SCIENCE

FRIDAY, JULY 14, 1911

CONTENTS

MSS. intended for publication and books, etc., intended for review should be sent to the Editor of SCIENCE, Garrison-on-Hudson, N. Y.

JAMES AS A PHILOSOPHER[1]

FIFTY years since, if competent judges were asked to name the American thinkers from whom there had come novel and notable and typical contributions to general philosophy, they could in reply mention only two men—Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson. For the conditions that determine a fair answer to the question, "Who are your representative American philosophers?" are obvious. The philosopher who can fitly represent the contribution of his nation to the world's treasury of philosophical ideas, must first be one who thinks for himself, fruitfully, with true independence, and with successful inventiveness, about problems of philosophy. And, secondly, he must be a man who gives utterance to philosophical ideas which are characteristic of some stage and of some aspect of the spiritual life of his own people. In Edwards and in Emerson, and only in these men, had these two conditions found their fulfilment, so far as our American civilization had yet expressed itself in the years that had preceded our civil war. Edwards, in his day, made articulate some of the great interests that had moulded our early religious life. The thoughts which he most discussed were indeed, in a sense, old, since they largely concerned a traditional theology. Yet both in theology and general philosophy, Edwards was an originator. For he actually rediscovered some of the world's profoundest ideas

[1] Oration delivered on June 29 at the annual exercises of the Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

regarding God and humanity simply by reading for himself the meaning of his own religious experience. With a mysterious power of philosophical intuition, even in his early youth, he observed what, upon the basis of what we know to have been his range of philosophical reading, we could not possibly have expected him to observe. If the sectarian theological creed that he defended was to our minds narrow, what he himself saw was very far-reaching and profound. For he viewed religious problems with synoptic vision that enabled him to reconcile, in his own personal way, some of the greatest and most tragic conflicts of the spiritual world, and what he had to say consequently far transcended the interests of the special theological issues which he discussed. Meanwhile, he spoke not merely as a thinker, but as one who gave voice to some of the central motives and interests of our colonial religious life. Therefore he was, in order of time the first of our nationally representative philosophers.

Another stage of our civilization—a later phase of our national ideals—found its representative in Emerson. He too was in close touch with many of the world's deepest thoughts concerning ultimate problems. Some of the ideas that most influenced him have their far-off historical origins in oriental as well as in Greek thought, and also their nearer foreign sources in modern European philosophy. But he transformed whatever he assimilated. He invented upon the basis of his personal experience, and so he was himself no disciple of the orient, or of Greece, still less of England and of Germany. He thought, felt and spoke as an American.

Fifty years ago, I say, our nation had so far found these two men to express each his own stage of the philosophy of our national civilization. The essence of a philosophy, in case you look at it solely from a historical point of view, always appears to you thus: A great philosophy expresses an interpretation of the life of man and a view of the universe, which is at once personal, and if the thinker is representative of his people, national in its significance. Edwards and Emerson had given tongue to the meaning of two different stages of our American culture. And these were thus far our only philosophical voices.

To-day, if we ask any competent foreign critic of our philosophy whether there is any other name to be added to these two classic American philosophers, we shall receive the unanimous answer: "There is to-day a third representative American philosopher. His name is William James." For James meets the two conditions just mentioned. He has thought for himself, fruitfully, with true independence, and with successful inventiveness. And he has given utterance to ideas which are characteristic of a stage and of an aspect of the spiritual life of this people. He, too, has been widely and deeply affected by the history of thought. But he has reinterpreted all these historical influences in his own personal way. He has transformed whatever he has assimilated. He has rediscovered whatever he has received from without; because he never could teach what he had not himself experienced. And, in addition, he has indeed invented effectively and richly. Moreover, in him certain characteristic aspects of our national civilization have found their voice. He is thus the third in the order of time among our representative American philosophers. Already, within a year of his death, he has begun to acquire something of a classic rank and dignity. In future this rank and dignity will long increase. In one of

James's latest utterances he indeed expressed, with characteristic energy, a certain abhorrence of what he called classical tendencies in philosophical thought. But I must repeat the word: Fortune not unjustly replies, and will reply to James's vigorous protest against every form of classicism, by making him a classic.

Thus, then, from the point of view of the competent foreign students of our philosophy, the representative American philosophers are now three and only three —Edwards, Emerson, James.

And of these three there can be little question that, at the present time, the most widely known abroad is James. Emerson has indeed found a secure place in the minds of the English-speaking lovers of his type of thought everywhere; and has had an important part in the growth of some modern German tendencies. But James has already won, in the minds of French, of German, of Italian, and of still other groups of foreign readers, a position which gives him a much more extended range of present influence than Emerson has ever possessed.

It is my purpose, upon the present occasion, to make a few comments upon the significance of William James's philosophy. This is no place for the discussion of technical matters. Least of all have I any wish to undertake to decide, upon this occasion, any controversial issues. My intentions as I address you are determined by very simple and obvious considerations. William James was my friend from my youth to the end of his beneficent life. I was once for a brief time his pupil. I long loved to think of myself as his disciple; although perhaps I was always a very bad disciple. But now he has just left us. And as I address you I remember that he was your friend also. Since the last annual meeting of this assembly he has been lost to us all. It is fitting that we should recall his memory to-day. Of personal reminiscences, of biographical sketches, and of discussions relating to many details of his philosophy, the literature that has gathered about his name during the few months since we lost him, has been very full. But just as this is no occasion for technical discussion of his philosophy so too I think this is no place to add new items to the literature of purely personal reminiscence and estimate of James. What I shall try to do is this: I have said that James is an American philosopher of classic rank, because he stands for a stage in our national self-consciousness—for a stage with which historians of our national mind must always reckon. This statement, if you will permit, shall be my text. I shall devote myself to expounding this text as well as I can in my brief time, and to estimating the significance of the stage in question, and of James's thought in so far as it seems to me to express the ideas and the ideals characteristic of this phase of our national life.

I

In defining the historical position which William James, as a thinker, occupies, we have of course to take account, not only of national tendencies, but also of the general interests of the world's thought in his time. William James began his work as a philosopher, during the seventies of the last century, in years which were, for our present purpose, characterized by two notable movements of world-wide significance. These two movements were at once scientific in the more special sense of that term, and philosophical in the broad meaning of that word. The first of the movements was concerned with the elaboration—the widening and the deepening of the newer doctrines about evolution. This movement

had indeed been preceded by another. The recent forms of evolutionary doctrine, those associated with the names of Darwin and of Spencer, had begun rapidly to come into prominence about 1860. And the decade from 1860 to 1870, taken together with the opening years of the next decade, had constituted what you may call the storm and stress period of Darwinism, and of its allied tendencies, such as those which Spencer represented. In those years the younger defenders of the new doctrines so far as they appealed to the general public, fought their battles, declared their faith, out of weakness were made strong and put to flight the armies of the theologians. You might name, as a closing event of that storm and stress period, Tyndall's famous Belfast address of 1874, and the warfare waged about that address. Haeckel's early works, some of Huxley's most noted polemic essays, Lange's "History of Materialism," the first eight or nine editions of Von Hartmann's "Philosophy of the Unconscious," are documents characteristic of the more general philosophical interests of that time. In our country, Fiske's "Cosmic Philosophy" reflected some of the notable features that belonged to these years of the early conquests of evolutionary opinion.

Now in that storm and stress period, James had not yet been before the public. But his published philosophical work began with the outset of the second and more important period of evolutionary thought—the period of the widening and deepening of the new ideas. The leaders of thought who are characteristic of this second period no longer spend their best efforts in polemic in favor of the main ideas of the newer forms of the doctrine of evolution. In certain of its main outlines—outlines now extremely familiar to the public—they simply accept the notion of the natural origin of organic forms and of the general continuity of the processes of development. But they are concerned, more and more, as time goes on, with the deeper meaning of evolution, with the study of its factors, with the application of the new ideas to more and more fields of inquiry, and, in case they are philosophers, with the reinterpretation of philosophical traditions in the light of what had resulted from that time of storm and stress.

James belongs to this great second stage of the evolutionary movement, to the movement of the elaboration, of the widening and deepening of evolutionary thought, as opposed to that early period of the storm and stress. We still live in this second stage of evolutionary movement. James is one of its most inventive philosophical representatives. He hardly ever took part in the polemic in favor of the general evolutionary ideas. Accepting them, he undertook to interpret and apply them.

And now, secondly, the period of James's activity is the period of the rise of the new psychology. The new psychology has stood for many other interests besides those of a technical study of the special sciences of the human and of the animal mind. What is technical about psychology is indeed important enough. But the special scientific study of mind by the modern methods used in such study has been a phase and a symptom of a very much larger movement—a movement closely connected with all that is most vital in recent civilization, with all the modern forms of nationalism, of internationalism, of socialism, and of individualism. Human life has been complicated by so many new personal and social problems, that man has needed to aim, by whatever means are possible, towards a much more

elaborate knowledge of his fellow-man than was ever possible before. The results of this disposition appear in the most widely diverse sciences and arts. Archeology and ethnology, history and the various social sciences, dramatic art, the novel, as well as what has been called psychical research —in a word, all means, good and bad, that have promised either a better knowledge of what man is or a better way of portraying what knowledge of man one may possess—have been tried and moulded in recent times by the spirit of which recent technical psychology is also an expression. The psychological movement means then something that far transcends the interests of the group of sciences to which the name psychology now applies. And this movement assumed some of its most important recent forms during the decade in which James began to publish his work. His own contributions to psychology reflect something of the manifoldness and of the breadth of the general psychological movement itself. If he published the two great volumes entitled "Psychology" he also wrote "The Varieties of Religious Experience," and he played his part in what is called "psychical research."

These then are James's two principal offices when you consider him merely in his most general relations to the thought of the world at large in his time. He helped in the work of elaborating and interpreting evolutionary thought. He took a commanding part in the psychological movement.

II

But now it is not of these aspects of James's work, significant as they are, that I have here especially to speak. I must indeed thus name and emphasize these wider relations of his thought to the world's contemporary thought. But I do so in order to give the fitting frame to our picture. I now have to call attention to the features about James which make him, with all his universality of interest, a representative American thinker. Viewed as an American, he belongs to the movement which has been the consequence first, of our civil war, and secondly, of the recent expansion, enrichment, and entanglement of our social life. He belongs to the age in which our nation, rapidly transformed by the occupation of new territory, by economic growth, by immigration and by education, has been attempting to find itself anew, to redefine its ideals, to retain its moral integrity, and yet to become a world power. In this stage of our national consciousness we still live and shall plainly have to live for a long time in the future. The problems involved in such a civilization we none of us well understand; least of all do I myself understand them. And James, scholar, thinker, teacher, scientific and philosophical writer as he was, has of course only such relation to our national movement as is implied by the office that he thus fulfills. Although he followed with keen interest a great variety of political and social controversies, he avoided public life. Hence he was not absorbed by the world of affairs, although he was always ready to engage generously in the discussion of practical reforms. His main office with regard to such matters was therefore that of philosophical interpreter. He helped to enlighten his fellows as to the relations between the practical problems of our civilization and those two world-wide movements of thought of which I have just spoken.

Let me call attention to some of the results of James's work as interpreter of the problems of the American people. I need not say that this work was, to his own mind, mainly incidental to his interest in

those problems of evolutionary thought and of psychology to which I just directed your attention. I am sure that James himself was very little conscious that he was indeed an especially representative American philosopher. He certainly had no ambition to vaunt himself as such. He worked with a beautiful and hearty sincerity upon the problems that as a fact interested him. He knew that he loved these problems because of their intense human interest. He knew, then, that he was indeed laboring in the service of mankind. But he so loved what he called the concrete, the particular, the individual, that he naturally made little attempt to define his office in terms of any social organism, or of any such object as our national life, viewed as an entity. And he especially disliked to talk of causes in the abstract, or of social movements as I am here characterizing them. His world seemed to him to be made up of individuals—men, events, experiences and deeds. And he always very little knew how important he himself was, or what vast inarticulate social forces were finding in him their voice. But we are now viewing James from without, in a way that is of course as imperfect as it is inevitable. We therefore have a right at this point to attribute to him an office that, as I believe, he never attributed to himself.

And here we have to speak first of James's treatment of religious problems, and then of his attitude towards ethics.

Our nation since the civil war has largely lost touch with the older forms of its own religious life. It has been seeking for new embodiments of the religious consciousness, for creeds that shall not be in conflict with the modern man's view of life. It was James's office, as psychologist, and as philosopher, to give a novel expression to this our own national variety of the spirit of religious unrest. And his volume "The Varieties of Religious Experience," is one that, indeed, with all its wealth of illustration, and in its courageous enterprise, has a certain classic beauty. Some men preach new ways of salvation. James simply portrayed the meaning that the old ways of salvation had possessed, or still do possess, in the inner and personal experience of those individuals whom he has called the religious geniuses. And then he undertook to suggest an hypothesis as to what the whole religious process might mean. The hypothesis is on the one hand in touch with certain tendencies of recent psychology. And in so far it seems in harmony with the modern consciousness. On the other hand it expresses, in a way, James's whole philosophy of life. And in this respect it comes into touch with all the central problems of humanity.

The result of this portrayal was indeed magical. The psychologists were aided towards a new tolerance in their study of religion. The evolution of religion appeared in a new light. And meanwhile many of the faithful, who had long been disheartened by the later forms of evolutionary naturalism, took heart anew when they read James's vigorous appeal to the religious experience of the individual as to the most authoritative evidence for religion. "The most modern of thinkers, the evolutionist, the psychologist," they said, "the heir of all the ages, has thus vindicated anew the witness of the spirit in the heart—the very source of inspiration in which we ourselves have always believed." And such readers went away rejoicing, and some of them even began to write christologies based upon the doctrine of James as they understood it. The new gospel, the glad tidings of the subconscious, began to be preached in many

lands. It has even received the signal honor of an official papal condemnation.

For my own part, I have ventured to say elsewhere that the new doctrine, viewed in one aspect, seems to leave religion in the comparatively trivial position of a play with whimsical powers—a prey to endless psychological caprices. But James's own robust faith was that the very caprices of the spirit are the opportunity for the building-up of the highest forms of the spiritual life; that the unconventional and the individual in religious experience are the means whereby the truth of a superhuman world may become most manifest. And this robust faith of James, I say, whatever you may think of its merits, is as American in type as it has already proved effective in the expression which James gave to it. It is the spirit of the frontiersman, of the gold seeker, or the home builder, transferred to the metaphysical and to the religious realm. There is our far-off home, our long-lost spiritual fortune. Experience alone can guide us towards the place where these things are; hence you indeed need experience. You can only win your way on the frontier in case you are willing to live there. Be, therefore, concrete, be fearless, be experimental. But, above all, let not your abstract conceptions, even if you call them scientific conceptions, pretend to set any limits to the richness of spiritual grace, to the glories of spiritual possession, that, in case you are duly favored, your personal experience may reveal to you. James reckons that the tribulations with which abstract scientific theories have beset our present age are not to be compared with the glory that perchance shall be, if only we open our eyes to what experience itself has to reveal to us.

In the quest for the witness to whom James appeals when he tests his religious doctrine, he indeed searches the most varied literature; and of course most of the records that he consults belong to foreign lands. But the book called "The Varieties of Religious Experience" is full of the spirt that, in our country, has long been effective in the formation of new religious sects; and this volume expresses, better than any sectarian could express, the recent efforts of this spirit to come to an understanding with modern naturalism, and with the new psychology. James's view of religious experience is meanwhile at once deliberately unconventional and intensely democratic. The old world types of reverence for the external forms of the church find no place in his pages; but equally foreign to his mind is that barren hostility of the typical European free thinkers for the church with whose traditions they have broken. In James's eyes, the forms, the external organizations of the religious world simply wither; it is the individual that is more and more. And James, with a democratic contempt for social appearances, seeks his religious geniuses everywhere. World-renowned saints of the historic church receive his hearty sympathy; but they stand upon an equal footing, in his esteem, with many an obscure and ignorant revivalist, with faith healers, with poets, with sages, with heretics, with men that wander about in all sorts of sheepskins and goatskins, with chance correspondents of his own, with whomsoever you will of whom the world was not and is not worthy, but who, by inner experience, have obtained the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

You see, of course, that I do not believe James's resulting philosophy of religion to be adequate. For as it stands it is indeed chaotic. But I am sure that it can only be amended by taking it up into a larger view,

and not by rejecting it. The spirit triumphs, not by destroying the chaos that James describes, but by brooding upon the face of the deep until the light comes, and with light, order. But I am sure also that we shall always have to reckon with James's view. And I am sure also that only an American thinker could have written this survey, with all its unconventional ardor of appreciation, with all its democratic catholicity of sympathy, with all its freedom both from ecclesiastical formality and from barren free thinking. I am sure also that no book has better expressed the whole spirit of hopeful unrest, of eagerness to be just to the modern view of life, of longing for new experience, which characterizes the recent American religious movement. In James's book then the deeper spirit of our national religious life has found its most manifold and characteristic expression.

III

I must next turn to the other of the two aspects of James's work as a thinker that I mentioned above, namely to his ethical influence. Since the war our transformed and restless people has been seeking not only for religious, but for moral guidance. What are the principles that can show us the course to follow in the often pathless wilderness of the new democracy? It frequently seems as if, in every crisis of our greater social affairs we needed somebody to tell us both our dream and the interpretation thereof. We are eager to have life, and that abundantly. But what life? And by what test shall we know the way of life?

The ethical maxims that most readily meet the popular demand for guidance in such a country, and at such a time, are maxims that combine attractive vagueness with an equally winning pungency. They must seem obviously practical; but must not appear excessively rigorous. They must arouse a large enthusiasm for action, without baffling us with the sense of restraint, or of wearisome self-control. They must not call for extended reflection. Despite their vagueness they must not appear abstract, nor yet hard to grasp. The wayfaring man, though a fool, must be sure that he at least will not err in applying our moral law. Moral blunders must be natural only to opponents, not to ourselves. We must be self-confident. Moreover, our moral law must have an athletic sound. Its first office is to make us "good sports." Only upon such a law can we meditate day and night, in case the "game" leaves us indeed any time for meditation at all. Nevertheless, these popular maxims will of course not be meant as mere expressions of blind impulse. On the contrary, they will appeal to highly intelligent minds, but to minds anxious for relief from the responsibility of being too thoughtful. In order to be easily popular they must be maxims that stir the heart, not precisely indeed like the sound of a trumpet, but more like the call of the horn of an automobile. You will have in mind the watchwords that express some of the popular ethical counsels thus suggested. One of these watchwords has of late enabled us to abbreviate a well-known and surely a highly intelligent maxim, to something that is to-day used almost as a mere injection. It is the watchword, "Efficiency"! Another expression of the same motive takes shape in the equally familiar advice, "Play the game."

Now I do not mean to make light of the real significance of just such moral maxims, for awakening and inspiring just our people in this day. The true value of these maxims lies for us in three of their characteristic features. First, they give us counsel that is in any case opposed

to sloth. And sloth on every level of our development remains one of the most treacherous and mortal enemies of the moral will. Secondly, they teach us to avoid the dangers to which the souls of Hamlet's type fall a prey. That is, they discourage the spirit that reflectively divides the inner self, and that leaves it divided. They warn us that the divided self is indeed, unless it can heal its deadly wound, by fitting action, a lost soul. And thirdly, they emphasize courage. And courage—not, to be sure, so much the courage that faces one's rivals in the market place, or one's foes on the battlefield as the courage that fits us to meet our true spiritual enemies—the courage that arises anew from despair and that undertakes, despite all tribulations, to overcome the world—such courage is one of the central treasures of the moral life.

Because of these three features, the maxims to which I refer are in all their vagueness, vehicles of wisdom. But they express themselves in their most popular forms with a wilfulness that is often more or less comic, and that is sometimes tragic. For what they do not emphasize is the significance of self-possession, of lifting up our eyes to the hills whence cometh our help, of testing the life that now is by the vision of the largest life that we can in ideal appreciate. These popular maxims also emphasize results rather than ideals, strength rather than cultivation, temporary success rather than wholeness of life, the greatness of "Him that taketh a city," rather than of "Him that ruleth his spirit." They are the maxims of unrest, of impatience and of a certain humane and generous unscrupulousness, as fascinating as it is dangerous. They characterize a people that is indeed earnestly determined to find itself, but that so far has not found itself.

Now one of the most momentous problems regarding the influence of James is presented by the question: How did he stand related to these recent ethical tendencies of our nation? I may say at once that, in my opinion, he has just here proved himself to be most of all and in the best sense our national philosopher. For the philosopher must not be an echo. He must interpret. He must know us better than we know ourselves, and this is what indeed James has done for our American moral consciousness. For, first, while he indeed made very little of the formal office of an ethical teacher and seldom wrote upon technical ethical controversies, he was, as a fact, profoundly ethical in his whole influence. And next, he fully understood, yes shared in a rich measure, the motives to which the ethical maxims just summarized have given expression. Was not he himself restlessly active in his whole temperament? Did he not love individual enterprise and its free expression? Did he not loathe what seemed to him abstractions? Did he not insist that the moralist must be in close touch with concrete life? As psychologist did he not emphasize the fact that the very essence of conscious life lies in its active, yes, in its creative relation to experience? Did he not counsel the strenuous attitude towards our tasks? And are not all these features in harmony with the spirit from which the athletic type of morality just sketched seems to have sprung?

Not only is all this true of James, but, in the popular opinion of the moment, the doctrine called pragmatism, as he expounded it in his Lowell lectures, seems, to many of his foreign critics, and to some of those who think themselves his best followers here at home, a doctrine primarily ethical in its force, while, to some minds, pragmatism seems also to be a sort of phi-

losophical generalization of the efficiency doctrine just mentioned. To be sure, any closer reader of James's "Pragmatism" ought to see that his true interests in the philosophy of life are far deeper than those which the maxims "Be efficient," and, "Play the game" mostly emphasize. And, for the rest, the book on pragmatism is explicitly the portrayal of a method of philosophical inquiry, and is only incidentally a discourse upon ethically interesting matters. James himself used to protest vigorously against the readers who ventured to require of the pragmatist viewed simply as such, any one ethical doctrine whatever. In his book on "Pragmatism" he had expounded, as he often said, a method of philosophizing, a definition of truth, a criterion for interpreting and testing theories. He was not there concerned with ethics. A pragmatist was free to decide moral issues as he chose, so long as he used the pragmatic method in doing so, that is, so long as he tested ethical doctrines by their concrete results, when they were applied to life.

Inevitably, however, the pragmatic doctrine that both the meaning and the truth of ideas shall be tested by their empirical consequences of these ideas and by the practical results of acting them out in life, has seemed both to many of James's original hearers, and to some of the foreign critics just mentioned, a doctrine that is simply a characteristic Americanism in philosophy—a tendency to judge all ideals by their practical efficiency, by their visible results, by their so-called "cash values."

James, as I have said, earnestly protested against this cruder interpretation of his teaching. The author of "The Varieties of Religious Experience" and of the "Pluralistic Universe" was indeed an empiricist, a lover of the concrete and a man who looked forward to the future rather than backward to the past; but despite his own use, in his "Pragmatism" of the famous metaphor of the "cash values" of ideas, he was certainly not a thinker who had set his affections upon things below rather than upon things above. And the "consequences" upon which he laid stress when he talked of the pragmatic test for ideas, were certainly not the merely worldly consequences of such ideas in the usual sense of the word "worldly." He appealed always to experience; but then for him, experience might be, and sometimes was, religious experience—experience of the unseen and of the superhuman. And so James was right in his protest against these critics of his later doctrine. His form of pragmatism was indeed a form of Americanism in philosophy. And he too had his fondness for what he regarded as efficiency, and for those who "play the game," whenever the game was one that he honored. But he also loved too much those who are weak in the eyes of this present world—the religious geniuses, the unpopular inquirers, the noble outcasts. He loved them, I say, too much to be the dupe of the cruder forms of our now popular efficiency doctrine. In order to win James's most enthusiastic support, ideas and men needed to express an intense inner experience along with a certain unpopularity which showed that they deserved sympathy. Too much worldly success, on the part of men or of ideas, easily alienated him. Unworldliness was one of the surest marks, in his eyes, of spiritual power, if only such unworldliness seemed to him to be joined with interests that, using his favorite words, he could call "concrete" and "important."

In the light of such facts, all that he said about judging ideas by their "consequences" must be interpreted, and there-

fore it is indeed unjust to confound pragmatism with the cruder worship of efficiency.

IV

Yet, I repeat, James's philosophy of life was indeed, in its ethical aspects, an expression of the better spirit of our people. He understood, he shared, and he also transcended the American spirit. And just that is what most marks him as our national philosopher. If you want to estimate his philosophy of life in its best form, you must read or re-read, not the "Pragmatism," but the essays contained in the volume entitled "The Will to Believe."

May I still venture, as I close, to mention a few features of the doctrine that is embodied in that volume? The main question repeatedly considered in these essays of James is explicitly the question of an empiricist, of a man averse to abstractions, and of an essentially democratic thinker, who does not believe that any final formulation of an ideal of human life is possible until the last man has had his experience of life, and has uttered his word. But this empiricism of the author is meanwhile the empiricism of one who especially emphasizes the central importance of the active life as the basis of our interpretation of experience. Herein James differs from all traditional positivists. Experience is never yours merely as it comes to you. Facts are never mere data. They are data to which you respond. Your experience is constantly transformed by your deeds. That this should be the case is determined by the most essential characteristics of your consciousness. James asserts this latter thesis as psychologist, and has behind him, as he writes, the vast mass of evidence that his two psychological volumes present. The simplest perception, the most elaborate scientific theory, illustrate how man never merely finds, but also always cooperates in creating his world.

No doubt then life must be estimated and guided with constant reference to experience, to consequences, to actual accomplishments, to what we Americans now call efficiency. But on the other hand efficiency itself is not to be estimated in terms of mere data. Our estimate of our world is not to be forced upon us by any mere inspection of consequences. What makes life worth living is not what you find in it, but what you are ready to put into it by your ideal interpretation of the meaning that, as you insist, it shall possess for you. This ideal meaning is always for you a matter of faith not to be imposed coercively upon another, but also never to be discovered by watching who it is that wins, or by merely feeling your present worldly strength as a player of the game. Your deeper ideals always depend upon viewing life in the light of larger unities than now appear, upon viewing yourself as a coworker with the universe for the attainment of what no present human game of action can now reveal. For this "radical empiricist" then present experience always points beyond itself to a realm that no human eye has yet seen—an empirical realm of course, but one that you have a right to interpret in terms of a faith that is itself active, but that is not merely worldly and athletic. The philosophy of action thus so imperfectly suggested by the few phrases that I have time to use, can best be interpreted, for the moment, by observing that the influence of Carlyle in many passages of this volume is as obvious as it is by our author independently reinterpreted and transformed. Imagine Carlyle transformed into a representative American thinker, trained as a naturalist, deeply versed in psychology, deprived of his disposition to hatred, open-minded towards

the interests of all sorts and conditions of men, still a hero worshiper, but one whose heroes could be found in the obscurest lovers of the ideal as easily as in the most renowned historical characters; let this transformed Carlyle preach the doctrine of the resolute spirit triumphant through creative action, defiant of every degree of mortal suffering. Let him proclaim "The Everlasting Yea" in the face of all the doubts of erring human opinion: and herewith you gain some general impression of the relations that exist between "Sartor Resartus" and "The Will to Believe."

The ethical maxims which are scattered through these pages voluntarily share much of the vagueness of our age of tentative ethical effort. But they certainly are not the maxims of an impressionist, of a romanticist, or of a partisan of merely worldly efficiency. They win their way through all such attitudes to something beyond—to a resolute interpretation of human life as an opportunity to cooperate with the superhuman and the divine. And they do this, in the author's opinion, not by destroying, but by fulfilling the purposes and methods of the sciences of experience themselves. Is not every scientific theory a conceptual reinterpretation of our fragmentary perceptions, an active reconstruction, to be tried in the service of a larger life? Is not our trust in a scientific theory itself an act of faith? Moreover, these ethical maxims are here governed, in James's exposition, by the repeated recognition of certain essentially absolute truths, truths that, despite his natural horror of absolutism, he here expounds with a finished dialectic skill that he himself, especially in his later polemic period, never seemed to prize at its full value. The need of active faith in the unseen and the superhuman he founds upon these simple and yet absolutely true principles, principles of the true dialectics of life: First, every great decision of practical life requires faith, and has irrevocable consequences, consequences that belong to the whole great world, and that therefore have endless possible importance. Secondly, since action and belief are thus inseparably bound together, our right to believe depends upon our right, as active beings, to make decisions. Thirdly, our duty to decide life's greater issues is determined by the absolute truth that, in critical cases, the will to be doubtful and not to decide, is itself a decision, and is hence no escape from our responsible moral position. And this our responsible position is a position that gives us our place in and for all future life. The world needs our deeds. We need to interpret the world in order to act. We have a right to interpret the universe so as to enable us to act at once decisively, courageously and with the sense of the inestimable preciousness and responsibility of the power to act.

In consequence of all these features of his ethical doctrine a wonderful sense of the deep seriousness and of the possibly divine significance of every deed is felt in James's every ethical counsel. Thus it is that while fully comprehending the American spirit which we have sketched, he at once expresses it and transforms it. He never loved Fichte; but there is much of the best of the ethical idealism of Fichte in "The Will to Believe." Many of you have enjoyed James's delightfully skilful polemic against Hegel, and against the external forms, phrases and appearances of the later constructive idealists. I have no wish here to attempt to comment upon that polemic; but I can assure you that I myself learned a great part of my own form of absolute idealism from the earliest expressions that James gave to the thoughts contained in "The Will to Believe." As

one of his latest works, "The Pluralistic Universe," still further showed, he himself was in spirit an ethical idealist to the core. Nor was he nearly so far in spirit even from Hegel as he supposed, guiltless as he was of Hegel's categories. Let a careful reading of the "Pluralistic Universe" make this fact manifest.

Meanwhile, what interests us is that, in "The Will to Believe," as well as in "The Pluralistic Universe," this beautifully manifold, appreciative and humane mind, at once adequately expressed, and, with true moral idealism transcended the caprices of recent American ethics. To this end he lavishly used the resources of the naturalist, of the humanist, and of the ethical dialectician. He saw the facts of human life as they are, and he resolutely lived beyond them into the realm of the spirit. He loved the concrete but he looked above towards the larger realm of universal life. He often made light of the abstract reason, but in his own plastic and active way he uttered some of the great words of the universal reason, and he has helped his people to understand and to put into practise these words.

I ask you to remember him then, not only as the great psychologist, the radical empiricist, the pragmatist, but as the interpreter of the ethical spirit of his time and of his people—the interpreter who has pointed the way beyond the trivialities which he so well understood and transcended towards that "Rule of Reason" which the prophetic maxim of our supreme court has just brought afresh to the attention of our people. That "Rule of Reason," when it comes, will not be a mere collection of abstractions. It will be, as James demanded, something concrete and practical. And it will indeed appeal to our faith as well as to our discursive logical processes. But it will express the transformed and enlightened American spirit as James already began to express it. Let him too be viewed as a prophet of the nation that is to be.

JOSIAH ROYCE

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

HOWELL'S RELIEF MAPS AND THE NATURALISTIC LAND MODEL

THE death of Edwin E. Howell removes one well known among those connected with earth studies in this country, who will be greatly missed.

As stated by Dr. G. K. Gilbert in the May 12th issue of SCIENCE, Howell was the pioneer for the United States in the modeling of relief maps. As his work is the most widely distributed and best known of any in American institutions and has greatly influenced the prevalent conception of the subject, a brief analysis of it may be of interest.

Howell made the best and most ornamental relief maps we have. They were true to the maps which were represented, and were finished and lettered in an exceptionally decorative style. Dr. Gilbert mentions that Howell's work "was not distinguished for its artistic quality." The use of the term "artistic" is frequently misleading. Howell's work certainly showed skillful craftsmanship and "finish." For many years he employed an expert whose lettering was the most elaborate to be found on relief-map work. Dr. Gilbert further states that the work was "realistic wherever the material from which he worked was full." In one instance where a relief containing a breakwater was made, an actual specimen of rock taken from the stone foundation was introduced; this was realism but not "naturalistic," both the scale of detail and the material were not in keeping with the rest of the work.

"Naturalistic" is the term applied to the truthful reproduction of natural topography as distinguished from the conventional or diagrammatic map-method. The most obvious difference in the two classes of work is that the naturalistic gives the appearance as