Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.
losophers, "This is nothing but that." Thus we hear that a house is nothing but bricks and mortar, the mind nothing but a bundle of perceptions, God nothing but a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness, the material world nothing but a permanent possibility of sensation. Such assignations of specific origins or substances to the things of daily discourse might possibly be correct physically or historically: the whole substance, the full ground of what is analyzed, might be given in such an analysis. In fact, this sort of analysis is seldom adequate; in none of the four examples I have just given, for instance, is even the substance or origin of the things in question assigned correctly. But even if it was, the essence of each of them would have been missed and left standing, and in spite of the critic would remain the very essence that it always was. Things are never merely their whole substance nor merely their whole cause; they are what they are, having an inalienable physiognomy and essence of their own. To say they are what they are made of or what brings them about, when this is something wholly different from them in essence, is to use the verb to be in a confused and confusing way, although the poverty of language may render such speech inevitable.

Whenever, then, the word is, though used with literary propriety, seems to cover some ambiguity or (as in the ontological proof) to lend itself to some obvious fallacy, we have but to ask whether it is used essentially, meaning "is identical with this," or attributively meaning "has this property among others," or existentially, meaning, "has a place in the flux," or naturalistically, meaning "has this substance or origin." If we substitute the last three phrases whenever they will fit, the cases in which the word is alone remains appropriate and sufficient will be those in which it serves to denote an essence, to give that essence a definition, or to call it by some synonym of its proper name.

George Santayana.

PROFESSOR HOCKING'S ARGUMENT FROM EXPERIENCE

The purpose of this paper is to offer a brief examination of the fourth part of Professor Hocking's book, 'The Meaning of God in Human Experience.' Inasmuch as this part of his book is an essay in philosophical thinking, an examination of it comes fairly within the scope of this Journal.

The substance of this part of the book is an argument for the existence of God based upon our experience of nature. The unique feature of Professor Hocking's undertaking is the attempt to find God by the pathway of cognitive experience alone; and that experience of the simplest type, namely, our experience of nature. He will not
disdains to seek God on the lower level of our perceptive knowledge of physical nature; and the thesis he seeks to establish is that this perceptive knowledge of nature is at the same time a knowledge of the reality of God. God is the only admissible meaning of our cognitive experience of nature.

The proposition Professor Hocking will establish is that the existence of God is as certain as our own existence and the existence of the physical world.

I propose briefly to state the arguments by which this doctrine is maintained, and then to give some reasons for my opinion that this reasoning does not reach its goal. And first, the argument of Professor Hocking.

Nature, as it shows itself in my experience, is a reality which is independent of my existence and it evinces a priority to my perceptions. "My mind depends on nature as nature does not depend on my mind." "This independence, priority and obstinacy of nature is not to be denied or minimized. It is just in this character of opposition to me and to my wishes, a high superiority to any doing or thinking of mine, that nature begins to assume for me the unmistakable aspect of other mind" (pp. 284-87). This character of nature presents a problem for thought, it calls for explanation. "Further examination of my experience with nature discloses the true character of my dependence on an Absolute other." "I am experiencing that other as other mind" (p. 288). My nature-experience is, therefore, an experience of other mind, in being an experience of physical things. As simply and directly as nature presents herself to me as objective, so simply and directly is the other mind presented to me as the actual meaning of that nature-object.

In another way my experience of nature compels me to recognize this other mind. My experience acquaints me with what nature is not, her insufficiency, her lack of self-dependence, error and defect, and the generally unsatisfying character of nature in my experience makes me certain of that other mind which must possess what nature lacks. This discovery that my world of cosmic reality falls short of my demand of the real world is due to what I must already know in the very experience in which this lack is present to me.

Now, in this matter of my knowing what nature is not, it is impossible that the standard of my judgment is itself a mere idea; for I can take this standpoint in idea only in so far as I at the same time take it in experience. This standard of reality by which I judge must be known to me in experience, my idea can be only a report of that experience. Thus, is the proof complete that in our experiential knowledge of nature is at the same time a knowledge of God.

I shall now give some reasons for my conviction that this proof
does not accomplish its purpose. Let me first advert to a distinction which is really of critical importance for Professor Hocking's entire undertaking; but which, it seems to me, he does not consistently recognize. In some places he appears to be well aware of it; in other places his reasoning proceeds on the assumption that no such distinction exists. The distinction I mean is that between experience itself and what experience means or indicates. Now, this distinction between experience and its meaning or explanation is vital to Professor Hocking's argument. Can he establish his thesis that God is in our cognitive experience in any other way than by so interpreting that experience as to show that God is what that experience necessarily means, that God is the only possible explanation of that experience?

Now, to admit interpretation or explanation, as a factor in experiential knowledge, is to admit thought as a mediating principle; and where thought enters, there enter alternatives in thought's outcome. If we admit there is not knowledge by experience until that experience means something, indicates something which is not mere datum, we have thereby admitted the possibility of more than one meaning of interpretation of experience; and we can claim truth for any one of these alternative meanings only as we are able definitively to exclude all other suggested meanings. Now, the situation we have in the cognitive experience of nature is one which presents alternative interpretations of our experience. Not fewer than four alternative explanations are here theoretically possible; and for no one of them, I venture to assert, can the claim be set up that it alone is the right interpretation. There is (1) the explanation Professor Hocking champions, and (2) there is the explanation of common-sense philosophy, the doctrine of realism in some form. There is (3) the explanation which makes nature-objects merely complexes of sensations in the common or social mind; and, finally, (4) there is the doctrine of agnostic or critical monism, which holds that the ultimate reality of nature is a type of being we need not identify either with what we take to be physical reality or with mind as we know mind, but some kind of reality which we may suppose to be the tap-root of both physical and mental being.

Now, unless Professor Hocking has shown beyond a reasonable doubt that his explanation of cognitive experience is the only one which the facts of experience will tolerate, he has not, I think, established his thesis. He has not proved that our experience of nature is at the same time an experience of God. The most that he has accomplished in this direction is to have shown that the positive characters of nature are not incompatible with such a conception of the deeper reality of nature.

If we turn now to that experience in which we discover the fail-
ure of nature to satisfy our ideal of independent and self-sufficient existence, it is evident that the reasoning by which Professor Hocking establishes the existence of God as the reality we must know in this experience proceeds on the assumption that the distinction I have said is vital to Professor Hocking’s doctrine does not really exist. The underlying assumption of this part of the argument is that experience and idea are in subject-matter and scope identical, the idea being but the report of the experience. Now, this relation of idea to experience creates a dilemmic situation for Professor Hocking’s argument. If that relation is one of identity, as one of his lines of proof clearly assumes, in the other line of proof,—that which sets out from our perceptive experience,—Professor Hocking has in reality presented no proof whatever; he has only given a description of our cognitive experience; he has merely made a series of statements about that experience, no one of which can claim objective validity.

I think the right conclusion of the matter is that Professor Hocking has not shown that we necessarily know God in our experience of nature. This somewhat novel attempt to open a pathway through our human experience to a transcendent and divine reality is hardly successful.

JOHN E. RUSSELL.

WILLIAMS COLLEGE.

SOCIETIES

THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

The twenty-third annual meeting of the American Psychological Association was held in Philadelphia on December 29, 30, and 31, at the University of Pennsylvania, in affiliation with the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology. Joint sessions were held with Section L and with Section H of the A. A. A. S., and with the Southern Society. In addition to these joint sessions, Section L had an unusually full series of daily programmes, a larger number of the papers being of distinct psychological as well as educational interest. The meeting was well attended. About one hundred were present at the annual banquet and many not in attendance at that time appeared later.

Among the special features were the exhibit of apparatus and teaching materials, in charge of Professor Twitmyer; the report of the Committee on the Academic Status of Psychology, by Professor Warren; the demonstration and discussion of the introspective