# THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF

# WILLIAM JAMES

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Of

Dr. William P. Burris

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John Wesley Humphreys, A.B., A.M., B.D.

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# Chapter I

## INTRODUCTION

It is nearly eighteen years since the death of William James. In the meantime many changes have taken place, not only in the United States, but throughout the world. These changes are not merely the easily transitional ones connected with life at any time. Some of the changes have been saltatory, even though we may recognize their germs in pre-twentieth century events. It seems almost superfluous to mention the World War, and yet how it has changed our outlook, our ideas, in some cases our very philosophy of life!

Life to-day seems in much more of a flux than it seemed a quarter-century ago. The old stabilities seem to be gone; - at least with many people. The moorings are loose, the anchors fail to grip the bottom. Religious faith is often weak and not seldom wanting. The question, "Where do we go from here?" is one that arises on all sides, and it will not down.

Quite naturally the educational world reflects the general unrest prevalent in all other phases of life. We are no longer satisfied with the older definitions.

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Our rights as individuals having been progressively emphasized for several centuries, it was perhaps inevitable that, in the course of time, we should reach that point where everything is being questioned and reevaluated, and panaceas offered. In educational matters we have prophets of all descriptions, some crying, "Lo, here!" others, "Lo, there!" and still others vocable enough but plainly wandering in the quagmires of conflicting interests and philosophies.

It is not only in the matter of changing emphases that education is involved. Our educational problems have become increasingly complex because of the greater demands made upon education. William H. Kilpatrick, writing on "Tendencies in Educational Philosophy," in a volume titled Twenty-five Years of American Education, [1] says:

"The life of our people has in this period (the twenty-five year period from 1898 to 1923) been seen to make from varying angles many opposed demands upon education. To act at any time in the face of such demands and with due consideration of all the complex results has meant the kind of thought we have called philosophizing, and this has been true whether the needed deliberation has been made by philosopher or by administrator. The more immediate demands have often involved deeper demands. So that education has been called on to face problems that involved the bases of all associate life and action. The answers that have been made to these questions have naturally been various, ."

Evidently we do need a guiding hand. Life should

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[1] P.85-86

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be interpreted for each new generation. But the new interpretation will not necessarily reject all that belonged to the old. Indeed, the newer understanding may be just the old one in new dress, with the central meaning unimpaired. As a matter of fact, it may well be questioned whether any one is even incipiently qualified to give us a meaning of life who fails to see the common core, - and this the major portion, too, - running through the whole history of the race.

There is no need in these pages to enter into the controversy regarding the relative worth of science and philosophy. Each needs to reinforce the other. A philosophy that fails to take into consideration all the facts of science cannot meet the demands of this century. But, on the other hand, science in and of itself cannot furnish aims and ideals. It can and does take the facts, bring them to light, enumerate and classify them, interpret them. But if we are looking for the ultimate "Why?" of life, we must perforce turn to philosophy. It may prove inadequate. It will have to be revamped perhaps as new scientific facts emerge. But it, in my judgment, remains the court of last resort.

To solve our educational problems, we turn, then, to both science and philosophy. But as the problems of education are analogous to those of life in general, we must, I think, pay the greater homage to philosophy, never

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forgetting for an instant the debt of philosophy to science and the constant interplay of the two.

It is but natural that, in our effort to untangle these major problems of education, we should turn for help to all who seem to have anything of promise. Hence our numerous panaceas. Kilpatrick, continuing his statement previously quoted, to the effect that there have naturally been many answers made, in the period in question, says: "But during the period under discussion there has been in this field an unmistakable trend. In this movement the most influential leaders have been William James and John Dewey . . . . in the philosophy of education." [1]

This paper proposes, then, that we shall pause long enough in our quest for the "fountain of eternal youth" in education to look backward, and in perspective to study the life and teachings of one who justly lays claim to being both scientist and philosopher, and also educator. Such a study of William James ought to prove of great value to all educators.

Did William James have a philosophy of education? The following pages will attempt to answer that question, and, if the answer be in the affirmative, to show what that philosophy was. James did not leave any one book in which is embodied a fully-rounded educational philosophy. But from his numerous writings one should be able

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p.86

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to extract and deduce such a philosophy. The aim of this paper, then, shall be to ascertain the educational philosophy of William James.

In so doing, I shall try, as much as possible, consistent with the length of the essay, to let William James speak for himself. In doing this I shall follow the method of Captain Howard V. Knox, in his The Philosophy of William James: "I felt," says Mr. Knox, "that James was so supremely excellent a writer that a summary of his philosophy would be best given as far as possible in his own incomparable language. I have accordingly aimed largely at effective selection and at stringing together his own expositions of his own most important doctrines, with a minimum of explanatory comment." [1] This method, writes a reviewer in The Hibbert Journal, [2] is the only right method of presenting James's philosophy.

The reader will be prepared, therefore, for numerous quotations. Furthermore, as the aim shall be limited to the ascertainment of what constituted James's educational philosophy, the facts will be presented with a minimum of personal criticism, the reader himself thus being allowed the privilege of drawing his own conclusions and making his own interpretations. Some philosophers' educational philosophy is given forth ex-

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1 See Preface.
2 April, 1915, Vol. 13, p.677.

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plicitly in certain works. Such, for example, are Plato's *Republic*, Rousseau's *Emile*, Davidson's *Education as World-Building*. As has been stated already, William James left no one book containing anything at all like a fully-rounded educational philosophy. The task of the present writer, then, in making the necessary extracts and deductions for the formulation of such a philosophy is sufficiently large and lengthy in scope as to preclude any adequate critical evaluation of the philosophy after it has been thus abstracted.

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Chapter II

## WILLIAM JAMES THE MAN

"Among those who have earned the name of philosopher there is none," writes L. P. Jacks, referring to William James, "whose philosophy is a more sincere and complete expression of his own personality . . . His philosophy is, in fact, himself writ large. This in a sense is true of all philosophers, though they are not always aware of it; but James knew it and accepted it as one of his guides to the meaning of Truth." [1]

Similar expressions have been made by others. We shall, therefore, take the time to acquaint ourselves with the personality of the man who is the object of our study. In so doing we shall, of course, refer to some of the main events in his life; but no attempt will be made to give a full biographical record.

William James was born in New York City on January 11, 1842, the eldest son of Henry James of Boston, and of Mary Walsh of New York City.

The father was a Swedenborgian mystic, a theologian,

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1 "William James and His Letters," The Atlantic Monthly, Bol. 128, August, 1921, p.197.

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a writer, a man of books. He was on intimate terms with Emerson, on this side, and with Carlyle, on the other side, of the Atlantic. He combined the career of a literary man with that of a philosopher.[1] He "was a religious prophet and genius, if ever prophet and genius there were."[2] As a young man he graduated, in 1830, from Union College, Schenectady. Five years later he entered Princeton Theological Seminary. "By the time he had completed two years of his Seminary course, his discontent with the orthodox dispensation was no longer to be doubted. He left Princeton, and the truth seems to be that he had already conceived some measure of the antipathy to all ecclesiasticisms which he expressed with abounding scorn and irony throughout all his later years."[3]

Much has been written, on various occasions, about Henry James the elder. Some delightful glimpses of him are given in the *Letters of William James*,[4] edited by William James's son. "There was nothing conventional, prim, or parson-like"[5] about him. The following incident exemplifies this very strikingly:

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[1] Everett Dean Martin: *Psychology*, p.30.
[2] *Letters of William James*, Vol. I, p.13.
[3] *Letters of William James*, Vol. I, p.8.
[4] The Atlantic Monthly Press, Boston, 1920.
[5] *Letters of William James*, Vol. I, p.13.

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"A week before Father died," writes his daughter Alice, "I asked him one day whether he had thought what he should like to have done about his funeral. He was immediately very much interested, not having apparently thought of it before; he reflected for some time, and then said with the greatest solemnity and looking so majestic: 'Tell him to say only this: "Here lies a man, who has thought all his life that the ceremonies attending birth, marriage and death were all damned non-sense." Don't let him say a word more!'"[1]

Professor George Santayana describes the father as "one of those somewhat obscure sages whom early America produced: mystics of independent mind, hermits in the desert of business, and heretics in the churches. They were intense individualists, full of veneration for the free souls of their children, and convinced that every one should paddle his own canoe, especially on the high seas."[2]

William James resembled his father in many ways.[3] "There is no doubt that heredity and paternal example have counted for much in the literary style and in the temperament of the son, as well as in the fundamental inspiration of his philosophy. It is not that he has preserved intact any of the theological ideas of his father, rather the contrary; but the dominant note has remained, which is perhaps characterized best by the

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1 Ibid, p.16.
2 Character and Opinion in the United States, p.64
3 Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.10.

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word serious." [1] But we have already read enough to see that there was something more in the father than gravity. Serious he was, but it was the kind of seriousness that had a twinkle in the eye, and the quick apprehension of the humorous. William James likewise combined this "gaiety and gravity, keen thought and great depth of feeling with a turn for quip and jest." [2]

Another writer, commenting on William James's debt to his father, says: "James was born a philosopher; philosophy was in the blood and in the very air of the household. There is no better instance of the heredity of genius and of predestination to a career." [3]

It is clearly seen that William James's boyhood environment was of a highly intellectual kind. "The intellectual life was not an extraneous thing to him but almost identical with the adventure of living itself. It is this spirit of adventure which we always meet in James. Thinking was never for him the dead and formal thing that it is for most people." [4]

The religious training to which William James was subjected was not that of the orthodox kind. And yet

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[1] Th. Flournoy: The Philosophy of William James, p.14.
[2] Emile Boutroux: William James, p.3 ff.
[3] John Macy: The Critical Game, p.180.
[4] Everett Dean Martin: Psychology, p.30.

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it was religious, nevertheless. Henry James the novelist, brother of William James, in writing of the early religious training in the home of the two boys, says:

"It is not too much to say, I think, that our religious education, so far as we had any, consisted wholly in that loose yet enlightening impression: I say so far as we had any in spite of my very definitely holding that it would absolutely not have been possible to us, in the measure of our sensibility, to breathe more the air of that reference to an order of goodness and power greater than any this world by itself can show which we understand as the religious spirit. Wondrous to me, as I consider again, that my father's possession of this spirit, in a degree that made it more deeply one with his life than I can conceive another or a different case of its being, should have been unaccompanied with a single one of the outward or formal, the theological, devotional, ritual, or even implicitly pietistic signs by which we usually know it. The fact of course was that his religion was nothing if not a philosophy, extraordinarily complex and worked out and original, intensely personal as an exposition, yet not only susceptible of application, but clamorous for it, to the whole field of consciousness, nature and society, history, knowledge, all human relations and questions, every pulse of the process of our destiny." [1]

With regard to that element of mysticism in the father to which reference has already been made, William James, early saturating himself with the Swedenborgian spirit, [2] "grew up believing that the powers of that admirable man ( his father ) had been hindered in efficiency, if not in growth, by a mystical idealism. He came, therefore, to dread such blinding beliefs for

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[1] Notes of a Son and Brother, p.163-164.

[2] Emile Boutroux: William James, p.4.

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himself." [1] This reaction against Swedenborgianism helps to explain a great deal of William James's later thought. More will be said regarding James's religious beliefs in a later chapter.

Interesting incidents in the early life of William James are recorded by his brother Henry, in the two volumes titled, respectively, A Small Boy and Others, [2] and Notes of a Son and Brother. [3] The father was restless, this restlessness resulting in changes of residence from America to Europe and back again. It is suggested, however, that "clearly there was profit for him ( William James ) also in the restlessness which governed his father's movements and which threw the boy into quickening collision with places, people, and ideas at a rate at which such contacts are not vouchsafed to many schoolboys." [4] "He began young to be a wide reader; soon he became a wide reader in three languages. Above all, he was encouraged early to trust his own impulse and pursue his own bent." [5]

The effect of this cosmopolitanism upon the James family surely could not have been inconsiderable. In his later life, as we shall see, William James made

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1 "William James," George Herbert Palmer. Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 29, Sept., 1920, p.33.
2 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1913, 419 pages.
3 Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1914, 515 pages.
4 Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.21.
5 Ibid., p.24.

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numerous trips to Europe; and his brother Henry actually expatriated himself and became a British subject. William, However, always remained loyal to the United States. But his views were no narrow, provincial ones..[1]

While in London and Paris, in his early teens, William was instructed by special tutors. In 1857-8 he attended the college of Boulogne-sur-Mer. From there he went, in 1859-60, to the University of Geneva. He began to study drawing in Paris, and in 1860-1, having returned to the United States, he studied painting at Newport, Rhode Island, in the studio of William Hunt. But before the year 1861 came to a close James "had decided not to be a painter at all. Thereafter, what was remarkable was just that he let so genuine a talent remain completely neglected." [2]

At this place we had better stop long enough to say a word or two regarding William James's physical condition. As a boy his health was not of the robust kind. There were certain weaknesses which served as a thorn in the flesh to him all during his life. It became necessary for him to pause in his academic duties from time to time to rest for rather long periods of time. It was this physical frailty which prevented him from

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[1] See Ralph Barton Perry: Present Philosophical Tendencies, p.378.
[2] Ibid., p.24.

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taking any part in the war between the States that began in 1861.

In this same year that the civil strife began James, after definitely deciding to turn his back upon painting as a career, entered the Lawrence Scientific School at Harvard. Here, for two years, he studied anatomy and chemistry. He was, at the time of beginning his work, nineteen years of age. During the first winter at the Scientific School his physical and nervous frailty was such as to bring itself to the notice of President Eliot. In 1863 James entered the Harvard Medical School.

At this time Professor Louis Agassiz was at Harvard. Quite unlike James in the matter of meticulously gathering and classifying zoological specimens, Agassiz nevertheless exerted a wonderful influence upon William James. It was under Agassiz that James studied natural science. Flournoy, in his _The Philosophy of William James_,[1] mentioning first the influence of William James's father upon our philosopher with regard to the note of the seriousness of life, states that the second important influence upon William James at least in his earlier years, was that of the illustrious zoologist Agassiz. In April, 1865, Agassiz went to Brazil at the head of the Thayer

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[1] _Op_. _cit_., p.16.

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Expedition. William James was included as a member of the expedition. For over a year he was absent from home on this trip. During this period he was sick part of the time. He became disgusted with all the detail work of the naturalist, and henceforth turned his mind into other channels. However, the influence of the great naturalist had been irrevocably stamped upon the mind of William James. In writing at a later date about Agassiz, James said:

> "I myself, for instance, have never been able to escape; but the hours I spent with Agassiz so taught me the difference between all possible abstractionists and all livers in the light of the world's concrete fulness, that I have never been able to forget it. Both kinds of mind have their place in the infinite design, but there can be no question as to which kind lies the nearer to the divine type of thinking."[1]

James had already turned his back upon painting. Now he turns his back upon natural science, and, though scarcely twenty-three years of age, "he reached the conviction, never to be departed from, that the life of speculative thought was the only existence in which he could find scope for his dearest inclinations. He went on with the study of medicine after he had reached that conviction, it is true; nevertheless, from then on he was really preparing to embark, and embarking on the

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[1] "Louis Agassiz," Memories and Studies, p. 14-15.

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speculative voyage of the mind."[1]

Returning from Brazil, James found himself ill in body and disturbed in mind. So he interrupted his course at the Medical School, and left in April, 1867, for Europe. He spent the summer in Dresden and Bohemia. But, instead of improving, his health became worse. "Insomnia, digestive disorders, eye-troubles, weakness of the back, and sometimes deep depression of spirits followed each other or afflicted him simultaneously."[2] This illness, beginning in 1867, "overtook him when he was only twenty-five years old, and threw him heavily upon his inner moral and intellectual resources. It caught him alone and among strangers, more or less prostrated him, and defeated his plans just at a time of life when he was beginning to" etc., etc.[3]

These were not easy years for James. Wandering in the wilderness is never pleasant, if one feels lost. The decision to embark upon the speculative voyage did, at the time, prove a stimulus to him. We are so constituted that we need a goal of some kind. But, although James's early life had been saturated with philosophy, now, in his young manhood, as he makes the deeper plunge

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[1] "The Education of William James," Charles K. Trueblood, The Dial, Vol. 83, October, 1927, p.308.
[2] Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.84
[3] Ibid., p.85.

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into metaphysics, he finds unplumbed depths, uncharted currents. In his Varieties of Religious Experience we get some idea of his mental state at this time. His first ventures "on the speculative voyage of the mind" were, says Mr. Trueblood,

"not merely unprofitable; they were unwholesome, for they landed him on the shores of scepticism, where he contracted a formidable case of metaphysical melancholy. How formidable it was may be inferred from the fact that it brought him, in his twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year, . . . . . well balanced and normal hearted as he was, to the contemplation of suicide; and in his twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth year, brought him . . . . . within sight of insanity. The story of this double crisis is, surely, the central drama of his education." [1]

During the winter of 1867-8 James studied physiology at the University of Berlin. On October 5, 1868, writing to his father ( from Divonne? ) James tells him:

"I got a little book by a number of authors, "L'Annee 1867 Philosophique," which may interest you if you have not got it already. The introduction, a review of the state of philosophy in France for some years back, is by one Charles Renouvier, of whom I never heard before but who, for vigor of style and compression, going to the core of half a dozen things in a single sentence, so different from the namby-pamby diffuseness of most Frenchmen, is unequaled by anyone. He takes his stand on Kant." [2]

Returning to America, James went to work at the

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1 "The Education of William James", The Dial, Vol. 83, October, 1927, p.308.

2 Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.138.

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Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, and in 1869 took his doctorate in medicine at Harvard. From this time on until 1872 "he continued to work according to his fancy, assuming no professional obligations, partly because of his ill-health, partly because of his intellectual curiosity, his eagerness for varied knowledge, to say nothing of a certain instinctive repugnance to official duties." [1]

In 1872 James was appointed instructor of physiology at Harvard. From 1873-6 he taught anatomy and physiology. Early in this latter year Thomas Davidson introduced James to Miss Alice H. Gibbens. The next day James wrote to his brother Wilky that he had just met "the future Mrs. W. J." [2] On July 10, 1878, William James fulfilled his prophecy, he and Miss Gibbens being married at the house of the bride's mother in Boston. [3]

Mr. James gave his first real course in philosophy in 1879-80. In 1880 he became assistant professor of philosophy. Five years later he was made professor of philosophy, which chair he held until 1889, when he took the chair of psychology. In 1892 he gave up the direction of the psychological laboratory, and five years later,

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[1] Emile Boutroux: William James, p. 5 ff.
[2] Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.192
[3] Ibid., p.192

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in 1897, he eschewed once and for all the official title of professor of psychology, exchanging it for that of professor of philosophy. This latter title he bore until his death in 1910.

In 1882, while James was in Europe, he received word that his father was dangerously ill. He hastened to return to America, but, getting as far as London, he was advised that his father was showing improvement, and that it wouldn't be necessary to return right at that time. We have the record of the letter William James wrote to his father at this time ( December 14, 1882 ). The following quotations are taken therefrom:

"You are old enough, you've given your message to the world in many ways and will not be forgotten; you are here left alone, and on the other side, let us hope and pray, dear, dear, old Mother is waiting for you to join her . . . . . . .
As for the other side, and Mother, and our all possibly meeting, I can't say anything. More than ever at this moment do I feel that if that were true, all would be solved and justified. And it comes strangely over me in bidding you good-bye how a life is but a day and expresses mainly but a single note. It is so much like the act of bidding an ordinary good-night. Good-night, my sacred old Father! If I don't see you again -- Farewell! a blessed farewell!"[1]

In 1884 James helped to establish the American Society for Psychical Research. On January 1, 1886, in a letter to Carl Stumpf, James wrote with regard to losing his ( James's ) youngest child in the summer

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[1] Ibid., p.219-220.

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( evidently the summer of 1885 ). The child was eighteen months old, "the flower of the flock." [1] In 1890 appeared James's Principles of Psychology, a momentous, epoch-making work, that assured the author of undying fame. In the chapter of the present essay dealing with James's psychology, additional references will be made to this work.

In 1892 Professor James was requested by the Harvard Corporation "to give a few public lectures on psychology to the Cambridge teachers." The lectures then given were repeated at various places. In 1899 James, after carefully weeding out from the lectures those parts he deemed least valuable from a practical standpoint, and after otherwise revising them, had the lectures published. In the same volume with the lectures he included certain talks to students "written in response to invitations to deliver 'addresses' to students at women's colleges." This book, titled Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals, is mentioned in this paper in an especial way because it, along with James's Principles, furnishes us much of the material from which we abstract James's educational philosophy.

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[1] Ibid., p.247

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In this same year in which the Talks to Teachers was published, after an excursion in the Adirondacks which put him under unusual physical strain. Professor James found his health greatly impaired. For two years, from 1899 to 1901, he was forced to give up his university duties.

In 1901 and 1902 he delivered his famous lectures, "The Varieties of Religious Experience," at the University of Edinburgh, on the Gifford Foundation. In 1905 "an escape from influenza, from Cambridge duties, and from correspondents, became imperative. James had long wanted to see Athens with his own eyes, and he sailed on April 3 for a short southern holiday."[1] While he was abroad there was held in Rome a Philosophical Congress. James had been given an invitation to attend this congress, and had declined; but on his way back home from Greece, wishing to see certain young Italian philosophers, he stopped in Rome, visited the congress, "inevitably became involved in its proceedings, and ended by seizing the occasion to discuss his theory of consciousness."[2]

Having accepted an invitation from Stanford University to give a course of lectures during its 1906 spring term, James took leave of absence from Harvard, went to

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[1] Ibid., Vol. II, p.219.
[2] Ibid.

California, and was in the midst of his work when the San Francisco earthquake took place. The course of lectures was interrupted, and James returned East. In that same year, and also in the following year, he lectured at both Lowell Institute in Boston and Columbia University on Pragmatism.

In 1910 the condition of his health became so bad that James felt his only recourse to lie in a trip to Europe to consult specialists there. In spite of his ill health he busied himself on the voyage in continuing the preparation of a rèsumè of his philosophy for the use of students. He had previously done some work on this rèsumè. It was destined, however, not to be completed. What was finished was published in 1911 under the title of Some Problems in Philosophy.[1] After visiting several places in Europe in search of relief, and finding himself growing steadily worse, James decided to return to America.

"After leaving Geneva James rested at Lamb House for a few days before going to Liverpool to embark. Walking, talking and writing had all become impossible or painful. The short northern route to Quebec was chosen for the home voyage. Whe he and Mrs. James and his brother Henry landed there, they went straight to Chocorua. The afternoon light was fading from the familiar hills on August 19th when the motor brought them to the little house, and James sank into a chair

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[1] Longmans, Green, and Co., New York

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beside the fire, and sobbed, 'It's so good to get home!'"[1]

It was just a week later, in the early afternoon of August 26th, that death occurred to William James, at the age of sixty-eight years. His body was taken to Cambridge for the funeral service in the College Chapel. His ashes ( for he was cremated ) were placed in Cambridge Cemetery beside the graves of his parents.[2]

In the foregoing pages no attempt was made to give anything at all approximating a complete biography of Mr. James. Very little mention was made of his family. There were other brothers besides Henry. There were children that blessed his own married life, which was a happy one. Mention was made of some of the European trips, but not of all of them. Little was said of his writings, and yet he was a prolific writer. His correspondence alone took great deal of his time, and many of his letters have been preserved to posterity in two volumes edited by his son Henry.

The three following chapters will discuss, respectively, his psychology, his general philosophy, and his educational philosophy. Hence in the present chapter

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[1] _Letters of William James_, Vol. II, p.350.
[2] _Ibid._

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these subjects, if mentioned at all, have been passed over quickly.

We cannot turn from this part of our writing, however, without discussing the general character of the man, and some of his distinguishing characteristics. A description of him will be first in order.

"He was of medium height ( about five feet eight and one-half inches ), and though he was muscular and compact, his frame was slight and he appeared to be slender in youth, spare in his last years. His carriage was erect and his tread was firm to the end. Until he was over fifty he used to take the stairs of his own house two, or even three, steps at a bound. He moved rapidly, not to say impatiently, but with an assurance that invested his figure with an informal sort of dignity. After he strained his heart in the Adirondacks in 1899 he had to habituate himself to a moderate pace in walking, but he never learned to make short movements and movements of unpremeditated response in a deliberate way . . . . . .

In talking he gesticulated very little, but his face and voice were unusually expressive. His eyes were of that not very dark shade whose depth and color change with alterations of mood, . . . . . . He talked in a voice that was low-pitched rather than deep - - an unforgettably agreeable voice, that was admirable for conversation or a small lecture-room although in a very large hall it vibrated and lacked resonance. His speech was full of earnest, humorous and tender cadences.

James was always as informal in his dress as the occasion permitted. His Norfolk jacket in which he used to lecture to his classes invariably figured in college caricatures - as did also his festive neckties. But there was nothing that disgusted him more than a 'loutish' carelessness about appearances." [1]

"Almost anyone who was at Harvard in the nineties

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[1] Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.24-26.

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can . . . . in memory see again that erect figure walking with a step that was somehow firm and light without being particularly rapid, two or three thick volumes and a notebook under one arm, and on his face a look of abstraction that used suddenly to give way to an expression of delighted and friendly curiosity. . . . . . One day he would have worn the Norfolk jacket that he usually worked in at home to his lecture-room; the next, he would have forgotten to change the black coat that he had put on for a formal occasion. At twenty minutes before nine in the morning he could usually be seen going to the College Chapel for the fifteen-minute service with which the College day began. If he was returning home for lunch, he was likely to be hurrying; . . . He was apt then to have some student with him whom he was bringing home to lunch . . . . . At the end of the afternoon, or in the early evening, he would frequently be bicycling or walking again."[1]

Mention has already been made of the note of seriousness that pervaded James's life and teachings.

"The general impression given by William James's philosophy as also by his personality is one of seriousness, of taking life seriously, and of meeting reality in a serious spirit . . . . . and if such explicit phrases are found but infrequently in his writings it is because he never assumed the tone of a preacher.[2] And to be 'serious' does not here mean as it so often does, to be tiresome, pedantic, or morose; nor does it preclude charm, imagination, vivacity, humor, and a kindly irony. But beneath these lighter qualities there is always the intimation that this life is no idle matter, but rather a brave enterprise in which risks are to be run and difficulties surmounted.

This pervasive sentiment of the seriousness of life comes out in James explicity in four doctrines -

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1 Ibid., Vol. II, p.6-7.

2 He may never have assumed the tone of a preacher, but he preached, and himself felt that he was prone to lapse into the attitude of preacher. See his letter to Thos. W. Ward, dated Jan. 1868 (Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.132).

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the liberty of man, the reality of evil, the existence of God, and the possible salvation of the world ( that is to say, in the final triumph of good ) by the collaboration of man with God. These are the convictions that constitute the key to James's metaphysics - to his conception of the universe." [1]

This same serious William James knew how, as has been suggested, to be vivacious and humorous. A kindly humor is apparent in many of his writings, and his letters reveal in an exquisite way this quality. Let us take his letter to his mother, written at Dresden on June 12, 1867, at a time when he was in the midst of great mental conflicts. After telling about his flirtations with certain young ladies living in a young ladies' boarding-school diagonally opposite his dwelling place, he says:

"There has, however, lately arisen in the Christian Strasse, just under my window, a most ravishing apparition, and I begin to think my heart will not wither wholly away. About eighteen, hair like night, and such eyes. Their mute-appealing, love-lorn look goes through and through me. Every day for the last week, after dinner, have I sat in my window and she in hers. I with the telescope! she with those eyes! and we communing with each other!! . . . . She has only one defect, which is the length of her nose. If that were only one inch and a half shorter, I should propose at once to her mother for it; . . . . ." [2]

Or we may take this letter to Henry Holt, dated

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[1] Th. Flournoy: The Philosophy of William James, p.14-16.
[2] Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.93-94.

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March 27, 1894. The reader might infer from this letter that James lacked sympathy with the movement for reformed spelling. As a matter of fact James was sympathetic toward the movement:

"Dear Holt, - The Introduction to filosofy is what I ment - I dont no the other book.
I will try Nordau's Entartung this summer - as a rule however it duzn't profit me to read Jeremiads against evil - the example of a little good has more effect.
A propo of kitchen ranges, I wish you wood remoov your recommendation from that Boynton Furnace Company's affair. We have struggled with it for five years - lost 2 cooks in consequens - burnt countless tons of extra coal, never had anthing decently baikt, and now, having got rid of it for 15 dollars, are having a happy kitchen for the 1st time in our experience, - all through your umprincipld recommendation! You ought to hear my wife sware when she hears your name!
I will try about a translator for Nordau - though the only man I can think of needs munny more than fame, and coodn't do the job for pure love of the publisher or author, or on an unsertainty." [1]

Another one of James's outstanding traits was his independence and individualistic tendency. He was like his father in this regard, although probably to a less degree. The following examples of this spirit will serve to illustrate this point:

Professor George Herbert Palmer, writing in 1920 with reference to his former colleague, says: "Once, long before the days of spelling reform, he came to me

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[1] Ibid., Vol. II, p.18-19.

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with, 'Isn't it abominable that everybody is expected to spell in the same way? Let us get a dozen influential persons to agree each to spell after his own fashion and so break up this tyranny of the dictionary.'"[1]

William James

" was increasingly sure that all high experiences must come to the individual man absolutely alone. He once said to a young woman, 'Why do you tie yourself up to the rules and conventions of a very conservative Church, when you are by nature the freest and most spontaneous creature I know?' She answered simply that in the very best thing she knew in life, she liked to share the happiness and the help of it. She said that she couldn't imagine religion without fellowship. He was much interested and gave his usual rapt attention as if he were about to be converted; but he said at length: 'Well, religion is for me an individual matter. When I think of religion I think of a desolate heath in the silence of the night; the cold wind is blowing over my blad head; one star is shining; and I have the conviction of utter isolation.'"[2]

In writing about his friend Thomas Davidson, that "knight-errant of the intellectual life," in May, 1905, James said:

"The memory of Davidson will always strengthen my faith in personal freedom and its spontaneities, and make me less unqualifiedly respectful than ever of 'Civilization,' with its herding and branding, licensing and degree-giving, authorizing and appointing, and in general regulating and administering by system the lives of human beings. Surely the individual, the person in

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1 Article on "William James," Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 29, September, 1920, p.31.

2 Charles L. Slattery: Certain American Faces, p. 45-46.

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the singular number, is the more fundamental phenomenon, and the social institution, of whatever grade, is but secondary and ministerial. Many as are the interests which social systems satisfy, always unsatisfied interests remain over, and among them are interests to which system, as such, does violence whenever it lays its hands upon us. The best Commonwealth will always be the one that most cherishes the men who represent the residual interests, the one that leaves the largest scope to their peculiarities." [1]

Professor Palmer assures us, however, that "no one ever called James odd or bumptious. Self-assertion and loose radicalism were alien to his beauty-loving and serious temperament. His bearing and utterance were always quiet and distinguished. Only he insisted on using his own eyes and mind . . . ." [2]

William James was a broad, expansive character. His philosophy took its roots in the life of humanity, in the concrete, the empirical. It was this, perhaps, that made him so sympathetic and generous. "Men and women of all sorts felt at ease with him, and anybody who, in Touchstone's phrase, had any philosophy in him, was soon expounding his private hopes, faiths, and skepticisms to James with gusto." [3] Some men are only at their best when dealing with an audience that pays homage to them by assenting to their statements, "swallow-

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1 Memories and Studies, p. 102-103.
2 "William James," Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 29 September, 1920, p.31.
3 Letters of William James, Vol. I, p.26.

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ing them whole," never daring to question or dissent. Not so with James. "He was, distinctly, not a man who required a submissive audience to put him in the vein. A kind of admiring attention that made him self-conscious was as certain to reduce him to silence as a manly give and take was sure to bring him out. It never seemed to occur to him to debate or talk for victory . . . . He made the other man feel that he had no desire to pigeon-hole him and dismiss him from further consideration, but that he rejoiced in him as a fellow creature, unique like himself and forever fascinating."[1]

Mr. Trueblood, in writing with regard to this same quality in William James, says:

> "One can hardly escape the force of the word self-less; it points home to the captain jewel of William James's temperament. He was self-less. His personality was impersonality in its best essence; egoism had no place in the economy of his spirit; in him the puny principality of the ego was absorbed in a great natural and abundantly cultivated humanity."[2]

Many a young student or writer received encouragement to greater achievement from a spoken word or a written note from William James. He praised whatever seemed to be promising, and this praise spurred on the

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[1] Ibid., p. 26-27.
[2] Charles K. Trueblood: The Education of William James", The Dial, Vol. 83, October, 1927, p.305.

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one to whom it was given. Indeed, says Professor Palmer, "his judgment of men was not good; it was corrupted by kindness. In our Committee, when voting on candidates for the higher degrees, he generally favored the merciful side."[1] "He was brilliant, influential," says Edward F. Buchner, "ever ready to help young minds 'find themselves.'"[2]

James was friendly to his students, frequently taking some of them home to lunch. John S. Reed tells how, as a Harvard freshman, he was one evening looking into the window of a book-store, when he was addressed by "a quietly dressed, unimpressive man with a sparse, dark beard." A short discussion ensued concerning O. Henry and his works. After going into the store and purchasing one of O. Henry's books this stranger invited Reed home to dinner with him. Reed went and remained until midnight. When he was ready to leave the stranger asked Reed for his name, in turn telling his own name to Reed. It was not until then that Reed found out that he had been entertained by William James.[3]

Many other incidents could be cited to show to the reader this unselfish, friendly, sympathetic attitude

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[1] "William James," Harward Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 29, September, 1920, p.30.

[2] Article: "William James," in Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education, Vol. III, p.516.

[3] "A Reminiscence," American Magazine, Vol.73, November, 1911, p.16.

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of James.

Closely allied to this characteristic, and yet distinct from it, was the attitude of openmindedness for which James was noted. All who knew him recognized this trait in him. Ralph Barton Perry writes:

> "It is impossible to divorce his intellectual gifts from his character. His openmindedness, which has become proverbial, was only one of many signs of his fundamental truthfulness. Having no pride of opinion, and setting little store by his personal prestige, his mind remained flexible and hospitable to the end." [1]

Norman Foerster, writing for The Dial in 1913, submits an article entitled: "Open Minds: A Text from William James." [2] Walter Lippmann, in an article of similar import, says:

> "William James wasn't 'credulous,' He was simply openminded. . . . At the age of sixty-five, with the whole of New England's individualism behind him, he asked about socialism. When he met H. G. Wells, he listened to the socialist, and, as it happens, was converted. So he said so. James was no more afraid of a new political theory than he was of ghosts, and he was no more afraid of proclaiming a new theory, or an old one, than he was of being a ghost. I think he would have listened with an open mind to the devil's account of heaven, and I'm sure he would have heard him on hell.
>
> James knew that he didn't know." [3]

Professor George Santayana, in a keen personal

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[1] Present Philosophical Tendencies, p.738.
[2] Vol. 54, May 1, 1913, p.364-367.
[3] "An Open Mind: William James," Everybody's, Vol. 23, Dec., 1910, p.800.

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analysis of William James that is distinctly less favorable than the analysis of most acquaintances of James, frankly accuses him of being an agnostic, and Santayana would seem to explain much of James's broad-mindedness by this agnosticism.[1] Probably it was his own modesty, his realization of the fact that he "knew that he didn't know," that made James so breadminded. But broadminded he was, beyond the peradventure of a doubt. He had no closed system; truth was not static; new truths were constantly being discovered; even the humblest person, a unique individual in himself, might, because of that very uniqueness, be able to contribute something to the sum total of truth, whether we spell it with a capital T, or make it plural and begin it with a small letter. L. P. Jacks, in reviewing _The Letters of William James_ in the _Atlantic Monthly_, described James as being "flagrantly unique," and this uniqueness, contended Mr. Jacks, "was manifest in nothing so much as in the power he possessed of discerning the disguised or hidden uniqueness of other people, and, indeed, of every single thing, great and small, which the universe contains."[2] In his last article in his last book James writes: "Let

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[1] See _Character and Opinion in the United States_, p.69-78.
[2] "William James and His Letters," Vol. 128, August, 1921, p.199.

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my last word, then, speaking in the name of intellectual philosophy, be his ( Benjamin Paul Blood's ) word: 'There is no conclusion. What has concluded, that we might conclude in regard to it? There are no fortunes to be told, and there is no advice to be given. - Farewell!'"[1]

It would be impossible in a paper of this kind, whose main thesis is the educational philosophy of William James, to do justice to the many characterizations that have been made of James. His personality and traits of character were such as to call forth an active ardent admiration and personal loyalty on the part of his actuaintances and friends. And his friends were legion. With the following quotations, therefore, we shall bring to an end this chapter dealing with William James the Man and pass on to a consideration of his philosophy:

"His simplicity and modest and ardent sincerity won him friends wherever his name was known; his freedom from dogmatism and prejudice, and his love for truth and fair play brought him in closest touch with the greater scientists and philosophers, and his approachable, friendly, happy manner, together with his desire to see the good in a fellow, caused him to be loved by all his students, as hundreds will testify. It has been said that he helped more young men find themselves than any

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[1] Memories and Studies: "A Pluralistic Mystic," p.411. This essay was written during the early summer of 1910 - James's last summer on earth.

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other philosopher or educator in this country." [1]

"His own stamp was on all he thought, did, or said. I doubt if he ever knew fear, vanity, or social constraint, or if a sense of incompetence ever held him back from what he wished to do. Yet courage did not blind him." [2]

"James, . . we think, is one of those folio editions of our race, one of those beings of heroic type, whose thought, carried away by the passion for truth, aspires to nothing less than embracing the sum total of living things and sketching in a philosophy in which all empirical data shall be taken into consideration and every human experience find its place. He was a man of infectious enthusiasm and of an expansive and generous spirit that instantly won all hearts, and one who was forever looking forward to that future which our own efforts are destined to create." [3]

"To me William James is an Attitude. . . .
I do not think of him, sometimes, as a personality, but as a principle; and that principle admits of various interpretations. I can see how the churchman may assert that William James exemplified in his life the mystic creed of love that Jesus Christ preached. I can see how the scholar may point to him as an ideal of broad tolerance. It would not be strange if the socialist found his creed in James's teachings; . . .
The shade of William James is in his books. . .
His shade? - - but an attitude, a principle.
The attitude? - - Love." [4]

The following minute with reference to Professor James's life and work was made a part of the records of the faculty of Arts and Sciences, of Harvard University,

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1 Bird T. Baldwin: "William James's Contributions to Education." The Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. 2, 1911, p.370.

2 George Herbert Palmer: "William James." Harvard Graduates' Magazine, Vol. 29, Sept. 1, 1920, p.29.

3 Th. Flournoy: The Philosophy of William James, p.23.

4 M. H. Hedges: "Seeking the Shade of William James." The Forum, Vol. 53, April, 1915, p.446-48.

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at the meeting held several months after his death:

"By the death of William James this university loses one who brought it high honor in many lands. . . . . . In him science and humanism were singularly combined. Learned as he was, he had none of the pedantry of the scholar. His books, beside illuminating their subjects, were creative of character, and through them he became one of the chief spiritual forces of our time. . . . .

The honors received by Professor James were many and great. He was a member of national academies in America, France, Italy, Prussia and Denmark; was a doctor of letters at Padua and Durham, of laws at Harvard, Princeton and Edinburgh, of science at Geneva and Oxford . . . . . .

Yet all who knew William James thought less of his learning and renown than of his massive and inspiring personality. The universal admiration given him was ever mixed with love. From him men drew their ideals of human character and were grateful to him for being what he was. They found him the best of comrades - - simple, engaging, generous in his estimates of others, tender as a woman, fair-minded, playful, reverent and unconventional, with a natural elevation of thought and manner which made all excellence easy in his presence." [1]

This present chapter was started with a quotation that William James's philosophy "is, in fact, himself writ large." Herein lies the justification for the amount of time and space taken, and the number of quotations made, to emphasize the life and characteristics of the man, the understanding of whose educational philosophy is the aim of this paper. And yet, we must not deceive ourselves into thinking that we can, from the descriptions

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[1] "William James," Science, n.s. 32, November 11, 1910, p.659-60.

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given, get a real picture of the real William James.

As James R. Angell has so fillingly remarked:

> "No one who knew William James can ever write of him in a wholly objective and dispassionate spirit. Nor can one cherish any hope of transfusing into words the abundant richness of his wonderful nature. Any just estimate of the man would require for its accomplishment a soul as pure and fine and brave as his own." 1

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1 "William James," The Psychological Review, Vol. 18, January, 1911.

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## Chapter III

## WILLIAM JAMES'S PSYCHOLOGY

Having heretofore considered the advisability of attempting at this date, when educational theories are almost as numerous as there are writers on the subject, to ascertain the educational philosophy of one of the acknowledged leaders in our modern period in philosophy, psychology, and education; and having in the immediately preceding chapter dealt somewhat at length, although certainly not exhaustively, with the life of this man; we are now prepared to narrow the range of our vision ever more and more until we arrive at the focal point of the thesis. The present chapter and the following one will, therefore, concern itself with James's psychology and his general philosophy; and after having these stated in a rather clear and concise way we can then, in the following chapter, seek to draw from all the material available the facts necessary, - if such is possible, - to construct the educational philosophy of William James.

Henry Rutgers Marshall, writing in Science [1] a few months after the death of William James, speaks of him aw being "first and foremost a psychologist." And, con-

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[1] "William James", Science, n. s. 32, Oct. 14, 1910, p.489-92.

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tinues Mr. Marshall: "That he was the ablest and most influential psychologist of our time can not be questioned." As a matter of fact Mr. Marshall feels inclined "to agree with Professor Dewey, that men of future generations may look upon him as the greatest psychologist that has ever lived."

In the Preface to his Principles, Volume I, James calls psychology "the science of finite individual minds." The science "assumes as its data (1) thoughts and feelings, and (2) a physical world in time and space with which they coexist and which (3) they know."

"Of course these data themselves are discussable; but the discussion of them (as of other elements) is called metaphysics and falls outside the province of this book. This book, assuming that thoughts and feelings exist and are vehicles of knowledge, thereupon contends that psychology when she has ascertained the empirical correlation of the various sorts of thought or feeling with definite conditions of the brain, can go no farther - can go no farther, that is, as a natural science. If she goes farther she becomes metaphysical. All attempts to explain our phenomenally given thoughts as products of deeper-lying entities (whether the latter be named 'Soul,' 'Transcendental Ego,' 'Ideas,' or 'Elementary Units of Consciousness') are metaphysical. This book consequently rejects both the associationist and the spiritualist theories; and in this strictly positivistic point of view consists the only feature of it for which I feel tempted to claim originality. Of course this point of view is anything but ultimate. Men must keep thinking; and the data assumed by psychology, just like those assumed by physics and the other natural sciences, must some time be overhauled. The effort to overhaul them clearly and thoroughly is metaphysics; but metaphysics can only perform her task well when distinctly conscious of its great extent. Metaphysics fragmentary, irresponsible, and half-awake, and unconscious that she is metaphysical, spoils two good things when she injects

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herself into a natural science. And it seems to me that the theories both of a spiritual agent and of associated 'ideas' are, as they figure in the psychology books, just such metaphysics as this. Even if their results be true, it would be well to keep them, as thus presented, out of psychology as it is to keep the results of idealism out of physics." [1]

It will be well, here in the very beginning of our discussion of James's psychology, to emphasize the distinction made by James himself between psychology and metaphysics. In the passage just quoted James refers especially to the 'Soul,' or 'Transcendental Ego.' The position he takes with regard to this matter is maintained quite consistently in both his psychology and metaphysics. But with regard to certain other subjects, such, for example, as the will, we find them treated even antagonistically, in his psychology in one way, and in his philosophy in the opposite way. This may seem to some inconsistent. Certainly James has been charged on various occasions with inconsistency. "There is," says Jared S. Moore, "between this philosophy of the Gifford lectures of 1901-2, and the later philosophy of the Hibbert lectures of 1909 . . . . - between James the empirical psychologist and metaphysician - a contradiction so great as to be startling." [2] William McDougall like-

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[1] Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p.vi.

[2] "The Religious Significance of the Philosophy of William James," The Sewanee Review, Vol. 21, 1913, p.48.

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wise finds that "there were two Jameses - James the physiologist and sensationist psychologist, and James the author of the purposive psychology which was the root of his pragmatic philosophy." [1] James, however, would justify himself, at least in respect to some of the alleged inconsistencies, by saying, as he did with regard to the free-will question:

"The fact is that the question of free-will is insoluble on strictly psychologic grounds. After a certain amount of effort of attention has been given to an idea, it is manifestly impossible to tell whether either more or less of it might have been given or not. To tell that, we should have to ascend to the antecedents of the effort, and defining them with mathematical exactitude, prove, by laws of which we have not at present even an inkling, that the only amount of sequent effort which could possibly comport with them was the precise amount that actually came. Such measurements, whether of psychic or neural quantities, and such deductive reasonings as this method of proof implies, will surely be forever beyond human reach. No serious psychologist or physiologist will venture even to suggest a notion of how they might be practically made. Had one no motives drawn from elsewhere to make one partial to either solution, one might easily leave the matter undecided. But a psychologist cannot be expected to be thus impartial, having a great motive in favor of determinism. He wants to build a Science; and a Science is a system of fixed relations. Wherever there are independent variables, there Science stops. So far, then, as our volitions may be independent variables, a scientific psychology must ignore that fact, and treat of them only so far as they are fixed functions. In other words, she must deal with the general laws of volition exclusively; with the impulsive and inhibitory character of ideas; with the nature of their appeals to the attention; with the conditions under which effort may arise, etc.; but not with the precise amounts of efforts, for these, if our wills be free,

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[1] Outline of Psychology, p.viii.

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are impossible to compute. She thus abstracts from free-will, without necessarily denying its existence. Practically, however, such abstraction is not distinguished from rejection; and most actual psychologists have no hesitation in denying that free will exists.

For ourselves, we can hand the free-will controversy over to metaphysics . . . . . Psychology will be psychology, and Science science, as much as ever ( as much and no more ) in this world, whether free-will be true in it or not."[1]

James endeavors to maintain this strictly scientific viewpoint with respect to Psychology, for he wishes it to be understood as a Science, or at least as a very promising babe of Science. And he, by his own scientific treatment of the subject, helped to establish it more firmly and securely as a Science. So it happens that, in the matter of the will, James posits, or at any rate does not disagree with, determinism in certain portions of his psychology, while, as we shall see later on, he argues strongly and frequently for indeterminism and free-will in his philosophy, and champions an anti-mechanistic psychology as opposed to the automaton theory.

No wonder that James, with his views on pluralism, tychism, and novelty; with his love for the perceptual as opposed to the slavishly conceptual view with its usually accepted closed system of general laws, and with his strong belief in the moral integrity of man; should more and more veer from a science that tends always to be

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[1] Psychology, Briefer Course, p.456-58.

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mechanistic to a philosophy of free-will and indeterminism. No wonder that he, according to Professor Palmer, "called psychology 'a nasty little subject,' and added, 'all one cares to know lies outside.' "[1] And, "as time went on, he became more and more irritated at being addressed or referred to as a'psychologist.'"[2]

James's treatment of Psychology is, then, from the scientific viewpoint. And in this he had recourse to his early training in the natural sciences. Man is a biological animal, "a practical being whose mind is given him to aid him in adapting him to this world's life." The evolutionary point of view is accepted. Man is a behaving animal. Both the intellective and affective elements of the mind lead to action or behavior of some kind. Behavior includes inhibitions as well as exhibitions. The intellective and affective constituents receive their material as the result of impressions made upon the sensory end organs by appropriate stimuli. These impressions are all originally referred to impulses from the periphery, but later, as a result of memory, they may also be centrally aroused. Some behavior is of a purely reflex kind; some is instinctive. The difference between the two is often just one of degree, no clear line of

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[1] Letters of William James, Vol. II, p.2.
[2] Ibid., p.3; also see James Mark Baldwin: Between Two Wars, Vol. I, p.62-3.

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demarcation being possible. As a result of the repetition of acts, habits are formed. Habits are possible because of the plasticity and modifiability of the nervous system. Over and above the habitual acts are those involving premeditation, thinking problem-solving. Emotions have their physiological basis, and instead of their being influenced immediately by the cognitive processes, certain bodily processes intervene between these two mental phenomena, and these bodily processes are what directly influence the emotions. Volition results from the presence of ideas in the mind, the strength and prevalence of certain ideas determining the kind of action, or the kind of inhibition to action, that is taken. The cerebralistic theory of the mind is accepted, and the relation of mind to brain continuously adhered to. There is no "Soul" or "Transcendental Ego." There are states of consciousness which are the results of the action of the physical upon the mental, and the mental upon the physical. Selfhood is thus built up as a consequence and is the sum total of the person's reactions. Stated succinctly and in rather common-place language, man is a behaving organism, a thinking, feeling, and volitional animal.

We are now prepared to go back and take up some of these items more in detail. James, in his Principles of

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Psychology, has devoted a great deal of time to such subjects as "The Perception of Things," "The Perception of Space," "The Perception of Reality." His chapter on Space Perception is one of the best, if not the best, in its field. But it will be unnecessary in a paper of this kind, the scope of which has been delimited to the deducing of James's educational philosophy, to go into all the intricacies and complexities involved in a discussion of the perception of space and reality. The only justification for treating of James's psychology at all lies in the fact that his philosophy is built up from his psychology, and that Education, as a subject, is so closely associated with both Psychology and Philosophy.

A good place to begin the detailed discussion is with James's ideas regarding the Soul. We have already seen that, for psychological purposes, he rejects all the efforts " to explain our phenomenally given thoughts as products of deeper-lying entities," whatever the name may be by which they are known. Going into the subject of the Self, he divides it into the "I" and the "Me," the Self as Knower and the Self as Known. Inasmuch as the latter is the easier for discussion, let us begin with it first. "Whatever I may be thinking of," says James, "I am always at the same time more or less aware of myself, of my <u>personal existence</u>." [1] The Self as

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[1] <u>Psychology, Briefer Course</u>, p.176

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Known is then the object the Self as Knower or Thinker. There are three Me's, the material Me, the social Me, and the spiritual Me. "The body is the innermost part of the material me in each of us; and certain parts of the body seem more intimately ours than the rest. The clothes come next." [1] The social me consists in the recognition which a person gets from his associates. "A man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind." [2] "By the 'spiritual me,'" writes James, "so far as it belongs to the empirical self, I mean no one of my passing states of consciousness. I mean rather the entire collection of my states of consciousness, my psychic faculties and dispositions taken concretely. This collection can at any moment become an object to my thought at that moment and awaken emotions like those awakened by any of the other portions of the Me." [3]

"When we think of ourselves as thinkers, all the other ingredients of our Me seem relatively external possessions. Even within the spiritual Me some ingredients seem more external than others. Our capacities for sensation, for example, are less intimate possessions, so to speak, than our emotions and desires; our intellectual processes are less intimate than our volitional decisions. The more active-feeling states of consciousness are thus the more central portions of the spiritual Me. The very core and nucleus of our self, as we know it, the very

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.177. [2] *Ibid.*, p.179 [3] *Ibid.*, p.181.

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sanctuary of our life, is the sense of activity which certain inner states possess. This sense of activity is often held to be a direct revelation of the living substance of our Soul. Whether this be so or not is an ulterior question. I wish now only to lay down the peculiar internality of whatever states possess this quality of seeming to be active. It is as if they went out to meet all the other elements of our experience."[1]

The self as object of thought is a relatively simple subject to consider, compared with the self as the subject. As object it is but one of the multitude of other objects experienced by us. As subject it is unique. To each one of us there is only one of its kind, the "I" of the individual doing the thinking. "In other words, it is the Thinker; and the question immediately comes up what is the thinker?"[2] Most philosophers have postulated some permanent Substance or Agent behind the passing state of consciousness. This Agent or Substance then becomes the Thinker, and "Soul," "Transcendental Ego," "Spirit," are just so many names for this permanent Thinker.

A discussion of association and consciousness will help us to a better understanding of James's views regarding the nature of the "I"-self. We have already seen that James, although, naturally, a believer in association, could not accept all the notions advanced by the associationists in psychology, and that he rejected the associationist theory of thought as well as the spiritualist

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[1] Ibid., p.181.

[2] Ibid., p.195.

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theory of the Soul.

There are, of course, - according to James, - "mechanical conditions on which thought depends, and which, to say the least, determine the order in which is presented the content or material for her comparisons, selections, and decisions." [1] But the historic doctrine of psychological association has in it "one huge error - - that of the construction of our thoughts out of the compounding of themselves together of immutable and incessantly recurring 'simple ideas.' It is the cohesion of these which the 'principles of association' are considered to account for." [2]

To illustrate what James means we take an example given by him: "' There can be no difficulty in admitting that association does form the ideas of an indefinite number of individuals into one complex idea,' says James Mill, 'because it is an acknowledged fact. Have we not the idea of an army? And is not that precisely the ideas of an indefinite number of men formed into one idea?'" [3] But, replies Professor James, "our idea of a couple is not a couple of ideas." [4] A thousand ideas, one for each man in an army of one thousand men, are not the same as an idea of the whole army of one thousand men.

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[1] Principles of Psychology, Vol. I, p.553.
[2] Ibid., p.553-54.
[3] Briefer Course, p.196. [4] Ibid., p.197.

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An idea of the taste of lemonade is not the idea of the taste of lemon and the idea of the taste of sugar combined. "The physical lemonade contains both the lemon and the sugar, but its taste does not contain their tastes; for if there are any two things which are certainly not present in the taste of lemonade, those are the pure lemon-sour on the one hand and the pure sugar-sweet on the other." [1]

These illustrations will have to suffice. We go into the matter of associationism only because of its intimate connection with the subject of the Knower. And we are interested in arriving, in as short a way as possible, at an understanding of James's ideas regarding the Knower, the "I"-self.

> "No possible number of entities ( call them as you like, whether forces, material particles, or mental elementa ) can sum themselves together. Each remains, in the sum, what it always was; and the sum itself exists only for a bystander who happens to overlook the units and to apprehend the sum as such; or else it exists in the shape of some other effect on an entity external to the sum itself." [2]

It is here that the spiritualists in philosophy bring in the Soul, or Ego, or Spirit. They "have been prompt to see that things which are known together are known by one something, but that something, they say, is no mere passing thought, but a simple and permanent

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[1] Ibid., p.197. [2] Ibid., p.198.

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spiritual being on which many ideas combine their effects." [1]

And, continues James,

"if we had other grounds, not yet considered, for admitting the Soul into our psychology, then getting there on those grounds, she might turn out to be the knower too. But if there be no other grounds for admitting the Soul, we had better cling to our passing 'states' ( of consciousness ) as the exclusive agents of knowledge; for we have to assume their existence anyhow in psychology, and the knowing of many things together is just as well accounted for when we call it one of their functions as when we call it a reaction of the Soul. Explained it is not by either conception, and has to figure in psychology as a datum that is ultimate." [2]

James thus arrives at the conclusion that the real knower consists of those passing states of consciousness in each individual. "The logical conclusion seems then to be that the states of consciousness are all that psychology needs to do her work with. Metaphysics or theology may prove the Soul to exist; but for psychology the hypothesis of such a substantive principle of unity is superfluous." [3]

James made one of his characteristic contributions to psychology when he took up the subject of consciousness. His description of consciousness as a stream remains in a class all its own. And it was this conception of consciousness as a moving, fluent body that led James to see in the static conceptualistic view of reality and

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.200. [2] *Ibid.*, p.200 [3] *Ibid.*, p.203.

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experience something radically wrong, namely, the failure to account for the flux and movement which are not just extraneous parts of consciousness, but which are integral parts of its existence second by second. It is no wonder that he came to the conclusion that, if relationships exist, they must be objects of perception; that in some way we perceive the "buts," the "ands," the "bys," the "ons," the "ats," etc., etc., that go into all true experience.

> "The first and foremost concrete fact which every one will affirm to belong to his inner experience is the fact that consciousness of some sort goes on. 'States of mind' succeed each other in him." [1]

There are four characteristics of consciousness: 1. "Every 'state' tends to be part of a personal consciousness." 2. These states of consciousness, in each individual, are always changing. 3. These changes, however, are not disconnected, but "each personal consciousness is sensibly continuous." 4. "It is interested in some parts of its object to the exclusion of others, and welcomes or rejects - - chooses from among them, in a word - - all the while." [2]

Consciousness has its focal part and its more or less unfocalized portions shading off to a mere "fringe."

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[1] Ibid., p.152. [2] Ibid., p.152.

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All consciousness, of course, evolves out of experience. At any given moment consciousness tends to have in the center of focus certain dominant notions, ideas, or train of thought. But crowding in upon the focal part are other more or less related ideas. It is these marginal ideas which support and give meaning to the ones in focus. Let us use James's own words:

> It is, the reader will see, the reinstatement of the vague and inarticulate to its proper place in our mental life which I am so anxious to press on the attention. Mr. Galton and Professor Huxley have . . . . . made one step in advance in exploding the ridiculous theory of Hume and Berkeley that we can have no images but of perfectly definite things. Another is made if we overthrow the equally ridiculous notion that, whilst simple objective qualities are revealed to our knowledge in 'states of consciousness,' relations are not. But these reforms are not half sweeping and radical enough. What must be admitted is that the definite images of traditional psychology form but the very smallest part of our minds as they actually live. The traditional psychology talks like one who should say a river consists of nothing but pailsful, spoonsful, quartpotsful, barrelsful, and other moulded forms of water. Even were the pails and the pots all actually standing in the stream, still between them the free water would continue to flow. It is just this free water of consciousness that psychologists resolutely overlook. Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows round it. With it goes the sense of its relation, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead. The significance, the value, of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and excorts it, - or rather that is fused into one with it and has become bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh; . . . . .
>
> Let us call the consciousness of this halo of relations round the image by the name of 'psychic overtone'

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or 'fringe.'"[1]

James accepted the hypothesis of the subconscious, and felt that it threw a flood of light upon many subjects, both psychological and philosophical. In his religious views especially, as we shall seein the next chapter, James finds the subconscious of great explanatory and harmonizing significance.

Perhaps we are now ready to return to James's view on the Self. Summarizing these views, he writes:

> "The consciousness of Self involves a stream of thought, each part of which as 'I' can remember those which went before, know the things they knew, and care paramountly for certain ones among them as 'Me,' and appropriate to these the rest. This Me is an empirical aggregate of things objectively known. The I which knows them cannot itself be an aggregate; neither for psychological purposes need it be an unchanging metaphysical entity like the Soul, or a principle like the transcendental Ego, viewed as 'out of time.' It is a thought, at each moment different from that of the last moment, but appropriative of the latter, together with all that the latter called its own. All the experiential facts find their place in this description, unencumbered with any hypothesis save that of the existence of passing thoughts or states of mind."[2]

It has been stated in these pages that James considered the human being as a behaving organism. This is one of his most fundamental views. In his chapter on "Education and Behavior," in the Talks to Teachers on Psychology, James goes explicitly into this matter

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[1] Ibid., p.165-66.

[2] Ibid., p.215.

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of behavior:

"It would be quite impossible for me, with my mind technically and professionally organized as it is, and with the optical stimulus which your presence affords, to remain sitting here entirely silent and inactive. Something tells me that I am expected to speak, and must speak; something forces me to keep on speaking. My organs of articulation are continuously innervated by outgoing currents, which the currents passing inward at my eyes and through my educated brain have set in motion; and the particular movements which they make have their form and order determined altogether by the training of all my past years of lecturing and reading. Your conduct, on the other hand, might seem at first sight purely receptive and inactive, - leaving out those among you who happen to be taking notes. But the very listening which you are carrying on is itself a determinate kind of conduct. All the muscular tensions of your body are distributed in a peculiar way as you listen. Your head, your eyes, are fixed characteristically. And, when the lecture is over, it will inevitably eventuate in some stroke of behavior, as I said on the previous occasion; you may be guided differently in some special emergency in the schoolroom by words which I now let fall. . . . So it is with the impressions you will make there on your pupil. You should get into the habit of regarding them all as leading to the acquisition by him of capacities for behavior, - emotional, social, bodily, vocal, technical, or what not. And, this being the case, you ought to feel willing, in a general way, and without hair-splitting or farther ado, to take up for the purposes of these lectures with the biological conception of the mind, as of something given us for practical use." [1]

In his essay on "Reflex Action and Theism," James writes:

"The willing department of our nature, in short, dominates both the conceiving department and the feeling department; or, in plainer English, perception and thinking are only there for behavior's sake. .
I am sure I am not wrong in stating this result as

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[1] P. 29-31.

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one of the fundamental conclusions to which the entire drift of modern physiological investigation sweeps us. If asked what great contribution physiology has made to psychology of late years, I am sure every competent authority will reply that her influence has in no way been so weighty as in the copious illustration, verification, and consolidation of this broad, general point of view." [1]

Behavior involves both voluntary and involuntary, exhibitive as well as inhibitive, movements. The involuntary movements include reflexes and instinctive activities and are primary functions of the human organism. "Reflex, instinctive, and emotional movements are all primary performances. The nerve-centres are so organized that certain stimuli pull the trigger of certain explosive parts." [2]

James lays much emphasis upon instinctive acts. He defines instinct " as the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends, without foresight of the ends, and without previous education in the performance." [3] Instincts exist on an enormous scale in the animal kingdom. Man has more instincts than the lower animals. [4] No clear differentiation can be drawn between reflexes and instinctive action. "The actions we call instinctive all conform to the general reflex type." [5]

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[1] The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.114.
[2] Principles of Psychology, Vol. II, p.487.
[3] Ibid., p.383. [4] Ibid., p.393

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At the lower end lies the simple reflex action, at the other end the more complex reflexes which we call instincts. These are all unlearned, innate tendencies. After an instinctive activity has taken place in an animal with memory, it is obvious, says James, that the "instinctive act . . . must cease to be blind." [1]

> "It is plain, then, that, no matter how well endowed an animal may originally be in the way of instincts, his resultant actions will be much modified if the instincts combine with experience, if in addition to impulses he have memories, associations, inferences, and expectations, on any considerable scale." [2]

Hence, there is above instinctive activity that higher habitual activity of learned tendencies to which instinctive acts naturally lead; and crowning the arch there are the voluntary nonhabitual acts. But these are built up on the instincts and reflexes, the higher centers of the brain in man having been given him, as heretofore suggested, as an instrument of adaptation in this world's life.

But before we pass on to a consideration of habit and the higher thought processes, attention should be called to James's doctrine of the transitoriness of instincts. Tendencies to instinctive activities do not all come into a person's existence at the time of birth. Neither do they all last throughout the length of the

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.380. [2] *Ibid.*, p.390

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person's life. There are certain instinctive tendencies at birth. Others are due to arise from time to time clear up to adolescence. If, says James, these tendencies, when they come to birth, are not exercised, they are likely to atrophy and die to the detriment of the individual:

"In a perfectly-rounded development, every one of these instincts would start a habit toward certain objects and inhibit a habit toward certain others. Usually this is the case; but, in the one-sided development of civilized life, it happens that the timely age goes by in a sort of starvation of objects, and the individual then grows up with gaps in his psychic constitution which future experiences can never fill. Compare the accomplished gentleman with the poor artisan or tradesman of a city; during the adolescence of the former, objects appropriate to his growing interests, bodily and mental, were offered as fast as the interests awoke, and, as a consequence, he is armed and equipped at every angle to meet the world. Sport came to the rescue and completed his education where real things were lacking. He has tasted of the essence of every side of human life, being sailor, hunter, athlete, scholar, fighter, talker, dandy, man of affairs, etc., all in one. Over the city poor-boy's youth no such golden opportunities were hung, and in his manhood no desires for most of them exist. Fortunate it is for him if gaps are the only anomalies his instinctive life presents; perversions are too often the fruit of his unnatural bringing up." [1]

It may be said in passing that much of what James said with regard to instincts needs to be corrected in the light of later investigations. And the doctrine of the transitoriness of instincts, while undoubtedly having some truth in it, is, in its broader, more general applications, among the questionable parts of James's

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[1] William James; "Some Human Instincts," Popular Science Monthly, Vol. 31, 1887, p.680-81.

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Treatment of the instincts.

Instincts, innate, unlearned tendencies, lead to activities. These activities, repeated, combine with experience and result in certain learned-and-unlearned activities. The learned part of the combined activity selects certain preferred routes of response. The neural mechanism is plastic and modifiable. Each discharge over the synapse from a sensory to a motor neurone strengthens the linkage, and the tendency to respond in certain ways of acquired behavior becomes habitual.

"An acquired habit, from the physiological point of view, is nothing but a new pathway of discharge formed in the brain, by which certain incoming currents ever after tend to escape. That," continues James, "is the thesis of this chapter ( on Habit ); and we shall see in the later and more psychological chapters that such functions as the association of ideas, perception, memory, reasoning, the education of the will, etc., etc., can best be understood as results of the formation *de novo* of just such pathways of discharge." [1]

As soon as one makes any attempt to define habit, he is led, continues James, to the fundamental characteristics and properties of all matter. "The laws of Nature are nothing but the immutable habits which the different elementary sorts of matter follow in their actions and reactions upon each other." Matter is constantly sub-

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[1] *Psychology, Briefer Course*, p. 134 ff.

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jected to change, due to influences at work both within and without it. A change of structure results. "The change of structure . . . need not involve the outward shape; it may be invisible and molecular, as when a bar of iron becomes magnetic or crystalline through the action of certain outward causes, . . ." These changes all take place rather slowly; the modifying cause and the resistance of the material oppose each other, clash as it were, "but the gradual yielding ( of the material ) often saves ( it ) from being disintegrated altogether." After the yielding has taken place "the same inertia becomes a condition of its comparative permanence in the new form, and of the new habits the body then manifests." James calls this ability of a structure that is "weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once," by the name of plasticity. "Organic matter, especially nervous tissue, seems endowed with a very extraordinary degree of plasticity of this sort." This leads James to the proposition that: "The phenomena of habit in living beings are due to the plasticity of the organic materials of which their bodies are composed." And so, says James, "the philosophy of habit is thus, in the first instance a chapter in physics rather than in physiology or psychology." [1]

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[1] Ibid., p.135.

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James gives two practical effects of habit. In the first place, it "simplifies our movements, makes them accurate, and diminishes fatigue":

"Man is born with a tendency to do more things than he has ready-made arrangements for in his nerve centres. Most of the performances of other animals are automatic. But in him the number of them is so enormous that most of them must be the fruit of painful study. If practice did not make perfect, nor habit economize the expense of nervous and muscular energy, he would be in a sorry plight." [1]

In the second place, "habit dminishes the conscious attention with which our acts are performed." [2] Voluntary acts have to be guided by ideas, perceptions, and volitions throughout their whole course. But in habitual action, "mere sensation is a sufficient guide, and the upper regions of brain and mind are set comparatively free." The first sensation instigates a certain response. This response, let us say, for example, a muscular contraction, produces in turn its own sensation which instigates a new muscular contraction, and so on, until the end of the series of an habitual act has been reached.

All of this is very elementary; and yet, as James lays so much importance upon habit and its place in education, it is well that we get a clear conception of

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[1] Ibid., p.138 [2] Ibid., p.139

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his views on the subject.

It seems almost superfluous to repeat James's maxims concerning habit. ( Several of these maxims James gets from Professor Bain. )

1. In the acquisition of a new habit, or the leaving off of an old one, we must take care to launch ourselves with as strong and decided an initiative as possible.

2. We should never suffer an exception to occur till the new habit is securely rooted in our life.

3. We should seize the very first possible opportunity to act on every resolution that we make, and on every emotional prompting we may experience in the direction of the desired habits.

4. We should keep the faculty of effort alive in us by a little gratuitous exercise every day. [1]

We shall find it necessary in the chapter on James's educational philosophy to come back to his discussion o on habit. One more quotation from James is all that is necessary at this place:

"Habit is thus the enormous fly-wheel of society, its most precious conservative agent. It alone is what keeps us all within the bounds of ordinance, and saves the children of fortune from the envious uprisings of the poor. It alone prevents the hardest and most repulsive walks of life from being deserted by those brought up to tread therein. It keeps the fisherman and the deck-hand at sea through the winter; it holds the miner in his darkness, and nails the countryman to his log-cabin and his lonely farm through all the months of snow; it protects us from invasion by the natives of the desert and the frozen zone. It

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1 Ibid., p. 145-49.

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dooms us all to fight out the battle of life upon the lines of our nurture or our early choice, and to make the best of a pursuit that disagrees, because there is no other for which we are fitted, and it is too late to begin again. It keeps different social strata from mixing. Already at the age of twenty-five you see the professional mannerism settling down on the young commercial traveller, on the young doctor, on the young minister, on the young counsellor-at-law. You see the little lines of cleavage running through the character, the tricks of thought, the prejudices, the ways of the 'shop,' in a word, from which the man can by-and-by no more escape than his coat-sleeve can suddenly fall into a new set of folds. On the whole, it is best he should not escape. It is well for the world that in most of us, by the age of thirty, the character has set like plaster, and will never soften again."[1]

We have seen that, according to Professor James, man is a biological animal, a behaving organism, his behaviour having its roots in the reflexes and instincts. The instincts cannot be sharply differentiated from reflexes. They are called impulses. After an instinct has had expression experience combines with instinct to create a modified form of expression. Repetition of certain acts leads to habit, habit having its physiological basis in the character and structure of the nerve tissue. But all activity is not simply reflexive, instinctive, or habitual, or any two or all three of these combined. Over and above these forms of activity lies the voluntary unhabitual form, having its basis, it is

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1 *Ibid.*, p.143-44.

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true, in the instinctive and habitual, and never completely divorced therefrom, but still consisting in a something that is higher and different from the lower forms of expression.

Practically nothing has been said so far concerning the affectional element in men, and inasmuch as volition depends not alone upon intellect, but upon both the intellective and affective elements, the proper place for a discussion of the latter is right here.

Man is, according to James, a being with a mind that has a three-fold aspect, the cognitive, the affective, and the conative. These are not separate and apart. James is no believer in a faculty-psychology. Into each the other two probably always enter. They are part and parcel of one whole -- the mind. Still we are justified in distinguishing between these different aspects and considering them separately.

James considers man a product of evolution. In this process feeling came before thinking, the latter being added to man's capacity to enable him to adapt himself to his environment. In thus giving the primacy to feeling in the evolutionary scale James seems to be in accord with Rosmini, and with Thomas Davidson, James's friend and contemporary.

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"In our quadrupedal relatives thought proper is at a minimum, but we have no reason to suppose that their immediate life of feeling is either less or more copious than ours. Feeling must have been originally self-sufficing; and thought appears as a superadded function, adapting us to a wider environment than that of which brutes take account." [1]

( We shall have to be careful in following James at this point, for he is not always consistent in his use of terms. For instance, in the foregoing he clearly differentiates between feeling ( affective ) and thought ( cognitive ). If we refer to other places in his writings, however, we find him using both terms synonymously. In Volume I of his Principles, pages 185-86, he writes regarding the difficulty involved in choosing some term that shall "designate all states of consciousness merely as such, and apart from their particular quality or cognitive function." After discussing the use for this purpose of such words as "psychosis,""idea," and "thought," and showing their limitations, James says: In this quandary we can make no definitive choice, but must, according to the convenience of the context, use sometimes one, sometimes another of the synonyms that have been mentioned. My own partiality is for either FEELING or THOUGHT. I shall probably often use both words in a wider sense than usual, and alternately startle two classes of readers by their unusual sound; but if the connection makes it clear that mental states at large,

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[1] William James: Some Problems of Philosophy, p.47.

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irrespective of their kind, are meant, this will do no harm, and may even do some good." )

Instinctive reactions lead to cognitions and the building up of the intellectual life. Affectional reactions lead to the building up of emotions, and out of these grow sentiments, ideals, etc., in which we find various mixtures of both the affective and the intellective. But, says James,

> "In speaking of the instincts it has been impossible to keep them separate from the emotional excitements which go with them. Objects of rage, love, fear, etc., not only prompt a man to outward deeds, but provoke characteristic alterations in his attitude and visage, and affect his breathing, circulation, and other organic functions in specific ways. When the outward deeds are inhibited, these latter emotional expressions still remain, and we read the anger in the face, - though the blow may not be struck, and the fear betrays itself in voice and color, though one may suppress all other sign. Instinctive reactions and emotional expressions thus shade imperceptibly into each other. Every object that excites an instinct excites an emotion as well." [1]

We have already seen how instinctive and reflexive reactions arise. There is present the instinctive tendency in an organism constructed for behavior. Certain stimuli impinge upon an end organ in the periphery, or are centrally aroused, and these stimuli provoke an electro-chemical impulse that travels over the sensory nerves, into the central nervous system, and out to the

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1 Principles, Vol. II, p.442.

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muscles and glands through the motor neurones. Instinctive tendencies, then, are for, and result in, behavior, either exhibitive or inhibitive. But behavior also results from emotional disturbances. "All feeling," says James, "is for the sake of action, all feeling results in action, - to-day no argument is needed to prove these truths." [1] Now, how are emotional excitements liberated?

This brings us to the famous James-Lange theory of the emotions. James, however, is credited with having arrived at his conclusions and to have publshed them prior to and independent of the publication of Lange's theory. We shall follow James's own exposition of the theory:

"Our natural way of thinking about these standard emotions is that the mental perception of some fact excites the mental affection called the emotion, and that this latter state of mind gives rise to the bodily expression. My thesis, on the contrary, is that <u>the bodily changes follow directly the PERCEPTION of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion</u>. Common sense says, we lose our fortune, are sorry and weep; we meet a bear, are frightened and run; we are insulted by a rival, are angry and strike. The hypothesis here to be defended says that this order of sequence is incorrect, that the one mental state is not immediately induced by the other, that the bodily manifestations must first be interposed between, and that the more rational statement is that we feel sorry because we cry, angry because

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[1] "The Function of Cognition," <u>The Meaning of Truth</u>, p.22.

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we strike," etc. [1]

The views here expressed, so startling at first, have become more and more generally accepted by psychologists. The significance of this theory lies not in its seeming strangeness, but rather in the fact that it gives added confirmation to the theory that mental states, be they affective or intellective, are closely linked up with, and are dependent upon the physical body of the animal.

(?)

James would defend himself against the claim that he is advancing a "materialistic" view, the word materialistic here being used with its more opprobrious connotation:

> "Let not this view be called materialisitc. It is neither more nor less materialistic than any other view which says that our emotions are conditioned by nervous processes. No reader of this book is likely to rebel against such a saying so long as it is expressed in general terms; and if any one still finds materialism in the thesis now defended, that must be because of the special processes invoked. They are sensational processes, processes due to inward currents set up by physical happenings. Such processes have, it is true, always been regarded by the platonizers in psychology as having something peculiarly base about them. But our emotions must always be inwardly what they are, whatever be the physiological ground of their apparition. If they are deep, pure, worthy, spiritual facts on any conceivable theory of their physiological source, they remain no less deep, pure, spiritual, and worthy of regard on this present sensational

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[1] "What is an Emotion?" Collected Essays and Reviews, p.247-48; also see p.449-474 of James's Principles, Vol.II.

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theory. They carry their own inner measure of worth with them; and it is just as logical to use the present theory of the emotions for proving that sensational processes need not be vile and material, as to use their vileness and materiality as a proof that such a theory cannot be true." [1]

James asserts that the physiology of the brain corroborates his view of the emotions. If the neural process that underlies emotional consciousness be what he says it is, then there need to be in the brain no special centers for emotion. "Sensational, associational, and motor elements are all that the organ need contain." And is it just a coincidence that the physiologists who have been so painstakingly studying the brain and its functions "have limited their explanations to its cognitive and volitional performances?" [2]

But we are not concerned in this paper with going into a critical discussion of James's different theories, trying to find support for them, or endeavoring to show their fallacy. We are mainly interested in getting James's views, putting them down in an orderly way, and letting them speak for themselves. James's whole discussion of the emotions is interesting and convincing.

From the cognitive and affective we turn for a brief consideration of James's views on the volitional element

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[1] Principles, Vol. II, p.453

[2] Ibid., p.472-73.

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of the mind.

Voluntary movements are secondary performances. The primary movements of the organism, as we have seen, are those automatic and reflexive ones which, on the first occasion of their performance at any rate, are not foreseen by the agent. [1] "This," says James, "is the first point to understand in the psychology of Volition. Reflex, instinctive, and emotional movements are all primary performances." [2] Out of these primary performances our voluntary movements are built up. How? Through the experience we are enabled to frame ideas of what the experience is like. Afterward, then, with this knowledge stored away in memory, we can voluntarily and deliberately will the act. "A supply of ideas of the various movements that are possible, left in the memory by experiences of their involuntary performance, is thus the first prerequisite of the voluntary life." [3] With these ideas, for there to be action there must be "the _fiat_, the element of consent, or resolve that the act shall ensue." [4]

As James builds up his theory of volition upon the function of ideas, we need to go slow at this point. He says there are two kinds of ideas, _resident_ and _remote_.

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[1] _Briefer Course_, p.415. [2] _Ibid._, p.415-16.
[3] _Ibid._, p.416. [4] _Ibid._, p.419.

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The former are due to resident sensations, or kinaesthetic feelings. Memories of these are called kinaesthetic ideas. Remote ideas are ideas "of the movement as it feels in some other part of the body which it affects ( strokes, presses, scratches, etc. ), or as it sounds, or as it looks." [1]

"We need, then, when we perform a movement, either a kinaesthetic or a remote idea of which special movement it is to be. In addition to this it has often been supposed that we need an idea of the amount of innervation required for the muscular contraction. The discharge from the motor centre into the motor nerve is supposed to give a sensation *sui generis*, opposed to all our other sensations." [2]

Without going into the detailed evidence for or against the existence of this third kind of idea, it will be sufficient to state that James feels that this third kind of idea is not called for. "Many authors deny that this feeling exists, and the proofs of its existence are certainly insufficient." [3]

"An anticipatory image, then, of the sensorial consequences of a movement, plus ( on certain occasions ) the fiat that these consequences shall become actual, is the only psychic state which introspection lets us discern as the forerunner of our voluntary acts." [4]

Thus, states James, "the entire content and material

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.417. [2] *Ibid.*, p.418. [3] *Ibid.*, p.418.
[4] *Ibid.*, p.420.

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of our consciousness -- consciousness of movement, as of all things else -- seems . . . to be of peripheral origin and to come in the first instance through the peripheral nerves." [1]

If we call the last idea in the mind which precedes the motor discharge the "motor-cue," is this motor cue made up of resident or remote images? Either kind, replies James, can form the cue. "Although at the outset of our learning a movement it would seem that the resident feelings must come strongly before consciousness, later this need not be the case. The rule, in fact, would seem to be that they tend to lapse more and more from consciousness, and that the more practiced we become in a movement, the more 'remote' do the ideas become which form its mental cue." "What interest us are the ends which the movement is to attain." "The idea of the end, then, tends more and more to make itself all-sufficient." [2]

Professor James then raises this additional question:

"Is the bare idea of a movement's sensible effects its sufficient motor-cue, or must there be an additional mental antecedent, in the shape of a fiat, decision, consent, volitional mandate, or other synonymous phenomenon of consciousness, before the movement can follow?"

And he answers:

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.420. [2] *Ibid.*, p.420-21.

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> "sometimes the bare idea is sufficient, but sometimes an additional conscious element, in the shape of a fiat, mandate, or express consent, has to intervene and precede the movement. The cases without a fiat constitute the more fundamental, because the more simple, variety." [1]

Here we have voluntary action divided into two kinds. The first is called ideo-motor action, and this takes place wherever a movement _unhesitatingly_ and _immediately_ follows upon the idea of it. It is the absence of any conflicting notion in the mind, says James, which is "the determining condition of the unhesitating and resistless sequence of the act." [2] The other kind of voluntary action, that requiring some express consent, fiat, mandate, would then be that action following some conflicting notion in the mind. Some choice must be made; a problem has been met and must be solved.

> "We may then lay it down for certain that every representation of a movement awakens in some degree the actual movement which is its object; and awakens it in a maximum degree whenever it is not kept from so doing by an antagonistic representation present simultaneously to the mind." [3]

In other words, man is a behaving animal. Cognitive and emotional states all exist for behavior. Action is the completion of the process of which cognition and affection are the beginning elements.

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[1] _Ibid._, p.422-23. [2] _Ibid._, p.424.
[3] _Ibid._, p.426.

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"Movement is the natural immediate effect of the process of feeling, irrespective of what the quality of the feeling may be. It is so in reflex action, it is so in emotional expression, it is so in the voluntary life. Ideo-motor action is thus no paradox, to be softened or explained away. It obeys the type of all conscious action, and from it one must start to explain the sort of action in which a special fiat is involved." [1]

In action after deliberation there is first in the mind some conflict. "The result is that peculiar feeling of inward unrest known as indecision." [2] Finally something comes to reinforce one side or the other, and movement takes place in accordance with the prevailing idea or set of ideas. This process of deliberation may be relatively simple or it may contain endless degrees of complication. One's consciousness at a time like this is extremely complex.

"Of this complicated object ( the whole set of motives and their conflict ), the totality of which is realized more or less dimly all the while by consciousness, certain parts stand out more or less sharply at one moment in the foreground, and at another moment other parts, in consequence of the oscillations of our attention and of the 'associative' flow of our ideas. But no matter how sharp the foreground-reasons may be, or how imminently close to bursting through the dam and carrying the motor consequences their own way, the background, however dimly felt, is always there as a fringe . . . . .; and its presence ( so long as the indecision actually lasts ) serves as an effective check upon the irrevocable discharge. The deliberation may last for weeks or months, occupying at intervals the mind. The motives which yesterday seemed full of urgency and blood and life to-day feel strangely weak and pale and dead. But as little to-day as to-morrow is the question finally resolved . . . . This inclining

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[1] Ibid., p.427. [2] Ibid., p.428.

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first to one, then to another future, both of which we represent as possible, resembles the oscillations to and fro of a material body within the limits of its elasticity . . . . . If the elasticity give way, however, if the dam ever do break, and the currents burst the crust, vacillation is over and decision is irrevocably there."[1]

James attempts to classify decision into various types. In practically all decisions, he says, they are made without effort. But there is a type of decision in which there is the feeling of effort.[2] The decisions without effort are not without deliberation. But the deliberation comes to an end as a result of certain emotional or intellectual factors without the strain involved in the other type of decision. The feeling of effort, then, complicates volition. But what is the cause of this feeling of effort, and when does it complicate volition?

"It does so whenever a rarer and more ideal impulse is called upon to neutralize others of a more instinctive and habitual kind; it does so whenever strongly explosive tendencies are checked, or strongly obstructive conditions overcome."[3]

After discussing the pleasure and pain as springs of action, and saying that, "important as is the influence of pleasures and pains upon our movements, they are far from being our only stimuli,[4] Professor James writes:

"If one must have a single name for the condition

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[1] Ibid., p.428-29. [2] Ibid., p.433. [3] Ibid., p.442.
[4] Ibid., p.444-45.

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upon which the impulsive and inhibitive quality of objects depends, one had better call it their interest. . . . . . It seems as if we ought to look for the secret of an idea's impulsiveness, not in any peculiar relations which it may have with paths of motor discharge, - for all ideas have relations with some such paths, - but rather in a preliminary phenomenon, the urgency, namely, with which it is able to compel attention and dominate it in consciousness. Let it once so dominate, let no other ideas succeed in displacing it, and whatever motor effects belong to it by nature will inevitably occur . . . . . . . . [1]

Whic is to say that, even in this most complicated sort of volitionary action, where there is not only deliberation, but a deliberation involving a strain and feeling of effort, the action is, after all, ideo-motor action. "In short, one does not see any case in which the steadfast occupancy of consciousness does not appear to be the prime condition of impulsive power. It is still more obviously the prime condition of inhibitive power." [2]

If, then, volition of all kinds falls back upon the prevalence of ideas in the mind, we are "driven more and more exclusively to consider the conditions which make ideas prevail in the mind." [3] The movements themselves do not necessarily concern us in the psychology of volition. They are "exclusively physiological

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[1] Ibid., p.448. [2] Ibid., p.448.

[3] Ibid., p.449.

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phenomena, following according to physiological laws upon the neural events to which the idea corresponds. The willing terminates with the prevalence of the idea; and whether the act then follows or not is a matter quite immaterial, so far as the willing itself goes." [1] "Volition is a psychic or moral fact pure and simple, and is absolutely completed when the stable state of the idea is there. The supervention of motion is a supernumerary phenomenon depending on executive ganglia whose function lies outside the mind." [2]

By what process is it that the thought of any given action finally comes to prevail stably in the mind? All that any case of volition implies is attention with effort. "The essential achievement of the will, in short, when it is most 'voluntary,' is to attend to a difficult object and hold it fast before the mind. The so-doing *is* the *fiat*; and it is a mere physiological incident that when the object is thus attended to, immediate motor consequences should ensue." [3] Effort of attention is the essential phenomenon of will. The will applies itself to an idea. "Consent to the idea's undivided presence, this is effort's sole achievement." [4] This undivided presence means that it must not be allowed to flicker and

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.449. [2] *Ibid.*, p.449. [3] *Ibid.*, p.450
[4] *Ibid.*, p.452

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go out, but that it must be kept "steadily before the mind until it fills the mind."

"To sum it all up in a word," writes James, "the terminus of the psychological process in volition, the point to which the will is directly applied, is always an idea . . . . The only resistance which our will can possibly experience is the resistance which such an idea offers to being attended to at all. To attend to it is the volitional act, and the only inward volitional act which we ever perform."[1]

Although James has stated that the question of free-will is insoluble on strictly psychologic grounds, we are to note that, even in his psychology, he was clearly opposed to the automaton theory. He made various experiments upon animals such as frogs, and found that the presence of the cerebral hemispheres in an animal made a decided difference in its activities and responses. Without the cerebrum there was, indeed, the automatic response of the reflexive type. With the cerebrum present, the response was various and indeterminable. James came to the conclusion that the cerebrum, the physical basis of consciousness, had been evolved for a specific purpose:

"As a mere conception, and so long as we confine our view to the nervous centres themselves, few things are more seductive than this radically mechanical theory of their action. And yet our consciousness is there,

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1 Ibid., p.455.

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and has in all probability been evolved, like all other functions, for a use -- it is to the highest degree improbable a priori that it should have no use. Its use seems to be that of selection; but to select, it must be efficacious. States of consciousness which feel right are held fast top those which feel wrong are checked. If the 'holding' and the 'checking' of the conscious states severally mean also the efficacious reinforcing or inhibiting of the correlated neural processes, then it would seem as if the presence of the states of mind might help to steer the nervous system and keep it in the path which to the consciousness seemed best." [1]

That the brain is a physical machine James does not deny, but readily affirms. But consciousness and the brain are not equivalent terms. And James raises the question: "Can consciousness increase its efficiency by loading its dice?" [2]

"Loading its dice would mean bringing a more or less constant pressure to bear in favor of those of its performances which make for the most permanent interests of the brain's owner; it would mean a constant inhibition of the tendencies to stray aside." [3]

Well, answers James to his own question, "just such pressure and such inhibitions are what consciousness seems to be exerting all the while." [4]

"The brain is an instrument of possiblities, but of no certainties. But the consciousness, with its own ends present to it, and knowing also well which possibilities lead thereto and which away, will, if endowed with casual efficacy, reinforce the favorable possibilities and repress the unfavorable or indifferent ones. The nerve-currents, coursing through the cells and fibres,

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[1] Ibid., p.103.
[2] Principles, Vol. I, p.140. [3] Ibid., p.140
[4] Ibid., p.140.

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must in this case be supposed strengthened by the fact of their awaking one consciousness and dampened by awaking another. How such reaction of the consciousness upon the currents may occur must remain at present unsolved . . . ."[1]

Other facts which seem to form circumstantial evidence regarding the causal efficacy of consciousness are the phenomena of "vicarious function"[2] and the fact that "that pleasures are generally associated with beneficial, pains with detrimental, experiences."[3]

Summing up his arguments against the automaton theory -- which arguments are too lengthy to produce here in detail -- James writes:

"Thus, then, from every point of view the circumstantial evidence against the theory is strong. A priori analysis of both brain-action and conscious action shows us that if the latter were efficacious it would, by its selective emphasis, make amends for the indeterminateness of the former; whilst the study a posteriori of the distribution of consciousness shows it to be exactly such as we might expect in an organ added for the sake of steering a nervous system grown too complex to regulate itself. The conclusion that it is useful is, after all this, quite justifiable. But, if it is useful, it must be so through its causal efficaciousness, and the automaton-theory must succumb to the theory of common-sense."[4]

So we have a James who holds to the cerebralistic theory of the mind, and who stoutly defends anti-mechanism. It is in just such matters as this that James

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[1] Ibid., p.141-42. [2] Ibid., p.67-72. [3] Ibid., p.143.
[4] Principles, Vol. I, p.144.

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causes confusion to many, especially to those who do not read him thoroughly. Attention has already been called in these pages to James's alleged inconsistencies. Now, how does James reconcile a cerebralistic theory of mental action with anti-automatism? Perhaps we can find this reconciliation, or at least an attempt at it, in the following quotation:

> "Taken thus absolutely," says James, regarding the working hypothesis of the cerebralistic-mental theory, "it may possibly be too sweeping a statement of what in reality is only a partial truth. But the only way to make sure of its unsatisficatoriness is to apply it seriously to every possible case that can turn up. To work an hypothesis ' for all it is worth' is the real, and often the only, way to prove its insufficiency. I shall therefore assume without scruple at the outset that the uniform correlation of brain-states with mind-states is a law of nature. The interpretation of the law in detail will best show where its facilities and where its difficulties lie. To some readers such an assumption will seem like the most unjustiable _a priori_ materialism. In one sense it doubtless is _materialism_; it puts the Higher at the mercy of the Lower. But although we affirm that the _coming to pass_ of thought is a consequence of _mechanical laws_, - _for_, according to another 'working hypothesis,' that namely of physiology, the laws of brain-action are at bottom mechanical laws, - we do not in the least explain the _nature_ of thought by affirming this dependence, and _in that_ latter sense our proposition is not materialism."[1]

We shall have to content ourselves so far as this paper is concerned, with the foregoing account, - with its recognized weaknesses and superficiality, - of James's psychology; and in the next chapter we shall consider his general philosophy.

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[1] _Briefer Course_, p.6.

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Chapter IV

# THE GENERAL PHILOSOPHY OF WILLIAM JAMES

It did not dawn upon the minds of most Americans until late in William James's life that a new philosophic star was shining in the firmament. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country," writes Professor George Santayana, quoting the words of Jesus; "and until the return wave of James's reputation reached America from Europe his pupils and friends were hardly aware that he was such a distinguished man." [1] But if men were slow, as is nearly always the case, in recognizing greatness in their midst, there have been increasing numbers since his death to attribute to William James the highest rank as a philosopher.

"William James," writes F. C. S. Schiller, in the July, 1921, issue of the _Quarterly Review_, "was a great man; the greatest probably, who has yet 'taken birth' in the Great Republic. He was also a great philosopher, one of the half-dozen who have made an epoch and given a new direction to the deepest, and dimmest, _nisus_ of the human soul. But he was a great

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[1] _Character and Opinion in the United States_, p.94.

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philosopher because he was a great man; a great man essentially, a philosopher consequently."[1]

James "was a real philosopher of the race of Socrates," says John Macy.[2] "Our Foremost Philosopher," is the title of an article, referring to William James, in Current Literature for October, 1910.[3] And in an article titled "William James, Leader in Philosophical Thought," appearing in the Outlook in February, 1907, George Hodges writes: "I am maintaining the proposition, which nobody, I suppose, will dispute, that Professor James is not only the most eminent but also the most interesting of all our contemporary philosophers."[4] James is called "one of the half dozen greatest Americans of his generation" by Edward L. Thorndike[5]; an "acknowledged leader in philosophical thought in America" by M. Irwin Macdonald[6]; "the first great evolutionary philosopher" by H. M. Kallen,[7] who also predicts that the pluralism of James and of Bergson will be "the genuine philosophy of the future."[8] Many other such statements of praise might be quoted to

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1 Vol. 236, p.27.
2 "William James as Man of Letters," The Bookman, Vol.33, April, 1911, p.206.
3 Vol. 49, p.415-8.
4 Vol. 85, p.449.
5 Science, N.s.53, Feb. 18, 1921, p.165.
6 The Craftsman: "The Common Sense of William James: Why His Thought has become the Thought of the People," Vol. 19, Nov. 1910, p.135.
7 Current Literature, "Comments on James's Pluralistic Philosophy," Vol. 47, August, 1909, p.185
8 Ibid.

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show the esteem in which James is held as a philosopher.

There are some, however, who take an unfriendly and antagonistic attitude toward James as a philosopher. He is described, in a sort of superior tone that is clearly apparent between the lines, as "the son of a Swedenborgian mystic and writer"; as one "gifted with a charming literary style, a keen sense for the dramatic in presentation; and a love of speculation without any positive determination to arrive at a solution." [1] Jacques Maritain, in an obviously unfriendly article named "William James and his Impetuous Philosophy," writes: "For all that, his ( James's ) European fame is out of proportion to the true value of his thought." "After all," continues Mr. Maritain, "what is pluralism? A vague term for a vague idea, emotional rather than intellectual in content, . . ." [2] "There is something like the hilarity of sport," says Paul Elmer More, "in dragging out the inconsistencies, if not insincerities, of a philosopher who has tried to defend rationally a system which is professedly an attack on rationalism." [3]

According to certain criteria, writes Morris R. Cohen, James is no philosopher at all.

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[1] Current Literature: "Is the Psychology taught at Harvard a National Peril?" Vol. 46, April, 1909, p.436.

[2] Living Age, Vol. 311, Nov. 12, 1921, p.392,393.

[3] Shelburne Essays, Seventh Series, p.196-97.

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"The extreme orthodox view was boldly put by Howison thus: 'Emerson and James were both great men of letters, great writers, yes, great thinkers, if you will, but they do not belong in the strict list of philosophers. Mastery in logic is the cardinal test of the true philosopher, and neither Emerson nor James possessed it.'" So, continues Cohen, "from the professional point of view it is not sufficient that a man should believe in free will, absolute chance, or the survival of consciousness beyond death. To be worthy of being called a philosopher, one must have a logically reasoned basis for his belief." [1]

"There is a sense," claims Professor Santayana, "in which James was not a philosopher at all. He once said to me: 'What a curse philosophy would be if we couldn't forget all about it!' In other words, philosophy was not to him what it has been to so many, a consolation and sanctuary in a life which would have been unsatisfying without it. It would be incongruous, therefore, to expect of him that he should build a philosophy like an edifice to go and live in for good. Philosophy to him was rather like a maze in which he happened to find himself wandering, and what he was looking for was the way out." [2]

Professor Santayana's criticisms of James are perhaps the most keenly critical of any I have read. One can see, however, in the foregoing quoted statements, that there was a wide divergence between Santayana and James in their philosophic positions. Most philosophers have built themselves an edifice in which to live for good. They have thenceforth lived in the realm of conceptions and abstractions, which, according to James, are dead things, if not kept constantly in touch with the flux

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1 "On American Philosophy: William James." The New Republic, Vol. 20, Oct. 1, 1919, p.255.
2 Op. cit., p.92.

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of life. Such philosophers have followed the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition of staticism, and it was against this conception of life that James raised his voice. What has concluded, that we should conclude? asks James. The whole story has not been told, nor can be told, until the last man has performed his last act, whenever and if ever that comes to pass.

From these criticisms, both of praise and of disparagement, of James as a philosopher, let us turn to James's own statements regarding what, in his opinion, philosophy is.

> "The principles of explanation that underlie all things without exception, the elements common to gods and men and animals and stones, the first _whence_ and the last _whither_ of the whole cosmic procession, the conditions of all knowing, and the most general rules of human action - these furnish the problems commonly deemed philosophic _par excellence_; and the philosopher is the man who finds the most to say about them . . .
> Philosophy, indeed, in one sense of the term is only a compendious name for the spirit in education which the word 'college' stands for in America. Things can be taught in dry dogmatic ways or in a philosophic way. At a technical school a man may grow into a first-rate instrument for doing a certain job, but he may miss all the graciousness of mind suggested by the term liberal culture." [1]

Philosophy is, in its fullest sense, "only man thinking, thinking about generalities rather than about particulars." [2] And his thinking includes four different

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[1] _Some Problems in Philosophy_, p.5-6
[2] Ibid., p.15.

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human interests, namely, science, poetry, religion, and logic. The interaction of these upon one another constitutes philosophy in an historical sense.[1]

"In its original acceptation, meaning the completest knowledge of the universe, philosophy must include the results of all the sciences, and cannot be contrasted with the latter. It simply aims at making of science what Herbert Spencer calls a 'system of completely unified knowledge.' In the more modern sense, of something contrasted with the sciences, philosophy means 'metaphysics.' The older sense is the more worthy sense, and as the results of the sciences get more available for co-ordination, and the conditions for finding truth in different kinds of question get more methodically defined, we may hope that the term will revert to its original meaning. Science, metaphysics, and religion may then again form a single body of wisdom and lend each other mutual support."[2]

James, however, in his volume titled Some Problems in Philosophy, prefers, in view of the existing state of knowledge, to limit his use of the term philosophy to the narrow sense of metaphysics, "and to let both religion and the results of science alone."[3] But in other works he deals at length with religious questions; and we have seen already something of his endeavor to deal with psychology as a science. Metaphysics and religion will be the two principal subjects discussed in the present chapter.

The three main problems that James interested himself

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[1] Ibid., p.7 [2] Ibid., p.27. [3] Ibid., p.28.

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in were Radical Empiricism, Pragmatism, and Pluralism. We shall take them up in their order, realizing all the time, however, that there is a constant overlapping in the handling and discussion of these three subjects.

## A. Radical Empiricism.

Radical empiricism is the name given by James to his theory of knowledge. Empiricism, defines Professor James, "means the habit of explaining whole by parts," as contrasted with Rationalism, which "means the habit of explaining parts by wholes."[1] There is a difference, however, between simple empiricism and radical empiricism. Professor Dewey defines the latter as the belief "that things are what they are experienced as."[2] James writes:

> "I give the name of 'radical empiricism' to my *Weltanschauung*. Empiricism is known as the opposite of rationalism. Rationalism tends to emphasize universals and to make wholes prior to parts in the order of logic as well as in that of being. Empiricism, on the contrary, pays the explanatory stress upon the part, the element, the individual, and treats the whole as a collection and the universal as an abstraction. . . . . .
>
> To be radical, an empiricism must neither admit into its constructions any element that is not directly experienced, nor exclude from them any element that is directly experienced. For such a philosophy, the relations

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[1] William James: *A Pluralistic Universe*, p.7.
[2] *Journal of Philosophy*, etc., Vol. II, p.393.

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that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as 'real' as anything else in the system.
. . . . .

Now, ordinary empiricism, in spite of the fact that conjunctive and disjunctive relations present themselves as being fully co-ordinate parts of experience, has always shown a tendency to do away with the connections of things, and to insist most on the disjunctions. . . . .

The natural result of such a world-picture has been the effort of rationalism to correct its incoherencies by the addition of transexperiential agents of unification, substances, intellectual categories and powers, or Selves; whereas if empiricism had only been radical and taken everything that comes without disfavor, conjunction as well as separation, each at its face value, the results would have called for no such artificial correction." [1]

In another place James says:

"I am interested in another doctrine in philosophy to which I give the name of radical empiricism, and it seems to me that the extablishment of the pragmatist theory of truth is a step of first-rate importance in making radieal empiricism prevail. Radical empiricism consists first of a postulate, next of a statement of fact, and finally of a generalized conclusion.

The postulate is that the only things that shall be debatable among philosophers shall be things definable in terms drawn from experience. . . . .

The statement of fact is that the relations between things, conjunctive as well as disjunctive, are just as much matters of direct particular experience, neither more nor less so, than the things themselves.

The generalized conclusion is that therefore the parts of experience hold together from next to next by relations that are themselves parts of experience. The directly apprehended universe needs, in short, no extraneous trans-empirical connective support, but possesses in its own right a concatenated or continuous structure." [2]

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[1] Essays in Radical Empiricism, p. 41-44.

[2] The Meaning of Truth, p. xii-xiii.

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The fact that the parts of experience hold together from next to next does not mean that all life is a unity. Life is both unity and disunity. With the passage of time perhaps the unity will become greater. In fact, radical empiricism agrees "that there appear to be actual forces at work which tend, as time goes on, to make the unity greater."[1] But as long as there is the least amount of disunity, things are not one, - as say the monists, - and pluralism is a fact. Radical empiricism is thus "fair to both the unity and the disconnection. It finds no reason for treating either as illusory. It allots to each its definite sphere of description."[2]

Experience, then, becomes James's basis and criterion of knowledge. He refuses to leave out of consideration, in his search for truth and reality, anything of an experiential nature. That is why he interested himself in psychical research, and studied for years, in an open-minded, unbiased way, the phenomena of spiritism. We are forced, said James, to go back to direct experience itself for knowledge. Herein lies his radicalism in the matter of empiricism. A consideration, therefore, of both knowledge and experience, seems to be necessary at this place.

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[1] Essays in Radical Empiricism, p.47.
[2] Ibid., p.47.

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Knowledge may be said to be of two types, the perceptual and the conceptual. Man's experience originally comes in the perceptual order, says James, and man's intellectual life consists almost entirely in his substituting a conceptual for the perceptual order.[1] A line of cleavage in philosophy appears just at this place. The rationalists and empiricists appear. The cleavage itself goes back to the time of Plato and Aristotle, and first by one set of names and then by another the two opposing sides have drawn the lines of battle. The rationalists, as has already been suggested, lay the greater or the complete emphasis on the conceptual, the empiricists giving first place to the perceptual. James followed the Aristotelian school,but whereas Aristotle's philosophy is static, James's is active, and he is, as we have seen, not merely an empiricist, but a radical empiricist.

"For rationalistic writers conceptual knowledge was not only the more noble knowledge, but it originated independently of all perceptual particulars. Such concepts as God, perfection, eternity, infinity, immutability, identity, absolute beauty, truth, justice, necessity, freedom, duty, worth, etc., and the part they play in our mind, are, it was supposed, impossible to explain as results of practical experience. The empiricist view, and

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[1] Ibid., p. 51.

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probably the true view, is that they do result from practical experience."[1]

Of course James recognizes the value of concepts and the irreplaceable part they play in man's thinking. Without them man would be in a terrible fix. With their use we can bridge chasms otherwise practically impassable. Thinking would be at a standstill had we to repeat in every thought process all the perceptual facts involved in the different objects of perception. "We harness perceptual reality in concepts in order to drive it better to our ends."[2] But, to James, concepts are secondary, derivative from percepts, which are primary, foundational. In his latter days James attempted to mediate between the two attitudes. "It is possible," he said, "to join the rationalists in allowing conceptual knowledge to be self-sufficing, while at the same time one joins the empiricists in maintaining that the full value of such knowledge is got only by combining it with perceptual reality again."[3]

"Since it is only the conceptual form which forces the dialectic contradictions upon the innocent sensible reality, the remedy would seem to be simple. Use concepts when they help, and drop them when they hinder understanding; and take reality bodily and integrally up into philosophy in exactly the perceptual shape in which it comes. The

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1 *Ibid.*, p.55 [2] *Ibid.*, p. 65. [3] *Ibid.*, p.58

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aboriginal flow of feeling sins only by a quantitative defect. There is always much-at-once of it, but there is never enough, and we desiderate the rest. The only way to get the rest without wading through all future time in the person of numberless perceivers, is to substitute our various conceptual systems which, monstrous abridgments though they be, are nevertheless each an equivalent for some partial aspect of the full perceptual reality which we can never grasp.

This, essentially, is Bergson's view of the matter, and with it I think that we should rest content." [1]

Whereas conceptualism leads to intellectualism, and intellectualism leads to a system of an all-inclusive world-view, and an Absolute as the All-knower, empiricist philosophy, on the contrary, "renounces the pretension to an all-inclusive vision."

"It ekes out the narrowness of personal experience by concepts which it finds useful but not sovereign; but it stays inside the flux of life expectantly, recording facts, not formulating laws, and never pretending that man's relation to the totality of things as a philosopher is essentially different from his relation to the parts of things as a daily patient or agent in the practical current of events. Philosophy, like life, must keep the doors and windows open." [2]

Many other quotations of similar import could be adduced from James's writings to support the ones already given, but what has been put down is quite sufficient to indicate James's views on the value of experience, and hence of the perceptual, in arriving at an understanding of truth and reality. More will be said about the nature

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[1] Ibid., p.95-96.

[2] William James: Some Problems in Philosophy, p. 99-100.

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of truth when we discuss Pragmatism.

While we are on the subject of Radical Empiricism, with its superstructure built upon the foundational stone of pure Experience, we need to consider James's philosophic views regarding consciousness. As we have already seen in the chapter dealing with his psychology, James posited a consciousness, or rather states of consciousness, in the human organism. These states of consciousness were, of course, hypothesized as a datum immediately given. By the law of parsimony, then, it became unnecessary to assume, - for psychological purposes, - a Soul or transcendental Ego, inasmuch as the "states of consciousness" could perform all the acts ( such as the act of Knower and of Experiencer ) that the idealists call upon the Soul to perform. James leaves the matter of Soul for metaphysics to take up. Now, in his philosophy, having made experience his foundational stone, he endeavors to show the connection between experience and consciousness, or, in other words, between the subjective and objective, the Knower and the known. The problem of how the subjective can lay hold of the objective is one that has engaged all philosophers. It has resulted in such a logical abstraction as the Absolute ( James himself tries logically to show that the Absolute is an illogicality ), and in such principles as Monism, Pantheism, etc. More will be said of these things, when

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we consider James's Pluralism and his religious views.

James suggests as a thesis "that there is only one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed," [1] and, says James, "if we call that stuff 'pure experience,' then knowing can easily be explained as a particular sort of relation towards one another into which parts of pure experience may enter." [2] Pure experience, then, comprehends both consciousness and the content, the subject and object, the knower and the known.

> "Experience, I believe, has no such inner duplicity; and the separation of it into consciousness and content comes, not by way of subtraction, but by way of addition—the addition, to a given concrete piece of it, or other sets of experiences, in connection with which severally its use or function may be of two different kinds. . . Just so, I maintain, does a given undivided portion of experience, taken in one context of associates, play the part of a knower, of a state of mind, of 'consciousness'; while in a different context the same individual bit of experience plays the part of a thing known, of an objective 'content,' In a word, in one group it figures as a thought, in another group as a thing. And, since it can figure in both groups simultaneously, we have every right to speak of it as subjective and objective at once." [3]

Consciousness as an entity thus ceases, for James, to be valued as an hypothesis. For twenty years, he said, writing in 1904, "I have mistrusted 'consciousness' as an entity; for seven or eight years past I have suggest-

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[1] _Essays in Radical Empiricism_, p.4
[2] _Ibid._, p. 4
[3] _Ibid._, p.9.

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ed its non-existence to my students, and tried to give them its pragmatic equivalent in realities of experience. It seems to me that the hour is ripe for it to be openly and universally discarded." [1]

James feels that, in hypothesizing pure experience as the one primal stuff in the world, he is only building on foundations already laid by Berkeley and Locke:

"The entering wedge for this more concrete way of understanding the dualism was fashioned by Locke when he made the word 'idea' stand indifferently for thing and thought, and by Berkeley when he said that what common sense means by realities is exactly what the pholosopher means by ideas. Neither Locke nor Berkeley thought his truth out into perfect clearness, but it seems to me that the conception I am defending does little more than consistently carry out the 'pragmatic' method which they were the first to use." [2]

James realizes the "hot water" he is getting himself into with some readers when he denies the existence of consciousness:

"To deny plumply that 'consciousness' exists seems so absurd on the face of it - for undeniably 'thoughts' do exist - that I fear some readers will follow me no farther. Let me then immediately explain that I mean only to deny that the word stands for an entity, but to insist most emphatically that it does stand for a function. There is, I mean, no aborginal stuff or quality of being, contrasted with that of which material objects are made, out of which our thoughts of them are made; but there is a function in experience which thoughts perform, and for the performance of which this quality of being is invoked. That function is knowing."[3]

But to call this primal stuff, if indeed it is such, "pure experience" will not, to many people, solve the problem.

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[1] Ibid., p.3.
[2] Ibid., p.10-11
[3] Ibid., p.3-4.

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"First of all, this will be asked: 'If experience has not "conscious" existence, if it be not partly made of "consciousness," of what then is it made? Matter we know, and thought we know, and conscious content we know, but neutral and simple "pure experience" is something we know not at all. Say what it consists of - for it must consist of something - or be willing to give it up!' " [1]

James answers this challenge in this way: Although he had spoken of a "stuff of pure experience," he would enlarge upon that phase of the matter by saying that "there is no general stuff of which experience at large is made":

> "There are as many stuffs as there are 'natures' in the things experienced. If you ask what any one bit of pure experience is made of, the answer os always the same: 'It is made of that, of just what appears, of space, of intensity, of flatness, brownness, heaviness, or what not.' Shadworth Hodgson's analysis here leaves nothing to be desired. Experience is only a collective name for all these sensible natures, and save for time and space (and, if you like, for 'being') there appears no universal element of which all things are made." [2]

It looked as though we were going to make a real monist of our James when we started out with his statements as to the indentity of content of both subject and object, but we wind up with a conclusion of an entirely opposite nature. It does seem that James is guilty here of the very sin that he frequently impugns to the abstractionists. Taking a dualism (that of knower and known), and endeavoring to show their unity, so that he may logically explain how the sub-

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[1] Ibid., p.26.
[2] Ibid., p.26-27.

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ject can grasp the object in thought, he abstracts therefrom the conception of Pure Experience which, when put to the test, is not one stuff, but as many stuffs as there are 'natures' in the things experienced, there appearing to be "no universal element of which all things are made." Instead of a mere dualism we come out of the dilemma with a veritable pluralism of the rankest kind. No wonder James is accused of inconsistencies and illogicalities!

But let us go with James to the end of his argument in favor of the "pure experience" hypothesis. He says that even if his other answers prove satisfactory, there will likely be "a last cry of <u>non possumus</u>" to go up from many readers. " 'All very pretty as a piece of ingenuity,' they will say, 'but our consciousness itself intuitively contradicts you. We, for our part, <u>know</u> that we are conscious. We feel our thoughts flowing with the objects which it so unremittingly escorts. We cannot be faithless to this immediate intuition. The dualism is a fundamental datum; Let no man join what God has put asunder.' "[1]

To which Professor James replies:

> "This is my last word and I greatly grieve that to many it will sound materialistic. I can not help that, however, for I, too, have my intuitions and I must obey them. Let the case be what it may in others, I am as confident as I am of anything that, in myself, the stream of thinking (which I recognize emphatically as a phenomenon) is only a careless name for what, when scrutinized, reveals itself to consist chiefly of the stream of my breathing. The 'I think( which Kant said must be able to accom-

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[1] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 36.

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pany all my objects, is the 'I breathe' which actually does accompany them. There are other internal facts besides breathing (intracephalic muscular adjustments, etc., of which I have said a word in my larger Psychology), and these increase the assets of 'consciousness,' so far as the latter is subject to immediate perception; but breath, thish was ever the original of 'spirit,' breath moving outwards, between the glottis and the nostrils, is, I am persuaded, the essence out of which philosophers have constructed the entity known to them as consciousness. <u>That entity is fictitious, while thoughts in the concrete are fully real. But thoughts in the concrete are made of the same stuff as things are.</u>" [1]

We have a good example in what has been written about consciousness of the way in which radical empiricism and pluralism, as subjects of discussion, cannot be kept apart. When we have discussed pragmatism we shall take up more in detail James's reasons for believing in pluralism.

Before passing from our consideration of James's radical empiricism to the consideration of his pragmatism it may be well for us to read Mr. Th. Flournoy's interpretation of James's epistemology. Mr. Flournoy refers to radical empiricism as the very heart of James's philosophy. The following quotations are from Flournoy's book, <u>The Philosophy of William James</u>:

"In every cognitive act analysis discovers two factors, on the one hand the intuitions of sense or the data of perception, and on the other the intellectual elements which serve to bind the sense-intuitions together, such as the concepts of identity, resemblance, difference, space and time, quantity and quality, causality, finality, possibility, necessity, reality, and in short all the ideas of relation which are, so to speak, the skeleton of our thought, and the logical scaffolding of our scientific and philosophical edifices. Now empiricists have always been much embarrassed by these intellectual factors, for which they are unable to

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[1] <u>Ibid.</u>, p.36-37.

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find a satisfactory origin among the sense-data; and so these factors straightway furnish the rationalists with an excuse for alleging that they are principles which utterly transcend experience. These are the rationalists' so-called innate ideas, a priori concepts, categories of the understanding, synthetic acts of pure reason, and so forth. Here again James takes his stand on introspective psychology and asserts that as a fact the relationships which our thought conceives as obtaining between the brute facts of sense, are themselves found just as much in immediate experience as are the brute facts! The result is that the famous categories of the mind, which have always been the corner-stone of rationalism and the stumbling-block of classical empiricism, cease to exist for radical empiricism. . . . The truth is that our inner life is far richer, more varied and profound than most philosophers . . have realized, and that when attentively examined it is found to contain a host of original experiences which have escaped the observation of both the one and the other." [1]

"This discovery, James's great contribution to psychology, constitutes the basis of his radical empiricism, both in metaphysics and epistemology." [2]

"James does not mean to imply that in each particular case the true relationships are necessarily perceived, for we should then be infallible; . . . What James means is that although we may be often deceived in experiencing these ideas of relation, nevertheless these ideas have their origin somehow in the immediate experience itself." [3]

B. Pragmatism.

William James devoted a good many pages to the development of his doctrine of Pragmatism. And it was a logical development of his attitude toward the primacy of the perceptual, and of his "passion for the immediate and actual and real." [4]

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[1] Op. cit., p. 74-76
[2] Ibid., p. 77
[3] Ibid., p. 76, footnote.
[4] Will Durant; The Story of Philosophy, p.556.

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"Brought up in the school of French clarity, he abominated the obscurities and pedantic terminology of German metaphysics; and when Harris and others began to import a moribund Hegelianism into America, James reacted like a quarantine officer who has detected an immigrant infection. He was convinced that both the terms and the problems of German metaphysics were unreal; and he cast about him for some test of meaning which would show, to every candid mind, the emptiness of these abstractions." [1]

His view of life was that it is not static, but constantly changing. Consciousness is not an entity, but a stream. Indeed, life exists for action. Cognition and affection both result in volition, and the rounding-out of every impression is some expression. This being true, life is continuously in the making. This is the evolutionary view. There can be no conclusion - at least theoretically, according to the radical empiricist's view, - until the last man has performed his last act. It is not strange, then, that James adopted the pragmatic method regarding truth. If life is not static, truth is not static; truth also is in the making, and we arrive at it *ambulando*. Pragmatism, then, even as radical empiricism, finds itself at war with rationalism. "Truth had been conceived as an objective relation, as once good and beauty had been; now what if truth, like these, were also relative to human judgment and human needs?" [2]

"Up to about 1850 almost every one believed that sciences expressed truths that were exact copies of a definite code of non-human realities. But the enormously rapid multiplication of theories in these latter days has

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.556-57.

[2] *Ibid.*, p.557.

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well-nigh upset the notion of any one of them being a more literally objective kind of thing than another. There are so many geometries, so many logics, so many physical and chemical hypothesis, so many classifications, each one of them good for so much and yet no good for everything, that the notion that even the truest formula may be a human device and not a literal transcript has dawned upon us." [1]

"The suspicion is in the air nowadays that the superiority of one of our formulas to another may not consist so much in its literal 'objectivity,' as in subjective qualities like its usefulness, its 'elegance' or its congruity with out residual beliefs. Yielding to these suspicions, and generalizing, we fall into something like the humanistic state of mind. Truth we conceive to mean everywhere, not duplication, but addition; not the constructing of inner copies of already complete realities so as to bring about a clearer result. Obviously this state of mind is at first full of vagueness and ambiguity." [2]

Truth, then, must like everything else, be brought to the touchstone of hyman experience. "All the sanctions of a law of truth lie in the very texture of experience. Absolute or no absolute, the concrete truth for us will always be that way of thinking in which our various experiences most profitably combine." [3] "How does the partisan of absolute reality know what this orders him to think? He cannot get direct sight of the absolute; and he has no means of guessing what it wants of him except by following the humanistic clues. The only truth that he himself will ever practically accept will be that to which his finite experiences lead him of themselves." [4]

We cannot but admire James for his tenacity in sticking

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1 William James: The Meaning of Truth, p.58
2 Ibid., p.60
3 Ibid., p.73
4 Ibid., p.72

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to experience as the center and circumference of his philosophic views. In this respect he became the philosopher of the common man, for he spoke a language the common man could understand and appreciate. And if we hold on to this underlying point of view of James's, we shall the better be able to understand his doctrine of pragmatism, whether we can or cannot fully subscribe to it.

What James actually did was to advocate a new definition of truth. And yet it was not a new definition, either.[1] He himself placed himself under tribute to Charles Peirce, who, in 1878, had written an article published in the Popular Science Monthly, on "How to Make Our Ideas Clear." In this essay Peirce had stated that the meaning of an idea must be ascertained in the light of the consequences to which it leads in action. Following this cue James turned to results as the criteria by which we are to judge of the value, and hence of the truth, of an idea.

> "Scholasticism asked, What is the thing?- and lost itself in 'quiddities'; Darwinism asked, What is its origin?- and lost itself in nebulas; pragmatism asks What are its consequences?- and turns the face of thought to action and the future." [2]

Truth, then, for James, was not a synonym of reality. "Realities are not true, they are; and beliefs are true of them. But I suspect," added James, "that in the anti-pragmatist mind the two notions sometimes swap their attributes.

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[1] Albert Schinz, in his book titled Anti-Pragmatism, suggests that Rousseau was one of James's most unmistakable precursors on the road to pragmatism.

[2] Durant: Story of Philosophy, p.558.

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The reality itself, I fear, is treated as if 'true;' and conversely." [1] Truth is only the "cash-value" of an idea. "The true . . . is only the expedient in the way of our behaving." [2] "The true is the name of whatever proves itself to be good in the way of belief." [3] I think we need to understand this point clearly if we would keep from getting an incorrect view of James's pragmatism. In denying abstract Truth[4] and in insisting upon a criterion of expediency in determining what is true James has been accused of making truth a mere subjective notion without any objective content. Under such circumstances it could mean anything, and its meaning to every individual person would be valid if it provided satisfactory consequences. Indeed, say some of the anti-pragmatists with regard to the pragmatist:

> "Believing as he does that truth lies _in rebus_ and is at every moment our own line of most propitious reaction, he (the pragmatist) stands forever debarred . . . from trying to convert opponents, for does not their view being their most propitious momentary reaction, already fill the bill? Only the believer in the _ante-rem_ brand of truth can on this theory seek to make converts without self-stultification." [5]

But James tried clearly to differentiate between reality and truth. Reality exists independent of the subject. If James was early an idealist, or granted certain things to

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1 _The Meaning of Truth_, p.196.
2 James: _Pragmatism_, p.222.
3 _Ibid._, p.45
4 _The Meaning of Truth_, p.202
5 _Ibid._, p.74.

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the idealists, he did not long hold to that belief. And as for solipsism, James recognized that one of the grave misunderstandings to which pragmatism was subjected was that "pragmatism is shut up to solipsism."[1]

"Men who see each other's bodies sharing the same space, treading the same earth, splashing the same water, making the same air resonant, and pursuing the same game and eating out of the same dish," wrote James, "will never practically believe in a pluralism of solipsistic worlds."[2]

In regard to the independent existence of reality James calls to his support both Dewey and Schiller. These two men had been advocating a "humanism" that was closely akin to James's pragmatism.

"As I myself understand these authors (Dewey and Schiller)," says James, "we all three absolutely agree in admitting the transcendency of the object (provided it be an experienceable object) to the subject in the truth relation. Dewey in particular has insisted almost ad nauseam that the whole meaning of our cognitive states and processes lies in the way they intervene in the control and revaluation of independent existences of facts."[3]

And in another place James writes:

"Pragmatism, which, according to M. Hebart, claims that our sentiments make truth and falsehood, would oblige us to conclude that our minds exert no genuinely cognitive function whatever . . . . . . . . . . .

My mind was so filled with the notion of objective reference that I never dreamed that my hearere would let go of it; and the very last accusation I expected was that in speaking of ideas and their satisfactions, I was denying realisies outside."[4]

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1 Ibid., p.212.
2 The Meaning of Truth, p.26.
3 Ibid., p.xvii.
4 Ibid., p.233-34

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On the one hand there is the mind; on the other the objective reality. "Total conflux of the mind with the reality would be the absolute limit of truth," and "there could be no better or more satisfying knowledge than that."[1] And, continues James,

> "I can conceive no other objective content to the notion of ideally perfect truth than that of penetration into such a terminus, nor can I conceive that the notion would ever have grown up, or that true ideas would ever have been sorted out from false or idle ones, save for the greater sum of satisfactions, intellectual or practical, which the truer ones brought with them. Can we imagine a man absolutely satisfied with an idea and with all its relations to his other ideas and to his sensible experiences who should yet not take its content as a true account of reality? The matter of the true is thus absolutely identical with the matter of the satisfactory. You may put either word first in your ways of talking; but leave out that whole notion of satisfactory working or leading (which is the essence of my pragmatistic account) and call truth a static logical relation, independent even of possible leadings or satisfactions, and it seems to me you cut all ground from under you."[2]

That satisfaction does play a part in practically everyone's life in helping him to arrive at what (for him) is true, is a fact, in spite of our tendency to repudiate it. This is true of the absolutists and conceptualists as well as of the pragmatists. Inasmuch as each one builds his own world, and each world is different from another, we cannot escape subjectivity[3] in the matter of determining the truth, no matter how objective we try to be. And into this subjectivity satisfaction enters and becomes a deciding factor. Yet satisfaction itself is an abstraction, and it is hard to define.

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[1] Ibid., p.156-57
[2] Ibid., p.159
[3] Ibid., p.76-77

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"Satisfactoriness has to be measured by a multitude of standards, of which some, for aught we know, may fail in any given case; and what is more satisfactory than any alternative insight, may to the end be sum of pluses and minuses, concerning which we can only trust that by ulterior corrections and improvements a maximum of the one and a minimum of the other may some day be approached." [1]

"Of course if you take satisfactoriness concretely, as something felt by you now, and if, by truth, you mean truth taken abstractly and verified in the long run, you cannot make them equate; for it is notorious that the temporarily satisfactory is often false. Yet at each and every concrete moment, truth for each man is what that man 'troweth' at that moment with the maximum of satisfaction to himself; and similarly, abstract truth, truth verified, by the long run, and abstract satisfactoriness, long-run satisfactoriness, coincide." [2]

However, satisfaction in itself, insists James, does not make truth.

"The pragmatist calls satisfactions indispensable for truth-building, but I have everywhere called them insufficient unless reality be also incidentally led to. If the reality assumed where cancelled from the pragmatist's universe of discourse, he would straightway give the name of falsehoods to the beliefs remaining, in spite of all their satisfactoriness. For him, as for his critic, there can be no truth if there is nothing to be true about. Ideas are so much flat psychological surface unless some mirrored matter gives them cognitive lustre. This is why as a pragmatist I have so carefully posited 'reality' *ab initio*, and why, throughout my whole discussion, I remain an epistemological realist." [3]

If "total conflux of the mind with the reality would be the absolute limit of truth," then it seems to follow that truth must, to each one of us, be only partial, for whose mind is able absolutely to apprehend and comprehend any

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.56-57.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.88-89.
[3] *Ibid.*, p.195.

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reality? Of course an Absolute or All-knower could perform this task. But James finds it logically impossible for himself to posit an Absolute (the Absolute and God are not synonymous, with James). So we may, with the passage of time, get a completer and completer idea of the nature of any item of reality, as we handle the reality, utilize it, or approach in the neighborhood of it. In all of this our experiences are a prime factor.

"In no case, however, "writes James, "need truth consist in a relation between experiences and something archetypal or transexperiential. Should we ever reach absolutely terminal experiences, experiences in which we all agreed, which were superseded by no revised continuations, these would not be <u>true</u>, they would be <u>real</u>, they would simply <u>be</u>, and be <u>indeed</u> the angles, <u>corners</u>, and linchpins of all <u>reality</u>, on which the truth of everything else would be stayed. Only such <u>other</u> things as led to these by satisfactory conjunctions <u>would</u> be 'true.' Satisfactory connection of some sort with such termini is all that the word 'truth' means."[1]

"Now the most general way of contrasting my view of knowledge with the popular view . . is to call my view ambulatory, and the other view saltatory; . . . . . . my own account of this relation (of knowing) is ambulatory through and through. I say that we know an object by means of an idea, whenever we ambulate towards the object under the impulse which the idea communicates. If we believe in so-called 'sensible' realities, the idea may not only send us towards its object, but may put the latter into our very hand, make it our immediate sensation. But, if, as most reflecting people opine, sensible realities are not 'real' realities, but only their appearances, our idea brings us at least so far, puts us in touch with reality's most authentic appearances and substitutes. In any case our idea brings us into the object's neighborhood, practical or ideal, gets us into commerce with it, helps us towards its closer acquaintance, enables us to foresee it, class it, compare it, deduct it,-in short, to deal with it as we could not were the idea not in our possession . . . . . . . . .

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[1] <u>Ibid.</u>, p.134.

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. . . . Thus carried into closer quarters, we are in an improved situation as regards acquaintance and conduct; and we say that through the idea we now know the object better and more truly."[1]

If truth is not fixed and static, but must continually be referred back to individual experiences, truth then is in the making, and each person, according to James, has a part in creating truth:

"I, for my part," states James, "cannot escape the consideration, forced upon me at every turn, that the knower is not simply a mirror floating with no foothold anywhere, and passively reflecting an order that he comes upon and finds simply existing. The knower is an actor and co-efficient of the truth on one side, whilst on the other he registers the truth which he helps to create. Mental interests, hypotheses, postulates, so far as they are bases for human action--action which to a great extent transforms the world--helps to make the truth which they declare. In other words, there belongs to mind, from its birth upward, a spontaneity, a vote. It is in the game and not a mere looker-on; and its judgments of the should-be, its ideals, cannot be peeled off from the body of the cogitadum as if they were excrescences or meant at most survival."[2]

Hence arises the validity of faith. By faith in a possibility, an ideal, perhaps, of one sort or another, we help to bring the possibility to pass. We need, then, to have some end in view, in order to help make it realizable. As a matter of fact, says James, "we are all fated to be a priori teleologists whether we will or not. Interests which we bring with us, and simply posit or take our stand upon, are the very flour out of which our mental dough is kneaded. The organism of thought .

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[1] Ibid., p.139-41

[2] Collected Essays and Reviews, p.67.

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. . . is teleological through and through."[1] Our interests depend upon our heredity and our environment.

> "Every individual man may, if it please him, set up his private categorical imperative of what rightness or excellence in thought shall consist in, and these different ideals, instead of entering upon the scene armed with a warrant . . . appear only as so many brute affirmations left to fight it out upon the chessboard among themselves. They are, at best, postulates each of which must depend on the general consenses of experience as a whole to bear out its validity. The formula which proves to have the most massive destiny will be the true one. But this is a point which can only be solved _ambulando_, and not by any _a priori_ definition."[2]

One can readily see how "the will to believe" thus enters into the matter. Of certain alternatives where the evidence is equally lacking on both sides but with regard to which we are forced by life to take one side or another - for even if we say we don't know we are in reality taking sides - we have the right and the duty to choose the side that appears to be the most logical, or that looks as though it will give the greater permanent satisfactions, - considering life in its length, breadth, and depth, - and then by our faith to go ahead and make come to pass that side on which we stake ourselves.

It was James's genius for the perceptual and experiential that made a pragmatist of him. If he was to turn from Platonic universals in some things he would have to be consistent in the matter of truth. Abstract truth does not exist, says the pragmatist. "Truth in the singular is only a collective name

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[1] _Ibid._, p.60.

[2] _Ibid._, p.60-61.

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for truths in the plural, these consisting always of series of definite events." "What intellectualism calls the truth, the *inherent* truth, of any one such series is only the abstract name for its truthfulness in act, for the fact that the ideas there do lead to the supposed reality in a way that we consider satisfactory."[1]

"I think it is important to remember," writes Professor Santayana, "if we are not to misunderstand William James, that his radical empiricism and pragmatism were in his own mind only methods."[2] "Pragmatism," says Flournoy, "amounts simply to introducing into philosophy the scientific or experimental method which already prevails ( and ever more widely) in other scientific fields, and which insists on the concrete verification of every theory."[3] This method "may come out to very different conclusions according to the one who is using it."[4] And Charles L. Slattery writes:

> "He (James) put all his theories, discoveries, and principles to work and they shone every morning in his face and in his quivering action. It was not only truth which he sought, but truth expressed in life. The conservative shook their heads: they shuddered for the fate of the ideal and the absolute. All that was whimsical and adventurous came out in James's chivalrous defence of Pragmatism; and he did the world of theology and philosophy unmeasured good thereby. A hard logic, a mathematical correctness, did not appear any longer the only goal of reflection. Men bowed their heads and remembered One who said, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' James was holding up to thought a test which has divine sanction."[5]

Every philosophy has its good and bad, its weak and

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.202
*Ibid.*, p.202
[4] *States*, p.74-75
*Ibid.*, p.[illegible]

[2] *Character and Opinion in the United*
[3] *Op. cit.*, p.46
[5] *Certain American Faces*, p.46-47.

strong, points. The inductive temper, reliance on experiment, and readiness to question even what seems most certain, are, according to Bertrand Russell,[1] among the unquestionable merits of pragmatism. But Mr. Russell doubts whether pragmatism "is in reality less dogmatic than the system it seeks to replace. To take it as certain that not even the multiplication table contains final and infallible truth is to adopt a dogma which, in philosophy, may be just as great a bar to open-mindedness as any other dogma." [2]

Ralph Barton Perry compares pragmatism with its "perfect anti-thesis," Spinozism. "It is the perpetuation of Spinozism in objective and absolute idealism that is the real object of the pragmatist attack."

"Absolutism is other-wordly, contrary to appearances; pragmatism mundane, empirical. Absolutism is mathematical and dialectical in method, establishing ultimate truths with demonstrable certainty; pragmatism is suspicious of all short-cut arguments, . . . Absolutism is monistic, deterministic, quietistic; pragmatism is pluralistic, indeterministic, melioristic. That which absolutism holds to be most significant, namely, the logical unity of the world, is for the pragmatism a negligible abstraction. That which for absolutism is mere appearance - the world of space and time, the interaction of man and nature, and of man and man, is for pragmatism the quintessence of reality. The one is for the philosophy of eternity, the other the philosophy of time." [3]

"Pragmatism," inscribes Will Durant, "has its roots in Kant's 'practical reason'; in Schopenhauer's exaltation of

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1 "The Philosophy of William James," The Living Age, Vol.267, Oct. 1, 1910, p.55.

2 Ibid. p.55.

3 Ralph Barton Perry; Present Philosophical Tendencies, p.198-99.

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the will; in Darwin's notion that the fittest (and therefore also the fittest and truest idea) is that which survives; in utilitarianism, which measured all goods in terms of use; in the empirical and inductive traditions of English philosophy; and finally in the suggestions of the American scene."[1]

From this most interesting and intriguing of subjects we turn for a brief consideration of James's Pluralism.

C. Pluralism.

Radical empiricism leads to a pragmatic view of truth; and pragmatism leads to pluralism. "Pragmatism," writes Ralph Barton Perry, "implies pluralism, and this . . affords a characteristic version of evil and of God. But pragmatists are not only pluralists; they are also indeterminists, and find in their indeterminism additional ground for a philosophy of religion."[2]

The term pluralism is likely to be misunderstood by some. To understand James's pluralism we need to have recourse to the meaning of monism. Monism, by its very meaning, is absolute. Everything is absolute unity. "Absolute unity broks no degrees."[3] In the monistic universe the "All" or Absolute or All-knower "is prior to the parts which it generates, and which it dominates in such a way as to maintain eternally a system that is perfectly closed and complete."[4] Now the term pluralism means "essentially no more than the

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[1] *Op.cit.*, p.564.
[2] *Op.cit.*, p.249. [3] *Ibid.*, p.373.
[4] Fournoy: *The Philosophy of William James*, p.103.

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denial of absolute monism." Pluralism demands no more than that "you grant some separation among things, some tremor of independence, some free play of parts on one another, some real novelty or chance, however minute."[1]

Monism with its absolute unity means determinism. All the parts are inextricably bound up with each other so that effect follows cause in a purely mechanical way. This unity and determinism exclude novelty and chance. Man becomes a mere automaton. Where is there any ground for morality in such a conception? Religion itself seems to have its very undergirdings knocked down in one fell swoop. So we are not surprised to see that pluralism and indeterminism go together, and that they both make room for a philosophy of religion.

With monism evil and good come from the same source, the Absolute. But evil is too real to some people (especially to pragmatists) for them to be able logically to conceive of an Absolute, with all the qualities ascribed to it, that can be Author of both good and evil.

> "The Scholastic philosopher described the deity as 'Ens a se extra et supra omne genus, necessarium, unum, infinite, perfectum, simplex, immutabile, immensum, eternum, intelligens.' This is magnificent; what deity would not be proud of such a definition? But what does it mean?- what are its consequences for mankind? If God is omnicient and omnipotent, we are puppets; there is nothing we can do to change the course of destiny which His will has from the beginning delineated and decreed; Calvinism and fatalism are the logical corollaries of such a definition." [2]

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[1] Perry, Op. cit. p.373

[2] Will Durant, op.cit., p.558.

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Into this matter of monism versus pluralism enters the same old problem of absolutism. We have already read Perry's statement that absolutism is other-worldly, while pragmatism is mundane. In the same way monism emphasizes the excellencies of the Absolute at the expense of man, while pluralism does just the reverse. "For pragmatism, God is a part and not the whole. He is beneficent without its being necessary to judge his beneficence by all the works of nature and life." [1] "As God is not all things, He can be an 'eternal (i.e. unceasing) tendency making for righteousness,' and need not be, as on all other theories He must be, the responsible Author of evil."[2]

With these problems James wrestled. Naturally of a religious mind - the narrow, orthodox type of mind is not here meant - he sought to solve the problems of religion with his philosophy. He was interested in them for his own sake. But as he looked around upon human nature with all its ignorance and prejudices, his sympathetic heart went out to the multitude, and he sought to provide balm for weary souls, by giving to the world a philosophy and an interpretation of life that meant for more courageous living. He had

"a sure instinct for hymanly interesting and hymanly important problems. He sought to answer for men the questions the exigencies of life led them to ask. And where no certain answer was to be had, since men must needs live notwith-

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[1] Perry, op.cit., p.248.
[2] Schiller, F.C.S., Riddles of the Sphinx, 3rd edition, p.350.

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standing, he offered the prop of faith. Making no pretense of certainty where he found the evidence inconclusive, he felt the common human need of forging ahead even though the light be dim. Thus his philosophy was his way of bringing men to the wisest belief which in their half-darkness they can achieve. He was the frank partizan of mankind, undeceiving them when necessary, but giving them the benefit of every doubt." [1]

As he looked out and saw the results of evil he could not believe in an Absolute that was the Author of both good and evil. As he saw men striving daily in a thousand and one ways to overcome difficulties, he could not bring himself to believe that free-will was a total delusion, and that we are mere automata. His study of the brain and of the mind led him to the conclusion that the cerebrum had been evolved as a sort of defense mechanism to enable man to adapt himself better to his environment, and that one of the main functions of the cerebral hemispheres seemed to be that of making for delayed responses and choosing. Tychism he believed to be a reality.

James had grown up under the monistic belief. But in the seventies, while in Europe, he came across a work by the French philosopher Renouvier. James considered that he had found a jewel of great price, and in a letter to his father of which mention has already been made in these pages, he tells of his discovery. From that time on James felt a debt of gratitude to Renouvier, and at the end of his life he could write of this French philosopher:

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[1] Perry, op.cit., p.376.

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"I think that Renouvier made mistakes, and I find his whole philosophic manner and apparatus too scholastic. But he was one of the greatest of philosophic characters, and but for the decisive impression made on me in the seventies by his masterly advocacy of pluralism, I might never have got free from the monistic superstition under which I had grown up." [1]

As a result of his early training in the natural sciences James became an empiricist. Empiricism of the radical kind leads to pragmatism, and pragmatism implies and leads to pluralism. It is not at all surprising that Renouvier's philosophic seeds on pluralism should have found such a ready soil in James's mind.

A word of caution perhaps is not out of place at this juncture. James, in his advocacy of pluralism, was not quarreling with Christianity. Although he was no Christian in the orthodox sense of the term, he was a religious man. Flournoy says of him: "I do not hesitate to describe James's personality and philosophy as purely Christian in spirit, although in spite of his sympathy for every sincere and living faith his dislike of formulae caused him to remain uncommitted to any of the orthodox and established creeds." [2] James's quarrel was with "Monistic Idealism, which postulates One Eternal Reality, the Absolute." [3] James denies that the Absolute of the Monists and the God of the Christians are the same, and he clearly evinces - to my mind - in his various writings a belief in God. But this God is not omnipotent.

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1 James: Some Problems of Philosophy, p.165.
2 Op.cit., p.163-64.
3 "Professor James's New 'Pluralistic' Philosophy," Current Literature, Vol. 46, June,1909, p.648.

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"I must . . . ask you to distinguish the notion of the absolute carefully from that of . . . the 'God' of common people in their religion, and the creator-God of orthodox Christian theology. Only thoroughgoing monists or pantheists believe in the absolute. The God of our popular Christianity is but one member of a pluralistic system. He and we stand outside of each other, just as the devil, the saints, and the angels stand outside of both of us. . If it should prove probable that the absolute does not exist it will not follow in the slightest degree that a God like that of David, Isaiah, or Jesus may not exist, or may not be the most important existence in the universe for us to acknowledge. . . I hold to the finite God . . but I hold that his rival and competitor - I feel almost tempted to say his enemy - the absolute, is not only not forced on us by logic, but that it is an improbable thesis." [1]

James's Hibbert Lectures dealing with pluralism are full of illumination. He begins with the whole race of philosophers and divides them up into two main streams. He shows how these streams diverge into smaller ones, and he places pluralism for us in its proper position.

"If we take the whole history of philosophy, the systems reduce themselves to a few main types which, under all the technical verbiage in which the ingenious intellect of man envelops them, are just so many visions, modes of feeling the whole push, and seeing the whole drift of life, forced on one by one's total character and experience, and on the whole preferred . . as one's best working attitude. Cynical characters take one general attitude, sympathetic characters another." [2]

Pantheism, theism, etc., come from the spiritualistic stream. The pantheistic belief can be

"held in two forms, a monistic form which I called the philosophy of the absolute, and a pluralistic form which I called radical empiricism, the former conceiving that the divine

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[1] A Pluralistic Universe, p.110.
[2] Ibid,, p.20-21.

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exists authentically only when the world is experienced all at once in its absolute totality, whereas radical empiricism allows that the absolute sum-total of things may never be actually experienced or realized in that shape at all, and that a disseminated, distributed, or incompletely unified appearance is the only form that reality may yet have achieved."[1]

"Pragmatically interpreted, pluralism or the doctrine that it is many means only that the sundry parts of reality _may be externally related_. Everything you can think of, however vast or inclusive, has on the pluralistic view a genuinely 'external' environment of some sort or amount. Things are 'with' one another in many ways, but nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything. The word 'and' trails along after every sentence. Something always escapes. 'Ever not quite' has to be said of the best attempts made anywhere in the universe at attaining all-inclusiveness." [2]

Pluralism does not, as has already been hinted, make a 'multiverse.' We can still have a 'universe' even though everything is not one as say the monists.

"If the each-form be the eternal form of reality no less than it is the form of temperal appearance, we still have a coherent world, and not an incarnate incoherence, as is charged by so many absolutists. Our 'multiverse' still makes a 'universe'; for every part, though it may not be in actual or immediate connexion, is nevertheless in some possible or mediated connexion, with every other part, however remote, through the fact that each part hangs together with its very next neighbors in inextricable interfusion." [3]

It is this very "coalescence of next with next in concrete experience" - even though all the parts are not one and do not drag the whole universe along with them,- which provides James in his psychology with the theory

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[1] _Ibid._, p.43-44.
[2] _Ibid._, p.321.
[3] _Ibid._, p.325.

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of the perception of relations, and which makes of him in his philosophy a radical empiricist instead of a simple empiricist of the traditional kind "which (rightly or wrongly) is accused of chopping up experience into atomistic sensations incapable of union with one another until a purely intellectual principle has swooped down upon them from on high and folded them in its own conjunctive categories." [1]

Monism calls for an Absolute, an All-knower, who is out of time and knows everything in one timeless act. James feels that the hypothesis of noetic monism is unverified. Over against it he places the noetic pluralism which, he says, is verified by us every moment when we try to get information from others. "According to this, everything in the world might be known by somebody, yet not everything by the same knower, or in one single cognitive act." [2]

"To sum up the world is 'one' in some respects, and 'many' in others. But the respects must be distinctly specified, if either statement is to be more than the emptiest abstraction. Once we are committed to this soberer view, the question of the One or the Many may well cease to appear important. The amount either of unity or of plurality is in short only a matter for observation to ascertain and write down, in statements which will have to be complicated, in spite of every effort to be concise." [3]

Pluralism means, as we have already seen, chance and indeterminism. This means that there may be novelty in the

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[1] Ibid., p.326.
[2] James: Some Problems of Philosophy, p.127.
[3] Ibid., p.133-34.

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world. But James differentiates between the likelihood of novelty in the physical world and the likelihood of novelty in the mental realm of human beings.

"So far as physical nature goes few of us experience any temptation to postulate real novelty. The notion of eternal elements and their mixture serves us in so many ways, that we adopt unhesitatingly the theory that primordial being is unalterable in its attributes as well as in its quantity, and that the laws by which we describe its habits are uniform in the strictest mathematical sense. These are the absolute conceptual foundations, we think, spread beneath the surface of perceptual variety. It is when we come to hyman lives, that our point of view changes. It is hard to imagine that 'really' our own subjective experiences are only molecular arrangements even though the molecules be conceived as beings of a phychic kind . . . . . Men of science and philosophy, the moment they forget their theoretic abstractions, live in their biographies as much as any one else, and believe as naively that face even now is making, and that they themselves, by doing 'original work,' help to determine what the future shall become." [1]

And in another place James writes:

"Human causal activity is the only known unconditional antecedent of the works of civilization; so we find, as Edward Carpenter says, something like a law of nature, the law that a movement from feeling to thought and thence to action, from the world of dreams to the world of things, is everywhere going on. Since at each phase of this movement novelties turn up, we may fairly ask, with Carpenter, whether we are not here witnessing in our own personal experience what is really the essential process of creation. Is not the world really growing in these activities of ours? And where we predicate activities elsewhere, have we a right to suppose aught different in kind from this?" [2]

James's "first and last word" in his philosophy is "to take our moral nature, with all its demands, seriously."[3]

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1 *Ibid.*, p.150-51.

2 *Ibid.*, p.214-15.

3 Th. Flournoy, *op.cit.*, p.124.

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If this be so, then we can readily see why James would champion indeterminism against determinism.

"What interest, zest, or excitement can there be in achieving the right way, unless we are enabled to feel that the wrong way is also a possible and a natural way, - nay, more, a menacing and an imminent way? And what sense can there be in condemning ourselves for taking the wrong way, unless we need have done nothing of the sort, unless the right way was open to us as well? . . . . . .
I cannot understand regret without the admission of real, genuine possibilities in the world. Only then is it other than a mockery to feel, after we have failed to do our best, that an irreparable opportunity is gone from the universe, the loss of which it must forever after mourn."[1]

So often in his philosophic works does James fight for indeterminism that additional quotations in this paper, to substantiate the statement, seem superfluous. Flournoy sums it up by saying that "William James was always an enemy of determinism. At first he was so instinctively, because he found that as soon as life ceased to be a real combat of uncertain issue, and became a preconcerted puppet-show with its denouement settled in advance, he was no longer capable of taking it seriously."[2]

Indeterminism carries with it, as a corollary, the matter of tychism or chance. And chance is a two-edge sword. It operates in two opposite directions. Chance means free-will, - at least a certain residuum of free-will; it guarantees that we, as moral beings, have some say in our destiny, and

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[1] "The Dilemma of Determinism," The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.175-76.

[2] Op.cit., p.112.

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even, perhaps, in the destiny of the world; it saves us from being mere machines. But while chance does these things, it also, seemingly and logically, takes away the guarantees of safety and salvation given by monism. "There is no room for chance in the block-universe of the monists where the most rigorous determinism rules down to its minutest part."[1] "Salvation is, according to optimistic monism, essentially universal and complete, like the block universe itself."[2] Some would rather have the guarantee of safety, even though they become thereby mere mechanisms, than to risk anything and to have with the risk the endowment of choice.

It must be confessed that optimistic monism makes its appeal. But this perhaps is due as much to the factor of optimism as to any absolute belief in monism. Many of us like to feel, with Browning, that "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." Yet the saner view, perhaps, is to divide Browning's statement in half and, accepting the first part, subject the second part, as did James, to the touchstone of experience. James would say that if all is to be right with the world, then each must do his part to make it come out right; and that otherwise all is not right, nor possibly will be, with the world. But, says James, "a world working out an uncertain destiny, as the phenomenal world appears to be doing, is an intolerable idea to the rationalistic mind."[3]

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[1] Flournoy, op.cit., p.111.
[2] Ibid., p.131.
[3] Some Problems of Philosophy, p.142.

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"Pluralism, on the other hand, is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, put melioristic, rather. The world, it thinks, may be saved, on condition that its parts shall do their best. But shipwreck in detail or even on the whole is among the open possibilities.

There is thus a practical lack of balance about pluralism, which contrasts with monism's peace of mind. The one is more moral, the other a more religious view; and different men usually let this sort of consideration determine their belief." [1]

The outcome of the world is not assured, so far as James's opinion is concerned. "The supremacy of the good is not guaranteed, but is only made possible and is thrown into the future as a goal of endeavor." [2] Everything may not be saved; indeed, quite probably some shall be lost. "It is possible if not inevitable that this salvation will never be complete, certain individuals and objects being unfit and having to be excluded from the final fabric. Perfection, in other words, is probably realizable only at the price of selections, of radical sacrifices, and of downright renunciations." [3] James's emphasis, therefore, is not so much, if at all, upon salvation,-considered as a conclusion to life,- as upon the need and the value of struggling here and now to overcome the wrong and to establish and to strengthen the right. We can well understand why, with this viewpoint, he did not feel the necessity of an advance guarantee as to his own personal safety. "He sympathized deeply with the more importunate and helpless cravings of the religious spirit."[4] in many people for an assured salvation, but when it came to himself

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[1] Ibid.,p.142.
[2] Ralph Barton Perry, op.cit., p.374
[3] Flournoy, op.cit., p.131.
[4] Perry, op.cit., p.375.

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he was "willing to take the universe to be really dangerous and adventurous, without therefore backing out and crying 'no play.'"[1]

Here we find James in one of his finest moods, the advocate of courage and of the strenuous life. The very essence of life, to him, meant courage and fighting against real obstacles, with a real, not an imaginary, good as the goal. Heaven could never mean a place of rest to James. Without the struggle and the activity, it would be too inane a place for him.

"Why," writes Professor James, "does the painting of any paradise or utopia, in heaven or on earth, awaken such yawnings for nirvana and escape? The white-robed harp-playing heaven of our sabbath-schools, and the ladylike tea-table elysium represented in Mr. Spencer's Data of Ethics, as the final consummation of progress, are exactly on a par in this respect, - lubberlands, pure and simple, one and all. We look upon them from this delicious mess of insanities and realities, strivings and deadnesses, hopes and fears, agonies and exultations, which form our present state, and _tedium vitae_ is the only sentiment they awaken in our breasts. To our crepuscular natures, born for the conflict, the Rembrandtesque moral chiaroscuro, the shifting struggle of the sunbeam in the gloom, such pictures of light upon light are vacuous and expressionless, and neither to be enjoyed nor understood. If _this_ be the whole fruit of the victory, we say; if the generations of mankind suffered and laid down their lives; if prophets confessed and martyrs sand in the fire, and all the sacred tears were shed for no other end than that a race of creatures of such unexampled insipidity should succeed and protract in _saecula saeculorum_ their contented and inoffensive lives, - why, at such a rate, better lose than win the battle, or at all events ring down the curtain before the last act of the play, so that a business that began so importantly may be saved from so singularly flat a winding-up."[2]

Two other favorite themes of James's are linked up with

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[1] James: _Pragmatism_, p.296.

[2] "The Dilemma of Determinism," _op.cit._, p.168.

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his advocacy of courage and strenuousness. One of these refers to the reserves of energy in man. Few men accomplish all that they can accomplish. Writing on "The Energies of Men," James says:

> "But the plain fact remains that men the world over possess amounts of resource which only very exceptional individuals push to their extremes of use. But the very same individual, pushing his energies to their extreme, may in a vast number of cases keep the pace up day after day, and find no 'reaction' of a bad sort, so long as decent hygienic conditions are preserved. His more active rate of energizing does not wreck him; for the organism adapts itself, and as the rate of waste augments, augments correspondingly the rate of repair." [1]

More will be said about this subject of latent energies in man in our next chapter on James's educational philosophy.

The other theme connected with this whole subject of indeterminism and courage is that of "the will to believe." We have already seen something of its meaning in the foregoing pages. The world is, according to James, in the making, rather than merely unfolding itself in a mechanical way in accordance with some predetermined plan qhixh focwena wcwey detail of existence. If James's contention be so, then faith is justified, and faith helps to create its own future. There are some things that cannot be decided in advance on purely logical and intellectual grounds. And yet we are called upon to decide, and decide we must, for when we decide not to decide -

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[1] Memories and Studies, p.232-33.

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that itself is a decision. The thesis that James defends is this:

> "Our passional nature not only lawfully may, but must, decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds; for to say, under such circumstances, 'Do not decide, but leave the question open,' is itself a passional decision, - just like deciding yes or no,- and is attended with the same risk of losing the truth." [1]

Faith, then, and the "will to believe" become possible and legitimate in a pluralistic, indeterminate world in which struggle is the very bulwark of whatever is finest and best in life. And in this struggle men have great unused reserves of energy that may be called upon. The outcome of the warfare is not assured, and if it were it would take all the zest out of the fighting. There is the possibility of defeat, hence the need of straining every energy to win. Instead of thinking of salvation as an ultimate goal, we should think of the struggle here and now, losing ourselves in the fight (yet never allowing our personality or individualism to become lost in the organization). Doing this day by day we come to the end of the physical life, and the matter of personal immortality is not of primary concern, for the thing that is really worth while is the survival and upbuilding of the ideals for which we have striven. These, at least with James, are the corollaries and concomitants of pluralism and chance. Pluralism "has no saving message for incurably sick souls." "It is no philosophy for the 'tender-minded'; it makes life worth living only for those in whom the

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[1] <u>The Will to Believe</u>, etc., p.11.

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fighting spirit is alive."[1] We face a doubtful and perilous situation, and "there is but one unconditional commandment, which is that we should seek incessantly with fear and trembling, so to vote and to act as to bring about the very largest total universe of good which we can see."[2]

"Make as great an uproar about chance as you please," says James, "I know that chance means pluralism and nothing more. If some of the members of the pluralism are bad, the philosophy of pluralism, whatever broad views it may deny me, permits me, at least, to turn to the other members with a clean breast of affection and an unsophisticated moral sense. And if I still wish to think of the world as a totality, it lets me feel that a world with a chance in it of being altogether good, even if the chance never come to pass, is better than a world with no such chance at all. That 'chance' whose very notion I am exhorted and conjured to banish from my view of the future as the suicide of reason concerning it, that 'chance' is - what? Just this, - the chance that in moral respects the future may be other and better than the past has been. This is the only chance we have any motice for supporting to exist. Shame, rather, on its repudiation and its denial! For its presence is the vital air which lets the world live, the salt which keeps it sweet."[3]

Nor does such a view necessarily exclude the notion of a Providence ruling the world. "The belief in free-will is not in the least incompatible with the belief in Providence, provided you do not restrict the Providence to fulminating nothing but fatal decrees."[4]

"If you allow him to provide possibilities as well as actualities to the universe, and to carry on his own thinking in those two categories just as we do ours, chances may be there, uncontrolled even by him, and the course of the universe be really ambiguous; and yet the end of all things may be just

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1 Perry, op.cit., p.374.
2 James: The Will to Believe, etc., p.209.
3 "The Dilemma of Determinism," op.cit., p.178-79.
4 Ibid., p.180.

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what he intended it to be from all eternity."[1]

We cannot pass from the subject of pluralism without going back to the subject of consciousness. On a preceding page we have already considered James's thesis that consciousness is composed of pure experience. The problem we there faced was that of how the subject can know the object. James reduces both to one common element, namely, experience. But there is another problem which pluralism has to face - "a difficulty from which monism considers itself exempt," namely, "How can separate individuals, different currents of experience, come to coincide in certain points?" James tells us that he thought for twenty years about this problem of the co-terminousness of consciousnesses. He wished to be able logically to conceive the fact, but he was face to face with the indisputable evidence of reality itself which, as a pragmatist and radical empiricist, he could not brush aside.

> "He pondered . . long and vainly over this mystery and over the related problem of how one and the same entity (an object, an idea, a feeling, etc.) can belong at the same time to several different streams of consciousness; or what amounts to the same thing, how independent minds can come to meet and interpenetrate. His final conclusion was that we have here a fact which transcends logic, and which is irrational as all reality is irrational, but which is for all that none the less certain, and that to see in this an insurmountable difficulty is to be guilty of nothing less than vicious intellectualism."[2]

James explains the situation for us in a little more detail:

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[1] Ibid., p.180-81.
[2] Flournoy, op.cit., p.107-108.

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"I was envious of Fechner and the other pantheists because I myself wanted the same freedom that I saw them unscrupulously enjoying, of letting mental fields compound themselves and so make the universe more continuous, but that my conscience held me prisoner. In my heart of hearts, however, I knew that my situation was absurd and could be only provisional. That secret of a continuous life which theuniverse knows by heart and acts on every instant cannot be a contradiction incarnate. If logic says it is one, so much the worse for logic. Logic being the lesser thing, the static incomplete abstraction, must succumb to reality, not reality to logic. . . . . . . . Sincerely, and patiently as I could, I struggled with the problem for years, covering hundred of sheets of paper with notes and memoranda and discussions with myself over the difficulty. How can many consciousnesses be at the same time one consciousness? How can one and the same identical fact experience itself so diversely? The struggle was vain; I found myself in an impasse. I saw that I must either forswear that 'psychology without a soul' to which my whole psychological and Kantian education had committed me, - I must, in short, bring back distinct spiritual agents to know the mental states, now singly and now in combination, in a word bring back scholasticism and common sense - or else I must squarely confess the solution of the problem impossible, and then either give up my intellectualistic logic, the logic of identity, and adopt some higher (or lower) form of rationality, or, finally, face the fact that life is logically irrational." [1]

Faced with making some choice in the matter James found himself "compelled to give up the logic, fairly, squarely, and irrevocably." This doesn't mean that he denies the value of logic. "It has an imperishable use in hyman life, but that use is not to make us theoretically acquainted with the essential nature of reality." Life or experience or reality - it does not make any difference what word is used to signify the thing meant - "exceeds our logic, overflows and surrounds it." [2]

Attention is called to this matter in this place in this specific way because of the fact that it explains at least one

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[1] A pluralistic Universe, p.206-207.

[2] Ibid., p.212.

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of the processes by which James was brought to place his reliance on some foundation other than simply that of logic. He believed that philosophy itself "is more a matter of passionate vision than of logic." [1] In all of this he is true to his genuis, and his position is a relatively consistent one. Yet very few of us can refrain from taking the occasion to poke a little fun at the man who by logic attempts to prove to us the illogicality of logic. We must always remember, however, that James did not forswear logic. He readily concedes its "imperishable use in hyman life," and his works in philosophy and psychology are, on the whole, splendid examples of close and logical thought. But life, for James, is greater than logic. Life is fluent, whereas logic is static. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." If it is a question of experience or logic, then so much the worse for logic.

A writer in Current Literature, commenting on James's pluralistic philosophy, notes that "Professor James's conclusions in regard to both the plurality and the illogicality of the universe have aroused keen interest in the philosophical and religious worlds. They are felt to be heterodox and challenging." "America, the new Roman Catholic weekly, confesses its distaste for 'William James's pantheistic, or as some prefer athistic, desires.'" "Even one of Professor James's most sympathetic interpreters, H. M. Kallen, writing in the

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[1] Ibid., p.176.

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Boston Transcript, shares the Roman Catholic fear that the new pluralistic philosophy may turn out to be morally subversive." And Paul Elmer More, writing in the New York Evening Sun, does not for a moment believe "that the pluralism of William James represents the whole of reality." [1]

D. James's Religious Views.

Enough has already been said in these pages, in connection with other matters, regarding certain religious views of James, as to make unnecessary a very extensive treatise on the subject.

One can not fail to perceive the religious spirit in James's writings. His heredity and early environment were not for nothing. In his psychology and philosophy it seemed to be a very happy thing to James if he could harmonize his views with those of the religious spirit. He was not always able to do this, and when he couldn't, he hewed to the line, letting the chips fall where they would; but it always seemed to pain him if his conclusions could not, in some way at least, be made to harmonize with the more or less common religious experiences of mankind.

It was this sympathetic attitude of his that enabled him to write such a book as his Varieties of Religious Experience. Approaching the subject in a distinctly objective way, - so much so that it is hard to get his own views on the matters under discussion, except at the very end, - James shows his ability

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[1] Current Literature, Vol. 47, August, 1909, p.182-85.

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to make allowance for all kinds of religious phenomena; and where, as in the case of the mystics, there seems to be involved a kind of experience that gives so much satisfaction to the experiencer, but which at the same time is foreign to James's own experience, we almost see a wistful look on James's face as though he felt his own lack, and regretted it.

This note of sympathy in James, especially in matters religious, must be associated with a permeating agnosticism in his works. Professor Santayana, in a criticism that seems to me to be keener and more intelligent than most other criticisms of James, - even though it must be frankly admitted that the criticism partakes in some places of a tendency to be too harsh and unfriendly, - says that James's radical empiricism and pragmatism were, to James, simply methods: "his doctrine, if he may be said to have had one, was agnosticism." [1]

"And just because he was an agnostic (feeling instinctively that beliefs and opinions, if they had any objective beyond themselves, could never be sure they had attained it), he seemed in one sense so favourable to credulity. He was not credulous himself, far from it; he was well aware that the trust he put in people or ideas might betray him. For that very reason he was respectful and pitiful to the trustfulness of others. Doubtless they were wrong, butwho were we to say so? In his own person he was ready enough to face the mystery of things, and whatever the womb of time might bring forth; but until the curtain was rung down on the last act of the drame (and it might have no last act!) he wished the intellectual cripples and moral hunchbacks not to be jeered at; perhaps they might turn out to be the heroes of the play. Who could tell what heavenly influences might not pierce to these sensitive half-flayed creatures, which are lost on the thick-skinned, the sane, and the duly goggled?"[2]

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[1] Character and Opinion in the United States, p.74.

[2] Ibid., p.75.

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With James "all faiths were what they were experienced as being, in their capacity of faiths." It was not the objects of these faiths that demanded our respect, but it was the faithsl themselves that "were the hard facts we must respect." We really cannot pass to anything firmer. "There was accordingly no sense of security, no joy, in James's apology for personal religion. He did not really believe; he merely believed in the right of believing that you might be right if you believed." [1]

Santayana's statements are so good that we cannot leave them without giving one more. He writes that "it is this underlying agnosticism that explains an incoherence which we might find in his popular works, where the story and the moral do not seem to hang together." [2]

> "Professedly they are works of psychological observation; but the tendency and suasion in them seems to run to disintegrating the idea of truth, recommending belief without reason, and encouraging superstition. A psychologist who was not an agnostic would have indicated, as far as possible, whether the beliefs and experiences he was describing were instances of delusion or of rare and fine perception, or in what measure they were a mixture of both. But James - and this is what gives such romantic warmth to these writings of his - disclaims all antecedent or superior knowledge, listens to the testimony of each witness in turn, and only by accident allows us to feel that he is swayed by the eloquence and vehemence of some of them rather than of others. This method is modest, generous, and impartial; but if James intended, as I think he did, to picture the drama of human belief, with its risks and triumphs, the method was inadequate." [3]

One who has read James's Varieties of Religious Experience can hardly fail to be impressed by the aptness and cogency of

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[1] Ibid., p.76-77.
[2] Ibid., p. 77.
[3] Ibid., p.77-78.

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Santayana's statements.

If we bear in mind these two dominating notes, i.e., of sympathy and agnosticism,-both in a more or less minor strain,- we shall find ourselves in a fair way toward understanding James's religious beliefs.

It must be noted, however, that there are among others, two kinds of agnosticism. There is the fatalistic and pessimistic kind. James was no exponent of this species. Then there is the optimistic kind, and we must classify James as an optimistic agnostic. How, otherwise, could we construe his "will to believe"? It is true, he says in effect, that we don't know about these things. But that is no reason for suicide or despair. Take some belief that seems to you to most reasonable and satisfying and then act as if it were true, and you will help to make it come true. Here we come back to his pragmatism. Also, in the meantime James would urge that we make more and better efforts to discover the facts. The effect of getting more facts will be to reduce the amount of our agnosticism and thereby at the same time to increase the amount of our "gnosticism."

James, as we have already seen, did not believe in the Absolute of the rationalists. But it seems quite evident that, despite his underlying agnosticism, he did believe, or tend toward a belief in a God. Time and time again he speaks of God in such a way that the reader cannot tell for certain whether James himself believes in God, or whether he is merely accomodating his speech and vocabulary to that of the ordinary individual Christian. In an essay on "The Essence of Humanism,"

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Professor James says: "I myself read humanism theistically and pluralistically." [1] And then he utters his well-recognized agnostic note: "If there be a God,-"[2] Granting a God, continues James,

"he is no absolute all-experiencer, but simply the experiencer of widest actual conscious span. Read thus, humanism is for me a religion susceptible of reasoned defence, tho I am well aware how many minds there are to whom it can appeal religiously only when it has been monistically translated." [3]

It is quite interesting to read James's defence of a limited, finite, and not omnipotent God, as against the Absolute. Who, knowing James's own agnosticism, can help smiling when he reads the following in defense of his pluralistic deity? "It gets rid, for example, of the whole agnostic controversy, by refusing to entertain the hypothesis of trans-empirical reality at all." [4] And yet it must be confessed that, agnostic though James himself be, there is a quality in his writings and in attitudes that does make for a better, firmer belief, and one that really does help to get rid of certain agnostic controversies.

In a questionnaire submitted to William James by James B. Pratt there appears the question: "Is God an attitude of the Universe toward you?" To which James replied, "Yes, but more

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[1] <u>The Meaning of Truth</u>, p.25.
[2] <u>Ibid</u>.
[3] <u>Ibid</u>.
[4] <u>Ibid</u>.

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conscious. 'God,' to me, is not the only spiritual reality to believe in. Religion means primarily a universe of spiritual relations surrounding the earthly practical ones, not merely relations of 'value,' but agencies and their activities."[1]

James considers the question of the need of a conception of a God:

> "Many of us," he writes, "most of us, I think, now feel as if a terrible coldness and deadness would come over the world were we forced to believe that no informing spirit or purpose had to do with it, but it merely accidentally had come. The actually experienced details of fact might be the same on either hypothesis, some sad, some joyous; some rational, some odd and grotesque; but without a God behind them, we think they would have something ghastly, they would tell no genuine story, there would be no speculation in those eyes that they do glare with. With the God, on the other hand, they would grow solid, warm, and altogether full of real significance." [2]

The main demand of modern men for a God "is for a being who will inwardly recognize them and judge them sympathetically."[3]

James recognizes the fact that his pluralistic conception of God may be inferior in clearness "to those mathematical notions so current in mechanical philosophy," but it at least has "this practical superiority over them" namely,

> "it guarantees an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved. A world with a God in it to say the last word, may indeed burn up or freeze, but we then think of Him as still mindful of the old ideals and sure to bring them elsewhere to fruition; so that, where He is, tragedy is only provisional and partial, and shipwreck and dissolution not the absolutely final things. This need of an eternal moral order is one of the deepest needs of our breast." [4]

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1 Letters of William James, Vol.II, p.213.
2 Collected Essays and Reviews, p.414.
3 Ibid., footnote, p.415.
4 Ibid., p.422.

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James's God---"if there be a God," [1]---is a"Theistic," not a "Deistic" God. "It is not likely that he is confined solely to making differences in the world's latter end; he probably makes differences all along its course." [2] This view, of course, accords with James's views on novelty, tychism, pluralism and pragmatism.

James is able to arrive at the conception of a possibility of a God in a way that is not antagonistic to the findings of science. A study of consciousness and subconsciousness, together with a voluminous reading of literature pertaining to mysticism, spiritism, and mediumistic phenomena, convinces James, it seems, that "the further limits of our being plunge . . into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible and merely 'understandable' world." [3]

"If we look on man's whole mental life as it exists, on the life of men that lies in them apart from their learning and science, and that they inwardly and privately follow, we have to confess that the part of it of which rationalism can give an account is relatively superficial. It is the part that has the prestige undoubtedly, for it has the loquacity, it can challenge you for proofs, and chop logic, and put you down with words. But it will fail to convince or convert you all the same, if your dumb intuitions are opposed to its conclusions. If you have intuitions at all, they come from a deeper level of your nature than the loquacious level which rationalism inhabits. Your whole subconscious life, your impulses, your faiths, your needs, your divinations, have prepared the premises of which your consciousness now feels the weight of the result; . . " [4]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.424.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.424.
[3] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p.515.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

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"Psychology and religion are thus in perfect harmony up to this point, since both admit that there are forces seemingly outside of the conscious individual that bring redemption to his life. Nevertheless, psychology, defining these forces as 'subconscious,' and speaking of their effects as due to 'incubation,' or 'cerebration,' implies that they do not transcend the individual's personality; and herein she diverges from Christian theology, which insists that they are direct supernatural operations of the Deity." [1]

James feels that the discovery, first made in 1886 by Mr. Frederic Myers, "that, in certain subjects at least, there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field, with its usual centre and margin, but an addition thereto in the shape of a set of memories, thoughts, and feelings which are extra-marginal and outside of the primary consciousness altogether, but yet must be classed as conscious facts of some sort," [2]--in other words, the subconscious,--this discovery, feels James, is "the most important step forward that has occurred in psychology" [3] since he (James) became a student of that science.

This subliminal consciousness "casts light on many phenomena of religious biography." [4] "If the grace of God miraculously operates, it probably operated through the subliminal door." [5] Just how it operates is, of course, another question, and is still unexplained. Furthermore, by

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[1] Ibid., p.211.
[2] Ibid., p.233.
[3] Ibid., p.233.
[4] Ibid., p.233.
[5] Ibid., p.270.

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means of the subliminal James arrives at a conception of God. Let us see how he does it.

In his presentation of numerous cases of religious experience he shows that, with many people, their lives seem to be connected up with outside spiritual powers. "Let me then," suggests James, "propose, as an hypothesis, that whatever it may be on its farther side, the 'more' with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its hither side the subconscious continuation of conscious life." [1] This being true, or being hypothesized as true, with respect to the closer limits of the subconscious, James then suggests, as has already been quoted, that "the further limits of our being plunge . . into an altogether other dimension of existence from the sensible . . world."

> "Name it the mystical region or the supernatural region, whichever you choose. So far as our ideal impulses originate in this region (and most of them do originate in it, for we fine them possessing us in a way for which we cannot articulately account), we belong to it in a more intimate sense than that in which we belong to the visible world, for we belong in the most intimate sense wherever our ideals belong. Yet the unseen region in question is not merely ideal, for it produces effects in this world . . . . . .
> God is the natural appellation, for us Christians at least, for the supreme reality, so I will call this higher part of the universe by the name of God. We and God have business with each other; and in opening ourselves to his influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled." [2]

Of course, argues James, "that the God with whom, starting from the hither side of our own extra-marginal self, we come at its remote margin into commerce, should be the

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1 *Ibid.*, p.512.
2 *Ibid.*, p.515-17.

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absolute world-ruler, is a very considerable over-belief." [1] James's own "over-beliefs" do not go so far as to accept an Absolute in terms of the monists. He is willing to make his personal venture on the over-belief that there are certain "more characteristically divine facts." [2]

"The whole drift of my education goes to persuade me that the world of our present consciousness is only one out of many worlds of consciousness that exist, and that those other worlds must contain experiences which have a meaning for our life also; . . . I can, of course, put myself into the sectarian scientist's attitude, and imagine vividly that the world of sensations and scientific laws and objects may be all. But whenever I do this, I hear that inward monitor of which W. K. Clifford once wrote, whispering the word 'bosh!' Humbug is humbug, even though it bear the scientific name, and the total expression of human experience, as I view it objectively, invincibly urges me beyond the narrow 'scientific' bounds." [3]

That James does believe in some sort of power or powers higher than man seems a reasonable inference to make, even though he is not at all clear in his definition of what or who 'God' is. This vagueness is well illustrated in the following quotation:

"Meanwhile the practical needs and experiences of religion seem to me sufficiently met by the belief that beyond each man,and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and to his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves. Anything larger will do if only it be large enough to trust for the next step. It need not be infinite, it need not be solitary. It might conceivably even be only a larger and more godlike self, of which the present self would then be but the mutilated expression, and the universe might conceivably

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[1] Ibid., p.518.
[2] Ibid., p.519.
[3] Ibid., p.519.

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be a collection of such selves, of different degrees of inclusiveness, with no absolute unity realized in it at all. Thus would a sort of polytheism return upon us--a polytheism which I do not on this occasion defend, for my only aim at present is to keep the testimony of religious experience clearly within its proper bounds."[1]

In his notes on his lecture on "Human Immortality,"- in which lecture he contends for the transmission-theory of the brain as being of service in our postulate of immortality,- James writes:

"The transmission-theory connects itself very naturally with that whole tendency of thought known as transcendentalism. Emerson, for example, writes: 'We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams.' - - But it is not necessary to identify the consciousness postulated in the lecture as pre-existing behind the scenes, with the Absolute Mind of transcendental Idealism, although, indeed, the notion of it might lead in that direction. The absolute Mind of transcendental Idealism is one integral Unit, one single *World-mind. For the purposes of my lecture, however, there might be many minds behind the scenes as well as one. All that the transmission-theory absolutely requires is that they should transcend our minds,- which thus come from something mental that pre-exists, and is larger than themselves."[2]

So much for James's conception or conceptions of God or of the superior power or existence of which he talks. Now, what is James's personal relationship with this higher order of being?

"My personal position is simple," James writes, in a letter dated April 17, 1904, addressed to James Henry Leuba. "I have no living sense of commerce with a God. I envy those

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[1] Ibid., p.525-26.
[2] Human Immortality, p.58, note 5.

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who have, for I know the addition of such a sense would help me immensely. The Divine, for my active life, is limited to abstract concepts which, as ideals, interest and determine me, but do so but faintly, in comparison with what a feeling of God might effect, if I had one. . . . . .
Now, although I am so devoid of Gottesbewústsein in the directer and stronger sense, yet there is something in me which makes response when I hear utterances made from that lead by others. I recognize the deeper voice. Something tells me, "thither lies truth"-and I am sure it is not old theistic habits and prejudices of infancy. Those are Christian; and I have grown so out of Christianity that entanglement therewith on the part of a mystical utterance has to be abstracted from and overcome, before I can listen. Call this, if you like, my mystical germ. It is a very common germ. It creates the rank and file of believers."[1]

Under such circumstances we are not at all surprised to get James's answer to the question: "Do you pray, and if so, why?" "No, responds James, I can't possibly pray - I feel foolish and artificial."[2]

James views on immortality have already been suggested in these pages. At least in his earlier years of adult life the matter of life beyond the grave seemed to James a matter of secondary import. In his last years, however, it is more than likely that immortality assumed new aspects to him. He found himself just beginning to live. Yet, in spite of his relegation of the subject to second place so far as his own personal interests were concerned, he realized that "realigion, in fact, for the great majority of our own race means immortality, and nothing else."[3] "But, he argues, if

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[1] Letters of William James, Vol.II, p.211.
[2] Ibid., p.214.
[3] The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.524.

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our ideals are only cared for in 'eternity,' I do not see why we might not be willing to resign their care to other hands than ours. Yet I sympathize with the urgent impulse to be present ourselves, . . "[1]

In his Ingersoll Lecture on this subject, James proceeds to expand the "transmission-theory" of cerebral action so as to show how immortality is a possibility, and "not incompatible with the brain-function theory of our present mundane consciousness."[2] His arguments are well put and his reasoning is logical. The total effect of his lecture is to strengthen immensely one's belief in the possibility of immortality, without taking revelation into consideration.

James's pluralism, however, does not imply the total salvation that goes with monism. There may be such a thing as only partial and conditional salvation. James is of the opinion "that a final philosophy of religion will have to consider the pluralistic hypothesis more seriously than it has hitherto been willing to consider it."[3]

> "For practical life at any rate, the chance of salvation is enough. No fact in human nature is more characteristic than its willingness to live on a chance. The existence of the chance makes the difference. . . between a life of which the keynote is resignation and a life of which the keynote is hope."[4]

James investigated for years the matter of spirit-return and other mediumistic phenomena. His broad-mindedness was such

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[1] Ibid., p.524.

[2] Human Immortality, p.viii.

[3] Varieties of Religious Experience, p.526.

[4] Ibid., p.526-27.

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that he refused to shut off this avenue of approach to the possible discovery of truth. Most of his investigations were unsatisfactory. Many frauds were unearthed. "Superior" men smiled at James's seeming credulity in paying any attention at all to such a subject. Still James kept an open mind, and he felt as if there was, after all, something of truth in the claims of the mediums. He died without being able to come to any very positive conclusions in the matter, but he felt that in the field of psychical research there were great promises for the future.

Conversion, to James, takes place as a result of some sort of unification of conflicting elements in the mind, in which the sub-conscious plays a most important part. He thus builds his theory of conversion upon psychological bases, and again shows his indebtedness to Frederic Myers in the use of the subconscious. A reviewer, writing for the Living Age, says that "this theory of the subconscious self whose triumph is conversion, whose conflict produces doubt, is, to our mind, intensely interesting and suggestive. Is it possible that this self knows, not the facts of creeds, but the fact at the bottom of all creeds, its own relation to God?" [1]

James divides mankind into two general classes, the once-born and the twice-born. The former are those healthy-minded individuals who avert their attention from evil, and live simply in the light of good. This, agrees James, "is splendid as long as it will work. It will work with many

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[1] Living Age, Vol. 24, August 23,1902, p.504.

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persons; it will work far more generally than most of us are ready to suppose." [1] "But, continues James, "Healthy-mindedness is inadequate as a philosophical doctrine, because the evil facts which it refuses positively to account for are a genuine portion of reality; and they may after all be the best key to life's significance." [2] The twice-born are those who see the evil in the world, face it, and become aware of their inadequacy. Of this group are the mystics. And conversion to them is a matter of prime and outstanding importance.

James's religious views are such as to call forth varying and quite contradictory comments. By some he is eulogized as a great spiritual force. "Is it not possible," writes one enthusiastic journalist, upon the publication of James's Varieties of Religious Experience, "that the Western World is once more on the eve of a great revival, whose forerunners are the prophets of psychology, not of a new Reformation which will create a new Church, but of a new inbreathing of the Spirit which will revive the spiritual life of all the Churches?" [3] Now hear Professor Santayana: "James himself . . by nature was a spirited rather than a spiritual man." [4] The consensus of opinion, however, lies rather with the former

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[1] Varieties of Religious Experience, p.163.

[2] Ibid., p.163.

[3] Living Age, Vol.234, Aug. 23, 1902, p.506.

[4] Op.cit., p.84.

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them with the latter writer. James is conceded, in spite of his own agnosticism, as being a great liberalizing, spiritual force.

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# Chapter V

## JAMES'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The foregoing account of James's personality, his psychological teachings, and his philosophy, while certainly far from complete, ought, in connection with his pedagogical teachings as contained especially in his Talks to Teachers, to enable us to arrive, at least in some approximate way, at James's educational philosophy.

Of course we run into a grave danger, not only in attempting to deduce such a philosophy of education, but even in attempting to give any adequate conception of his general psychology and philosophy. We have seen that James was no abstractionist. Logic he used and could use as well as anybody; but reality to him was greater than logic. If logic and reality clashed, so much the worse for logic. When, therefore, we attempt to take a philosophy that has as its genius a love for the perceptual and radical empirical as opposed to conceptions and abstractions, and try to abstract therefrom the essence of one particular phase of that philosophy,- as, for instance, an educational philosophy, - it were

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no wonder if our abstractions failed to picture the movement, the flux, the relationships between the perceptual, in other words, what to James is the reality. Leo Stein has aptly put the situation, in an article in The American Mercury on "William James":

> "Critics are constantly complaining and often try to apply his statements in such a way that the matter should be completely held within the limits of the statements and not blend with apparently outlying matter . . . . . They have continually tried to make of James's rich saturated solution a group of crystals that could readily be handled and definitely measured. But to the last has James eluded them."[1]

So with us. If we attempt once for all to arrive at a conception of James's educational philosophy, so that we can, as it were, definitely measure it with all the nicety and precision that some philosophies are measured with, we shall fail before we even begin. This, however, need not deter us from endeavoring to make some kind of a near approach to a more or less general understanding of what was the educational philosophy of one of America's greatest men in psychology, philosophy and education.

We shall use, for our purpose, the criteria laid down by Thomas Davidson. He says that "in dealing with the question of education, the three important questions

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[1] Vol. 9, Sept., 1926, p.68.

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are: (1) What is the being to be educated? (2) Wherein does education consist? (3) What is the result aimed at in education?"[1] Without further ado we shall address ourselves to the task of answering these questions, from the viewpoint of William James.

### 1. What is the Being to be Educated?

The human being is a biological animal, the result of evolution. He is both an animal and a rational being, but "we cannot divide man sharply into an animal and a rational part."[2] He is a reactive organism, and behavior is the inevitable result of impressions.[3] This ability to respond is built upon a nervous structure containing sensory, associative and motor neurones, and a central nervous system culminating in the brain.

Certain responses are reflexive and others are instinctive. Both types are, in the first place, unlearned reactions. Some instincts come into existence at birth, while others do not mature until later periods in life. "Many instincts," according to James, "ripen at a certain age and then fade away."[4] Among

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1 Education as World-Building, p.6
2 The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.327.
3 James: Talks to Teachers on Psychology, etc., p.38.
4 Psychology, Briefer Course, p.402.

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the more important instincts are imitation, emulation, pugnacity, fear, sympathy, shyness, sociability, play, curiosity, acquisitiveness, the hunting instinct, modesty, love, the parental instinct. [1] Over forty instincts are mentioned by James in his Principles. [2] He accepts the Darwinian hupothesis as to the origin of instinct. They are not inherited habits, for "we have as yet, perhaps, not one single unequivocal item of positive proof" "that adaptive changes are inherited." [3]

James lays special emphasis upon the instinct of pugnacity. "Man is once for all a fighting animal; centuries of peaceful history could not breed the battle-instinct out of us." [4]

> "Ages ago, war was the gory cradle of mankind, the grim-featured nurse that alone could train our savage progenitors into some semblance of social virtue, teach them to be faithful one to another, and force them to sink their selfishness in wider tribal ends. War still excels in this prerogative; and whether it be paid in years of service, in treasure, or in life-blood, the war tax is still the only tax that men ungrudgingly will pay. How could it be otherwise, when the survivors of one successful massacre after another are the beings from whose loins we and all our contemporary races spring?" [5]

In his Moral Equivalent for War, which we shall discuss in a later section, we shall see how Janes would utilize this fighting instinct.

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1 Ibid., p.406-07.
2 See his chapter on "Instincts."
3 Principles, Vol.I,p.688.
4 Memories and Studies, p.57.
5 Ibid., p.56.

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Experience changes the unlearned activities into activities that are partly acquired, partly unlearned. Because of the plasticity of the nervous structure, and its ability to be modified, certain unco-ordinated movements become co-ordinated, certain responses are repeated in more or less the same way, and habits are built up. The habitual acts tend to become as automatic as those of the simple reflexive and instinctive type.

Over and above the instinctive and habitual responses are those voluntary unhabitual responses. These have their physiological basis presumably in the cortex of the cerebrum, for experiments on certain animals have demonstrated that, with the cerebrum present, some responses, otherwise of a reflexive and instinctive nature, tend to be delayed, and the movement is not according to any fixed pattern. In other words, the cerebrum of man, with its own peculiar organization, is an organ superadded in the evolutionery scale for the function of choosing. In an article on "Brute and Human Intellect," published in 1878, James wrote:

> "In them (the lower animals) fixed habit is the essential and characteristic law of nervous action. The brain grows to the exact modes in which it has been exercised, and the inheritance of these modes - then called instincts - would have in it nothing suprising. But in man the negation of all fixed modes is the essential characteristic. He owes his whole pre-eminence as a reasoner, his whole human quality, we may say, to the facility with which a given mode of thought in him may suddenly be broken up into elements, which recombine anew. Only at the price of inheriting no settled instinctive tendencies, is he able to settle every novel case by the fresh discovery by his reason of novel principles.
> He is _par excellence_, the _educable_ animal." [1]

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[1] _The Journal of Speculative Philosophy_, Vol.12,1878,p.275-76

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In another place James goes into the matter of the difference between man and brute from a slightly different angle of approach, but it rests, in this case, too, upon the ability of man to think, and choose:

"Man's chief difference from the brutes lies in the exuberant excess of his subjective propensities,-his pre-eminence over them simply and solely in the number and in the fantastic and unnecessary character of his wants, physical, moral, aesthetic, and intellectual. Had his whole life not been a quest for the superflous, he would never had established himself as inexpugnably as he has done in the necessary. And from the consciousness of this he should draw the lesson that his wants are to be trusted; that even when their gratification seems farthest off, the uneasiness they occasion is still the best guide of his life, and will lead him to issues entirely beyond his present powers of reckoning. Prune down his extravagance, sober him, and you undo him." [1]

Man is, therefore, not an automaton; he has free will, although the reflexive and instinctive movements are of an automatic type, and habits themselves may become so binding as to fasten a person in their clutches, for good or for evil, and from a practical standpoint almost eliminate free will in certain modes of response:

" . . . the mind is at every stage a theatre of simultaneous possibilities. Consciousness consists in the comparison of these with each other, the selection of some, and the suppression of the rest by the reinforcing and inhibiting agency of attention.

. . . . . . .

Of course the materialist may still say that the emphasized attention obeys the strongest vibration and does not cause it, that we will what we do, not do what we will, - that, in short, interest is passive and at best a sign of strength of nerve-disturbances. But he is immediately confronted by the notorious fact that the strongest tendencies

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[1] The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.131.

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to automatic activity in the nerves often run most counter to the selective pressure of consciousness. Every day of our lives we struggle to escape some tedious tune or odious thought which the momentary disposition of the brain keeps forcing upon us. And, to take more extreme cases, there are murderous tendencies to nervous discharge which, so far from involving by their intensity the assent of the will, cause their subjects voluntarily to repair to asylums to escape their dreaded tyranny." [1]

Here is the way James sums up the foregoing:

"I cannot but think that to apperceive your pupil as a little sensitive, impulsive, associative, and reactive organism, partly fated and partly free, will lead to a better intelligence of all his ways. Understand him, then as such a subtle little piece of machinery." [2]

The human being's chief significance, as has been noted, lies in his mental life. The cerebralistic theory of the mind is accepted, but, as we have seen in James's essay on "Human Immortality," there are various kinds of functions, and we are as much permitted to postulate a permissive or transmissive function of the brain, as to postulate merely a productive function. [3]

The mental life grows up out of experience plus the equipment with which the being is endowed by birth. This mental life may be considered from the standpoints of its cognitive, affective, and volitional aspects. As the root of all knowledge lie percepts and sensations acquired through the media of the sensr organs. Closely associated with all intellectual processes are emotional states or feelings. These are aroused, according to the James-Lange theory, not directly

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1 "Are We Automata?" William James, Mind, January,1879,Vol.4, p.13-20.

2 _Talks to Teachers_, etc., p.196.

3 _Human Immortality_, p.10.ff

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by the brain centers or outside stimuli, but indirectly as a result of bodily sensations. Both cognition and affection lead to action, and are for the sake of behavior of some sort.

"The willing department of our nature, in short, dominates both the conceiving department and the feeling department; or, in plainer English, perception and thinking are only there for behavior's sake.
I am sure I am not wrong in stating this result as one of the fundamental conclusions to which the entire draft of modern physiological investigation sweeps us." [1]

"From its first dawn to its highest actual attainment, we find that the cognitive faculty, where it appears to exist at all, appears but as one element in an organic mental whole, and as a minister to higher mental powers, - the powers of will." [2]

The human being's "willing" department operates in a number of ways, the more complicated being that where there are conflicts that are not readily resolved; but the thing that finally produces action is the prevalence in the mind of certain ideas over other ideas, this prevalence being due to such things as interest and satisfaction combined with past experiences. It is in the process of volition that choosing takes place. And this choosing function is the principal fact in man's mental life. "The fact that mental life consists primarily in choosing," writes Everett Dean Martin, "gave James his great insight into the nature and meaning of the intellect." [3]

"Heretofore man had regarded intellect as a copying device, a passive receiver of impressions. With James we

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[1] The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.114.

[2] Ibid., p.140-41.

[3] Psychology, p.35.

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learn that it is essentially an instrument.
The theory that the intellect is an instrument with which we may adapt ourselves to the environment, together with the doctrine that man is a choosing animal, is one of the most revolutionizing concepts in mental science." [1]

Man is endowed with a something that may be called ('consciousness') or "conscious states," but this something is not an entity. It is a flow, a flux, a stream, a continual movement. It has its focal points, its fringes, its subliminal parts. The focus changes constantly, according to interest and attention. The fringe may be said to consist of the apperceptive mass which gives meaning to the sensations and thoughts in immediate focus. The subconscious mind exerts a wonderful influence upon life and it may be that it is through the medium of the subconscious that the supernatural directs, influences, holds concourse with the human and natural.

It is not necessary to postulate such an entity as a "soul" or "transcendental ego." There is, however, the personality, the ego, constantly changing, but maintaining its core of identity with each succeeding state of consciousness. This "I", the actor, has commerce with a "God" or some superior powers, but immortality is not by any means certain. However, as has already been indicated, the cerebralistic theory of the mind does not preclude the possibility of immortality, for we have just as much right to postulate a transmissive or permissive function of the brain as we have to postulate a

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[1] Ibid., p.35.

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productive function of that organ.

Mad is made for behavior; and effort and striving and overcoming are his main functions. This calls for daring, for courage. But it is a quite natural corollary of the law of survival that governs all life. There are two dominating moods in man, the strenuous and the easy-going. Some men belong almost entirely to one, some to the other, and then there are those who alternate between the two or have a dilution of both.

> "The deepest difference, practically, in the moral life of man is the difference between the easy-going and the strenuous mood. When in the easy-going mood the shrinking from present ill is our ruling consideration. The strenuous mood, on the contrary, makes us quite indifferent to present ill if only the greater ideal be attained. The capacity for the strenuous mood probably lies slumbering in every man, but it has more difficulty in some than in others in waking up." [1]

> "The capacity of the strenuous lies so deep down among our natural human possibilities that even if there were no metaphysical or traditional grounds for believing in a God, men would postulate one simply as a pretext for living hard, and getting out of the game of existence its keenest possibilities of zest." [2]

This emphasis upon striving and the strenuous mood is brought out by James in another connection. Mental measurements were in their swaddling clothes in James's later life, and he evidently did not place much reliance upon them. "No elementary measurement, capable of being performed in a laboratory," asserts James, "can throw any light on the actual

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[1] The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.211.

[2] Ibid., p.213.

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efficiency of the subject; for the vital thing about him, his emotional and moral energy and doggedness, can be measured by no single experiment, and becomes known only by the total results in the long run." [1]

For this striving and effort man is equipped with great stores of energy. Seldom does a person utilize as he should the energy and potentialities at his disposal.

> "If my reader," writes James, "will put together these two conceptions, first, that few men live at their maximum of energy, and second, that anyone may be in vital equilibrium at very different rates of energizing, he will find, I think that a very pretty practical problem of national economy, as well as of individual ethics, opens upon his view." [2]

> "The first point to agree upon . . is that as a rule men habitually use only a small part of the powers which they actually possess and which they might use under appropriate conditions . . . . . . . .
> Stating the thing broadly, the human individual thus lives usually far within his limits; he possesses powers of various sorts which he habitually fails to use. He energizes below his <u>maximum</u>, and he behaves below his <u>optimum</u>. In elementary faculty, in co-ordination, in power of inhibition and control, in every conceivable way, this life is contracted like the field of vision of an hysteric subject - but with less excuse, for the pure hysteric is diseased, while in the rest of us it is only an inveterate habit - the habit of inferiority to our full self - that is bad." [3]

But there is another factor that enters into man's behavior, namely, the element of faith. Of course, this is logically implied in the viewpoint that life is a struggle and that we have free will. It is perhaps true that we might

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[1] <u>Talks to Teachers on Psychology</u>, etc., p.135.

[2] <u>Memories and Studies</u>, p.233.

[3] <u>Ibid</u>., p.237-38.

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struggle on against a predetermined fate, in our ignorance, thinking our wills were free when they were not; but postulating the freedom of our wills as an actuality, not a delusion, and conceiving life in terms of activity and strenuousness, then faith not only enters into the matter as an auxiliary concomitant, but as one of the deciding factors:

> "So far as man stands for anything, and is productive or originative at all, his entire vital function may be said to have to deal with maybes. Not a victory is gained, not a deed of faithfulness or courage is done, except upon a maybe; not a service, not a sally of generosity, not a scientific exploration or experiment or textbook, that may not be a mistake. It is only by risking our persons from one hour to another that we live at all. And often enough our faith beforehand in an uncertified result is the only thing that makes the result come true." [1]

Notwithstanding variations in individuals, "mankind is made on too uniform a pattern for any of us to escape successfully from acts of faith." [2] "Tolstoy is absolutely accurate in classing faith among the forces by which men live. The total absence of it,anhedona, means collapse." [3]

Faith, then, according to James, is built up in our very mental structure, and there are cases "where faith creates its own verification. Believe, and you shall be right, for you shall save yourself; doubt, and you shall again be right, for you shall perish. The only difference is that to believe is greatly to your advantage." [4]

James believed in individual differences. To him

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[1] The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy,p.59.

[2] The Meaning of Truth, p.257.

[3] The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.505.

[4] The Will to Believe, etc., p.97.

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people are all different, and every person is constantly changing. This is bound to be true if persoanlity is built up from the interaction of environment and nervous system, for no two persons can possibly have the same experience and every experience makes a person different from what he formerly was. Thomas Davidson wrote that each person built up his own world. In similar vein James writes:

> "Even in the sphere of sensation, individuals are probably different enough. Comparative study of the simplest conceptual elements seems to show a wider divergence still. And when it comes to general theories and emotional attitudes towards life, it is indeed time to say with Thackeray, 'My friend, two different universes walk about under your hat and under mine.'" [1]

James felt that each individual was a unique personality, not to be smothered up in "averages and general laws":

> "I for my part cannot but consider the talk of the contemporary sociological school about averages and general laws and predetermined tendencies, with its obligatory and undervaluing of the importance of individual differences, as the most pernicious and immoral of fatalisms. Suppose there is a social equilibrium fated to be, whose is it to be, - that of your preference, or mine? There lies the question of questions, and it is one which no study of averages can decide." [2]

So James would encourage the study of individual differences:

> "If individual variations determine its ups and downs and hairbreadth excapes and twists and turns, Mr. Allen and Mr. Fiske both admit, Heaven forbid us from tabooing the study of these in favor of the average. On the contrary, let us emphasize these, and the importance of these; and in picking out

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[1] The Meaning of Truth, p.38.

[2] The Will to Believe, etc., p.261-62.

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from history our heroes, and communing with their kindred spirits, - in imagining as strongly as possible what differences their individualities brought about in this world, while its surface was still plastic in their hands, and what whilom feasibilities they made impossible, - each one of us may best fortify and inspire what creative energy may be in his own soul.

This is the lasting justification of hero-worship, and the pooh-poohing of it by 'sociologists' is the everlasting excuse for popular indifference to their general laws and averages." [1]

Not only are people all different now; there can not be, according to empirical philosophy, simply "one intrinsically ideal type of human character. . . All ideals are matters of relation." [2]

This emphasis of James upon the individual is what we might expect of an empiricist. In the chapter on James's life, we have already considered his own individualism. Certain philosophers placed their emphasis upon institutions. James placed his upon the individual. Human beings are ahead of institutions, in point of time and in point of value. Rousseau would throw overboard all human institutions and revert to the "natural state." James did not fall into any such pit-hole of doctrine as this. In what he wrote and by his own life he implied in the first and exemplified in the second that man is a social creature. But still he would never have us forget the value of the individual.

We pass quite naturally from James's opinions as to the unique value of the individual to his opinions regarding man as

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1 Ibid., p.260-61.
2 The Varieties of Religious Experience, p.374.

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a social creature. James did not write much about this matter. He seems to have simply taken it for granted. He describes the social instincts in his psychology; and in a number of his essays he brings out the matter of our selfishness, and the necessity of looking at things from another's point of view. That "certain blindness in human beings" is nothing but this lack of sympathy:

> "Each is bound to feel intensely the importance of his own duties and the significance of the situations that call these forth. But this feeling is in each of us a vital secret, for sympathy with which we vainly look to others. The others are too much absorbed in their own vital secrets to take an interest in ours. Hence the stupidity and injustice of our opinions, so far as they deal with the significance of alien lives. Hence the falsity of our judgments, so far as they presume to decide in an absolute way on the value of other persons' conditions or ideals." [1]

In his essay on "Human Immortality" the same thought is brought out in a different way.

And James's whole life and philosophy can only properly be interpreted in the light of his understanding of social needs. As H. M. Kallen writes: "His philosophy is a theory of life, not made in the schools but gathered through deep sympathy with the hearts of man whose beating his own responded to, the wide world over." [2] "Throughout his abundant social life," writes James Jackson Putnam, "he was so frank and so obviously friendly that it was impossible to take offense at anything he said, and this made it easier for him than for most men to strike the per-

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1 "On a certain Blindness in Human Beings," Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals, p.229-30.

2 "William James," The Dial, Vol.63, Aug.30, 1917, p.142.

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sonal note in human intercourse. He could get at once upon a footing which made a basis for intimacy, if occasion called for this; . . "[1] "Sympathy," says H. Addington Bruce, "was another of his salient characteristics, a sympathy carried out so thoroughly in private life that one of his friends once described his as a "dispenser of spiritual alms'" .[2]

Here, then, is a very healthy point of view. It veers neither to the excesses of anarchy and individualism, nor to the excesses of the socialistic school that would reduce mankind to averages and general laws. Of course we are social beings! Any other conception is sheer nonsense. It is even superfluous to write about it. And sympathy, consideration, and open-mindedness in all of life's relations are better sermons on the subject than written essays. But, each man is an individual unit, with his own unique personality, and that personality should be developed to the highest possible point consistent with the good of others. There is no one ideal type. The world is made up of all kinds. Some are geniuses, some are at the other end. The geniuses have often been accused of weaknesses of various kinds. But, sayd James, even these alleged weaknesses may be of worth to mankind. "The real lesson of the genius-books is that we should welcome sensibilities, impulses, and obsessions if we have them, so long as by their means the field of our experience grows deeper and we contribute the better to the race's store." "In short," he concludes, "we should not be afraid of life." [3]

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1 "William James," Atlantic Monthly, Vol.106,Dec.,1910,p.837.
2 William James,"Outlook, Vol.96, Sept.10,1910,p.70.
3 "Degeneration and Genius," Collected Essays and Reviews, p.405.

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Life is the main thing. It is both social and personal. Each side should receive its due proportion of emphasis.

"Thus social evolution is a resultant of the interaction of two wholly distinct factors,-the individual deriving his peculiar gifts from the play of physiological and infresocial forces, but bearing all the power of initiative and origination in his hands; and, second, the social environment, with its power of adopting or rejecting both him and his gifts. Both factors are essential to change. The community stagnates without the impulse of the individual. The impulse dies away without the sympathy of the community."[1]

2. Wherein does Education consist?

Education according to Professor James "consists in the organizing of resources in the human being of powers of conduct which shall fit him to his social and physical world."[2] The educated person is contrasted with the uneducated one:

"An 'uneducated' person is one who is nonplussed by all but the most habitual situations. On the contrary, one who is educated is able practically to extricate himself, by means of the examples with which his memory is stored and of the abstract conceptions which he has acquired, from circumstances in which he never was placed before."[3]

In short, concludes James, education "cannot be better described than by calling it the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to behavior."[4] And in another place he adds: "Our education means . . little more than a

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1 The Will to Believe, etc., p.232.
2 Talks to Teachers, etc., p.29.
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.

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mass of possibilities of reaction, acquired at home, at school, or in the training of affairs." [1]

Education, then, relies upon resources in the human being. What from a physiological standpoint are these resources? They are, as we have seen in previous chapters, the native or instinctive tendencies to respond or react to stimuli. "Man is an organism for reacting on impressions." [2] With these tendencies to respond there is, as we have seen, a nervous structure that is plastic and modifiable. Topping the nervous structure is the mind whose physical organ is the brain. This mind is there to help determine man's reactions, "and the purpose of his education is to make them numerous and perfect." [3]

James thus lays down his thesis concerning education. We are to take our native responses and, building upon them, acquire a mass of possibilities of reaction. Having acquired them, and while in the act of acquiring them, we are to organize them for conduct that will make us socially and physically efficient. In this organization process the memory is called upon, old abstract conceptions are utilized, and new conceptions built up on the old. The place of the teacher in this process of acquisition is that of supervisor. [4]

Now, says Professor James, "this being the case, I will immediately state a principle which underlies the whole process of acquisition and governs the entire activity of the

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[1] Ibid., p.38.
[2] Ibid., p.38.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., p.38.

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teacher." [1]

"Every acquired reaction is, as a rule, either a complication grafted on a native reaction, or a substitute for a native reaction, which the same object originally tended to provoke.

The teacher's art consists in bringing about the substitution or complication, and success in the art presupposes a sympathetic acquaintance with the reactive tendencies natively there." [2]

These reactions may be negative as well as positive. "Not to speak, not to move, is one of the most important of our duties, in certain practical emergencies." [3] To refrain, to renounce, to abstain,- "this often requires a great effort of will power, and physiologically considered, is just as positive a nerve function as is motor discharge." [4]

Education, accordingly, is for suitable behavior. This is the modern emphasis. Plato, Aristotle, indeed, the whole classic tradition in philosophy had placed the emphasis upon the mind's purely rational function, to the neglect of the practical side. But now, with our conception of man as a creature of evolution, "evolved from infra-human ancestors, in whom pure reason hardly existed, if at all," [5] it seems that "mind, so far as it can have had any function, would appear to have been an organ for adapting their movements to the impressions received from the environment, so as to escape the better from destruction." [6]

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[1] Ibid., p.38.
[2] Ibid., p.38-39.
[3] Ibid., p.28.
[4] Ibid., p.28.
[5] Ibid., p.23.
[6] Ibid., p.23-24.

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Behavior is of different kinds, and on different levels. In the chapter on James's psychology we saw that there is first the reflexive and instinctive behavior. We can differentiate these, and many psychologists do differentiate them, but with James there is no clear line of demarcation. Over and above the purely reflexive and instinctive behavior is the habitual, based upon the former and becoming, frequently, so automatic as to be almost on a level with the instinctive. Then there is that behavior which is not habitual, and it is in this highest form of behavior that man excels and shows his superiority to the lower animals. If man is a behaving animal,-and James says he is,-then education must consist in the proper stimulation and direction and control of all these various kinds of conduct.

The thing that produces expression is impression. And if there is no reaction, then, evidently, there has been no impression. "No reception without reaction, no impression without correlative expression,-this is the great maxim which the teacher ought never to forget." [1] Suitable impressions combined with native reactions produce behavior.

When unlearned reactions are repeated they are no longer purely unlearned. Experience enters in to modify certain phases of the reaction. Certain modes of response seem easier or more satisfactory than others, and are consequently repeated. Repetition tends to strengthen the bonds between the sensory and motor neurones, making for habitual action. But in animals with a cerebrum response tends to be delayed at times. In purely reflex

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[1] Ibid., p.33.

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action we know exactly what the response will be to a certain stimulus. In cerebralistic action, we cannot predict with certainty the response. In man, with his own particular design of cerebral hemispheres, choosing and judgment frequently enter in to keep the response from being simply habitual.

But all behavior must go back to innate tendencies to respond and to sensory impressions. Hence the vital necessity in a suitable education, of understanding these factors. The more abundant the impressions, the greater the store of ideas in one's mind, the greater the associations, the greater the abstractions and conceptions, and consequently the more likelihood that a person will respond correctly to a novel situation. Concepts go back to percepts, and sensations. These impressions are to be secured through as many of the senses as possible. The auditory sense reinforces the visual sense, and *vice versa*. "The process of education," writes James,

> "may be described as nothing but the process of acquiring ideas or conceptions, the best educated mind being the mind which has the largest stock of them, ready to meet the largest possible variety of the emergencies of life. The lack of education means only the failure to have acquired them, and the consequent liability to be 'floored' and 'rattled' in the vicissitudes of experience." [1]

As a matter of fact, as we have already seen, volition to James is the result of ideas. Action on its lower levels is ideo-motor. And even on the higher levels, where there is conflict and long delay in response, action finally accords with

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.145-46.

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that idea or set of ideas which prevails in the mind.

Ideas are as numerous as the sands on the seashore. They all produce action (either exhibitive or inhibitive). If we would know what kind of impressions, then, should be given to a person in order to educate him properly, we should have to ask, "What kind of a person do you wish him to be?" If we wish to make a soilor of a boy, the kind of ideas we should impregnate his mind with are different from those that would serve to influence him to become a merchant. In other words, our question resolves itself into this one: "What is the result aimed at in education?" The answer to this particular question constitutes the substance of the next division of this chapter, and we shall accordingly postpone the answer until then. In this section, our aim is simply to consider what education, from James's viewpoint, consists in. And, as we have already noted, education "consists in the organizing of resources in the human being, of powers of conduct which shall fit him to his social and physical world."

It is unnecessary, in this place, to go into any detailed discussion of the various instincts or instinctive tendencies. James lists quite a number of them, and we have already seen, on a previous page, which ones, in his mind, were the more important. The thing that should interest us here, however, is the treatment of the instincts.

This brings us to James's theory of the transitoriness of instincts. We have discussed this before. Let us now turn to James's own words on the subject:

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"Many of our impulsive tendencies ripen at a certain perios; and, if the appropriate objects be then and there provided, habits of donduct toward them are acquired which last. But, if the objects be not forthcoming then, the impulse may die out before a habit is formed; and later it may be hard to teach the creature to react appropriately in those directions. . . . . . .

In children we observe a ripening of impulses and interests in a certain determinate order. Creeping, walking, climbing, imitating vocal sounds, constructing, drawing, calculating, possess the child in succession; and in some children the possession, while it lasts,may be of a semi-frantic and exclusive sort. Later, the interest in any one of these things may wholly fade away. Of course, the proper pedagogic moment to work skill in, and to clinch the useful habit, is when the native impulse is most accutely present. Crowd on the athletic opportunities, the mental arithmetic, the verse-learning, the drawing, the botany, or what not, the moment you have reason to think the hour is ripe. The hour may not last long, and while it continues you may safely let all the child's occupations take a second place. In this way you economize time and deepen skill; for many an infant prodigy, artistic or mathematical, has a flowering epoch of but a few months."[1]

Further studies along the line of the instincts fails to confirm all that James has asserted regarding them, especially with regard to their acute transitoriness. That there is an element of truth in it is conceded. Even granting that instincts were not at all transitory, it would seem the reasonable thing with many of them to cultivate them when they are ripe. And cultivating them does not mean to encourage their bald primitive form of reaction.

This leads us to what James has said,-heretofore quoted,- to the effect that every acquired reaction is usually a complication grafted on a native reaction, or a substitute for the native reaction. Part of the task of education consists in grafting learned reactions upon native tendencies to respond, and to

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[1] Ibid., p.60-61.

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substitute certain learned responses for native reactions. Let us consider the matter of substitution first.

Rivalry, in its grosser form, lacks entirely any ennobling element. It makes for greediness and selfishness. But, suggests James, "emulation with one's former self is a noble form of the passion of rivalry, and has a wide scope in the training of the young." [1] Could we obliterate all rivalry, would we be better or worse? Postulate even in a general way a law of survival, and we can see where rivalry comes in. But it is not a question of elimation, at least with regard to this instinctive tendency. Were it totally bad, no matter how much service it may have performed in past eons of history, then perhaps the only noble thing to do would be to stamp it out, no matter what the cost. Rivalty, however, has its good side as well as its bad. "There is a noble and generous kind of rivalry, as well as a spiteful and greedy kind; and the noble and generous form is particularly common in childhood." [2] The teacher's task, then, is to substitute the higher for the baser form of emulation and rivalry.

Let us consider another example, namely, the instinct or instinctive tendency of pugnacity. James has much to say on the subject of the fighting instinct. It has been bred in us down from aboriginal days. In the form of physical combativeness it has served the interests of survival. But, says James,

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[1] Ibid., p.52.
[2] Ibid., p.52.

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pugnacity does not have to be thought of merely in terms of the physical encounter. "It can be taken in the sense of a general unwillingness to be beaten by any kind of difficulty. It is what makes us feel 'stumped' and challenged by arduous achievements, and is essential to a spirited and enterprising character." [1]

And then James comes along and pays his respects to "soft" pedagogies. They, he says,

"have taken the place of the old steep and rocky path to learning. But from this lukewarm air the bracing oxygen of effort is left out. It is nonsense to suppose that every step in education <u>can</u> be interesting. The fighting impulse must often be appealed to. Make the pupil feel ashamed of being scared at fractions, of being 'downed' by the law of falling bodies; rouse his pugnacity and pride, and he will rush at the difficult places with a sort of inner wrath at himself that is one of his moral faculties. A victory scored under such conditions becomes a turning-point and crisis of his character . . . . The teacher who never rouses this sort of pugnacious excitement in his pupil falls short of one of his best forms of usefulness." [2]

We shall consider the place of interest a little further on. It is sufficient at this place to call attention to the fact that James does not discount interest. He merely says that he must not suppose that every step in education can be interesting.

In his essay on "The Moral Equivalent of War" James illustrates more in detail this matter of substitution of instinctive tendencies. "Militarism," he writes, "is the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood, and human life with no

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[1] Ibid., p.54.
[2] Ibid., p.54.55.

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use for hardihood would be contemptible."[1] If we are going to do away with war, we must find some substitute for it. "So long as anti-militarists propose no substitution for war's disciplinary function, no moral equivalent of war, analogous, as one might way, to the mechanical equivalent of heat, so long they fail to realize the full inwardness of the situation."[2] James then proceeds to propose a moral equivalent of war; and as we shall find occasion, later on, to discuss the value of asceticism, we shall postpone further comment on this "moral equivalent of war."

Substitution of better forms of expression of instinctive tendencies appears, then, to be one of the main functions of education. Before changing, however, the purely natural response for one of a different type, we clearly must have some ideal to be achieved, or have some hypothesis as to what the result of education should be. Again we are called upon to postpone the discussion for the following section.

Habits are the results of the combination of innate tendencies to respons, and selective experience. "All our life, so far as it has definite form, is but a mass of habits,-practical, emotional, and intellectual."[3]

"I believe that we are subject to the law of habit in consequence of the fact that we have bodies. The plasticity of the living matter of our nervous system, in short, is the reason why we do a thing with difficulty the first time, but soon do it more and more easily, and finally, with sufficient practice, do it semi-mechanically, or with hardly any conscious-

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[1] Pamphlet No. 27, February 1910, published by American Association for International Conciliation, p.8.

[2] Ibid., p.13.

[3] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.64.

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ness at all. Our nervous systems have (in Dr. Carpenter's words) grown to the way in which they have been exercised, just as a sheet of paper or a coat, once creased or folded, tends to fall forever afterward into the same identical folds." [1]

Habit thus becomes a "second nature." "Ninety-nine hundredths or, possibly, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousandths of our activity is purely automatic and habitual, from our rising in the morning to our lying down each night." [2] We become "mere bundles of habit." This being the case, the duty of the teacher is clear: it should be to ingrain into the pupil that assortment of habits that shall be most useful to him throughout life." [3] This brings us to a slightly different definition of education,- different in wording but similar in intent to those definitions already quoted from James's works: "Education is for behavior, and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists."[4]

This definition may seem to contradict a former statement that behavior consists not only in the automatic and habitual responses, but in certain higher unhabitual responses. James would answer this by saying that even in that form of response that is delayed and unhabitual there are involved certain habits of thinking. But that James holds that all behavior is habitual must be denied in the light of other statements of his. We shall verify this in what follows.

The great thing in education "is to make our nervous

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[1] Ibid., p.65.
[2] Ibid., 65-66.
[3] Ibid., p.66.
[4] Ibid., p.66.

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our ally instead of our enemy." [1]

"It is to fund and capitalize our acquisitions, and live at ease upon the interest of the fund. For this we must make automatic and habitual, as early as possible, asmany useful actions as we can, and as carefully guard against the growing into ways that are likely to be disadvantageous. The more of the details of our daily life we can hand over to the effortless custody of automatism, the more our higher powers of mind will be set free for their own proper work." [2]

The last sentence of the foregoing quotation clearly shows that, so far as James is concerned, there are higher forms of activity than the habitual, and the inference is plain that the importance of these higher thought processes is such that the more of the relatively unimportant that we can turn over to automatic habitual response, the better for the higher processes.

James offers certain maxims concerning habit formations. These, quoted previously, need not be repeated here. The last one, however, has a special bearing on our problem, and must be mentioned again.

"Keep the faculty of effort alive in you," says James, "by a little gratuitous exercise every day." [3] This is quite the reverse from undisciplined spontaneity:

"Be systematically heroic in little unnecessary points, do every day or two something for no other reason than its difficulty, so that, when the hour of dire need draws nigh, it may find you not unnerved and untrained to stand the test. Asceticism of this sort is like the insurance which a man pays on his house and goods. The tax does him no good at the time, and possibly may never bring him a return. But, if the fire does come, his

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[1] Ibid., p.66.

[2] Ibid., p.66-67.

[3] Ibid., p.75.

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having paid it will be his salvation from ruin. So with the man who has daily inured himself to habits of concentrated attention, energetic volition, and self-denial in unnecessary things. He will stand like a tower when everything rocks around him, and his softer fellow-mortals are winnowed like chaff in the blast."[1]

James strikes this note on asceticism in more than one place. To him it is both a means and an end, but his chief emphasis is upon it as a means. In his Gifford Lectures, he avows his belief:

"Representatively, then, and symbolically, and apart from the vagaries into which the unenlightened intellect of former times may have let it wander, asceticism must, I believe, be acknowledged to go with the profounder way of handling the gift of existence. Naturalistic optimism is mere syllabub and flattery and sponge-cake in comparison. The practical course of action for us, as religious men, would therefore, it seems to me, not be simply to turn our backs upon the ascetic impulse, as most of us today turn them, but rather to discover some outlet for it of which the fruits in the way of privation and hardship might be objectively useful." [2]

We have fallen, says James, into the habit of worshiping material luxury and wealth, and this "constitutes so large a portion of the 'spirit' of our age." [3] And does not this, queries James, "make somewhat for effeminacy and unmanliness?" [4]

"Is not the exlusively sympathetic and facetious way in which most children are brought to to-day - so different from the education of a hundred years ago, expecially in evangelical circles - in danger, in spite of its many advantages, of developing a certain trashiness of fibre? Are there not hereabouts some points of application for a renovated and revised ascetic discipline?".[5]

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1 Ibid., p.75-76.

2 The Varieties of Religious Experiences, p.364-65.

3 Ibid., p.365.

4 Ibid., p.365.

5 Ibid., p. 365.

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This brings James to sound the praises of war once more. Let it be perfectly understood that James glories not in war as an instrument of aggression. He is for peace and brotherhood. But war to him does carry with it the necessity of heroic action, strenuous living, sacrifice and self-denial, and because of this fact war has, even in its brutality, subserved some of the higher interests of man. "The fact remains," says James, "That war is a school of strenuous life and heroism; and, being in the line of aboriginal instinct, is the only school that as yet is universally available." [1] "What we now need to discover in the social realm is the moral equivalent of war: something heroic that will speak to men as universally as war does, and yet will be as compatible with their spiritual selves as war has proved itself to be incompatible." [2]

James then suggests, in these Gifford Lectures, that possibly voluntarily accepted poverty (similar to the old monkish poverty-worship) might be 'the strenuous life.' "Among us English-speaking peoples especially do the praises of poverty need once more to be boldly sung. We have grown literally afraid to be poor." [3]

"It is true that so far as wealth gives time for ideal ends and exercise to ideal energies, wealth is better than poverty and ought to be chosen. But wealth does this in only a portion of the actual cases. Elsewhere the desire to gain wealth and the fear to lose it are our chief breeders of cowardice and propagators of corruction. There are thousands of conjunctures in which a wealth-bound man must be a slave, whilst a man for whom poverty has no terrors becomes a freeman . . . . .

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[1] Ibid., p.367.
[2] Ibid., p.367.
[3] Ibid., p. 368.

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I recommend this matter to your serious pondering, for it is certain that the prevalent fear of poverty among the educated classes is the worst moral disease from which our civilization suffers." [1]

The Gifford Lectures were delivered in 1901 and 1902. In 1910-the same year in which James died - the American Association for International Conciliation published James's essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War." Reference has already been made to this writing. In it James goes more exhaustively than in previous writings of his, into the validity of war and the need of a moral equivalent of war. He confesses his own utopia. Strictly speaking, a consideration of this utopia does not fall within the purview of the present section, but belongs in the discussion of the end or aim of education. But, means and ends overlap, and this justifies some consideration of the matter at this time.

In the Gifford Lectures James suggested voluntarily accepted poverty as such a moral equivalent of war. In 1910 he enlarges upon his former conception:

"A permanently successful peace-economy cannot be a simple pleasure-economy. In the more or less socialistic future toward which mankind seems drifting we must still subject ourselves collectively to those severities which answer to our real position upon this only partly hospitable globe. We must make new energies and hardihoods continue the manliness to which the military mind so faithfully clings. Martial virtues must be the enduring cement; intrepidity, contempt of softness, surrender of private interest, obedience to command, must still remain the rock upon which states are built . . ." [2]

We may seem to have wandered quite a distance from our

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[1] Ibid., p.368-69.

[2] The Moral Equivalent of War, p.15.

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discussion of the place of habit in education; but as a matter of fact we have not wandered at all. We are right within view of the whole subject of habit in our consideration of axceticism, and by this time we are back once more to that maxim quoted, namely, "Keep the faculty of effort alive in you by a little gratuitous exercise every day." The matter of effort, of striving, of self-discipline plays such an important part in all that James writes that it forms one of the main points in his philosophy of education.

The need of the "faculty of effort" in education does not, however, as we have heretofore seen, mean that we shall swing the pendulum to its opposite extreme and pay no attention at all to the use of interest. Far from that, in James's mind. James deals at length with the subject of interest.

Some objects are natively interesting, some require the artificial building up of interests. "The native interests of children lie altogether in the sphere of sensation." [1] Movement and action, especially, call for attention. "Living things . . moving things, or things that savor of danger or of blood, that have a dramatic quality, - these are the objects natively interesting to childhood . . and the teacher of young children, until more artificial interests have grown up, will keep in touch with her pupils by constant appeal to such matters as these." [2] This means that "instruction must be carried on

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[1] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.92.

[2] Ibid., p.93.

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objectively, experimentally, anecdotally. The blackboard-drawing and story-telling must constantly come in." [1]

But the native interests are inadequate in any system of education. Education begins with the native, the innate, the unlearned. But if it means anything at all it means passing beyond these to learned, acquired modes of behavior. So artificial interests must be built up. How?

> "Any object not interesting in itself may become interesting through becoming associated with an object in which an interest already exists. The two associated objects grow, as it were, together: the interesting portion sheds its quality over the whole; and thus things notinteresting in their own right borrow an interest which become as real and as strong as that of any natively interesting thing." [2]

> "From all these facts there emerges a very simple abstract programme for the teacher to follow in keeping the attention of the child: Begin with the line of his native interests, and offer him objects that have some immediate connection with these . . . . . . .
> Next, step by step, connect with these first objects and experiences the latter objects and ideas which you wish to instill. Associate the new with the old in some natural and telling way, so that the interest, being shed along from point to point, finally suffuses the entire system of objects of thought." [3]

James, we see, thus follows the Herbartian principle of preparation. And this falls back upon the necessity of there being, in the pupils' minds, something to attend with. "That something can consist in nothing but a previous lot of ideas already interesting in themselves. [4]

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[1] Ibid., p.93.

[2] Ibid., p.94.

[3] Ibid., p.95-96.

[4] Ibid., p.97.

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Interest then, and effort must go hand in hand. The teacher should appeal to interests wherever possible; she should build up artificial interests on native interests. And in so doing, if the "faculty of effort" is required, it should be used. After all, "life is hard," and "there is nothing to make one indignant in the mere fact that . . men should toil and suffer pain. The planetary conditions once for all are such, and we can stand it." [1]

There are two forms of habitual response, the physical and the mental. The mental form must, if we are to be educated persons in the real sense of the word, continuously be subject to reorganization on the basis of new experiences, and consequently, new conceptions. It is here that the habitual verges and shades into the non-habitual. But once a non-habitual response has taken place, in many cases it ought to be generalized and subsumed under some pre-existing habitual response. Ourability to reorganize our habitual modes of response to take in newer ideas and conceptions is what distinguishes us from the "old fogy," who is unable to unwilling to do this. Emile Boutroux summarizes James's views on this point in the following language:

> "Everything taught a pupil is to be for him the point of departure of a certain habit, is to determine in his organism a certain display of activity.
>
> On the other hand, it is important that these habits should be possibilities, powers at the service of man, not fatalities which tyrannize over him. The educator must take care, then, to maintain in the soul the suppleness, the power of adaptation, of change, of acquisition, of experiment which is its privilege. The very multiplicity and diversity of habits will contribute to render them more tractable." [2]

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[1] The Moral Equivalent of War, p.16.

[2] Op.cit., p.99-100.

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Consequently, one of the tasks of education is to train a person in open-mindedness and in the ability constantly to reorganize his experiences. The minute we refuse to reorganize our conceptions in the light of new experiences, that minute our education ceases, and "old fogyism" results. But, James reminds us, "there are young fogies, too. Old fogyism begins at a younger age than we think. I am almost afraid to say so, but I believe that in the majority of human beings it begins at about twenty-five." [1]

However, we are almost all destined to be old fogies sooner or later. This is due to our physical make up. "It is true that a grown-up adult keeps gaining well into middle age a great knowledge of details, and a great acquaintance with individual cases connected with his profession or business life." "But the larger categories of conceptions, the sorts of things, and wider classes of relation between things . . are all got into the mind at a comparatively youthful date." [2]

> "The conceptions acquired before thirty remain usually the only ones we ever gain. Such exceptional cases of perpetually self-renovating youth as Mr. Gladstone's only prove, by the admiration they awaken, the universality of the rule. And it may well solemnize a teacher . . . . to feel how exclusively dependent upon his present ministrations in the way of imparting conceptions the pupils' future life is probably bound to be." [3]

We have seen James's emphasis upon the instincts and upon habit. A little later on we shall consider the volitional forms of behavior. In all of these different forms of behavior

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[1] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.160-161.
[2] Ibid., p.167.
[3] Ibid., p.168.

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James gives great importance to ideas and to conceptions.

To James a word, a thought, an idea, a conception are in mental life as dynamite is in the physical realm. They are the movers to action. It is, then, of incalculable importance that the teacher guide the pupil in the forming of numerous concepts. And if it is true, - as it is in the case of the great mass of peolpe, - that "old fogyism" sets in before a person has reached hardly the middle of his second score of years, then education of the youth must consist largely in this kind of education.

> "When all is said and done, the fact remains that verbal material is, on the whole, the handiest and most useful material in which thinking can be carried on. Abstract conceptions are far and away the most economical instruments of thought, and abstract conceptions are fixed and incornated for us in words. Statisfical inquiry would seem to show that, as men advance in life, they tend to make less and less use of visual images, and more and more use of words." [1]

This means that words must be correctly used, that names must be accurate, for only in this way can we think accurately and, as a result, act correctly. It also means that memorizing must be a part of the educative process. James decries the reaction against memorizing, although he realizes that the reaction came about as a result of "the excesses of old-fashioned varbal memorizing." [2] "Learning things by heart is now probably too much despised." [3] And it is James's opinion "that constant exercise in verbal memorizing must still be an indispensable

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[1] Ibid., p.131,
[2] Ibid., p.131.
[3] Ibid.

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feature in all sound education." [1]

In thus emphasizing words and ideas James adds "reasoned and intellectual education" in a natural way "to the physiological and mechanical." [2] But is intellectual education the last phase of the educative process?

"If it were," writes Boutroux, "we ought to content ourselves with reaching for the new, for love of the new as such, without trying to make a choice between novelties. The idea, in itself, is indifferent to the issues entrusted to it; it casts in the mould of the given, and learns to realize alike the veil and the good, the erratic and the ingenious, the just and the unjust." [3]

The third phase of human education, then, must consist in taking ideas and conceptions and directing them by our "willing department" "toward those things which have a true value." "It is, properly speaking, the education of action, or moral education." [4] To James's discussion of the will we shall therefore now turn our attention.

In a former chapter James's theory of voluntary action was gone into in so much detail that it is unnecessary to repeat it at this place. We saw that action, to James, is ideo-motor; that even in the more complicated and greatly delayed forms of behavior, where there are conflicts of perhaps tragic import, final action follows upon and agrees with the prevalence of certain ideas or sets of ideas in consciousness. "Once brought . .

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Boutroux, op.cit., p.105.
[3] Op.cit., 108.
[4] Ibid., p.108-09.

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to the centre of the field of consciousness and held there, the reasonable idea will exert these (motor) effects inevitably."[1]

Something, the "I" the "Knower," the "Willer," puts forth an effort to hold certain ideas in the focus of consciousness. This effort is a moral one, and "terminates in our holding fast to the appropriate idea."[2]

> "if, then, you are asked, '_In what does a moral act consist_ when reduced to its simplest and most elementary form?' you can make only one reply. You can say that it _consists in the effort of attention by which we hold fast to an idea which but for that effort of attention would be driven out of_ the mind by the other psychological tendencies that are there."[3]

With the "associationists" like Hume, "the ideas are themselves the actors, the stage, the theatre, the spectators, and the play."[4] James, however, gives no such power to ideas in and of themselves. To him there is a "stream of consciousness," and he refuses to count himself a materialist.[5] "I cannot see," he writes, "how such a thing as our consciousness can possibly be produced by a nervous machinery, though I can perfectly well see how, if 'ideas' do accompany the workings of the machinery, the _order_ of the ideas might very well follow exactly the _order_ of the machine'soperations."[6] Voluntary attention determines action, but "the duration and amount of

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[1] _Talks to Teachers_, etc., p.186.
[2] _Ibid_.
[3] _Ibid_., p.186-87.
[4] _Ibid_., p.177.
[5] _Ibid_., p.190.
[6] _Ibid_., p.190.

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this attention seem within certain limits indeterminate. We *feel* as if we could make it really more or less, and as if our free action in this regard were a genuine critical point in nature, - a point on which our destiny and that of others might hinge." [1]

This brings up the whole question of free-will. In the previous section of this chapter, wherein was treated James's conception of the nature of the individual to be educated, we saw that James postulated free-will, and it is unnecessary to say more about that subject here.

We must call attention to James's phrase "effort of attention." In this phrase we see illustrated once more James's emphasis upon struggle, upon overcoming difficulty, or in other words, upon the strenuous life. The cognitive and affectional states lead to action. Some action is simple, almost mechanical. Some is hesitant, because of the conflict of ideas. When action finally takes place it does so following the "effort of attention." We simply cannot escape effort and struggle, according to James's philosophy of life.

"Our acts of voluntary attention, brief and fitful as they are, are neverthelsss momentous and critical, determining us, as they do, to higher and lower destinies. The exercise of voluntary attention in the schoolroom must therefore be counted one of the most important points of training that take place there; and the first-rate teacher by the keenness of the remoter interests which he is able to awaken, will provide abundant opportunities for its occurrence." [2]

"Voluntary action, then," says James, "is at all times

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.191.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.189.

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a resultant of the compounding of our impulsions with our inhibitions." [1] Now, there are two kinds of inhibition, inhibition by repression or negation, and inhibition by substitution." [2]

"The difference between them is that, in the case of inhibition by repression, both the inhibited idea and the inhibiting idea, the impulsive idea and the idea that negates it, remain along with each other inconsciousness, producing a certain inward strain or tension there; whereas, in inhibition by substitution, the inhibiting idea supersedes altogether the idea which it inhibits, and the latter quickly vanishes from the field." [3]

Which of the two forms of inhibition is better? To James "it is clear that in general we ought, whenever we can, to employ the method of inhibition by substitution." [4]

"Spinoza long ago wrote in his Ethics that anything that a man can avoid under the notion that it is bad he may also avoid under the notion that something else is good. He who habitually acts _sub specie mali_, under the negative notion, the notion of the bad, is called a slave by Spinoza. To him who acts habitually under the notion of good he gives the name of freeman. See to it now, I beg you, that you make freemen of your pupils by habituating them to act, whenever possible, under the notion of a good." [5]

All of which goes back to what has been said on an earlier page regarding the necessity of substitution in guiding the expression of many instinctive tendencies.

What has been written thus far in this division of the

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[1] _Ibid._, p.178.
[2] _Ibid._, p.192.
[3] _Ibid._, p. 192-93.
[4] _Ibid._, p.94.
[5] _Ibid._, p.194-95.

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chapter pertains mostly, although not entirely, to education as it affects the cognitive and volitional elements in man. Practically nothing has been said bearing directly on education as it involves the affective element. True, the affective element enters into instinctive and habitual and volitional responses, more in some cases, less in others. But a few words directly on the emotional elements are in order.

Ideas may be almost entirely purely intellectual, or they may be surcharged with emotion. In any event, the effect of all thought is to lead to some sort of behavior. But ideas in the first place, intellectual or emotional, go back to a sensory origin, or at least a sensory conduction. We have looked at the James-Lange theory of emotions and have seen how bodily states and sensations intervene between the two mental states of cognition and feeling. In other words, the connection between bodily and mental states is inescapable. This, thinks James, has a very vital bearing upon education:

> "There is no more valuable precept in moral education than this, as all who have experience know; if we wish to conquer undesirable emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously and in the first instance, cold-bloodedly go through outward motions of those contrary dispositions we prefer to cultivate. The reward of persistence will infallibly come, in the fading out of the sullenness or depression, and the advent of real cheerfulness and kindliness in their stead. Smooth the brow, brighten the eye, contract the dorsal rather than the ventral aspect of the frame, and speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment, and your heart must be frigid indeed if it do not gradually thaw!" [1]

And in another place, writing on "The Gospel of Relaxa-

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[1] Collected Essays and Reviews, p.261.

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tion," James says:

"There is . . no better known or more generally useful precept in moral training of youth, or in one's personal self-discipline, than that which bids us pay primary attention to what we do and express, and not to care too much for what we feel. If we only check a cowardly impulse in time, for example, or if we only don't strike the blow or rip out with the complaining or insulting word that we shall regret as long as we live, our feelings themselves will presently be the calmer and better, with no particular guidance from us on their own account."[1]

The matter of the emotional life in its connection with education is brought out by James in another way. As human beings, we have, according to him, reserves of energy that we do not use, but which we should use. Having already considered this topic heretofore, we shall not have to explain or go further into detail regarding it now. Suffice it to say that, granting James's thesis to be true, namely, "that few men live at their maximum of energy," and "that anyone may be in vital equilibrium at very different rates of energizing," then the practical question arises: "To what do the better men owe their escape? and, in the fluctuations which all men feel in their own degree of energizing, to what are the improvements due, when they do occur?"[2]

In general terms, says James, the answer is plain:

"Either some unusual stimulus fills them with emotional excitement, or some unusual idea of necessity induces them to make an extra effort of will. Excitements, ideas, and efforts, in a word, are what carry us over the dam."[3]

In one of the first definitions of education quoted from

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[1] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.200-201.

[2] Memories and Studies, p.238.

[3] Ibid., p.238.

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James we read that it is to fit man to his social and physical world. So far we have considered the mental education of man, and that more from an individualistic standpoint. But such an education would be entirely lopsided. Education must prepare man both physically and mentally, both as an individual and as a social creature. Let us consider the matter of his social education next.

That a man is a social animal James postulated both explicitly and implicitly. Social education, then, is both a means and an end. We shall not attempt at this placé to lay down the end for social education. Rather, let us try to confine our discussion to it as a means.

One of our gibbest defects is our selfishness. We are afflicted with a "certain blindness," namely, the blindness with which we all regard "the feelings of creatures and people different from ourselves." [1] As social creatures we ought to understand one another, to appreciate the other person's feelings and motives, to sympathize with another in his failings, to rejoice with him in his triumphs. Social education demands that we have such responsive sensibilities. And these responsive sensibilities are to be extended to the brute as well as to the human creation, as well to the inanimate as to the animate. We have here James's great lesson on sympathy, on open-mindedness. He seems almost to go against some of the very things he has previously said regarding an intellectual education:

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[1] Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals, p.229.

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"But we of the highly educated classes (so called) have not of us got far, far away from Nature. We are trained to seek the choice, the rare, the exquisite exclusively, and to overlook the common. We are stuffed with abstract conceptions and glib with verbalities and verbosities; and in the culture of these higher functions the peculiar sources of joy connected with our simpler functions often dry up, and we grow stone-blind and insensible to life's more elementary and general goods and joys." 1

In order to remedy this situation we need "to descend to a more profound and primitive leve."

"The savages and children of nature, to whom we deem ourselves so much superior, certainly are alive where we are often dead, along these lines; and, could they write as glibly as we do, they would read us impressive lectures on our impatience for improvement and on our blindness to the fundamental static goods of life. 'Ah! my brother,' said a chieftian to his white guest, 'thou wilt never know the happiness of both thinking of nothing and doing nothing.'"2

Is James uttering a Roussellian note? In one way, yes. James, too, would have us go back to nature for certain lessons, but not in an anti-social way. On the contrary, James would have us get back to nature by going to nature's creations, human, brut e, inanimate, and learning to understand them, and appreciate them. Can any higher note in social education really be sounded?

What James has to say on physical education is given in small doses in various places, but what he has said clearly indicates his belief in appropriate physical training, and in the proper care of the body. In an article named "Vacations," written in 1873, James advocated that "every man who possibly

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1 Ibid., p.257.

2 Ibid., p.257-58.

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can should force himself to a holiday of a full month in the year, whether he feels like taking it or not." Two reasons are given for this: "First, for the reason . . . . that that capacity for irresponsible enjoyment which is like air to space in the character, may not become wholly atrophied within him. . . But second, for the reason that all must consider practical, namely, tone of mind and health of body." [1]

A more certain and direct statement regarding physical education is made in another connection.

> "I hope that here in America more and more the ideal of the well-trained and vigorous body will be maintained neck by neck with that of the well-trained and vigorous mind as the two-co-equal halves of the higher education for men and women alike. The strength of the British Empire lies in the strength of character of the individual Englishman, taken all alone by himself. And that strength, I am persuaded, is perennially nourished and kept up by nothing so much as by the national worship, in which all classes meet, of athletic outdoor life and sport." [2]

> "Weakness is too apt to be what the doctors call irritable weakness, and that blessed internal peace and confidence, that acquiescentia in seipso, as Spinoza used to call it, that wells up from every part of the body of a muscularly well-trained human being, and soaks the indwelling soul of him with satisfaction, is, quite apart from every consideration of its mechanical utility, an element of spiritual hygiene of supreme significance." [3]

We have now covered in a more or less general way our second subject, namely, in what, according to James, does education consist? No attempt has been made to go into details regarding methods. For example, we sais that James places great importance upon the value of ideas and conceptions. But he didn't mean that children in the kindergarten are to be taught conceptions in the same way that the adolescent is. "One of the best

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1 The Nation, Aug. 7, 1873, Vol.17,p.91.

2 "The Gospel of Relaxation," Talks to Teachers, etc., p.205.

3 Ibid., p.207.

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fruits of the 'child-study' movement," writes Professor James, "has been to reinstate all these activities (such as manual work and the use of objects) to their proper place in a sound system of education." "It is not tell adolescence is reached that the mind grows able to take in the more abstract aspects of experience, the hidden similarities and distinctions between things, and especially their causal sequences." "Later still, not till adolescence is well advanced, does the mind awaken to a systematic interest in abstract human relations - moral relations, properly so called,-to sociological ideas and to metaphysical abstractions." [1]

Likewise practically nothing has been said about manual training, to which James gives his unqualified okeh.

"The most colossal improvement which recent years have seen in secondary education lies in the introduction of the manual training schools, not because they will give up a people more handy and practical for domestic life and better skilled in trades, but because they will give us citizens with an entirely different intellectual fibre. Laboratory work and shop work engender a habit of observation, a knowledge of the difference between accuracy and vagueness, and on insight into nature's compexity and into the inadequacy of all abstract verbal accounts of real phenomena, which once wrought into the mind, remain there as lifelong possessions. They confer precision, because, if you are doing a thing, you must do it definitely right or definitely wrong. They give honesty; for, when you express yourself by making things, and not by using words, it becomes impossible to dissimulate your vagueness or ignorance by ambiguity. They beget a habit of self-reliance; they keep the interest and attention always cheerfully engaged, and reduce the teacher's disciplinary functions to a minimum." [2]

These details regarding methods follow naturally upon the acceptance of James's point of view regarding the primacy

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[1] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.148.
[2] Ibid., p.105.

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of instincts, and the place of habit, in one's life. A philosophy of education does not have to go into all the details. It may if it so chooses, but it does not necessarily have so to do. Inasmuch as James made no attempt to go into details, but on the whole confined his efforts to giving us general rules and the larger truths involved in education, we shall do well if we likewise make no special attempt to ferret out all the minor details which he drops now and then along the way.

James saw in human beings a mass of possibilities. Knowledge must be imparted. But, with James, this was not in itself sufficient. From his own example we get his conception of education. As H. Addington Bruce writes in the Outlook,

"his (James's) idea of education was not only to impart knowledge, but to draw out knowledge, to arouse and set in play dormant faculties. Under his genial, man-to-man treatment an occasional spark of brilliancy flashed from even the dullest who cam into contact with him, while all men of originality, responding at once to his obvious faith in them and his ability to get at their latent powers, developed under his guidance as perhaps under no other instructor with whom they had to do." 1

Faith, then, in others, is an essential element in education. And with this faith must go a respect for the personality of each human being. With such a respect we do not care to have another reproduce parrot-like what is told him, but we wish to get him to react in his own way, resting, as we must if we are empiricists, in the belief that every one

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[1] Vol. 96, Sept. 10,1910,p.70.

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makes his particular contribution to the sum total of truth, and that no one knows all the truth. Vigorous and appropriate reaction, not necessarily exact reproduction, should be the aim. But when we have said this we find ourselves encroaching upon the subject of our next division.

One final word upon the discussion as to the nature of education, and then we shall pass on to the consideration of the end sought in education.

In what has been said in the present section it seems apparent that James believes in the potency of generalized attitudes, conceptions, and ideals. And this does not contradict his philosophic views on empiricism. As an impiricist he gives the primacy to percepts in the order of origin. And any concept must always be subject to be referred to the originating percepts in order to test the validity, usefulness, truth, of the concept. But concepts are of such importance in education that we could practically have no such thing as education without them, and James never for a minute loses sight of this fact. And when we come to his writings dealing more specifically with pedagogical procedure, we find the concept, the idea, being emphasized over and over again. Help a person to get a large, voluminous number of generalized attitudes, ideals, conceptions, and with them, says James, a person will be able to respond intelligently to novel situations.

James's emphasis upon habit does not preclude this viewpoint. Habit, to him, is involved in mental as well as

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physical reaction. Habit is not simple reflex movement. It always carries in it some portion of the learned with the instinctive or reflexive. And as a person's experiences are never exactly the same, any habitual act, especially if it be of the mental variety or if it involve the mental, is more than apt not to be repeated in the exact and identical way of the former occasion. Habit, in other words, includes the potentiality and possibility of continual readjustment as new experiences occur. Much of the later act may be identical with the former. But in human beings some element of the deed, sometimes relatively very slight, sometimes quite large, varies from the former action. Herein lie the utility and the importance of general ideas and conceptions, in so far as they affect habitual responses. If James does not say this in so many words, the inference is a fair and reasonable one from what he has said about ideas, habits, and "old fogyism."

In the next division we shall seek to ascertain what, to James, is the end, the aim, the goal of education.

### 3. What is the Result Aimed at in Education?

In a way our question has already been partially answered. We have discussed the nature of the individual to be educated. Any adequate appraisal of the nature of the individual must necessarily imply something of the end, the destiny of the individual, and, therefore, something of the result aimed at in education. For example, if man's nature is social, then one of the aims of education is to cultivate this characteristic, make

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it better, finer, etc.

From the discussion already had in previous pages, we have seen that James is in agreement with most people in assigning, in one way or another, a physical, mental, social and spiritual nature to man. These things being so, education must aim at the welfare of each person physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Nor must there be a lopsided result. The best education will aim at a harmonious development of all the "faculties." This, of course, is trite and commonplace. What educationist to-day does not believe in such a general scheme? But each person has his own particular emphases, and our task is to discover what James's were.

Perhaps we can best sum up James's views in this matter by saying that education should produce practical men of effort, of struggle, of heroism, who are self-controlled and used to proper inhibitions, who seek to develop their own potentialities to the limit and to do the same with regard to others, who through faith and courage try themselves to make this world a better place to live in, who reach out with open-mindedness and sympathy and unselfishness to help other people in their struggles and strivings, and who do not worry too much about "salvation" and "eternal life," but fight the battle here and now to the best of their ability, finding joy in the fight, and ever struggling to reach higher levels of living. Let us examine these points more in detail.

"We cannot escape our destiny," James writes, in his Talks to Teachers, "which (destiny) is practical; and even our

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most theoretic faculties contribute to its working out." [1]

We are behaving creatures, organisms designed for activity, and all our educational procedure should bear this in mind. Even "the inessential 'unpractical' activities are themselves far more connected with our behavior and our adaptation to the environment than at first sight might appear. No truth, however, abstract, is is ever perceived, that will not probably at sometime influence our earthly action." [2]

Nor is action in itself sufficient. The action should be purposive, involving struggle to attain ideals, and there should be the continuous attempt to rise to higher planes of life. Life without heroism and daring is hardly worth the name. But this brings up the whole question of ideals. If we are going to fight for something, it should be worth while and significant. Ideals and action must, then, join hands in anyadequate definition of a worthwhile life. There must be "a marriage of two different parents, either one of whom alone is barren." Taken by themselves, ideals are inert, lifeless; they give no reality. Likewise the virtues of effort, courage, and heroism, taken by themselves, are hundrum, monotonous, lacking novelty, showing no progress. And, continues James, "let the orientalists and pessimists say what they will, the thing of deepest--or, at any rate, of comparatively deepest--significance in life does seem to be its character of progress, or that strange union of reality with ideal novelty which it continued from one mement to another

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[1] P.27.
[2] _Ibid._, p.26.

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to present." [1]

"Culture and refinement all alone are not enough . . Ideal aspirations are not enough, when uncombined with pluck and will. But neither are pluck and will, dogged endurance and insensibility to danger enough when taken all alone. There must be some sort of fusion, some chemical combination among these principles for a life objectively and thoroughly significant to result." [2]

Now what are the ideals that, according to Professor James, should be our goal in education? Did he have any ideals for himself in the matter, and if so did he hold them up for universal endorsement and acceptance? Of course James had his ideals, and we shall consider them a little later on. But he did not, as do the intellectualists, seek any closed system. The old Greek philosophers conceived of their utopias in static terms. Such utopias are very satisfying to the intellect as conceptions. As realities they probably would be far from the "good places" that they were conceived to be. James gives us no such static picture of life. Life to him is dynamic. He makes no claim to knowing just what the ideal life is, and therefore, what is the ideal aim of education. In this he is true to his philosophy of experience. As Mr. Boutroux writes: "It is not the province of a philosophy of experience and of action to seek to give a final answer" as to "what, precisely, constitutes the higher form of existence which we call the ideal, and what are, in truth, the modes of activity which we call virtues." [3]

"Hands off,"warns James; "neither the holw of truth nor the whole of good is revealed to any single observer, although each observer gains a partial superiority of insight from the peculiar position inwhich he stands. Even prisons and sick-rooms have their special revelations. It is enough to ask of each of us that he should be faithful to his own opportunities and

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.294. [2] *Ibid.*, p.295. [3] *Op.cit.*, p.113.

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make the most of his own blessings, without presuming to regulate the rest of the vast field." 1

And in another place James writes:

"'Ever not quite!'-this seems to wring the very last panting word out of rationalistic philosophy's mouth. It is felt to be pluralism's heraldic device. There is no complete generalization, no total point of view, no all-pervasive unity, but everywhere some residual resistance to verbalization, formulation, and discursification, some genius of reality that escapes from the pressure of the logical fingers. . ." 2

This does not mean, let it be reiterated, that we shall not have ideals. But it does mean that each is responsible for his own ideals. There is, there can be, no standard, no set type of character to which we each and every one must measure up. There are "ideals," but no one "ideal."

How shall we arrive at a knowledge of these ideals, of whatever kind they may be? An ideal is some desired goal, presumably having in it something that will satisfy the one desiring it. But life presents all kinds of wants and desires. Many are mutually antagonisic or exclusive. How can one be saint and bon vivant at the same time? We have to draw the lines somewhere, "since all demands conjointly cannot be satisfied in this poor world." In fixing our aims and ideals, by what principles shall we be guided? James attempts to answer such question in the following language:

"Since everything which is demanded is by that fact a good, must not the guiding principle for ethical philosophy (since all demands conjointly cannot be satisfied in this poor

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1 Talks to Teachers, etc., p.264.
2 Memories and Studies, p.409.

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world) be simply to satisfy at all times as many demands as we can? That act must be the best act, accordingly, which makes for the best whole, in the sense of awakening the least sum of dissatisfactions. In the casuistic scale, therefore, those ideals must be written highest which prevail at the least cost, or by whose realization the least possible number of other ideals are destroyed. Since victory and defeat there must be, the victory to be philosophically prayed for in that of the more inclusive side,-of the side which even in the hour of triumph will to some degree do justice to the ideals in which the vanquished party's interests lay." 1

Each person, then, following some such principles as these, will, according to William James, have to determine his own "goods," his own ideals. As for James, what were his ideals, granting, as we must that we had no closed system?

We have seen, time and time again, James's emphasis upon behavior. This is his key to the universe. Activity must be combined with ideals. And any ideal worth while must be striven for. Life, consequently, to be worth while and significant to Professor James, must be filled with effort, with striving, with courage and heroism. It must be a strenuous life, in the sense of being constantly in the conflict for better and nobler living.

This emphasis upon the heroic and strenuous is strikingly and typically brought out by James in his description of a visit to Chautauqua Lake one summer:

"The mement one treads that sacred enclosure, one feels one's self in an atmosphere os success. Sobriety and industry, intelligence and goodness, orderliness and ideality, prosperity and cheerfulness, pervade the air. It is a serious and studious picnic on a gigantic scale." 2

Surely such a place as this must be satisfying!

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1 The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, p.205.

2 Talks to Teachers, etc., p.268-69.

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"You have culture, you have kindness, you have cheapness, you have equality, you have the best fruits of what mankind has fought and bled and striven for under the name of civilization for centuries. You have, in short, a fortaste of what human society might be, were it all in the light, with no suffering and no dark corners." [1]

James went just for a day to satisfy his curiosity. He stayed for a week, "held spell-bound by the charm and ease of everything, by the middle-class paradise, without a sin, without a victim, without a blot, without a tear." [2] But to his own astonishment, when he emerged "into the dark and wicked world again," he found himself saying:

"Ouf! what a relief! Now for something primordial and savage, even though it were as bad as an Armenian massacre, to set the balance straight again. This order is too tame, this culture too second-rate, this goodness too uninspiring. This human drame without a villain or a pang; this community so refined that ice-cream soda-water is the utmost offering it can make to the brute animal in man; this city simmering in the tepid lakeside sun; this atrocious harmlessness of all things,-I cannot abide with them. Let me take my chances again in the big outside worldly wilderness with all its sins and sufferings. There are the heights and depths, the precipices and the steep ideals, the gleams of the awful and the infinite; and there is more hope and help a thousand times than in this dead level and quintessence of every mediocrity." [3]

Whatever might be James's ideal of man's place in life, of this much we can be certain: his utopia was not a summer Chautauqua.

Probably his own reaction to the visit startled him and provided a new revelation of his own life to him. Was he so law-

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[1] Ibid., p.269-70.
[2] Ibid., p.270.
[3] Ibid., p.270-71.

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less as to fail to appreciate the peace and quiet and order of such an ideal spot as Chautauqua? There had been spread before him "the realization--on a small, sample scale of course-- of all the ideals for which our civilization has been striving," "and here was the instinctive hostile reaction, not of the natural man, but of a so-called cultivated man upon such a Utopia." [1]

This was a contradiction and a paradox. The problem required solving. So James meditated thereon. And he asked himself "what the thing was that was so lacking in this Sabbatical city." [2]

> "And I soon recognized that it was the element that gives to the wicked outer world all its moral style, expressiveness and picturesqueness,-the element of precipitiousness, so to call it, of strength and strenuousness, intensity and danger. What excites and interests the looker-on at life, what the romances and the statues celebrate and the grim civic monuments remind us os, is the everlasting battle of the powers of light with those of darkness; with heroism, reduced to its bare chance, yet ever and anon snatching victory from the jaws of death." [3]

These things were all missing at that "unspeakable Chautauqua." There was no danger, no possibility of death anywhere in sight, and the place was just sitting idly in the sun "resting on its oars." "But what our human emotions seem to require," says James, "is the sight of the struggle going on." [4]

> "Sweat and effort, human nature strained to its uttermost and on the rack, yet getting through alive, and then turning its back on its success to pursue another more rare and arduous

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.271.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.271.
[3] *Ibid.*, p.271-72.
[4] Ibid., p.272.

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still-- this is the sort of thing the presence of which inspires us, and the reality of which it seems to be the function of all the higher forms of literature and fine art to bring home to us and suggest." [1]

In a way we could stop right here. With James the one dominant purpose of life, and, therefore, the chief aim of education, is to learn the lesson of struggle, of fortitude, or courage, of achievement against odds. Over and over again he rings the changes on strenuousness and heroisms:

"In God's eyes the differences of social position, of culture, of cleanliness, of dress, which different men exhibit, and all the other rareties and exceptions on which they so fantastically pin their pride, must be so small as practically quite to vanish; and all that should remain is the common fact that here we are, a countless multitude of vessels of life, each of us pent in to peculiar difficulties, with which we must severally struggle by using whatever of fortitude and goodness we can summon up. The exercise of the courage, patience, and kindness, must be the significant portion of the whole business, and the distinctions of position can only be a manner of diversifying the phenomenal surface upon which these underground virtues may manifest their effects." [2]

In this whole matter of courage, faith, struggle, the "will" is a very important factor. As creatures of free-will, we can choose, decide, cast a determining vote, and therefore one of the chief aims of education is the proper training of the "willing" department of "faculty" of the mind. And this is true, whatever the ideals may be. In this process self-denial and inhibitions become both means and ends. Unrestricted expression finds no advocate in William James.

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[1] Ibid., p.272.

[2] Ibid., p.277-78.

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"The highest form of character, . . abstractly considered, must be full of scruples and inhibitions. But action, in such a character, far from being paralyzed, will succeed in energetically keeping on its way, sometimes overpowering the resistances, sometimes steering along the line where they lie thinnest." [1]

And in connection with self-denial, James asks: "Are we not bound to take some suffering upon ourselves, to do some self-denying service with our lives, in return for all those lives upon which ours are built? To hear this question is to answer it in but one possible way, of one have a normally constituted heart." [2]

Inhibitions and scruples make for self-control. And a self-controlled life is one of James's ideals. One who is properly self-controlled is able to eliminate worry, or to reduce it to a minimum. We need to know how to relax, how to lessen the tension, how to accomplish our tasks without all the "sound and fury" that so frequently accompany our work here in America:

"We must change ourselves from a race that admires jerk and snap for their own sake, and looks down upon low voices and quiet ways as dull, to one that, on the contrary, has calm for its ideal, and for their own sakes loves harmony, dignity, and ease." [3]

For our use in the efforts and struggles that life calls into being there are in all of us reserves of energy seldom or never touched. One of the aims of education should be to open up

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[1] _Ibid._, p.179.

[2] _The Will to Believe_, etc., p.50.

[3] _Talks to Teachers_, etc., p.217.

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these reserves, so that we all might function at a relatively much higher degree of efficiency. And the key that unlocks the door to the use of these reserves of energy is the having of some purpose, some ideal, that takes hold of us and unleashes these hounds of power and force and directs them in its service.

Faith, also, must be both an end as well as a means in education. It can create its own verification. It links itself naturally with ideals, with such a thesis as untouched reserves of energy, with potentialities of human beings, and with a philosophy that is pluralistic and anti-absolutistic. This faith needs to be exercised with regard to one's own possibilities, and in doing so it may well reach out to some sort of superior power or powers. It needs also to be exercised with regard to the possibilities in other people, By his own faith in others, as we have already seen, William James helped to bring out their latent powers and helped them to realize their hidden capacities. In a very true way faith becomes a creator, and as such the cultivation of it should be one of the aims of education.

Faith in others implies the desire to be of help to others. And this note is a characteristically Jamesian one, both in his precepts and by his example. "Since no one has any authoritative information about the final unshop of things," writes James, "and yet, since all men have a mighty desire to get on if they can, it cannot be too often repeated that they will all use the practical standard in measuring the excellence

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of their brothermen."[1] And what is this practical standard of measurement?

"Not the man of the most delicate sensibility but he who on the whole is the most helpful man will be reckoned the best man. The political or spiritual hero will always be the one who, when others crumbled, stood firm till a new order built itself around him; who showed a way out and beyond where others could only see written 'no thoroughfare.'" [2]

Service, therefore, and helpfulness and sympathy must be some of the marks of the better man, and education should endeavor to bring about such qualities of character. We should be sympathetic to all, seeking to see things from the other person's point of view, and realizing the fierceness and reality of our own struggles, and our own possibilities of defeat, be ever ready to extend to another, in his battles, a helping hand, a word of cheer and sympathy, bidding him not to be afraid, and telling him that the very essence of life consists in these struggles and strivings. "The burden of his (James's) message to all was the bracing text which he himself loved and lived by - 'Son of man, stand upon thy feet and I will speak unto thee.'" [3]

The whole man, his passional, his intellectual, his volitional faculties, must all be considered in any adequate scheme of education. "The total mental efficiency of a man is the resultant of the working together of all his faculties. He is too complex a being for any one of them to have the casting

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[1] Collected Essays and Reviews, p.38-9.
[2] Ibid., p.39.
[3] Letters of William James, Vol.I.p.30.

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vote." [1] And if, continues William James, if any one of them do have the casting vote, it is more likely to be the strength of his desire and passion, the strength of the interest he takes in what is proposed. Concantration, memory, reasoning power, inventiveness, excellence of the senses, - all are subsidiary to this." [2] And in another place James expresses the same basic thought in slightly differing words when he says: "What tells in life, is the whole mind working together." [3]

There is one point that may be inferred from things previously written in the present section, but which has not been explicitly mentioned and enlarged upon. That is the value of individuality. This is, of course, a corollary of James's empiricism and pluralism.. This emphasis upon the value of individuality is implied in the quotation previously made: "Son of man, stand upon thy feet," etc. Each man should be himself.

Imitation, of course, does come in. Human progress can no more get along without imitation than without invention. Both are fundamental. "Mankind does nothing save through initiative on the part of inventors, great or small, and imitation by the rest of us-these are the sole factors active in human progress." [4]

"We become conscious of what we ourselves are by imitat-

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[1] *Talks to Teachers*, etc., p.114.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.114.
[3] *Ibid.*, p.137.
[4] *Memories and Studies*, p.318.

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ing others-the consciousness of what the others are precedes - the sence of self grows by the sense of pattersn. The entire accumulated wealth of mankind - languages, arts, institutions, and sciences - is passed on from one generation to another by what Baldwin has called social heredity, each generation simply imitating the last." [1]

But, if imitation is one of the two legs "on which the human race historically has walked," [2] we must not forget that the other equally important leg is invention. Of course, we are all necessarily imitators, some to a greater, some to a less degree. But progress demands novelty, and says James, quotint from Emerson: "There is a time in each man's education when he must arrive at the conviction that imitation is suicide; when he must take himself for better or worse as his portion." [3]

"The highest ethical life," says James, "however few may be called to bear its burdens - consists at all times in the breaking of rules which havegrown too narrow for the actual case. There is but one unconditional commandment, which is that we should seek incessantly, with fear and trembling, so to vote and to act as to bring about the very largest total universe of good which we can see." [4]

Such a comprehension of individuality, and of the function of both imitation and invention, means that education will do all it can to pass on the acknowledged good fruits of preceding generations, but that it will also endeavor to make of every normal person something of an inventor. Individual initiative will be one of the direct goals of good education.

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[1] Talks to Teachers, etc., p.48.
[2] Ibid., p. 49.
[3] Memories and Studies, p.25.
[4] The Will to Believe, etc., p.209.

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This, then, will call for a better knowledge of the individual's mental abilities, and mental tests become of value in such a procedure. James himself did not seem to value mental tests so very highly. But we must remember that they were only in their infancy in his days, that undue claims ( now readily recognized as exaggerations) were being made for them, and that James's "common-sense" reaction was not so favorable to them. He saw clearly that intellect *per se* is not the measure of a man; and that the emotional side of man must be taken into consideration in any proper evaluation of him. But mental testing has improved since James wrote his *Talks to Teachers*. Many "ifs" and "buts" are inserted in the formerly bombastic claims of the mental measurers. And certainly it is a fair inference that James would ultimately approve some sane form of mental measurement, in view of his emphasis upon individuality, individual differences, and the need of cultivating each individual's possibilities to the limit.

Bearing at least indirectly upon this subject regarding the ascertainment of capacities and qualities and possibilities in human beings is James's statement made in his essay on "The Social Value of the College-Bred." He writes: "The best claim that a college education can possibly make on your respect, the best thing it can aspire to accomplish for you, is this: that it should *help you to know a good man when you see him*." [1] And in another connection James wrote:

"The nation blest above all nations is she in whom the

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[1] *Memories and Studies*, p.309.

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civic genius of the people does the saving day by day, by acts without external picturesqueness; by speaking, writing, voting, reasonably; by smiting corruption swiftly; by the people knowing true men when they see them, and preferring them as leaders to rabid partisans or empty quacks." [1]

James was glad there were geniuses. He didn't wish any dead level of mediocrity. This does not mean that he didn't believe in democracy. He did believe in a true democracy, in which there were heights and depths as well as the middle line. But with all his true sympathy for all classes, James realized that the world needed superior men, men who dared if need be to break rules and to launch out upon new ways. "The world," he writes, "is only beginning to see that the wealth of a nation consists more than in anything else in the number of superior men that it harbors." [2] And these superior men were not, in James's eyes, necessarily intellectual giants. They were superior because of the proper blending of high qualities in the emotional, intellectual, and volitional faculties.

James's idea of education was not that of a preparation for another world. He didn't deny life beyond the grave. In former chapters we have seen that he was an optimistic agnostic, so far as this subject was concerned. But even if we do not know for certain, James would take science at its own words and worth, and show, as he attempted to do in his essay on "Human Immortality," that immortal life, life after death with-

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1 Ibid., p.58.
2 Ibid., p.363.

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out the physical body, was not inconsistent with a properly interpreted view of the relation of mind and brain.

Nevertheless, as has already been stated, his philosophy of education is not "other worldly." Life to him is here and now. But, in spite of this fact, the element of preparation for the future is a vital one, whether that future be just later human life here on earth, or a life of the spirit after death. In other words, we are to do the best we can each day, in preparation for the morrow,-always hoping for the morrow (and for the morrow of "eternity," too), but not letting that hope interfere with the performance of today's duties. We may find our hopes realized, and if so we are that much the better. If they fail to materialize we are none the worse. And our very hope and faith may help to bring about the verification of their own objects.

> "Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help create the fact. "The 'scientific proof' that you are right may not be clear before the day of judgment (or some stage of being which that expression may serve to symbolize) is reached. But the faithful fighters of this hour, or the beings that then and there will represent them, may then turn to the faint-hearted, who here decline to go on, with words like those which Henry IV greeted the tardy Crillon after a great victory had been gained: 'Hang yourself, brave Crillon! we fought at Arques, and you were not there.'" [1]

One item especially important in modern educational practice suggests itself in connection with the foregoing. John Dewey makes education not a preparation for life, but life itself. This does not deny preparation, but it does, nevertheless, lay the emphasis upon the child's living with each stage of his

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[1] The Will to Believe, etc., p.62.

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development being an end in itself as well as a means. How does James view the situation? One might be led to think that, with his emphasis upon education for this world, James, as a modern man would logically arrive at Dewey's position. But it does seem that, with James, whatever importance he may have placed upon childhood as an end in itself, the main, the chief end was adulthood when the human being could engage with his full powers of manhoof, in the great struggles of existence. This idea seems to be corroborated in the following quotation from James:

> " . . . and yet verbal reproduction, intelligently connected with more objective work, must always play a leading, and surely _the_ leading, part in education. Our modern reformers, in _their_ books, write too exclusively of the earlier years of the pupil. These lend themselves better to explicit treatment; and I myself, in dwelling so much upon the native impulses, and object-teaching, and anecdotes, and all that, have paid my tribute to the line of least resistance in describing. Yet away back in childhoos we find the beginning of purely intellectual curiousity, and the intelligence of abstract terms. The object-teaching is mainly to _launch_ the pupils, with some concrete conceptions of the facts concerned, upon the more abstract ideas." [1]

Conclusion.

Did William James have a philosophy of education? According to the criteria laid down by Thomas Davidson, James did have such a philosophy. He has, and has given to us, a clear conception of the nature of the individual to be educated. He has told us in no enigmatic terms wherein education consists. And as for the aim of education, if he is less to the point in

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[1] _Talks to Teachers_, etc., p.151.

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a detailed analysis of the goal of education, it is because his own total philosophy is empirical and pragmatic, and *ipso facto* posits no closed system, no static utopia. Nevertheless, even with regard to the last point, namely, the aim of the educative process, James has in his various works given us clear-cut conceptions.

Man is a biological creature with a "mind" whose functioning organ is the brain. He has no such entity as a "soul," but he does have what we may term a stream of consciousness. His main purpose is behavior, and to that end the intellective and affective unite in varying degrees, guided by the volition. Man's behavior is built upon a foundation of instinctive tendencies to react, and his physical organism with its nervous equipment headed up in a brain with a peculiarly organized cerebrum is singularly adapted to satisfy the instinctive demands for reaction. Upn the instinctive tendencies are built up, in turn, habitual and voluntary action. The cognitive, affective and conative all unite to make the fully developed character, but if any one of them has the precedence and the primacy it is the emotional element. Man is a social creature, but nevertheless selfish. He is also a spiritual creature, has commerce with superior powers, and these superior powers, if they actually do enter into comunion with man, probably do so through the avenue of the subliminal part of consciousness. Man may be destined to "eternal life," but this is something which, as empiricists, we do not know as yet for certain.

Man has, as a rule, ideals of one kind or another. He

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also has great reserves of energy that are usually untouched. Faith, then, is a requisite element in his life: faith in his own ideals, faith in the worthwhileness of other people and their ideals, faith in the superior powers on which he relies for help.

Education should, under these circumstances, consist in the proper development of all these functiona and capacities. Appeal to the instinctive tendencies through objects presented to the sense organs should be made. Such innate tendencies as are harmful should be directed into channels of real usefulness. The right kind of habits should be built up, for man is a machine as well as a choosing animal. As many things as possible should be turned over to the habitual so that the mind may be left free to tackle new problems and meet new situations. The "will" should be trained to exert the necessary effort of attention to hold certain conceptions in the focus of consciousness so as to bring about appropriate action. Ideas, therefore, are of great importance, and education should begin, as early in one's life as possible, to build up abstractions and conceptions and ideals. As the emotions are directly reached through bodily states and sensations, the emotions may be controlled and changed by assuming certain bodily poses, etc.

As a man is a physical organism, education should provide for physical development by the use of gymnastics and other suitable athletic exercises. Likewise, as a man is a social being, his social education should consist in helping him to see

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the worthwhile in other people, to sympathize with them, to look at things from their points of view, and to seek to bring out in them their latent possibilities.

The end of education is to make us heroic, courageous, daring, fit for the struggles of life here and now, without too much thought being placed upon the hopes of reward in a possible life after death. The goal should be to bring out in each individual, to the fullest possible limit, the proper use of his capacities and potentialities. It is to make for individuality and creativeness, as well as to foster a reasonable amount of imitation. It is to provide us with as wide a range of experience as possible so that ideas and ideals may be built up in the mind, these in turn becoming our guides and our driving forces to action. It is to make for self-control and the ability to repress and inhibit certain responses that are not for the good of the individual or of society. It is to make for greater understanding among men, for greater sympathy and helpfulness one to another.

That there are seeming inconsistencies in James is true. But one who tries to put himself en rapport with William James usually finds it no hard thing to explain away the inconsistencies. While James himself was no mean logician, he laid his chief emphasis upon reality as perceived, and locig with him had to give way to reality. Reality with him is empirical, and that means, especially to a radical empiricist, no closed system until the last man has had his last fling in this great tragic and yet zestful drama of life. Hence the possibilities of in-

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consistencies, if one approaches James from an intelectualistic standpoint and seeks to appraise him in such terms.

Dr. Edward F. Buchner, in his article on William James in Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education, writes:

"Educational theory and practice, particularly in America, are greatly indebted to James. . . What is being done with children in schools to-day by way of letting the order of subjects and the methods of teaching follow the lead of the native activities and interests, is in part an outcome of his influence. . . By directing attention to the value of instincts as the equipment for education, by emphasizing the importance of the formation of habits, and by the serious doubt he threw around the doctrine of formal discipline, he fostered a descriptive study of the data of teaching and hastened the coming of experimental pedagogy." [1]

William H. Kilpatrick, writing on the "Tendencies in Educational Philolosphy" during the first two decades of the twentieth century, says:

"The conception of behavior, of reaction to situation, gave an entirely new shift to the study of education. James and Dewey led. 'Education is for behavior and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists.' This sentence from James's Talks to Teachers indicates the new outlook. The need for activity is henceforth on a new basis." [2]

Writing in the same volume in which Kilpatrick's article appears, Dan B. Leary says that "the contribution of even the Principles is as great in the field of education as in the larger field of psychology in general." [3] If this be true, it can be surmised how great education's debt is to William James, for men still almost reverently call him "master" in the field of psychology.

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[1] Vol.III, p.517.
[2] Twenty-five Years of American Education, edited by I.L.Kandel, p.82.
[3] Ibid., p.104.

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Another estimate of James's contributions to education is given by Bird T. Baldwin, writing in The Journal of Educational Psychology:

"These Talks (Talks to Teachers), together with his Principles, were the first to make serious inroads on the scholastic faculty psychology, to establish the method of introspection on a scientific basis and to bring modern psychology into the schoolroom and apply it to the every-day problems of the aim of education, the pedagogical significance of instinct, play, habit, motor responses and manual training, the signification of imitation and suggestion, methods of arouding interest and developing voluntary attention, the necessity of routine, the need of effort, the transfer of training, the value of discipline, methods of punishment, the meaning of marks, the evils of cramming, the methods of the recitation and methods of teaching, the limitations of object-teaching, the value of schoolroom observation, individual differences, the basis of moral training and the relation between teachers and pupils." [1]

Many similar quotations could be made from other writers, all bearing tribute to the great fruitage in an educational way resulting from the seeds planted by Mr. James. Just one more quotation at this place. Mr. L. P. Jacks, writing in the Atlantic Monthly, says:

"To the present writer William James appears as the forerunner of a time when Education will have become the primary concern of mankind and Government secondary, . . From his whole view of the universe, and of man as a creative element within it, it follows that the problem of developing the unused energies of the human mind is of far greater importance than that of controlling by regulative systems the energies that are now in operation. . . By giving to men the largest scope and opportunity to develop as free creative individuals, we establish the only conditions under which personal, social, and national morality can florish. . . The first need of man is the need to be taught, and not the need to be governed." [2]

To Socrates correct living called for the thinking of

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1. "William James' Contributions to Education," The Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol.2, 1911, p.373-74.

2 "William James and his Letters," Atlantic, Vol.128, Aug.1921, p.202-03.

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"whole thoughts." Right action naturally follows, then, of itself. And Socrates, says Thomas Davidson, not only believed that saving truth consisted of these whole thoughts; he also believed that all of these whole thoughts were universally and necessarily true; "that while there might be many opinions about a thing, there could be but one truth, the same for all men and therefore independent of any man. This," continues Mr. Davidson, "is the exact opposite of the gospel of individualism." [1] And, it might be added, this is likewise the exact opposite of the gospel of pragmatism and pluralism. James could have found no room in his philosophy for such things as "whole thoughts" as conceived by Socrates.

Plato's "Universals" were in like manner antagonistic to James's empiricism. "If anything is unlikely in a world like this," writes James, "It is that the next adjacent thing to the mere surface-show of our experience should be the realm of eternal essences, of platonic ideas, of crystal battlements, of absolute significance." [2] Plato's aim in education is a moral one. The improvement of man's moral nature--that was the goal he never let out of his sight. But morality with him as with Socrates is basically intellectual. Sin is ignorance. With James the thing that counts most is correct behavior, and this, when voluntary action is involved, goes back to the effort of attention "by which we hold fast to an idea which but for that effort of attention would be driven out of the mind by the other psychological tendencies that are there." [3]

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1 Thomas Davidson: Aristotle, p.109.
2 James: Memories and Studies, p.168.
3 Talks to Teachers, etc., p.186.

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"Thus," writes James, "are your pupils to be saved; first by the stock of ideas with which you furnish them; second, by the amount of voluntary attention that they can exert in holding to the right ones, however unpalatable; and, third, by the several habits of acting definitely on these latter to which they have been successfully trained.
In all this the power of voluntarily attending is the point of the whole procedure." [1]

This difference in emphasis, by Plato and James, between correct thinking and correct behavior, between the intellectual and the volitional is typical of the difference that has taken place in modern times. As James himself said, and as has been stated in substance on an earlier page, "it is impossible to disguise the fact that in the psychology of our own day the emphasis is transferred from the mind's purely rational function, where Plato and Aristotle, and, what one may call the whole classic tradition in philosophy, had placed it, to the so long neglected practical side." [2]

With Aristotle, who as an empiricist is in relation with James, education should fit one for the highest and worthiest of all occupations, the contemplation of the Divine. This static kind of utopia with the rational element supreme is certainly not the same as James's. James would not leave out leisure and contemplation; they are forms of activity, and have their proper place. But James would say that they put the emplasis in the wrong place.

James avoided the dilemma of the Stoics who, as monists, made God the author of both good and evil, by advocating a

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[1] *Ibid.*, p.188.
[2] *Ibid.*, p.23.

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philosoply of pluralism. But James has numerous affinities with stoicism. There is something of the pragmatic in stoicism. It aimed in education at wisdom realized in action. In the matter of discipline and self-control James, is not a pure stoic, was at least stoical. We therefore should not expect to find him favorable to epicureanism. This is also the opinion of one of his biographers, Mr. Th.Flournoy, who writes: "One gathers from all his work the decided impression that if he had constructed an ethics it would not have leaned toward the Epicurean. Man, in his eyes, does not feel himself to be really living except in the tonic atmosphere of determined struggle. When things are made too easy for us we soon lose our spirit." [1]

James and John Locke had a great deal in common. Both rejected innate ideas. All knowledge comes from experience. Yet James can hardly be said to have subscribed to the theory of the _tabula rasa_. Both James and Locke had, undoubtedly, the same thought in mind, though couched in different language, when the former said that instincts were transitory and we should exercise them at their bloom, and the latter remarked, "We must observe children carefully for 'favorable seasons of aptitude and inclination' and teach the child when he is in time." [2] Both believed in the value of gratuitously doing some things that were not pleasant; yet Loke's theories lead to formal discipline, while James's (perhaps, in a way, less consistently so) do not include a belief in faculty psychology. Both em-

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[1] _Op.cit._, p.127.

[2] Locke: _Some Thoughts Concerning Education_, par.74.

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phasize the place of habit in one's life. "What habits you fix in the child is the important thing." This is from Locke. "Education is for behavior, and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists." This is from James.

But with Rousseau, in spite of his great emphasis upon the individual, James has little in common. True, Albert Schinz, "anti-pragmatic to the marrow," has pointed out in his volume titled Anti-Pragmatism that Rousseau was one of James's most unmistakable precursors in the direction of pragmatism.[1] But this is perhaps giving too much credit to Rousseau. When it comes to Rousseau's doctrine of "undisciplined spontaneity," we find James at the opposite pole. Likewise is this true in the matter of habits. The only habit we shoulf form, according to Rousseau, is the habit of forming no habits. And Kant agrees with Rousseau in this. But again we hark back to James's: "Education is for behavior, and habits are the stuff of which behavior consists." Rousseau is anti-social and anti-institutional. James believes in and advocates individuality, but it is an individuality that is not anti-social nor anti-institutional, although the institution is secondary, not primary, with James. Rousseau, in advocating freedom and opportunity for the child, laid the ground and strengthened the foundation for the modern theories of Herbart, Froebel, Pestalozzi, James, Dewey, Kilpatrick, and others, with regard to the necessity of physical attivity on the part of the child in the

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[1] See Fournoy, op.cit.p.63

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educative process, and also with regard to use of sense perception as an avenue of first-hand experience.

Like Herbart, James stressed individuality and ideas, but even though James does not advocate the ideo-motor theory of action, - a view, let it be remarked in passing that E.L. Thorndike opposes, - James does not line himself up with the associationist school. For Herbart once that ideas are brought into existence they go on by their own force and own laws, and the "soul" that Herbart postulates has no further part to play in their life. As a matter of fact the "soul," according to Herbart, consists of the totality of these ideas. This totality, this aggregate, is the soul. The educational problem, then, becomes one of association, and Herbart's "apperceptive Mass" comes into prominence. Now James also lays great emphasis upon ideas, upon association, yes even upon apperception (how else could he be a good psychologist?), but he has, in place of a "soul" a stream of consciousness and, while there is no transcendental ego, there is the "I", the "Knower," That James is not clear at this point must be readily admitted. Something does the compounding of the ideas. It is not a "soul" or a transcendental ego. But James at least preserves personality and free-will, the latter in his philosophy if not in his psychology. Herbert's position leads to the exaltation of the place and function of the teacher. James, while not minifying the work of the teacher, things more in terms of the pupil and his responses in terms of behavior. There is one quite noticeable point of agreement between James and Herbart, and that is their common insistence upon the value of interest in educational procedure. James, of course, brings out this point is a more or less incidental way, and to understand James fully

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in this matter, one also has to take into consideration James's distaste for "soft pedagogy."

Froebel believed in self-activity of the child. So did James. Both advocated manual training. Rousseau had likewise done this, with the aim of teaching the boy a trade. But both James and Froebel advocated it from a less narrowly utilitarian motive.

Both Froebel and Herbart, realizing the social importance of education, attempted to make their school a miniature of society. Dewey follows in their train with his definition that "education is life," not merely a preparation for it. James, however, seems to assume that of course education is to fit one for life as a social being, but the very quality of sociability goes back, with James, to instincts and he laid his chief emphasis upon these innate tendencies as a whole, in so far as early education is concerned.

Much that has been said of James's general agreement with Froebel and Herbart can be said also regarding Pestalozzi. He believed in the development of all of the child's "faculties" at the proper season. James, as has already been indicated, believed in no "faculty" psychology, but if we substitute instincts for faculties in Pestalozzi's views, we come back at least in a way to James's theory of "striking while the iron is hot." Object teaching, self-activity, respect for the individuality of the pupil, - these are all in line with James's principles.

Herbert Spencer is the great evolutionist philosopher. But William James likewise built up his philosophy on the principles of evolution. Both believed in self-government. With

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Spencer the goal of complete happiness is one as variable as is human nature. This accords well with James's empiricism and pluralism. Spencer's belief in punishment through natural consequences, - a theory of Rousseau's, also, - seems to find no echo in James's writings. Spencer believed that great men were produced by their encironment. James believed that man himself, even though influenced in part by the environment, helped to change and mould that environment. [1] Spencer attempts to tell us what knowledge is of most worth, and he lists knowledge under five different heads, according to his viewpoint of values. James makes no attempt to do this, and this attitude is quite consistent with his pragmatism and radical empiricism. Spencer seems to support the formal discipline theory of education in his argument for the superiority of the sciences in disciplinary value. James is no formal-disciplinarian.

Rosmini said that "feeling is a primitive datum." Thomas Davidson took the same view. And with James, feeling comes before cognition. Davidson advicated that each one should be himself. "Be yourself." "Your worth consists in what you are, and not in what you have." And James said that there comes a time in life when imitation is suicide, when a man "must take himself for better or worse as his portion."

Dewey and James are both pragmatists. James groups himself with Dewey and Schiller as being "humanists." Schiller

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[1] See James's <u>Will to Believe</u>, etc., p.218 ff.

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seems to prefer the name humanist, James that of pragmatist, and Dewey that of instrumentalist. But all three are pragmatists. Dewey is an empiricist. He with James emphasizes the importance of the instincts in education, and of behavior as the end in education. There does seem to be a differences of rather marked importance between James and Dewey. The latter, in thinking of the child, considers each period in the child's life as an end in itself, in the educative process. This, of course, does not preclude the idea of preparation also for the following stages. But with James, while he goes thoroughly into the early training of the child in the matter of instincts and habits, there seems to be, at least implicit, if not explicit, the idea that education is chiefly a preparation for adult living in this world. Perhaps it is just a matter of emphasis. Surely James realized the importance of each stage of life. But, nevertheless, life to him was for struggle, for the combat of right with evil, and called for heroic action and strenuous living. It is not illogical, then, if we find in him the idea of education as preparation for the life of the mature individual who is able to go out and wage warfare for the better things of life.

Pedagogical problems of to-day will never be solved simply by accepting all of James's viewpoints. He himself would be the first to admit this. He made no claim to finality. His was always the open mind. But, on the other hand, not frequently does one arise whose influence in the whole world of philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy, is as great as James's. We need then to take into consideration what he said, in any attempt on our part to find the solution for these problems in education.

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