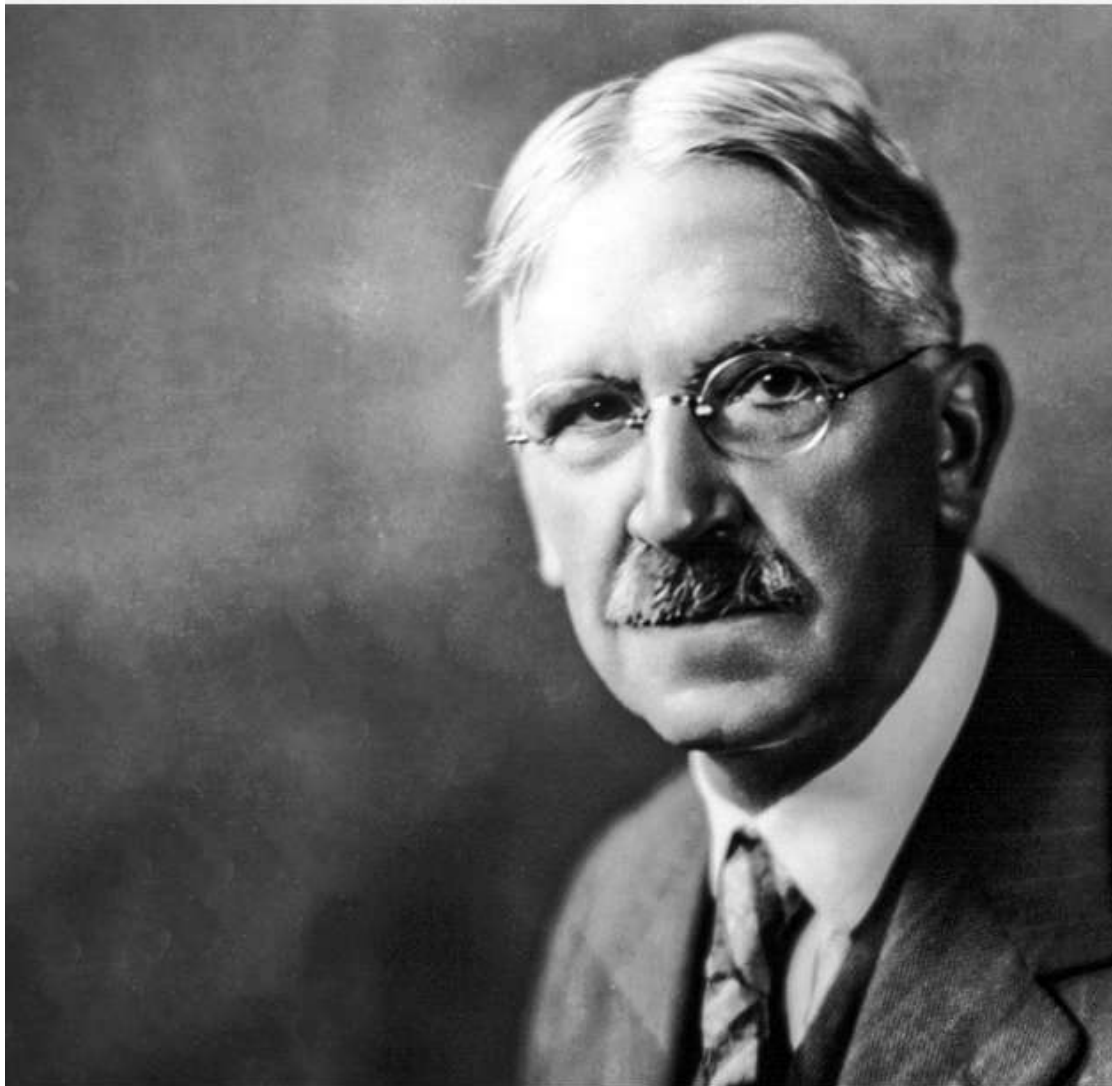




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**JOHN DEWEY**

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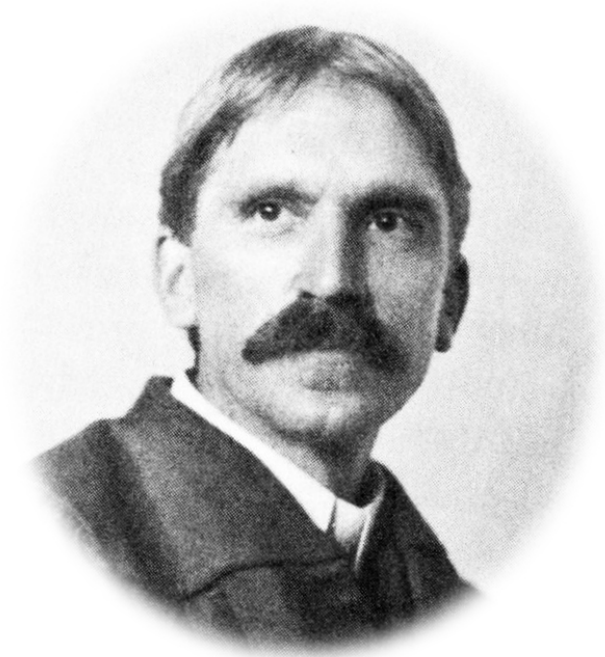
*The Delphi Classics Catalogue*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Dewey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'J' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'y'.

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Version 1

*The Complete Works of*

**JOHN DEWEY**



*By Delphi Classics, 2024*

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*Complete Works of John Dewey*



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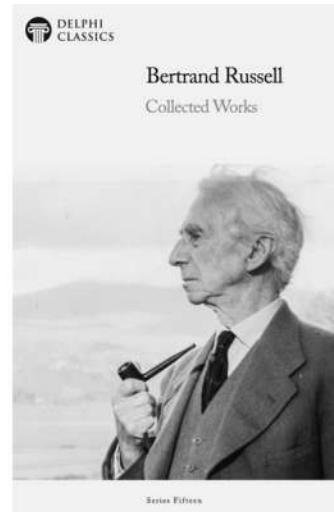
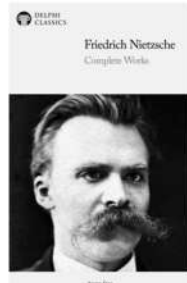
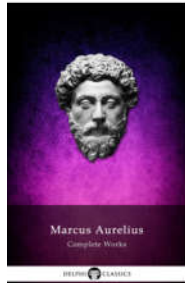
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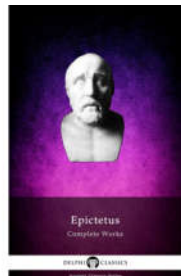
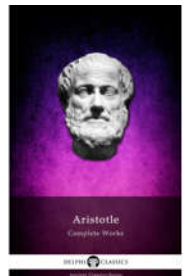
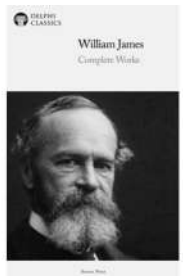
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# PHILOSOPHY



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## The Books



*Burlington, Vermont — Dewey's birthplace. This lithograph was produced a year before his birth in 1858.*

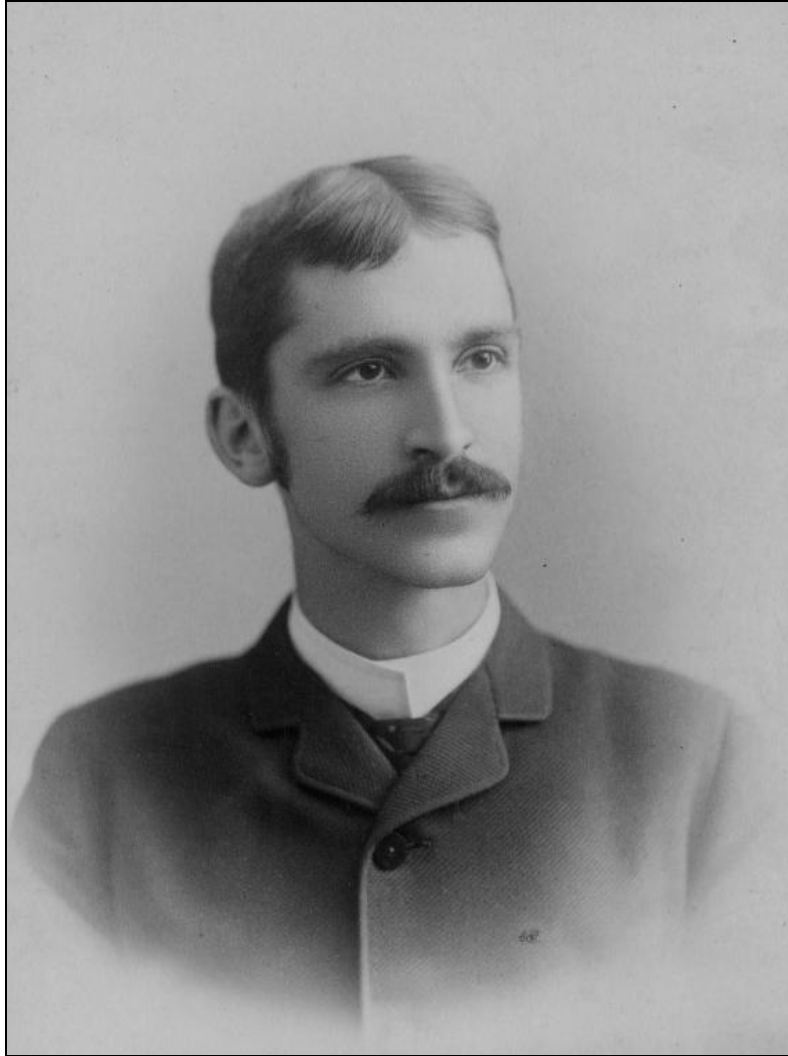


*Church Street, Burlington, as depicted on a 1907 postcard*





*Burlington in more recent times*



*Dewey as a young man*

## Psychology (1887)



*Psychology* was first published by Harper and Brothers in New York in 1887. Dewey revised the book over the next four years and released second and third editions reflecting his developing views and theories. The author was born into a family of four sons with modest means; his mother was a devoted and pious Christian and his father was a well-read man. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Vermont in 1879, Dewey taught at a high school in Oil City, Pennsylvania, for two years before enduring a brief and unhappy stint as a primary school teacher in the winter term of 1881 in Charlotte, Vermont. He soon abandoned school teaching to earn his graduate degrees at John Hopkins University after being encouraged by two of his articles appearing in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*.

H. A. P. Torrey, the philosophy professor at the University of Vermont, was an important early mentor to Dewey; he privately tutored his former student even after graduation. In the September of 1884, Dewey began teaching at the University of Michigan after one of his former professors, George S. Morris, helped him attain the position. It was during this period of lecturing that he released the first edition of *Psychology*, which he intended as a textbook about the subject. The work promotes psychology not only as an introduction to philosophy, but as a discipline or field of study that can be used to resolve some of the most challenging and disputed philosophical questions throughout the centuries.

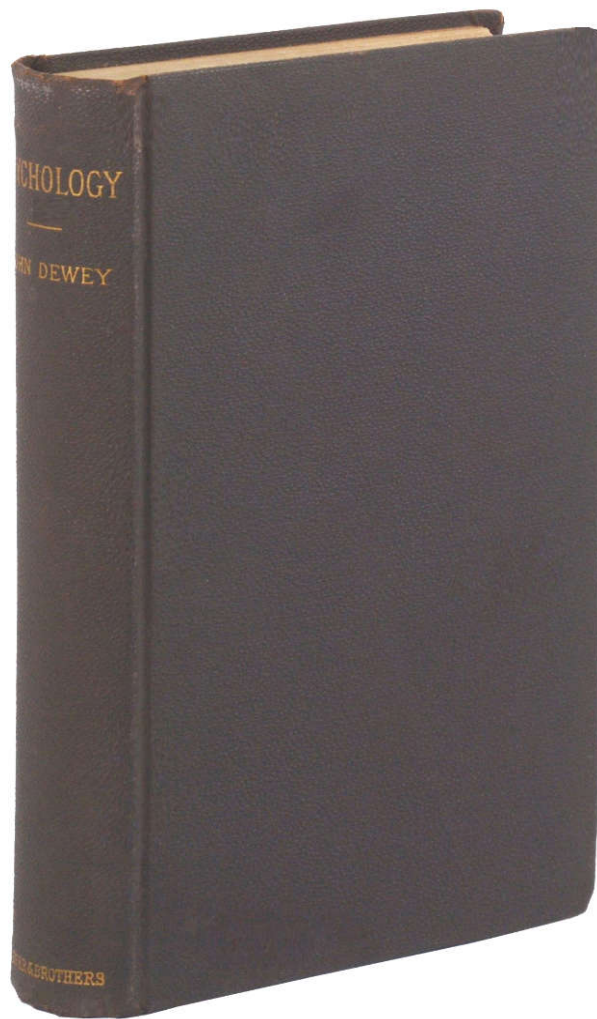


*H. A. P. Torrey was noted as a 'sound philosopher', as well as possessing a strong interest in Immanuel Kant.*



*University of Vermont, Dewey's alma mater, c. 1900*





*The first edition*

## CONTENTS

PREFACE.

CHAPTER I. THE SCIENCE AND METHOD OF PSYCHOLOGY.

CHAPTER II. THE MIND AND ITS MODES OF ACTIVITY.

### *PART I. KNOWLEDGE.*

CHAPTER III. ELEMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE.

CHAPTER IV. PROCESSES OF KNOWLEDGE.

CHAPTER V. STAGES OF KNOWLEDGE. — PERCEPTION.

CHAPTER VI. MEMORY.

CHAPTER VII. IMAGINATION.

CHAPTER VIII. THINKING.

CHAPTER IX. INTUITION.

### *PART II. FEELING.*

CHAPTER X. INTRODUCTION TO FEELING.

CHAPTER XI. SENSUOUS FEELING.

CHAPTER XII. FORMAL FEELING.

CHAPTER XIII. DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITATIVE FEELINGS.

CHAPTER XIV. INTELLECTUAL FEELINGS.

CHAPTER XV. ÆSTHETIC FEELING.

CHAPTER XVI. PERSONAL FEELING.

### *PART III. THE WILL*

CHAPTER XVII. SENSUOUS IMPULSES.

CHAPTER XVIII. DEVELOPMENT OF VOLITION.

CHAPTER XIX. PHYSICAL CONTROL.

CHAPTER XX. PRUDENTIAL CONTROL.

CHAPTER XXI. MORAL CONTROL.

CHAPTER XXII. WILL AS THE SOURCE OF IDEALS AND OF THEIR REALIZATION.

APPENDIX A.

APPENDIX B.

# PSYCHOLOGY

BY

JOHN DEWEY, Ph.D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

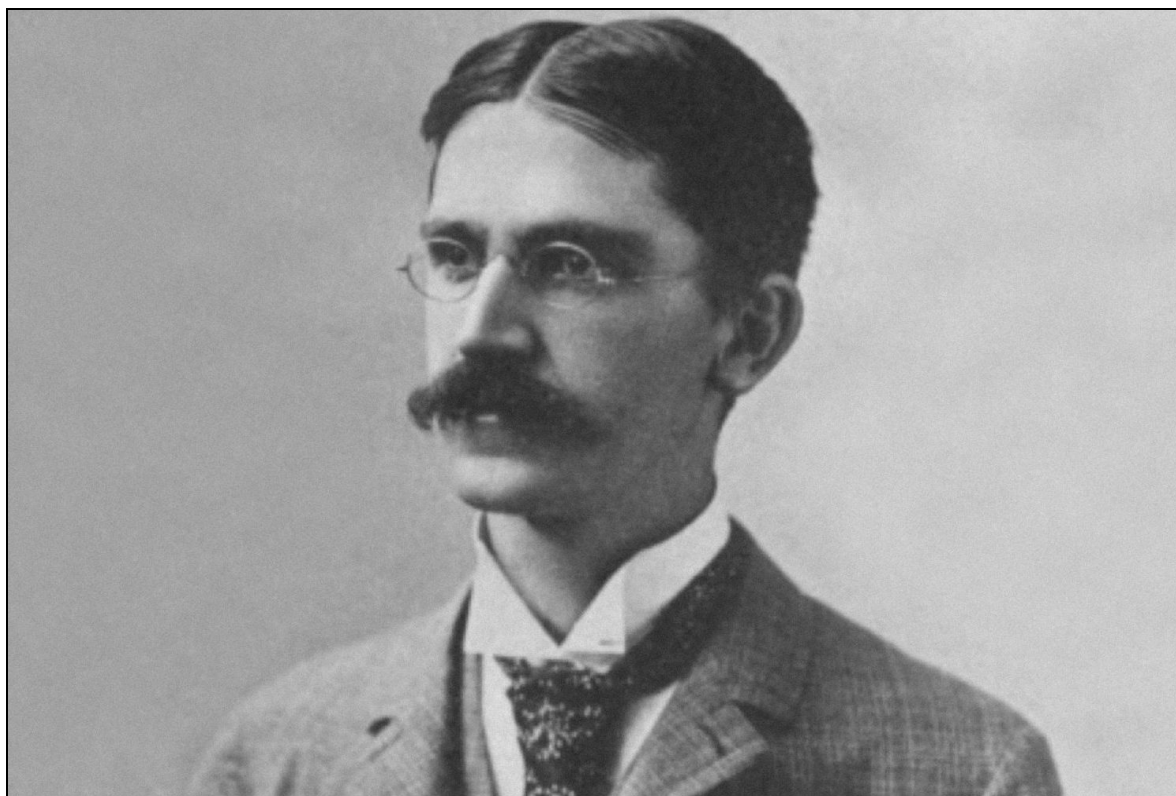
NEW YORK

HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE

1887

*The first edition's title page*





*Dewey, close to the time of publication*

## PREFACE.



ANY BOOK, WRITTEN as this one is, expressly for use in class-room instruction, must meet one question with which text-books outside the realm of philosophy are not harassed. What shall be its attitude towards philosophic principles? This is a question which may be suppressed, but cannot be avoided. The older works, indeed, were not so much troubled by it, for it is only recently that psychology has attained any independent standing. As long as psychology was largely a compound of logic, ethics, and metaphysics, the only thing possible was to serve this compound, mingled with extracts from the history of philosophy. And it must not be forgotten that such a course had one decided advantage: it made psychology a good introduction to the remaining studies of the philosophic curriculum. But at present, aside from the fact that there is already an abundance of text-books of this style, which it were idle to increase, psychology seems deserving of a treatment on its own account.

On the other hand, there are books which attempt to leave behind all purely philosophic considerations, and confine themselves to the facts of scientific psychology. Such books certainly have the advantage of abandoning — or, at least, of the opportunity of abandoning — a mass of material which has no part nor lot in psychology, and which should long ago have been relegated to the history of metaphysics. But one can hardly avoid raising the question whether such surrender of philosophic principles be possible. No writer can create nor recreate his material, and is it quite likely that the philosophic implications embedded in the very heart of psychology are not got rid of when they are kept out of sight. Some opinion regarding the nature of the mind and its relations to reality will show itself on almost every page, and the fact that this opinion is introduced without the conscious intention of the writer may serve to confuse both the author and his reader.

But to me one other consideration seems decisive against such a course. It does not have due reference to the historic conditions of our instruction. One essential element in the situation is that it is the custom of our colleges to make psychology the path by which to enter the fields of philosophy.

How, then, shall we unite the advantages of each class of text-books? That is to say, how shall we make our psychology scientific and up to the times, free from metaphysics — which, however good in its place, is out of place in a psychology — and at the same time make it an introduction to philosophy in general? While I cannot hope to have succeeded in presenting a psychology which shall satisfactorily answer this question, it does appear to me an advantage to have kept this question in mind, and to have written with reference to it. I have accordingly endeavored to avoid all material not strictly psychological, and to reflect the investigations of scientific specialists in this branch; but I have also endeavored to arrange the material in such a way as to lead naturally and easily to the problems which the student will meet in his further studies, to suggest the principles along which they shall find their solutions, and, above all, to develop the philosophic spirit. I am sure that there is a way of raising questions, and of looking at them, which is philosophic; a way which the beginner can find more easily in psychology than elsewhere, and which, when found, is the best possible introduction to all specific philosophic questions. The following pages are the author's attempt to help the student upon this way.

# CHAPTER I. THE SCIENCE AND METHOD OF PSYCHOLOGY.

## § 1. *The Subject-matter of Psychology.*



*DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY:* *Psychology is the Science of the Facts or Phenomena of Self* — This definition cannot be expected to give, at the outset, a clear and complete notion of what the science deals with, for the reason that it is the business of psychology to clear up and develop what is meant by facts of self. Other words, however, may be used to bring out the meaning somewhat. *Ego* is a term used to express the fact that self has the power of recognizing itself as I, or a separate existence or personality. *Mind* is also a term used, and suggests especially the fact that self is *intelligent*. *Soul* is a term which calls to mind the distinction of the self from the body, and yet its connection with it. *Psychical* is an adjective used to designate the facts of self, and suggests the contrast with physical phenomena, which exist externally. *Subject* is often used, and expresses the fact that the self *lies under* and holds together all feelings, purposes, and ideas; and serves to differentiate the self from the object — that which lies over against self. *Spirit* is a term used, especially in connection with the higher activities of self, and calls to mind its distinction from matter and mechanical modes of action.

*Fundamental Characteristic of Self.* — This is the fact of *consciousness*. The self not only exists, but it knows that it exists; psychical phenomena are not only facts, but they are facts of consciousness. A stick, a stone, exists and undergoes changes; that is, has experiences. But it is aware neither of its existence nor of these changes. It does not, in short, exist *for itself*. It exists only *for* some consciousness. Consequently the stone has no self. But the soul not only is, and changes, but it knows that it is, and what these experiences are which it passes through. *It exists for itself*. That is to say, it is a self. What distinguishes the facts of psychology from the facts of every other science is, accordingly, that they are *conscious* facts.

*Consciousness.* — Consciousness can neither be defined nor described. We can define or describe anything only by the employment of consciousness. It is presupposed, accordingly, in all definition; and all attempts to define it must move in a circle. It cannot be defined by discriminating it from the unconscious, for this either is not known at all, or else is known only as it exists for consciousness. Consciousness is necessary for the definition of what in itself is unconscious. Psychology, accordingly, can study only the various *forms* of consciousness, showing the *conditions* under which they arise.

*The Self or Individual.* — We have seen that the peculiar characteristic of the facts of self is that they are conscious, or exist for themselves. This implies further that the self is individual, and all the facts of self are individual facts. They are unique in this. A fact of physics, or of chemistry, for the very reason that it does not exist for itself, exists for anybody or everybody who wishes to observe it. It is a fact which can be known as directly and immediately by one as by another. It is universal, in short. Now, a fact of psychology does not thus lie open to the observation of all. It is directly and immediately known only to the self which experiences it. It is a fact of *my* or *your* consciousness, and only of mine or yours.

Communication of an Individual State. — It may be communicated to others, but the first step in this communication is changing it from a psychical fact to a physical fact. It must be expressed through non-conscious media — the appearance of the face, or the use of sounds. These are purely external. They are no longer individual facts. The next step in the communication is for some other individual to translate this expression, or these sounds, into his own consciousness. He must make them part of himself before he knows what they are. One individual never knows directly what is in the self of another; he knows it only so far as he is able to reproduce it in his own self. The fact of the existence of self or of consciousness is, accordingly, a unique individual fact. Psychology deals with the individual, or self, while all other sciences, as mathematics, chemistry, biology, etc., deal with facts which are universal, and are not facts of self, but facts presented to the selves or minds which know them.

*Relation of Psychology to Other Sciences.* — Psychology holds, therefore, a twofold relation to all other sciences. On the one hand, it is co-ordinated with other sciences, as simply having a different and higher subject-matter than they. The student may begin with bodies most remote from himself, in the science of astronomy. He may then study the globe upon which he lives, in geography, geology, etc. He may then study the living beings upon it, botany, zoology, etc. Finally he may come to his own body, and study human physiology. Leaving his body, he may then study his own self. Such a study is psychology. Thus considered, psychology is evidently simply one science among others.

*Psychology a Central Science.* — But this overlooks one aspect of the case. All the other sciences deal only with facts or events which are known; but the fact of *knowledge* thus involved in all of them no one of them has said anything about. It has treated the facts simply as *existent* facts, while they are also *known* facts. But knowledge implies reference to the self or mind. Knowing is an intellectual process, involving psychical laws. It is an activity which the self experiences. A certain *individual* activity has been accordingly presupposed in all the *universal* facts of physical science. These facts are all facts known by some mind, and hence fall, in some way, within the sphere of psychology. This science is accordingly something more than one science by the side of others; it is a central science, for its *subject-matter*, knowledge, is involved in them all.

*The Universal Factor in Psychology.* — It will be seen, therefore, that psychology involves a *universal* element within it, as well as the individual factor previously mentioned. Its subject-matter, or its *content*, is involved in *all* the sciences. Furthermore, it is open to *all* intelligences. This may be illustrated in case of both knowledge and volition. For example: I know that there exists a table before me. This is a fact of *my* knowledge, of my consciousness, and hence is individual. But it is also a possible fact for all intelligences whatever. The thing known is just as requisite for knowledge as the knowing; but the thing known is such for all mind whatever. It is, therefore, universal in its nature. While knowledge, therefore, as to its *form* is individual, as to its *content* it is universal. Knowledge may be defined as the process by which some universal element — that is, element which is in possible relation to all intelligences — is given individual form, or existence in a consciousness. Knowledge is not an individual possession. Any consciousness which in both form and content is individual, or peculiar to some one individual, is not knowledge. To obtain knowledge, the individual must get rid of the features which are peculiar to him, and conform to the conditions of universal intelligence. The realization of this process, however, must occur in an *individual*.

Illustration in Action. — Volition, or action, also has these two sides. The content of every act that I can perform already exists, i. e., is universal. But it has no existence for consciousness, does not come within the range of psychology, until *I*, or some *self*, perform the act, and thus give it an individual existence. It makes no difference whether the act be to write a sentence or tell the truth. In one case the pen, the ink, the paper, the hand with its muscles, and the laws of physical action which control writing already exist, and all I can do is to give to these separate universal existences an *individual* existence by reproducing them in my consciousness through an act of my own. In the other case the essence of the truth already exists, and all the self can do is to make it its own. It can give it individual *form* by reproducing this universal existence in consciousness or self.

*Further Definition of Psychology.* — Our original definition of psychology may now be expanded. Psychology is the science of the reproduction of some universal content or existence, whether of knowledge or of action, in the form of individual, unsharable consciousness. This individual consciousness, considered by itself, without relation to its content, always exists in the form of *feeling*; and hence it may be said that the reproduction always occurs in the medium of feeling. Our study of the self will, therefore, fall under the three heads of Knowledge, Will, and Feeling. Something more about the nature of each of these and their relations to each other will be given in the next chapter.

## § 2. Method of Psychology.

*Need of Method.* — The subject-matter of psychology is the facts of self, or the phenomena of consciousness. These facts, however, do not constitute science until they have been systematically collected and ordered with reference to principles, so that they may be comprehended in their relations to each other, that is to say, explained. The proper way of getting at, classifying, and explaining the facts introduces us to the consideration of the proper *method* of philosophy.

*Method of Introspection.* — In the first place, it is evident that, since the facts with which psychology has to do are those of consciousness, the study of consciousness itself must be the main source of knowledge of the facts. Just as the facts with which the physical sciences begin are those phenomena which are present to the senses — falling bodies, lightning, rocks, acids, trees, etc. — so psychical science must begin with the facts made known in consciousness. The study of conscious facts with a view to ascertaining their character is called *introspection*. This must not be considered a special power of the mind. It is only the general power of knowing which the mind has, directed reflectively and intentionally upon a certain set of facts. It is also called internal perception; the observation of the nature and course of ideas as they come and go, corresponding to external perception, or the observation of facts and events before the senses. This method of observation of facts of consciousness must *ultimately* be the sole source of the *material*, of psychology.

*Defects of Introspection.* — Introspection can never become *scientific* observation, however, for the latter means the direction of attention to certain facts according to some end or purpose. In observation of physical phenomena the things attended to remain entirely indifferent to and unchanged by the process of observation. In psychical events this is not so. The very act of attending to a psychical state changes its character, so that we observe, not what we meant to observe, but a comparatively artificial product. Since the mind's supply of energy is limited, it may often occur that the very effort of attention will absorb most of it, and the facts which we wished to

observe will vanish, and nothing remain but the tension of the mind. The rule for introspection must be, therefore, to use for the most part only accidental phenomena, such as are not expected, but are noticed in an incidental way.

It follows, therefore, that memory must be utilized rather than direct conscious perception; this remove from direct knowledge, however, renders the results subject to all the uncertainties of memory. It follows, also, that the most voluntary and distinct facts of mind will be most open to introspection, and that the more subtle and involuntary phenomena will necessarily either escape it or be transformed.

*Failure as Explanatory Method.* — *So far we have dealt with introspection merely as giving us the facts of the science, and have seen that even here it fails. But its most conspicuous failure as method is when it is employed to account for or explain these facts. The facts can be explained only as they are related to each other, or reduced to more fundamental unities. How, introspection cannot show us these relations or unities.*

It is necessarily limited to certain changing, extremely transitory phenomena, a succession of perceptions, ideas, desires, emotions, etc. The laws under which these facts come, the more fundamental activities which connect them, cannot be immediately perceived. Introspection will not even enable us to *classify* facts of consciousness. To classify them we must go beyond the present observed state and compare it with others which are no longer actually present. We do not gain much if we merely add memory to direct observation, and then compare; for classification requires a principle for its basis, and neither observation nor memory can supply this. Introspection, as a method of classification and explanation, has been noted rather as a source of illusions and deceptions in psychology than as the source of scientific comprehension. Introspection must, therefore, be carefully distinguished from self-knowledge. Knowledge of self is the whole sphere of intelligence or mind; introspection is the direction of mind in one limited channel, to the observation of particular states.

*Experimental.* — Amid these difficulties we can have recourse, first, to the *experimental* method. We cannot experiment directly with facts of consciousness, for the condition of experimentation — arbitrary variation for the sake of reaching some end, or eliminating some factor, or introducing some other to test its effects, together with the possibility of measuring the cause eliminated or introduced and the result occasioned — are not possible. But we can experiment, indirectly, through the connection of the soul with the body. The physical connections of the soul — that is, its relation to sense-organs and to the muscular system — are under our control, and can be experimented with, and thus, indirectly, changes may be introduced into consciousness. This is the department of *psycho-physics*. It differs from physiology in that the latter investigates only the physical processes of life, while psycho-physics makes use of these processes for the sake of investigating psychical states.

*Object of Experimental Method.* — Its object, as stated by Wundt, is to enable us to get results concerning the origin, composition, and temporal succession of psychical occurrences. Although this method has been employed but a short time, it has already yielded ample results in the spheres, especially, of the composition and relations of sensations, the nature of attention, and the time occupied by various mental processes. It will be noticed, therefore, that what is ordinarily called physiological psychology cannot aid psychology directly; the mere knowledge of all the functions of the brain and nerves does not help the science, except so far as it occasions a more penetrating psychological analysis, and thus supplements the deficiencies of introspection.

*Comparative Method.* — Even such results, however, are not complete. In the first place, the range of the application of this method is limited to those psychical events which have such connection with physical processes that they can be changed by changing the latter. And, in the second place, it does not enable us to get beyond the individual mind. There may be much in any one individual's consciousness which is more or less peculiar and eccentric. Psychology must concern itself rather with the *normal* mind — with consciousness in its universal nature. Again, the methods already mentioned give us little knowledge concerning the laws of mental *growth* or development, the laws by which the mind passes from imperfect stages to more complete. This important branch of the study, called *genetic* psychology, is, for the most part, untouched either by the introspective or experimental methods. Both of these deficiencies are supplemented by the *comparative* method.

*Forms of the Comparative Method.* — Mind, as existing in the average human adult, may be compared with the consciousness (1) of animals, (2) of children in various stages, (3) of defective and disordered minds, (4) of mind as it appears in the various conditions of race, nationality, etc. The study of animal psychology is of use, especially in showing us the nature of the mechanical and automatic activities of intelligence, which are, in the human consciousness, apt to be kept out of sight by the more voluntary states. The instinctive side of mind has been studied mostly in animal life. The psychology of infants is of especial importance to us in connection with the origin and genetic connection of psychical activities. The study of minds which are defective through lack of some organ, as sight or hearing, serves to show us what elements of psychical life are due to these organs, while disordered or insane minds we may almost regard as psychical experiments performed by nature. The study of such cases shows the conditions of normal action, and the effects produced if some one of these conditions is altered or if the harmony of various elements is disturbed. The study of consciousness as it appears in various races, tribes, and nations extends that idea of mind to which we would be limited through the introspective study of our own minds, even if supplemented by observation of the manifestations of those about us.

*Objective Method.* — The broadest and most fundamental method of correcting and extending the results of introspection, and of interpreting these results, so as to refer them to their laws, is the study of the objective manifestations of mind. Mind has not remained a passive spectator of the universe, but has produced and is producing certain results. These results are objective, can be studied as all objective historical facts may be, and are permanent. They are the most fixed, certain, and universal signs to us of the way in which mind works. Such objective manifestations of mind are, in the realm of intelligence, phenomena like language and science; in that of will, social and political institutions; in that of feeling, art; in that of the whole self, religion. Philology, the logic of science, history, sociology, etc., study these various departments as objective, and endeavor to trace the relations which connect their phenomena. But none of these sciences takes into account the fact that science, religion, art, etc., are all of them products of the mind or self, working itself out according to its own laws, and that, therefore, in studying them we are only studying the fundamental nature of the conscious self. It is in these wide departments of human knowledge, activity, and creation that we learn most about the self, and it is through their investigation that we find most clearly revealed the laws of its activities.

*Interpretation in Self-consciousness.* — It must be borne in mind, however, that in studying psychological facts by any or all of these methods, the ultimate appeal is to self-consciousness. None of these facts mean anything until they are thus interpreted.

As objective facts, they are not material of psychology, they are still universal, and must be interpreted into *individual* terms. What, for example, would language mean to an individual who did not have the power of himself reproducing the language? It would be simply a combination of uncouth sounds, and would teach him nothing regarding mind. The scowl of anger or the bent knees of devotion have no significance to one who is not himself capable of anger or of prayer. The psychical phenomena of infancy or of the insane would teach us nothing, because they would be nothing to us, if we did not have the power of putting ourselves into these states in imagination, at least, and thus seeing what they are like.

So the phenomena made known in physiological psychology, would have no value whatever for the science of psychology, if they were not interpretable into facts of consciousness. As physiological facts they are of no avail, for they tell us only about certain objective processes. These various methods, accordingly, are not so much a departure from self-consciousness, as a method of extending self-consciousness and making it wider and more general. They are methods, in short, of elevating us above what is purely contingent and accidental in self-consciousness, and revealing to us what in it is permanent and essential; what, therefore, is the subject-matter of psychology. It is with the true and essential self that psychology deals in order to ascertain its facts and explain them by showing their connections with each other.



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