilege of consistently observing his doctrine by being himself inconsistent.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> For a discussion of chance substantially bearing out the statements made here, see A. E. Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

<sup>54</sup> The allusion is to William James's essay, *The Dilemma of Determinism*. See also his *Pragmatism*, pp. 118-121, and *Principles of Psychology*, vol. II, pp. 569ff., and the essay by Professor E. L. Thorndike in *Essays Philosophical and Psychological in Honor of William James*. In this connection, reference may be made also to James Ward, who was reduced to inexplicability in his effort to defend free will. “It must be candidly confessed,” he says, “that however much we insist on the fact that mind can direct and control inert mass, we are quite unable to analyse the process.”—*Naturalism and Agnosticism*, vol. II, p. 85.



The indeterminist stands or falls metaphysically with the doctrine of chance.<sup>56</sup> He offers, however, additional arguments by which to establish his case. One of these is our awareness of the power of free choice, or what is termed the testimony of consciousness. We are said to be so clearly aware of freedom at moments when we choose between alternatives that no argument of reason can refute us.

The supposed irrefutability of this testimony, however, is challenged by the many denials of free will which have been made. It is also rendered questionable by the fact that much testimony of this character is deceptive. Moreover, there is a testimony of another kind, and on the other side, the testimony of the understanding. It tells us that a thing cannot both be and not be, and that without a cause there is no effect; or, that free will is impossible. It is not only a witness but also the court itself where all intelligible matters are tried. We may deny the other and impressionistic witness, but to deny this one and continue to think is not possible.<sup>57</sup>

It is also argued that praise and blame rest entirely upon the assumption of responsibility and that responsibility postulates freedom of decision. This is best stated perhaps in Kant's famous proposition that we can because we ought, or that "ought" implies "can." Now the validity of this proposition depends upon the identity of "ought" and "can," and in fact we recognize this identity when we refrain from attributing obligation where we know that adequate means are absent. Once this identification is made, however, there remains no ground for a disjunction into duty and performance, and praise and blame are then only desert, flowing from a continuous process. Were they other than this, they would be no indication of merit or demerit and hence no basis for theory as to conduct. They are our due, regardless of whether we have acted from freedom of choice or not, and consequently are incompetent to show that there was freedom in the agent; which is the same as to say that they contribute nothing toward establishing the free-will doctrine. It is doubtful that we ever know what went on in the willing process of a man whose act we praise or blame, yet that does not prevent our bestowing the reward. Furthermore, supposing the man did act from free will, the act would never prove it. All that it could do would be to carry us back to the point of initiation. As to what went on just at or beyond that point, it could tell us nothing without a resort on our part to causal inference, or the opposite of free will.

Responsibility we find, in accordance with the foregoing, to postulate not freedom or caprice but determination, not irresponsibility but responsibility. It is inference from any given point in a sequence to another point, or implication of one point by the other. Otherwise stated, it is the assurance that from a given cause a determinate effect will follow, let the cause be a physical occurrence and the effect another physical occurrence or the one an act of conduct and the other a bestowal of reward, there being no distinction in principle between the sequences in the two cases. There is then no room for a postulate of indifference, freedom, or chance in the agent; instead, the postulate is that of a particular act, which act makes inevitable a particular consequence.

<sup>56</sup> For a reduction of free will to chance, see Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature* (Selby-Bigge), p. 407.

<sup>57</sup> Some of the Epicureans, it is true, did deny the principle of non-contradiction, which they had to do in order to defend their doctrine of absolute freedom. But this was sheer assertiveness, for which no proof could be given. Manifestly it would overthrow their principle, *ex nihilo nihil*. William James denied causation, calling it a postulate and an "empty name." This he could do in virtue of his denial of the possibility of any theoretic solution of the problem of free will, which, as it turned out, was equivalent to denying the intelligibility of the universe. (See his *Will To Believe and Other Essays*, p. 147.) See also, on the subject of consciousness of free will as proof thereof, the following: Creighton, *op. cit.*, p. 74; Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 52ff.; H. H. Horne, *Free Will and Human Responsibility*, pp. 88-89; H. W. Carr, *Unique Status of Man*, p. 63; J. S. Mill, *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, 5th ed., p. 580. Couailhac thinks causation and chance reconcilable. See his *La liberte et la conservation de l'energie*, p. 250.



On this view the man who consistently acts in conformity to established standards will be more entitled to the name of a good or bad man, as the case may be, than will he who has either reformed or degenerated; that is to say, the habitually virtuous man is more entitled to esteem than the regenerated rascal, though the latter is less deserving of condemnation than his unregenerate brother. This is readily seen from the fact that deeds cannot be undone, and that desert follows unfailingly upon them or is, more specifically, the natural effect which they produce.<sup>57</sup>

It may be needful here to remark that this is very far from saying that exhortation, example, etc., are ruled out. All that it says is that there is a connection between such motivations and their effects. The proof that there was no such connection would lie in the establishment of the doctrine of free will; for if we were perfectly free to react or not react as we might please, there would never be any assurance that moral or any other motivations would have any effect whatever upon us.<sup>58</sup>

An argument against both free will and determinism and in behalf of a certain agnosticism is made by M. Bergson, whose thesis is that all attempts to account for willing are but vain attempts to translate a time process into a spatial process.<sup>59</sup> To understand an act of willing we must, he says, go back to the moment at which it was performed and then relive it.<sup>60</sup> "The whole series of our heterogeneous states of consciousness must be taken into consideration. In other words, it is in a close analysis of the idea of duration that the key to the problem must be sought."<sup>61</sup> Again, "a deepseated inner cause produces its effect once for all and will never reproduce it."<sup>62</sup> This argument reduces to two points: (1) that the understanding of an act of will calls for an apprehension of the complete process constituting the act, and (2) that such apprehension is impossible except immediately. The first point coincides with the general doctrine of determinism; the second also agrees with that doctrine so far as the latter involves observed facts, but disagrees with it in assuming that inference is here inapplicable. But in any case we do not discern whether an event is determinate or not through an act of intuition, so

<sup>57</sup> Hobbes notes that Cato was accorded praise because he was good by nature, *et quia aliter esse non potuit*—Referred to in Priestley, *op. cit.*, p. 491.

<sup>58</sup> It was thus argued by Hobbes in his essay on Liberty, Necessity, and Chance.

In the present connection it is to be remarked that Kant's famous instance of the man who tells a lie and for whom no justification is allowed, because in the noumenal or rational sphere every man is beyond the reach of phenomenal motive and hence cannot plead circumstances as the cause of his offense, flatters many of us by assuming that this noumenal character is the same in all. His categorical imperative does likewise in assuming the quality of such character to be identical in all. All are to be alike able to judge in any moral matter, and all are to reach a valid judgment, which, to avoid conflict and confusion, we can take to mean only one and the same judgment upon a given question. But are they thus alike? Few would maintain it. Even at what we may call its simplest stage, namely, the faculty of elementary reasoning, noumenon varies with each man as soon as its range and depth increase. With it as our basis of judging men morally, and with it varying from man to man, we clearly could not hold them equally responsible. Rather, responsibility would be proportional to noumenality, or rationality. As we have no way of telling what the rationality of an individual is except by means of such manifestations as he gives us, we could not conclude that any of his acts, including the telling of lies, were other than rational from the standpoint of the portion of rationality which had been allotted to him by nature. It is of no avail to say that he might increase his powers, that he can because he ought, since "can" and "ought" come to the same thing. We must accordingly say that the theory of the categorical imperative is not sustained. It assumes things about rationality which are inadmissible and involves a dichotomization of reality into possibility and responsibility—distinctions which cannot stand apart but fly back together at the first test, giving us just the reality that we have in any case, whether it be a lie or an act of highest virtue. See in this connection the *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp. 439-451 and the *Critique of Practical Reason*, ch. II; also E. M. Miller, *Basis of Freedom: a Study of Kant's Theory*, pp. 39ff.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *Time and Free Will*, Eng. trans., pp. 191-192.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 189.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 237n.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.



that even when most fully conscious of our willing process we could not tell whether absolute freedom was present anywhere in it or not. Determinism is rationalism, or understanding, which is the condition of all knowing. Intuition of the willing process would tell us nothing about such a condition. But since this intuition is incompetent to give information either as to free will or as to determinism, it falls outside the issue involved and so is not pertinent.

Let us, however, misapprehend the just claims of the free-will doctrine, let us look at it in its own terms. For a clear statement of it we may turn to Descartes. He says:

It is free-will alone or liberty of choice which I find to be so great in me that I can conceive no other idea to be more great; it is indeed the case that it is for the most part this will that causes me to know that in some manner I bear the image and similitude of God. . . . the faculty of will consists alone in our having the power of choosing to do a thing or choosing not to do it (that is, to affirm or deny, to pursue or to shun it), or rather it consists alone in the fact that in order to affirm or deny, pursue or shun those things placed before us by the understanding, we act so that we are unconscious that any outside force constrains us in doing so.<sup>63</sup>  
. . . freedom of the will is self-evident.<sup>64</sup>

Self-evidence, or the testimony of consciousness, and absence of any consciousness of external power operating upon the willing agent are then the claims on which the doctrine here rests. Since determinism does not necessarily signify external power, and when it does signify such power it may as well as not be a power of which we are unconscious and hence one not comprehended by the view of Descartes, the second part of the evidence as he states it may be disregarded. Left then to self-evidence, or the testimony of consciousness, we inquire what is the validity of that.

Already we have seen that the testimony of consciousness in this regard is offset by what, as we had occasion to judge, is a more potent testimony on the other side. We have seen also that intuition is incompetent to inform us as to the presence or absence of determinism in an act of willing. And we have noted that intuition is sometimes deceptive. It would therefore seem that no secure ground is left for self-evidence to stand on, but here arises the objection that self-evidence is its own ground and requires no other, and this we must now consider.

It is hardly to be denied that all knowledge depends at some point, if not throughout, on self-evidence. But this is not the same as the self-evidence of supra-rationalism; rather, it is that of the understanding as expressed in the principle of identity and as applying without conceivable exception to the whole intelligible world. As it is thus universally extended, it is inclusive of whatever, within the realm of being, may be advanced as extra-rational, which is to say, it is the judge even of self-evidence of the other kind. This is shown by the fact that however certain the import of this other self-evidence may appear, it subjects itself to the sway of understanding as soon as we undertake an explication of it, and gives way whenever the two conflict. Consequently determinism, as the expression of the understanding, can maintain that if indeterminists would follow out the implications of their doctrine they would be compelled to abandon it. To this the indeterminists can reply, and some do not hesitate to do so, that free will is something contrary to the whole intelligible system and proceeds from God, whom they must then think of as extraneous.<sup>65</sup> The controversy then resolves into an issue between the realm of intelligibility and an extraneous, unsearchable power (which yet is not strictly extraneous;

<sup>63</sup> *Meditation IV* (Haldane-Ross trans.).

<sup>64</sup> *Principles*, XXXIX (Haldane-Ross trans.).

<sup>65</sup> The Bishop, debating with Hobbes, puts it thus: "I grant that the will doth not take beginning from itself, for that the faculty of the will takes beginning from God, who created the soul, and poured it into man, and endowed it with this power . . ." Hobbes, *English Works*, ed. by Sir William Molesworth, vol. V, p. 376.



for the indeterminist professes to have it, or some of it, within himself, and he brings it into relation with the understanding whenever he discourses about it). It is now to be observed that these two forces cannot be cut off from each other and yet interact with each other, and, further, that if they do interact they are not two but one, as we know from what we have seen about the nature of relation. The question accordingly becomes a question as to whether one contains the other or whether there is a union of them both in a third. The latter alternative must be dismissed at once, since neither side knows anything about such a third thing and since, further, if there were a union we should not need to go outside either of the two members in order to apprehend it, as is clear from our knowledge of the nature of union. But now the determinist side professes to include the indeterminist, saying that it accounts in its own terms for everything that indeterminism lays claim to; whereas the latter, on its part, makes no such profession but says only that it is one within the other. If it is in fact within the other in the form of a contradiction of the other, it is fair to suppose that the other ought by now to know of its presence. That, of course, the other disavows; saying that all it knows is the deterministic or rational. From this it is evident that determinism is sustained.

Against determinism it is often argued that if the course of events is fixed, we should be able to make infallible predictions, which we are not. But it must be said that determinism neither professes nor implies perfect predictability in us; all that it stands for is understandability. A savage cannot forecast a solar eclipse, but that is no proof that it is undetermined. Whether I or anyone else can foretell that I shall read this book tomorrow or that one or none at all, in no sense decides whether my choice in the matter is already determined, or not. Only a mind that knew the entire order and program of what is involved in the case could tell that.

The indeterminist believes that the future may turn along any one of an indefinite number of paths, but which of these it shall be he thinks unknowable and undetermined. But he grants at least that it must be one. Now this is sufficient to establish the determinist's case; for, interpreted, it says, Given these conditions, that result follows (or, if it be preferred, *one* result follows). Conversely, this means that if you have a result, you thereby have had a given set of conditions. Since we always have a result, we therefore have had the one (and only one, as granted) set of conditions leading to it, and at any point in the sequence the result was determined already. In granting the course of things to be unilinear the indeterminist has implicitly granted determinism, as we now see; he has as much as determined the path of a line by giving us conditions from which we can derive its formula. The matter rests upon the hypothetical proposition, If A, then B, which is altogether deterministic. Or, it can be stated: Either B or C but one or the other (deterministic in either case). Moreover, we previously concluded that both hypothetical and disjunctive propositions rest on a categorical ground, which now tightens the grip of determinism. In general, if we can utter a proposition in either of these forms, and of course in the categorical form, about a course which is to be taken, we so far determine it. On the other hand, if we cannot do this the event may be awaited and resolved into analytic judgments, any one of which can then be cast into the form of a proposition as above, and so into determinism. This, to be sure, will be *a posteriori*, but that is nothing against it, since determinism does not profess ability to predict unless given all the conditions. Determinism is not, furthermore, a doctrine having to do with time. It is strictly metaphysical, proceeding throughout in the light of the principle of identity, which holds regardless of past or future time. It is universal and *sub specie aeternitatis*.

The foregoing is illustrated as follows. In a course of events culminating in a given issue there are certain factors given at any point or at all points. It is not a case of these being given or not given but only of *given*. If there is to be ambiguity,



or, if the course is to contain alternatives, then at some one of these points a factor or the whole chain of factors taken together will be ambiguous. The ambiguity will consist in our being both given and not given the factor or body of factors in question; that is, to have ambiguity we shall have to have a thing both being and not being at the same time, which is inconceivable.

Indeterminism always reduces to this violation of the principle of all understanding and of being itself. It supposes that at the moment when the conditions of a course are being given, we can have a thing both given and not given, or both chosen and not chosen. But clearly that is not ambiguity, but unity; for it is in terms of being and not-being, and since the second of these is nothing, there is only one thing, namely, being, left to be had. In order to have true ambiguity we should have to suppose that at any moment a given thing was splitting itself in two and beginning to travel two ways at once; for example, that if you are now setting out from Chapel Hill you may go both by way of Raleigh and by way of Greensboro at once, and tomorrow arrive in both New York and Chicago at the same time. Nor, supposing real ambiguity, is this to be true of only those things which are in process of change. It must be true of all things alike, seeing that the doctrine is generalized and applied to all futurity. So now we have to suppose that tomorrow the radii of a circle will be unequal, the day following equal again, and at any time both equal and unequal. This supposition we find confirmed on learning that ours is not a block universe but a higgledy-piggledy one, of which the lid is off; in fact, a nulliverse!<sup>66</sup>

In concluding this portion of our subject we may state that we find free will and its cognates, chance and indeterminism, to lie outside the intelligible sphere and hence to be inconceivable. If they are real, then they are within the reach of understanding and therefore subject to the principles of understanding; which means that they are not as represented. If they are as represented, then they are breaches in causal nexus and violations of the principle of identity, which principle is both ground and structure of being in its entirety. In the latter case the mind would be unable to take them in, and debate over them would consequently never have occurred.

## VI

### FREEDOM

Having looked somewhat into the conditions wherein anything which might lay claim to freedom would be found, we are now prepared to proceed to our conclusions as to what freedom would be. It is, however, desirable to indicate in advance something of what is to be understood by the term "freedom," otherwise we shall either not be sure of what we are talking about or else be taking for granted what we are out to discover. The meanings of the term reduce to two. One is that of independence, the other that of identification of the free thing with other things or with a whole realm of such things.

We see here a familiar separation. It is the same as the one we found between individuality and universality, with the former trying to maintain itself in isolation from the latter, and failing in the attempt. We foresee accordingly the direction of the course which freedom must take, but before committing ourselves to it let us look for a moment at the one which it leaves behind.

Long usage, and we may presume also the original conception, associate with any free thing a sense of independence from some other thing or things. To be free is to be free *from*. This is a meaning which it is vain to deny and which, moreover, has a legitimate place in ordinary thought and experience. Its validity is quite

<sup>66</sup> Cf. William James, *op. cit.*



another matter, of which we may take brief notice. If we ask what is there for anything to be free from, we are soon led to the conviction that there is nothing; for we have seen repeatedly that no conceivable thing is cut off and to itself exclusively. It is true that if our purview is slight we may think we are self-sufficient and exclusive in various respects, but that results from the misfortune of having such a purview. This restricted view has no greater merit when projected to fit the whole universe than when applied to the small sphere of the unreflective, self-centered individual, since the deficiencies of it are only magnified to the larger scale and stand as surely then as they did before. What is there for the universe to be free from? Other universes? But if it is free from any such, we have no conception of what that would mean. Then, supposing no other universes, is it free in the sense of having nothing to interfere with it? That would be, as it says and as we have just indicated, to be free from that which is nothing. Going a step farther, if we ask what the universe is absolutely free to do, we find that we can answer nothing. Is it free to enclose a space with two straight lines? Or to make a thing both be and not be at the same time? Or to produce something without cause? But if it is not free in these ways it is not absolutely free, in the common meaning of the term. Instead, it is absolutely determined. Again, it is not free from the individual things which comprise it, since none of these can be done away, and if they could the universe would then not be what we now conceive it to be. It follows that it is not free from anything—from external things or from internal things, including the laws and principles of its constitution.

There is another sense in which the whole universe is taken to be free, the sense of self-determination. This is called by Hegel<sup>67</sup> the truth of necessity and by Spinoza<sup>68</sup> the necessity of the nature of the thing free. Self-determination carries a sense of immunity to determination by another, or the same thing as independence, but if there is no other, then we have only that which is externally undetermined, and must ask what self-determination then means. It certainly means setting limits, if the plain import of "determination" is allowed. Since the self is all there is, this means that it sets limits to itself. This is as if the universe had by its own election taken the form of a geometrical figure. It conveys suggestions of a process carried on in extension and time, a process in which the author resolved to go so far and no farther, and did so. Or, to look at it apart from process, it gives the idea of logical distinction, and more specifically of distinction of being as such; not necessarily of distinction of being from not-being, however, because the self-determination refers only to the determined self and tells nothing about a not-self. Did it imply a not-self, we could not escape the thought that the one had been set over against the other, whereupon we should find it difficult to conceive how the original self could have done all the determining. But now, if this is the state of the matter, if we do not have being set over against not-being, then there is no distinction, but only identity. Once more let us recall what we found out about not-being. We found that we have no conception of it and are confined to being. We must accordingly say now that the distinction in question is fictitious and consequently that all we have is being. What then can self-determination signify? Evidently it must be synonymous with

<sup>67</sup> *Science of Logic*, Eng. trans., vol. II, pp. 212, 214.

<sup>68</sup> *Ethics*, I, Def. 7; letter 62.

This idea of freedom has been held, among many others, by Hobbes, who said, "Liberty is the absence of all impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsic quality of the agent," (*op. cit.*, vol. IV, p. 273) and by Descartes (*supra*, 85). Perfect liberty, we learn from the political theorist, Seeley, "is equivalent to the total absence of government." (Quoted in Bosanquet, *Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 133.). Such views are criticized sharply by Bradley, who shows that complete independence would be complete nothingness. (*Ethical Studies*, 2d. ed., p. 56.) For the concept of freedom as independence in the sense of universal self-determination, see W. T. Stace, *op. cit.*, pp. 224, 379, 441, and W. T. Harris, *Introduction to the Study of Philosophy*, p. 267.



being, or, otherwise stated, with self-identity. We then conclude that freedom in the sense of self-determination is the same thing as being, which, again, is universality. This accords with the doctrine of those who hold freedom to be self-determination, since they call it also universality, but it removes a source of confusion by showing self-determination to be either meaningless or else identical with universality and so tautologous.

We abandon herewith all thought of freedom as a state of independence; for if one thing be taken as independent of another, we know that to be erroneous, since each thing is related to every other and vice versa, and so is not independent of any thing; and if all things be taken together as independent, we find nothing for them to be independent of, and so independence is here left without signification. But we said that freedom traditionally means freedom *from*, and having now seen that there is no *from*, we must conclude that there is no freedom in that sense. But this, it may be answered, is only the negative aspect of freedom, and on that account it might have been expected to bring us to naught. The matter then resolves itself into the positive aspect altogether, and we have now to ask what that is. This, as we see, is equivalent to asking the what of being, and the problem of freedom has become the problem of being.

Something of this latter problem we have attempted to deal with in all that has preceded, with the hope of being able at the present stage to draw manifest conclusions. The undertaking was limited in all directions and is far from providing the foundation which a complete doctrine of freedom requires, yet we may indulge the hope that it suffices for certain statements, general and particular, to which we may proceed.

It will scarcely be necessary to point out that anything that we can now properly call freedom must not pertain to man only. Furthermore, as a consequence of this and of what we learned in considering free will, the confinement of freedom to kinds of choice is unjustified.<sup>90</sup> Freedom is the state of being, as here understood, and not simply a manner of changing that state, although it comprehends change. Nor is it the same as the good life, since inquiry shows the bad life to be free also. It is not a program of action, that is to say; it does not say, "Do this, avoid that," and then attempt to cast forbidden things into an empty world of non-freedom, or non-being. It says only, "If you do this, certain results will follow." If you became a saint you would enjoy the saint's kind of freedom, or that state which is saintliness, but if you became a devil you would enjoy devilish freedom also. Each state has its place and thereby what in common parlance would be called its right to such place, but neither is cut off from the other.

We shall examine briefly the idea that anything, and especially man, can or cannot do or think as it pleases. We shall thereafter inquire into the significance of the notion that freedom is harmonization. Finally, we shall somewhat elaborate the sense in which we find freedom to consist.

There is no need of reiterating the dependence of each thing upon other things and upon the whole system of all things. Likewise there is no need of making an exposition of the fact that if an individual invades the province of other individuals he must suffer the consequences or, on the other hand, that if he acts nobly he may expect noble rewards. Such as this we know *a priori*, or from the nature of the case. In the same way we know that as it is in the phenomenal realm, so it is in the noumenal, which is to say, there is no freedom there either; no freedom in the sense of escape, no laws or principles of the understanding which can be evaded.

<sup>90</sup> Many, however, treat freedom as if choice or action resulting from choice were its chief mark and character. See the surveys of Professors Horne (*op. cit.*, pp. 64-65) and Calkins (*Persistent Problems of Philosophy*, 5th ed., p. 474), and an article by Mr. Louis Arnaud Reid in the *Monist*, vol. XXXIV, p. 530.



All this was indicated in our inquiry into the nature of individuality, universality, and relation.

The recognition of limitations on physical action is common and has been given cogent expression by various thinkers. "Rather, we affirm, are Law, Morality, Government, and they alone, the positive reality and completion of freedom." (Hegel<sup>70</sup>) "Men think . . . that freedom means the doing of what a man likes. . . . But this is all wrong; men should not think it slavery to live according to the rule of the constitution; for it is their salvation." (Aristotle<sup>71</sup>) *Wann sind die Menschen am festesten überzeugt, dass sie mit voller Willensfreiheit spechen und handeln? Wenn sie betrunken oder irrsinnung sind, oder traumen.* (Maudsley<sup>72</sup>) "If God gave us liberty, He was very miserly about it." (Guyau<sup>73</sup>) *Was ist der Freisten Freiheit? Recht zu tun.* (Goethe<sup>74</sup>) But the world of action, the phenomenal world, thus marked out in all directions by bounds which none can transgress with immunity, is presumed to be a different world from that of the intelligence. The latter is contemplated by indeterminists and some others as a haven where we can escape the rigor of phenomenal control. It is so cloistered away from the world of things that contact between the two, if admitted at all, is of a character which is inexplicable. Here in the noumenal paradise are enthroned reason and the good. Entering, we put aside whatever it is that one puts aside when he becomes free and thereafter do as we intellectually please.

For our part, we can only say that we know nothing of any such wonderland. We know of only one brand of reasoning and cannot conceive of a second, unless it be that of those who *betrunken oder irrsinnung sind, oder traumen*. Nor do we know of any objects, including the eschatological, of the intelligible faculty which violate the principles of that faculty. We find no occasion for the intellect to shrink and flee, and do not understand how it could do so and still profess to weigh and judge the things from which it had withdrawn. We are not aware that human phenomenal affairs are divorced from it when it absents itself from them. Reasoning is not one thing here and something else there. But more than all this, we cannot see how anything in the noumenal sphere, unless that were the sphere of fantasy, could be styled free when there we have the prototype of the very rigor which we find in the phenomenal sphere where, we are informed, there is no freedom. *Unser Wesen ist ein logisches. Freies Denken folgt den logischen Gesetzen.*<sup>75</sup>

Concluding that freedom in the sphere of thought is incomprehensible if it means release from rigor, we shall now leave our first point of consideration and take up the second, which is the doctrine that freedom consists in harmonization of a given agent and his world. In the first place, what is the ground of the statement that harmonization is freedom? If we derive it *a posteriori*, we but show that harmony already exists, and hence that we need not speculate over how to bring it about. If, on the other hand, we have the idea *a priori*, we likewise get it from the nature of things; from the intelligible character of being itself. But let us consider the two derivations at more length.

The *a posteriori*, like all induction, presupposes what it would prove, and for that reason would hardly be entitled to consideration as a doctrine which had presented any justification for itself. Disregarding this, however, let us see what it means to say. It tells us that there should be an order in things, and especially in human affairs, meaning that we should set to work and create it. But since we see that the only argument advanced for this is that the order already exists, it is clear that nothing is to be done. Still, the argument is also that we ought to act as proposed. What then is the unstated basis of this? Presumably it is a preoccupation with some

<sup>70</sup> *Philosophy of History*, tr. by J. Sibree, p. 35.

<sup>71</sup> *Politics*, Jowett ed. rev., 1310a35.

<sup>72</sup> Karl Dunnkmann, *Das Problem der Freiheit*, p. 38n.

<sup>73</sup> W. H. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

<sup>74</sup> Joseph Mack, *Kritik der Freiheitstheorien*, p. 25.

<sup>75</sup> Windelband, quoted in Mack, *op. cit.*, p. 33.



one or some few elements of the whole harmonization, rather than the whole itself. We are to make over our world in imitation of some one portion of it, that is to say, like the ascetic who reduces himself to one phase of his character. One may ask, Is that harmony? If this interpretation be denied, however, and if it be maintained that harmonization contemplates not a part but the whole, then *cadit quaestio*.

We are not told that rationality is to be the standard throughout the reforms which are enjoined. Rationality would find nothing wrong anywhere, since it would see only that which was inevitable from the universal nature of things, including reform. But rationality is universality become aware of itself, and though it would give us understanding, including an understanding of exhortation, it would not exhort us to do anything. All that it would say would be hypothetical: Given this, that follows; If you do so and so, the result will be, etc. It therefore supplies little motivation for crusaders, yet they reckon ill who leave it out, as the poet said; for though they gather fire at other sources, to this they are always subject. Originating apart from it, the reforms come in and things are made to fit a certain formula for a time. Soon occurs reaction, followed by fresh distortion, and the process is repeated anew; which has led reflecting minds, Oriental, Platonic, Spinozistic, Hegelian, to abandon the show of things and seek the absolute nature which lies beyond this display.

For the crusading spirit an argument of some apparent potency can nevertheless be made. The world is not a dead body but one of which change is a fundamental attribute, it may be said. If we act, we act as members of the scheme of things, which is itself in all respects an embodiment of rationality. We might say that in acting, especially in chosen ways, we are realizing intrinsic order and design, and so carrying out God's purposes.

To this there are two answers, one concerning the view that the world is not static, the other concerning the view that the ends of reform are the ends of God.

Looked at empirically, the world is all that the empiricist calls it. Looked at *sub specie aeternitatis*, it is a place of quite different account. The one view gives the show of things here and now, and so is subject to being superseded and forgotten as soon as time and place are changed; the other gives the metaphysics of them and is by nature beyond the restrictions of time and place. The significance of this is that change, while as undeniable as any empiricist would have it, is only superficial, whence it is evident that the concern of those who seek understanding will not be with it but with what does not change, or, here, the changelessness of change, which is the understanding of it. Only they would be competent to propose crusades that were to be something more than show, but if we mistake them not, so far as they were concerned the world could be either "noble" or "evil," provided it first understood.

The second answer is no more encouraging to reform than the first. If we suppose that our designs in one instance or set of instances are God's designs, how shall we account for those we follow in other instances? Only by fancying that we are part God's and part the devil's or by some like invention can we do so. Even supposing that what we idealize must at some time, through the working of divine purposes, triumph over all the rest, we yet can find no ground to stand on which the devilish fellow who should correspondingly regard his ideals would not be equally able to claim. The difficulty is that we would destroy and narrow down, much as if we should take an aversion to all odd numbers and vow, for the glory of God, to abolish them and have only the even ones.

Before pronouncing upon what are cosmic purposes or what the final causes which the course of events is realizing, we should require a ground for judging. What could this be? Could it be observation? Or some apprehension of principles which are emerging out of history? Or an immediate insight, or light from God? The first two would be inductive and so would either beg the question or else yield only an hypothesis, which, as we know, could never be proved save on some additional and as it would turn out *a priori* ground, while the last either would be illusion or would embrace all reality and so deny the partial and finite which it was to justify. But if the ground



were this sum total of reality, or, as we have been calling it, universality, then it would be inclusive of those elements which reform would desire to destroy. And so the end or purpose of God would be the rationality of which we spoke before.

Thus we are led to the conclusion that the doctrine of harmonization, so far as it rests on a *posteriori* considerations, fails to justify itself as a theory of freedom. Let us briefly examine the same doctrine from the *a priori* standpoint.

We may observe to begin with that having reduced the *a posteriori* to the *a priori* in the preceding, we should expect to reach the same result in the present case as we did in that. Further, the *a priori* arises, as was noted before, from the intelligible character of that which it concerns, which is to say, it is *per se* typical of the rationality which we have found contrary to doctrines that make harmony consist in bending the course of affairs to fit the privative ends of reform. It is clear from this intelligible, or rational, character that if it is to be turned to the purposes of reform a major operation will have to be done upon it, such that it shall be divided into that which promises to suit the needs of theory and that which does not, the latter to be denied existence. But this would better be styled a decapitation, with not just one part but all of rationality ceasing to exist, since it is a whole that cannot be sectioned.

The argument may take another but still groundless turn. It runs then to the effect that thought and thing are at variance, and we have heard of it before. Here it is specifically that the world does not conform to proper conceptions of it and should be made to do so. But it is forgotten that these proper conceptions were taken from the nature of the very world which is now to be regenerated, and that they consequently give justification for the whole and not for some chosen part only. It is also not realized that the idea of a disparity between the rational and the real is baseless and, further, that it contradicts the original assumption of the argument, namely, that the rational is the expression of the nature of things, or, briefly that it is the real.

On neither its showing after the fact nor its assumptions before the fact do we find the doctrine of harmony, where that means reconstruction, to sustain itself. Were it a doctrine that consistently adhered to the basis from which it must arise if it is to make any valid claim, namely, the basis of the rationality of things, this result would be very different; for then it would be a doctrine that allowed place not to preferred things only but to these and all other things as well, including even programs of reform. Such a doctrine is that to which we shall now turn attention, the last of the three which we were to consider.

We take it for granted that in virtue of being universal anything whatever is as free as anything else, but we hasten to add that relatively to one another, individual things manifestly differ, in freedom as in other respects. Their difference in being is their difference in freedom, a difference, however, which we have found to be specious and to vanish before the understanding. Now it may be said that if the matter comes to this the whole problem of freedom has been swept out into mist along with all else, where everything automatically loses all distinguishability. This is criticism which we have met before. Did we not find all knowing to have its source and its whole being in the principle of identity? Did we not also find that knowing and known are one? Grant this and you grant the above; for they are the same. What under one aspect is all a fog is, under the other aspect, the light of understanding.

A further criticism might be that if every individual thing were equally free with every other, then it would be vain to perplex ourselves with the task of discovering a solution to our supposed problem. This would be a criticism to which we should find it difficult to give an answer if we kept to the ground on which it stood. Applied mathematics would make a like criticism of higher mathematics, seeing no use in such things as theories about equations, number, and the like, and higher mathematics would in turn somewhat tend to question the good of metaphysical speculation upon such matters as negation and relation. Why it is that criticisms like these can be given cogency is that the sphere of utility, whence they



arise and to which they have reference, is a sphere which does not require an order and system reaching far beyond itself and which accordingly is able to get along without much conscious contact with the realm of pure reason, or metaphysics. That it can so get along is due to its partial, self-centered character. It goes instinctively along, little concerned about the whence, the whither, or the why, questions in which it and the sweet-milk philosophy on which it feeds see no good—"fruitless" questions.

But even this sphere of experience cannot deny its connections with these abstruse questions. Neither can it maintain that, limited as it is, it possesses the attribute of what it regards as freedom, an attribute which must be sought somewhere beyond the limits of such experience. Now understanding, in that it does not stop at the bounds that circumscribe empiricism, but reaches beyond them without apparent limit as to scope, would present this attribute of freedom. But we have seen that the realm of the understanding is not the realm of the free, when by free is meant the indeterminate, and so now we have to say that the freedom to be expected of it is only relative. Whether from the idea of degrees of freedom, to which this might give rise, or from some other source, a concept of the universal as that which is most free is then put forward.<sup>76</sup> The universal is, however, according to our findings, ultimately one with the individual; so we might as well posit the individual as most free.

Leaving these considerations, we may turn without more ado to the remaining aspect of our problem. Under this aspect freedom consists in the increase of understanding, or the increase of awareness of the nature of being, or, in one word, knowledge. In considering the view that knowledge is the pathway to freedom we soon perceive that it assumes two things: (1) that knowledge is as yet fragmentary, and (2) that it nevertheless unfolds into completeness, or universality. As they stand, these assumptions are contradictory, since what is fragmentary is not also universal, except in virtue of an unstated ground. There is here an unstated ground, however, and it is that any portion of knowledge implies all the rest. If, then, freedom is to consist in knowledge, it will consist in the tracing of implications and the consequent awareness of universality, to which that process will lead.

What we need to know in order to judge this doctrine is how it stands with respect to our previous conclusion that freedom is synonymous with being. But it needs no arguing that the awareness required by the doctrine is far from coextensive with being; whence it is evident that the former is not the latter and so is not freedom.

It will be said that although finite human consciousness thus fails to establish itself as free, infinite or divine consciousness does not so fail, since it is *per se* one with all being. It will also be said that freedom is by degrees and that as far as we are conscious of the knowledge implicit in us, so far are we free. Again, it may be said that this expansiveness is the aim of all aspiration, whether of the mind or of the sentiments; that it makes us free in the original sense of free from, since through it we transcend the limitations of lower levels; and that it brings us to a more and more complete union with the divine.

We find points for criticism, nevertheless. In the first place, it is a dualistic state comprising being and consciousness of being. We have found that any thought or thing implies all others, and now we may say that consciousness itself is only one such, subsumed by rather than coincident with being. The ground in virtue of which it was possible to rise to this conception of freedom does not warrant this emergence into dualism, and, furthermore, it does not allow us to stop short of final unity as we are called upon here to do. This ground is the principle of identity. With it to stand on, we start with any unit and discursively advance, it may be only a little way or it may be to an apprehension of the totality of units, namely, being as such, or the principle itself; or, we begin with this principle and comprehend all units at once, not

<sup>76</sup> Cf. e.g., Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 60-326; Spinoza, *Ethics*, V. 36, *Schol.*



as separate things but as one thing, the identity itself. Conscious being is here replaced by the unity of all being *sub specie aeternitatis*—the One, the unmoved mover, the pre-established harmony. It is the universal formula, indifferent to time, change, and consciousness, and it does not fall short.

A second point of criticism is the idea that freedom is transcendent. Relatively speaking, we do find transcendence, consisting in the advance of consciousness from one stage to another and higher stage. No such transcendence do we find, however, when we pass beyond this practical, hither-and-yon outlook and apprehend the ground of the supposed transcendence; for then all that meets us is the immediate unity aforesaid. We conceive of nothing for reality to transcend, although we can see that elements unaware of the nature of themselves and their world might easily suppose that as they passed from one stage to another within the whole, they were transcending what they had left behind, as the man transcends the boy, or the oak the acorn. What we conceive of and what alone we find, from the intelligible standpoint, is immanence.

One other criticism follows from this. If freedom is transcendence, it is extensional, or quantitative. Stage B is higher or greater or more than stage A, and stage C is above both. What it is that is thus scaled may be itself qualitative—and such difficulty as this brings up is for the transcendentalist to remove. But we find no explanation or understanding in the idea of degree. Qualitative or quantitative, intensional or extensional, a thing is known through its relations, and these are immediate and universal, whereas degree would block them up into separate parts which would thereby be excluded from our comprehension.

By now it is evident that the idea of freedom yields us, short of universality, no formula capable of standing criticism. If we take it to mean independence, we find nothing to which it corresponds. If we assume it to be a harmony, we find that that signifies the world just as it is, or being as such. And if we identify it with knowledge, or the consciousness of reality, we again are led to calling it simple being.

This result was foreshadowed from the first. If we start from the basis of all understanding and find at every turn that this basis is what we must stand on, since it is universally comprehensive and so inclusive of everything that we know or can know, then it is clear that what we had to begin with is what we shall have in the end. Nor is there more to be desired or conceived. On this basis, the principle of identity, we not only apprehend reality but apprehend that we are one with it, that distinctions disappear, that what is unique and cut away under the aspect of time and change is universal and immutable under the aspect of eternity. When we have apprehended this ground, and thereby this significance of it, we have come into immediate apprehension of the nature of being, which is to say we have attained complete universality of understanding and of being. But the problem of being, we said, is the problem of freedom; hence, having apprehended in this principle the nature of being and having found that we are one with it, we have achieved freedom.

A conclusion apparently so intangible as this may fail to yield satisfaction. But if it is practical interest that is to be satisfied, the failure does not concern us, since it was understanding and not practical measures that we sought. In regard to practical matters we can now moreover say, after this inquiry, that, as no permanent solution of the problem of freedom is desired in their sphere, so also none is possible. New individuals and groups of individuals are perpetually coming in and passing out in that sphere, each different from the other and all possessed of privative ambitions to be realized. Into this continual flux, where the prime concern is with the here and now of the flux itself rather than with understanding as such, it is almost idle to introduce seemingly remote metaphysical speculation. This is witnessed by the fact that men who have undertaken to describe the perfect state have had to lay its scene in heaven.



Nevertheless, metaphysics is not in heaven but in understanding, and since understanding does not lie apart from men and their world but in them, it follows that metaphysics itself is here and now. That is to say, there is a rationale within our system, outside of which we neither need to go nor can go if we seek understanding of the system. But then the understanding that we shall attain will not conform to prescriptions concerning rights, property, ideals of morality, and the like, but only to what is; for it will be understanding of reality, or of being as such. If in the process of attaining this understanding we should become concerned with the what and the how of understanding itself and turn to an investigation of those questions, we might hope to discover expressed therein the universal nature of our system; for in fact we presuppose such an expression whenever we take understanding to be the measure of the world. We do discover it, in the principle of identity. In the light of this principle we receive all our knowledge. In apprehending it, which is a process of self-apprehension, which in turn is identification with being as such, we apprehend and pass over into that which is the universal nature. Thus in the elementary principle of all understanding we have the means to freedom in the broadest sense of that term.



## VII

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