

SCIENCE

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 1915

THE FUNCTION AND TEST OF DEFINITION
AND METHOD IN PSYCHOLOGY¹

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AMID all of the discussion current in the last few years among psychologists the unprejudiced outside observer might think that we were a body of men professing to develop and teach a science who did not know what that science was to deal with and without any idea or with too many ideas as to the methods that should be followed in undertaking to develop our knowledge of the unknown or undetermined subject-matter. Psychology is at once the science of mind, the science of consciousness, the science of experience, the science of behavior. Psychology must be studied only by careful watching of the processes of the individual, by the individual himself; one who does not proceed in this way is no psychologist, no matter how valuable his work may be as physiology or biology or sociology. On the other hand, we are assured by just as devoted and well-recognized psychologists that psychology must deal only with the responses of the individual, with what can be seen from the outside, and that what the first man deals with really has no existence, or at best is entirely irrelevant to the responses, to anything that is of scientific interest. If we are to be taken at our own valuation we are either altogether unfit to carry on the task we have set ourselves or entirely unprepared for it.

As a matter of fact I presume this comes from the youth of the science, at least from taking a definition and formal statements

¹ Address of the Vice-president and Chairman of Section H—Anthropology and Psychology, Philadelphia, December 30, 1914.