

## SCIENCE:

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A RECENT ANALYSIS OF WILL.<sup>1</sup>

THE promise made by Professor Baldwin in the preface to his first "Handbook"<sup>2</sup> has been fulfilled. The expectation aroused by this promise has perhaps been more than gratified since in the "Psychology of Feeling and Will" we have the same rigorous scientific treatment which characterized the former volume, applied to subject matter which, for reasons now known to be suicidal, has been worked over for college text-books with far less care and satisfaction than the strictly intellectual operations. It must be a source of congratulation to teachers of psychology to know that we are now having given us year by year psychologies which deal with the stubborn complexities of mind from a standpoint that bids fair to give us soon, if it has not done so already, a veritable "New Psychology."

Taking the old method at its true worth and retaining the sum-total of valuable results it has given, it is still evident that the "natural science point of view" has been so fruitful in its construction of psychological data, has so modified old conceptions, has in fact so changed the whole face of psychological procedure, that nothing short of "New Psychology" can briefly characterize these consequences. The volumes of both James and Baldwin will, however, have their real value for teachers, not only as psychology, but as affording an ordered body of scientifically determined laws necessary for anything like fruitful philosophical construction. The data of philosophy must come from science as positive, and the scientific data given up by psychology are, it is clear, peculiarly valuable as a contribution to the conditions necessary for serious philosophizing. Rational interpretation, aided by "the judicious use of hypotheses," is necessary to complete the full survey of mind, but presupposes, if it is to be of genuine worth, previous empirical investigation. Upon such investigation is based "the possi-

bility of a psychology, which is not a metaphysics, nor even a philosophy."

Written under this conception is Professor Baldwin's "Handbook." It is replete, however, with latent suggestions which take one immediately over into the philosophical field. Such suggestions when formally stated are to be found in the small print, which immediately follows the strictly psychological analysis and discussion.

Peculiarly rich in suggestion for ethical construction has seemed to me the author's discussion of "Will," and I desire, in brief review, to dissect out of the body of the analysis the facts which have ultimate bearing on the question of "Freedom." For whether solvable or insolvable in any ultimate sense on psychological grounds every one must admit that the weapons of analysis whereby the complex problem of "Free-Will" may be reduced to intelligible form are in the hands of psychology. Even if we reach no satisfactory solution, it is at least a gain to know clearly what the elements of the problem are. It is natural enough, therefore, that with every attempt to throw new light on the underlying elements of volition, the old sore of freedom should be reopened. As long as philosophy has life, an acknowledged fundamental question cannot remain passively unsettled; philosophy cannot be held in check by external prohibition; it moves with an inner life of its own.

Sidgwick recognizes this in his return to the question of freedom,<sup>3</sup> claiming, as he does, that, although "complete mutual understanding will never be reached until we have reached complete confutation of fundamental errors," yet "a diminution of the amount of misunderstanding . . . especially on fundamental points," is an end in itself worth striving for. What Professor Baldwin's discussion has accomplished in the interests of this desideratum of diminished misunderstanding, let us see.

Chapters xii. and xiii. discuss, under the general title of the "Motor Aspects of Sensuous Feeling," first, "the motor consciousness; second, the 'stimuli,' to involuntary movement." As a fundamental law of the motor consciousness we have stated what is called the law of mental dynamogenesis, viz., "that every state of consciousness tends to realize itself in an appropriate muscular movement." The general conclusion reached on the reactive consciousness is that this "consciousness, *per se*, is simply consciousness of nervous reactions and memories of such reactions or of their elements. As far as there is a consciousness of self in reflex attention, it is an objective felt self rather than a subjective feeling active self. Whatever ground may be found subsequently for such an active executive self, we find no such ground here" (pp. 293-4). This conclusion is corroborated by a reference to certain well-known hypnotic phenomena in which power of choice is wanting and the consciousness of the patient becomes entirely reactive.

Stimuli to involuntary movement are next analyzed and discussed. "By stimulus is meant the affective experience of any kind which tends to issue in conscious motor reaction" (p. 295). Such stimuli fall under one or the other of two great classes: (1) organic, (2) extra organic. In this connection (p. 204) is found the differentiation of stimuli as impulsive or instinctive. Sensuous impulse is "the original tendency of consciousness to express itself in motor terms as far as this tendency exists apart from particular stimulations of sense" (p. 307). On the other hand, "instincts are original tendencies of consciousness to express itself in motor terms in response to definite but generally complex stimula-

<sup>1</sup> "Handbook of Psychology: Feeling and Will," by James Mark Baldwin. Henry Holt & Co., New York.

<sup>2</sup> "Senses and Intellect."

<sup>3</sup> *Mind*, October, 1889.