

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE ANOMALIES OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.¹

(I.)

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In the present paper I shall venture to lay some stress upon certain familiar factors whose psychological influence upon the growth and the anomalies of self-consciousness, both in normal and in abnormal human beings, seems to me to have been, from the purely theoretical point of view, rather unduly neglected. In particular, I shall try to indicate how these theoretically neglected factors may help to explain certain well known types of variation, and of abnormality, to which the functions of self-consciousness, as they empirically appear, are subject. Meanwhile I shall of course avoid, in this paper, any positive reference to the distinctively metaphysical problems which the word self-consciousness easily suggests. The philosophical aspects of the problem of self-consciousness belong altogether elsewhere. Starting this evening with the mere empirical fact that any normal man has, as part of his mental equipment, conscious states and functions that involve, in one way or another, his experience, his knowledge, his estimate, or, in general terms, his view, of himself, and remembering that, in many defective and disordered people, these, the functions of individual self-

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consciousness, undergo changes of a manifold and interesting sort, I shall try to illustrate aspects of the purely psychological theory of our topic. I speak to practical men, who are also men of science. I need make then no apology for introducing here a problem which, whatever its difficulty, is full both of scientifically attractive, and of practically important elements. For surely the alterations and defects of the functions of self-consciousness are amongst the most frequent phenomena in the region of mental pathology.

I.

In its inner aspects and relations, what we mean by self-consciousness, in any one man, is an enormously complex function or rather a little world of functions. But this world of functions is centred about certain well known habits and experiences which at once serve, not to explain it, but in a measure to begin for us the definition of our problem. There are, namely, in any mature person, certain established motor habits, which, according as they appear to be intact or not, enable us at once to test, from without, the relative normality of whatever belongs to that which one may call the mere routine of an individual's self-consciousness. There are also certain inner experiences, in terms of which the normal individual himself, from moment to moment, can feel assured of the apparent naturalness of his own notion or estimate of himself. A mature man whose self-consciousness is normal, if his means of expressing himself are intact, must be able to explain 'who he is,' *i. e.*, he must be able to tell his name, his business, his general relations in life, and whatever else would be essential to the practical purpose of identifying him. Furthermore, his account of himself must be able to show an estimate by no means adequate or infallible, but at least not too wildly absurd, of his actual degree of social dignity, of his personal importance and of his physical capacity. He will to be sure quite normally estimate his value, his prowess, or even his social rank, not, in general, precisely as his fellows do. But this sort of estimate has its normal, if rather wide, limits of error. If these limits are passed, the man's account of himself proves the presence of a de-

rangement of self-consciousness. Finally, as to this account which the normal man can give of himself, he must show a certain degree of correctness as to what he can tell us of his body and of its present state. Here, of course, the limits of error are very wide, but are still pretty definite. A man is normally a very poor judge of his internal bodily states. But if he says he is made of glass, or that he is aware that he is a mile high, or that he is conscious of having no body at all, we recognize a disorder involving alterations of self-consciousness.

Within his own mind, meanwhile, and from his own point of view, a man normally self-conscious is more or less aware of a great deal about himself of which it is notoriously hard for him to give any exact account whatever. Yet this internally normal self-consciousness has, at any time, a definitive, if not easily definable content, which, in its relatively inexpressible complexity of constitution, far transcends what one expresses when he tells you his name, his place in life, his degree, or his notion of his bodily condition. This normal inner self-consciousness involves, in the first place, what we are now accustomed to call, from a psychological point of view, masses of somewhat vaguely localized bodily sensations, which, just in so far as they affect our general consciousness, are not sharply differentiated from one another. The origin of these sensations lies in the skin, in the muscles, and, in part, in the viscera. Moreover, the visual perception of the body, the auditory experiences of the sound of one's own voice, and yet other sensory contents, including the more general sensations of bodily movement, obviously determine, now more, and now less, the content or the coloring of normal self-consciousness. If any of these masses of sensory contents are suddenly altered, our immediate self-consciousness may be much changed thereby. Dizziness, sensations of oppression in the head, a general sense of bodily ill-being, a flushed face, a ringing in the ears,—any of these may involve what we primarily take to be a general alteration of our feeling of self, and only secondarily distinguish from the self as a separate and localized group of experiences. In general, the more sharply

we localize our sensations, and the more we refer them to external objects, the less do these sensory experiences blend into our total immediate feeling of ourselves. The localized or objectified sensory state appears as something foreign, as coming to us, as besetting us, or as otherwise affecting us, but not as being a part of the self; and only a relatively philosophical reflection regards even our perceptions as part of ourselves. Our more naïve self-consciousness tends to regard the sensory or immediate self as a vague whole, from which one separates one's definite experiences of this place on the skin, of this color or tone, or of this outer object.

Yet our inner notion of the self of self-consciousness is by no means confined to this cruder apperception of massive sensory contents. In addition, our normal mature awareness of who and what we are means what one may call a collection of feelings of inner control, of self-possession, or, as many would say, of spontaneity. If such feelings begin to be altered or lost, one complains of confusion, of a sense of self-estrangement, of helplessness, of deadness, of mental automatism, or of a divided personality. As a fact, since the associative processes always depend upon the conditions of which we are not conscious, our sense that we can and do rule our whole current train of conscious states is, as it is ordinarily felt, a fallacious sense. But if we cannot really predetermine, in consciousness, what idea shall next come to consciousness, but are dependent, even in the clearest thinking, upon the happy support of our associative mechanism, it is still normal to feel as if, on the whole, our inner process were, in certain respects, relatively spontaneous, *i. e.*, as if it were controlled by our ruling interests and by our volition. This sense of inner self-possession is, to be sure, an extremely delicate and unstable affair, and is constantly interfered with, in the most normal life, not only by a series of uncontrollable sensory novelties, due to the external world, but by baffling variations, either in the play of our impulses and ideal associations, or in the tone of our emotions, or in both. Yet, when we are alert, these little interferences continually arise only to be subordinated. We

have perhaps momentary difficulties in recalling names or other needed ideas, of an imperfectly learned group, or we feel equally momentary indecisions as to what it is just now best to do, or we find our attention wandering, or our emotional tone disagreeably insistent, or our impulses numerous and wayward. But in all such cases we can still, in the normal case, 'keep hold of ourselves,' so that we accept as our own whatever content triumphs in the play of associative processes, and find our essential expectations met, from moment to moment, by the inner experiences which form the centre of the mental field of vision. If this rule no longer holds of our inner life, then our self-consciousness begins to vary, and we suffer from confusion or from other forms of the sense of lost inner control.

Thus the self of ordinary self-consciousness appears at once as a relatively stable group of unlocalized sensory contents or contents of feeling, and as the apparent controller of the train of associated ideas, impulses, and acts of attention or of choice. Of course these two aspects of the self are closely related. It is the associative potency of the ruling feelings and interests that most secures the fact and the sense of inner self-control. But meanwhile the self also seems, or may seem, to its possessor, much larger than any group of facts or of functions now present. One notoriously regards the present self as only the representative of a self which has been present, in the remembered past of our lives, and which will be present in the expected future to which we look forward. Nor does self-consciousness usually cease with this view. The characters, attributes, functions, or other organic constituents of the self commonly extend, from our own point of view, decidedly beyond anything that can be directly presented in any series of our isolated inner experiences, however extended. When one is vain, one's self-consciousness involves the notion that one's self really exists, in some way or other, for the thoughts and estimates of others, and is at least worthy, if not the possessor, of their praise or of their envy. When one feels guilty, one does not and cannot abstract from the conceived presence of one's self in and for the experience of a real or ideal judge of one's

guilt. In all such cases the self of self-consciousness thus appears as something that it would not and could not be were there not others in the world to behold, or to estimate it, to be led or otherwise influenced by it, or to appeal to it. It is now from such points of view that the self of self-consciousness comes, in the end, to get form as a being who takes himself to have a social position, an office, a profession,—in brief, a vast group of functions without which the self would appear itself to be, relatively speaking, a mere cipher, while these functions are at once regarded as organically joined to the self, and centered in it, and, nevertheless, are unintelligible unless one goes beyond one's private consciousness, and takes account of the ideas and estimates of other people.

Every normal man thus knows what it means to be a person with a social position, or a dignity, or a place in the world, or a character, a person vain of himself, or ashamed of himself, or socially confident or timid about himself, or otherwise disposed to view himself either as others seem to view him, or as he fancies that they ought to view him, or as he has faith that God views him. And such a view of one's self cannot be satisfied with any group of inner facts, however extensive, as containing within it the whole of one's ego. This view conceives the office, calling, dignity, worth, position, as at once a possession, or a real aspect, of the self, and as a possession or an aspect that would vanish from the world were not the self conceived as existing for others besides itself, in other words, were not the self conceived as having an exterior as well as an interior form of existence.

The self of normal self-consciousness, then, is felt at any moment as this relatively stable group of inner states; it is also felt or conceived as the supposed spontaneous controller of the general or of the principal current of successive conscious states; it is remembered or expected as the past or future self, which is taken to be somehow more or less precisely the same as the present self; and finally, it is viewed as having a curious collection of exterior functions that involve its actual value, potency, prowess, reputation, or office, in its external social relations to other actual or ideal selves, *e. g.*, to its neighbors, to humanity at large, or, in case one's faith extends so far, to God.

And, now, just as the immediate self of the mass of inner sensations and feelings can vary, or just as the self of the sense of self-control can be more or less pathologically altered; so too the identical or persistent self of memory can be confused, divided, or lost, in morbid conditions; and so too finally, the self of the social type of self-consciousness is subject to very familiar forms of diseased variation. The social self above all can come to be the object of a morbidly depressed or exalted inner estimate. One's social prowess, position, office and other relations, both to God and to man, can be conceived in the most extravagantly false fashions. And furthermore, as I wish at once to point out, the most noteworthy alterations of self-consciousness, in insanities involving delusions of suspicion, of persecution and of grandeur, appear upon their very surface as pathological variations of the social aspect of self-consciousness. Note at once the possible significance of this fact. However you explain delusions of guilt, of suspicion, of persecution and of grandeur, however much you refer their source to altered sensory or emotional states, they stand before you, when once they are well developed, as variations of the patient's habits of estimating his relations to other selves. They involve, then, *maladies of the social consciousness*. The theoretical significance of this fact surely seems worthy of a closer consideration than it customarily receives.

Since the psychologist, as such, can afford to be quite indifferent to the question whether any real being, to be called an Ego, exists, or not, and since he is therefore still less interested in the philosophical problem as to the forms of being which a real Ego can possess, in case it exists,—I am here very little concerned to answer one question which these latest considerations may have already suggested to some of you. I mean the question whether an Ego really can possess that equivocal sort of exterior existence, outside of its own train of conscious experience, which, as we have seen, the social sort of self-consciousness seems to attribute to the self. When I feel humble or exalted, abased or proud, guilty or just, or when I say, 'I am in this social office or position,' I seem to myself as one whose actual nature and functions

include more facts than can ever be crowded into my own consciousness. For unless I believe in my real relations to my neighbors or to God, and conceive those relations as somehow a part of myself, I should have no material out of which to weave my notion of my rank, or my duties, and of my external importance. But whether this idea of myself is defensible or not, from a philosophical point of view, is far from us here. It is enough for us that a man commonly has just such a view as to his own nature, and that pathological variations of such a view are familiar and important phenomena.

II.

In the foregoing sketch, I have been simply reporting familiar psychological phenomena. That our human self-consciousness involves all these various elements, is, one may say, agreed. The problem is, how have all these elements come thus to hang together? And so we next have to attack the central problem just mentioned, *i. e.*, we have to ask, in a purely psychological sense: How does this elaborate mental product called self-consciousness get formed out of these numerous elements and why, when once formed, is it so variable, and, finally, why, when it varies, does it vary in the directions so frequently reported?

It is here that our theoretical knowledge is at present so poor. The collection of observed facts is, to be sure, at present, considerable. Readers of Ribot's book on the 'Diseases of Personality,' know of the general types of varying self-consciousness to which attention has been most attracted. Loss of the sense of personality; or again, the delusion that one is dead, or is lost, or is an automaton; or the feeling or idea that there is a foreign or other self within one; or the attribution of one's own thoughts, or acts, to another and wholly external person or persons; or the alternation or the apparently actual multiplication of one's own personality; or the refusal to regard one's present self as identical with one's past self: such are some of the variations to which self-consciousness is subject, in addition to the before-mentioned alterations of

the obviously social type of self-consciousness. But when we ask why any of these alterations takes place, we have so far only one unquestionable, but theoretically inadequate answer, viz.: In all such cases there are alterations of the common sensibility, or of the memory, or of both. Now one sees, without doubt, that self-consciousness involves the common sensibility, in the sense before indicated. One sees then that if this core of normally stable, vaguely localized sensory conditions and feelings gets altered, one's notion of one's self may also naturally change. And, not to leave the limits of ordinary experience, one knows and understands what it means to say, when these central masses of feeling do more or less change: 'I feel queer; I feel altered; I am no longer quite myself; I am not my old self.' By a little stretch of imagination one can also understand such a delusion as 'I am made of glass,' quite as well as one can understand any other delusion. For here our dreams help us to see our way, and we have only to suppose that a certain association of ideas, whereby a partial anæsthesia gets interpreted, becomes fixed, and exclusive, in order to see how the delusions as to bodily condition or constitution, present in a measure in all hypochondriacs, can assume such extreme forms. Just so too the mere assertion 'I am lost,' or 'I am dead,' is, on the face of it, just an insistent verbal statement, or at best an inner judgment whose exclusive presence in consciousness is due merely to morbid habit, and whose meaning or logical consequences we often need not suppose the patient to develop in any delusionally definite form at all. These phenomena involve, where they are alone, or are segregated from the rest of the patient's life, rather pathological simplifications of the contents of consciousness, morbid associations of sensations with simple groups of words or of ideas, than any other processes. So far, then, we see some light.

But now the case is otherwise when one says: 'There are two of me,' and proceeds actively to develop the consequences of this inner variety of self. Here, to be sure, the phenomena of dreams, and of the commoner forms of transient delirium, as in fevers, bring this sort of doubleness

within the remembered experience of very many persons; and familiar moral and poetical statements about the two selves or more that dwell in one's breast, assimilate such experiences to those of normal people. But one's consciousness, in such cases, throws little direct light upon how the phenomena arise. Sometimes, to be sure, in delirium their basis is plainly hallucinatory, as when a fever patient sees himself, in bodily presence, standing at a distance, or lying in the bed. But even then one wishes for more light as to the question whether and how such a tendency to pathological duplication has any natural foundation in the understood habits of normal life. This problem seems even the more insistent when one observes that the sense of the inwardly doubled personality often arises without any obvious basis in hallucinations of the special senses. But in such cases, our present theories often fall back again upon the variations of the common sensibility. Yet here one fails to see how any easily conceivable alteration in the contents of the central core of the sensory self is by itself sufficient to explain a tendency to apperceive that self as double. One does not doubt the existence, in such cases, of an altered common sensibility; what one fails to follow is the link between such alteration, and the new habits, of judgment, or of apperception, which tend to get formed upon this basis.

But I do not wish to burden you with a mere enumeration of problems, and I will not here further dwell upon the inadequacies of the current theories of the factors of self-consciousness, whether these theories lay stress upon the common sensibility, or upon the memory, as the principal factor in their explanations of the variations of the ego. It is only necessary to show that, while both the common sensibility and the memory are certainly largely concerned in the constitution of the self, the problem of self-consciousness is not thus to be fully solved. One must look to other factors as well. One has in fact only to remember that some large alterations of the common sensibility seem to involve very little change of self-consciousness at all, in order to see how complex the problem is.

And now, as to the real problem itself, it is surely one relating to the origin, to the nature and to the variations, of a certain important collection of mental habits. What are these habits? How do they arise? I insist, a mere catalogue of the contents of self-consciousness helps us little, unless we can interpret the facts in terms of the known laws of habit. For a man is self-conscious in so far as he has formed habits of regarding, remembering, estimating, and guiding himself. And now whenever these habits are in play, they all of them, as I must next insist, have a common and noteworthy character. If a man regards himself, as this individual Ego, he always sets over against his Ego something else, viz.: some particular object represented by a portion of his conscious states, and known to him as his then present and interesting non-Ego. This psychological non-Ego, represented in one's conscious states, is of course very seldom the universe, or anything in the least abstract. And, for the rest, it is a very varying non-Ego. And now, it is very significant that our mental habits are such that the Ego of which one is conscious varies with the particular non-Ego that one then and there consciously seems to encounter. If I am in a fight, my consciously presented non-Ego is my idea of my opponent. Consequently I am then conscious of myself as of somebody fighting him. If I am in love, my non-Ego is thought of as my beloved, and my Self, however much the chord of it pretends, trembling, to pass in music out of sight, is the Self of my passion. If I strut about in fancied dignity, my non-Ego is the world of people who, as I fondly hope, are admiring me. Accordingly I then exist, for myself, as the beheld of all beholders, the model. If I sink in despair and self-abasement, my non-Ego is the world of the conceived real or ideal people whose imagined contempt interests, but overwhelms me, and I exist for myself as the despised Ego, worthy of their ill will. When I speak, my non-Ego is the person or persons addressed, and my Ego is the speaker. If I suddenly note that, though I talk, nobody marks me, both the non-Ego and my Ego dramatically change together in my consciousness. These two contents of consciousness, then, are psychologically linked. Alone, I am so far not myself.

My consciousness of my Ego is a consciousness colored by my conceived relations to my endlessly changing consciousness of a non-Ego. And notice, I speak here as little of any metaphysically real non-Ego as I speak of any metaphysically real Ego. The whole question is here one of mental states and of the actual habits of their grouping not of relative, nor yet of real relations outside of consciousness. I point out merely the fact that, according as one chances to conceive thus or thus the non-Ego of his strongest current interest, even so, on the other hand, he conceives his Ego thus or thus, viz., as something related to this non-Ego, opposed to it, concerned in it, possessor of it, crushed by it, desirous of winning it, or however the play of habit and of interest makes the thing seem. Here, I think, lies the real key to all the variations of Self-consciousness, whether their conditions involve the common sensibility or not.

The psychological problem of self-consciousness reduces itself, then, to the following form. One must ask: How has one come to form all these habits of drawing a boundary, in one's consciousness, between mental states that represent a non-Ego, and mental states that clump themselves together into the central object called the Ego? One must also ask: Whence comes all this material for variation, whereby the content called the Ego shifts endlessly as the content called the non-Ego alters? And one must further inquire: How do the constitution and the variations of the Ego get that intimate relation to the sensations of the common sensibility upon which we have laid stress from the start?

Now to all these questions, as I hold, the recent study of childhood has tended to suggest at least a plausible answer. The substantial basis for the answer that I shall suggest has been reached, pretty independently, by my friend Professor Baldwin, of Princeton, and by myself. Professor Baldwin has given to some aspects of the matter, so far as concerns child life, a much fuller working out than I have done, both in his earlier papers and in his recently published book called *Mental Development in the Child and the Race*. On the other hand, in a recent discussion in the *Philosophical Review* (of Cornell) I have stated my own notions as to certain philo-

sophically important aspects of the growth of self-consciousness. But the application of these theoretical considerations to the study of the pathological variations of self-consciousness in the present paper is, I think, new.

The early intellectual life of the child is lost to us in obscurity, despite numerous recent observations. But we are clear that the infant, in the first months of life, has nothing that we should call self-consciousness. But the first clear evidence that we get of the presence of a form of self-consciousness intelligible to us comes when the infant begins to be observantly imitative of the acts, and later of the words, of the people about it. In other words, the first Ego of the child's intelligible consciousness appears to be, in its own mind, set over against a non-Ego that, to the child, is made up of the perceived fascinating, and to its feeling more or less significant, deeds of the persons in its environment. From this time on, up to seven or eight years of age, any normal child remains persistently, although perhaps very selectively, imitative, of deeds, of habits, of games, of customs, and often of highly ideal and perhaps quite imaginary models, such as are suggested to it by fairy-stories and other such material. As one follows the growth of these imitative tendencies, from their initial and quite literal stages, through those stages of elaborate impersonation and of playful, originally colored, often enormously insistent games, in which the child follows all sorts of real and fantastic models, one is struck by the fact that any normal child leads, relatively speaking, two lives, one naïve, intensely egoistic from our point of view, but relatively free from any marked self-consciousness in the child's own mind, while his other life is the life in which he develops his conscious ideas and views of himself as a person. The relatively naïve life is the life of his childish appetites and passions; the relatively self-conscious life is the life of his imitations and dramatic impersonations, of his poses and devices, of his games, and of his proudly fantastic skill, and of the countless social habits and attitudes that spring up from this source. The two lives mingle and cross in all sorts of ways. But the child who merely eats, cries, and enjoys his physical well-being, is not

just then self-conscious as is the child who plays horse, or hero, or doctor, or who carefully tries to follow a model as he draws, or to invent a trick as good as one that he has seen. The latter child, however, is essentially imitative, first of persons, then of ideas, then of the facts of the physical world as such. But the former child is simply the creature of natural impulses and passions, and would never come to self-consciousness, in our sense, if his life were not gradually moulded by the elaborate habits which the imitative child constantly introduces.

Now the psychological importance of imitation lies largely in the fact, that in so far as a child imitates, he gets ideas about the inner meaning or intent of the deeds that he imitates, and so gets acquainted with what he early finds to be the minds of other people. The child that repeats your words, slowly learns what they mean. The child that uses scissors, pencil, or other tools after you, learns, as he imitates, what cutting means, and what drawing, or other such doings. And as he thus learns, he gets presented to his own consciousness contents, which he regards as standing for those of your mind. The experienced interesting outcome of an imitated deed, is for the child the obvious meaning of that deed, for you, as you did it. But he does not get these contents,—these glimpses of your meaning,—he does not get them, at first, very easily. He gets them by persistently watching you, listening to you, playing with you, trying to be like you, all activities that for him involve muscular sensations, emotional concerns, and still other variations of his common sensibility. These efforts of his to grasp your meaning are marked and often delightful incidents of his consciousness. He returns over and over to his favorite games with you. He encounters every time your meaning, and he sets over against it those experiences of his own doings, whereby he comes to participate in your meaning. Here now the child always has present to him two sets of contents, both fascinating, each setting the other off sharply by contrast, while the contrast itself establishes the boundary between them. The first set of contents are his perceptions of your deeds, and his representation of your discovered mean-

ing in these deeds. The second set of contents are his own imitative acts themselves, as perceived by himself, these acts, and his delights in them. The first set of contents depend upon you. The child feels them to be uncontrollable. As perceptions, and as representations, these contents do not get closely linked to the child's common sensibility. They stand off as external although welcome intruders. On the other hand, the other set of contents, the child's own newly discovered powers, due to his imitation, are closely centred about his common sensibility, are accompanied with all the feelings which make up the sense of control, and get remembered, thenceforth, accordingly. The first set of contents form the psychological non-Ego of this particular phase of consciousness. The second set of contents form the psychological Ego corresponding thereto. One sees why the Ego-part of this sort of consciousness includes the common sensibility, and the sense of voluntary control, and why the non-Ego here involves contents that are set off by the contrast as uncontrollable, and as not closely linked to the common sensibility. And it is in this contrast that the source of true self-consciousness lies. We do not observe a given group of mental contents as such unless they are marked off by contrast from other contents. One could have all the common sensibility you please, and all the feelings of voluntary control, without ever coming to take note of this totality of united or centralized mental contents as such, and as clearly different from the rest of one's field of consciousness. Even now we all of us tend to lose clear self-consciousness so soon as we get absorbed in any activity, such as rowing, hill-climbing, singing, whistling, looking about us at natural scenery,—any activity I say, whose object does not, by the sharp contrast between its own external meaning and our efforts, call our attention to our specific relation to some non-Ego. Yet in lonely rowing and hill-climbing the common sensibility is as richly present as it is in many of our most watchfully self-conscious states. On the other hand, when I work hard to make my meaning clear to another man, or to make out what he means, I am self-conscious, just in so far as I contrast my idea of his ways and thoughts, with my own

effort to conform to his ways and thoughts. And just such an effort, just such a contrast, seems to mediate the earliest self-consciousness of the imitative child, and to secure the tendency of the self to be built up about the common sensibility, while the not self gets sundered therefrom. So then one sees the rule:—If one is keenly self-conscious, the common sensibility must be central. But, on the other hand, one may have a rich common sensibility without any keen self-consciousness. It is the contrast of Ego and non-Ego that is essential to self-consciousness.

But of course the child's relations to the varying non-Ego of consciousness do not remain merely imitative. When once he has other minds in his world, the function whose essence is the contrast between his conceptions of these minds and his view of his own response to them, can take as many forms as his natural instincts determine. His naïve life of appetites gets gradually infected by his conscious relations to other people. He wants good things, and perhaps must feign affection or show politeness, or invent some other social device, to get what he wants. Here again is an activity depending upon and bringing to light, the contrast between his own intention, and the conceived or perceived personal traits and whims to which he conforms his little skill. He learns to converse, and gets a new form of the contrast between the sayings of others (which he interprets by listening), and his own ideas and meanings. He reaches the questioning age, and now he systematically peers into the minds of others as into an endlessly wealthy non-Ego, in whose presence he is by contrast self-conscious as an inquirer. Here, every time one has the essential element of contrast upon which all self-consciousness depends. Argument and quarreling later involve similar contrasts. As to the external physical world,—what the child shall most care for in that, is largely determined for him by his social relations. Whatever habit he has acquired by social imitation, he can, therefore, in the end, apply to things as well as to persons. As a fact he is notoriously often animistic, directly transferring social habits to physical relations, and regarding things as alive. And here again he becomes self-conscious, by contrasting his own

activities with the conceived natures and meanings of external things. I do not at all suppose that the child regards all natural things in an animistic way; but I am of opinion, for reasons which I have set forth elsewhere, that our whole tendency to distinguish as sharply, as we all now do, between the self and the external physical world, is a secondary tendency, due in the child's case, to social influences. It is language, it is the accounts that people give to us of things, it is the socially acquired questioning habit,—it is such things that extend the contrast between Ego and non-Ego, at first mainly a social contrast, to the relations between one's own mind and one's physical environment. Even now, as I just pointed out, if we forget that nature is full of thinkable mysteries, of meanings, of laws, of other ideal contents whose significance we do not comprehend,—if we forget this, and lapse into mere busy and absorbing physical experience, as when climbing hills alone, or rowing, or cheerily whistling as we walk, we forget to be self-conscious, just because we lose sight of the sharper contrasts of Ego and non-Ego.

III.

But, to return to the explicitly social relations, there is still another factor to note in our early relations to our conceived social non-Ego. And this is the fact that, by our instinctive mental constitution as moulded by our social habits, we are early subject to a vast number of more or less secondary emotions, each one of which involves large alterations of the common sensibility, while all of these particular emotions arise under circumstances which make explicit the contrast between one's self, and one's idea of one's fellow's mind. Such emotions we get as children when people praise us, blame us, caress us, call us pet names, stare at us, call us by name, ask us questions, and otherwise appeal to us in noteworthy ways. Such emotions too we get again, in novel forms, in youth, when the subtle coloring of the emotions of sex begins to pervade our whole social life. Such emotions are shame, love, anger, pride, delight in our own bodily seeming as displayed before others, thrills of social expectation, fears of appearing ill in the eyes of others.

Such emotions involve blushing, weeping, laughter, inner glow, visceral sensations of the most various kinds, and feelings of the instinctive muscular tensions related to our countless expressive social deeds. These experiences are, however, aroused by situations all of which essentially involve the aforesaid contrast between our own ideas, wishes, or meanings, and the conceived states of other minds. Hence these emotional states associate themselves, as variations of the common-sensibility, first, with social situations, *i. e.*, with cases where Ego and non-Ego are sharply contrasted; and then especially with the Ego-member of the relation of contrast. And so, altogether by the force of habit, these emotions, which if primarily aroused would be mere content, belonging neither to Ego nor to non-Ego, come to be the specific emotions of self-consciousness, so that now whenever we have just these emotions, from any cause whatever, we are at once keenly self-conscious,—and that merely because the emotions in question faintly or keenly suggest particular social situations. Emotions that have had no such constant relation to social situations, involve no such marked states of self-consciousness. Fear of physical dangers tends to diminish our self-consciousness; shame intensifies it. Yet keen physical fear, as the more primitive emotion, involves vaster commotions of the common sensibility than does shame. Were then the marked presence or variation of the common sensibility in consciousness the sole and sufficient cause of the presence or of the variation of one's immediate or sensory Ego, physical terror would make one more self-conscious than does shame. But panic fear, in its intensest conscious forms, involves rather a destruction than a positive alteration of self-consciousness; while the most abject shame grows the more intensely self-conscious as it gets the more marked. Why? Because shame, habitually associated only with social situations, suggests them even where it is pathological and is not due to them; and so it brings to consciousness the contrast of Ego and non-Ego.

Thus, then, it is that I propose to explain what the current theories of self-consciousness usually seem unable to deal with, *viz.*, the before-mentioned fact that certain pathological

variations of the common sensibility profoundly alter the tone or constitution of a patient's self-consciousness, while others, equally intimate and vast, either leave self-consciousness relatively intact, or simply put it wholly out of sight without first tampering with its integrity. When a man has the colic he does not say, 'My Ego is deranged.' His account of the case is far less metaphysical. But when, as in the depression after the grip, he has certain very much dimmer and more subtle alterations of the common sensibility, he may complain of precisely such a sense of alienation from himself. Why? Well, as I should say, the colic suggests no social situation; the vague depression after the grip may dimly suggest, by habit, situations of social failure, or confusion, or powerlessness, such as, from sensitive childhood until now, have played their part in one's life. The suggestion may be very faint, and utterly abstract. No particular failure, no special case of social helplessness, comes to mind. But our nascent associations can be present in all degrees of faintness; and here I maintain are associations dimly involving social contrasts between Ego and non-Ego. Here, then, are conditions for the function of self-consciousness.

Since the emotional alteration of the common sensibility has thus the most various habitual relations, now with our unsocial physical states as such, now with social activities, one sees how it is possible for a nervous sufferer to say, on one day, that he personally feels his very being wrecked, and his self-hood lost or degraded, while on another day he may simply declare that he suffers keenly, but regards the affair as a mere physical infliction, external to his central self-hood. In the physical sufferings of sensitive women this shifting of the enemy's ground from the region of the physical or psychical pain felt as a mere brute fact, hateful but still bearable, to the region where the sufferer complains of an intolerable loss of self-possession, is notoriously a common and, to the sufferer herself, a puzzling incident. Both times the common sensibility is deeply affected, often in ways not subjectively localizable; the difference, I think, must be due to the nascent associations of the common sensibility now

with ideas of social situations, now with ideas of unsocial bodily events. There are some chronic neurasthenic sufferers who, despite headaches, spinal pains, and other distorted sensations innumerable, preserve for years a marvelous self-possession in face of their disorder; very many other such nervous sufferers, of the same general type, are throughout self-consciously cowardly and abject. One cannot assert that the latter class are more deranged in common sensibility than are the former. But many a neurasthenic man has really little to complain of *except* the unspeakable wretchedness of his deranged self-consciousness. How can one explain such phenomena without resort to the principles of habit and association? The social habits, however, of the type now defined, at once furnish a *vera causa* for the interpretation of some sensory disturbances as alterations of self-consciousness, while other disturbances, equally great and vague, get interpreted by the sufferer as merely external events. To be sure we cannot yet give an exhaustive classification of the variations of the common sensibility into those closely associated with social situations, and those not associated, or but slightly associated, yet the contrast of physical fear and of shame has already shown us that such a classification might, with care, be more or less worked out. We know, for instance, that the sexually tinged emotions normally have very complex social associations. Consequently, we may expect to find self-consciousness especially deranged in disorders involving the sexual functions. This expectation seems to be abundantly verified, even in ordinary cases of disorder, such as the teacher of youth may sometimes see as well as the doctor; and if one wants more verification, one may get it at will from the monumental records that fill Krafft-Ebing's too well-known and ghastly book. On the other hand, a sufferer from the emotional states accompanying ordinary physical exhaustion, or from some forms even of grief, or from a severe cold that does not give the form of depression now associated with the grip, or from some forms of even violent headache, often wonders how much pain and emotional alteration he can endure without any proportionate alteration of self-consciousness. And

these states are precisely such forms of consciousness as are not so closely associated with social situations. Finally, the emotions connected with laughter furnish an almost perfect natural experiment for our purpose. There are three principal sorts of laughter: the laughter of mere physical gleefulness, such as appears much in children, less in adults; the laughter of scorn, and the laughter of the sense of humor. The first is not an especially self-conscious affair; but the laughter of scorn and of a sense of humor are both of them always keenly self-conscious, involving what Hobbes called 'sudden glory in him that laugheth.' The emotions of the two latter types involve social situations, present or suggested. I shall find no time to point out at any length the application of the foregoing analysis to the study of the associative alterations of the socially tinged self-consciousness in true melancholia, in mania, or in the exaltation of general paralysis. But the mention of such alteration of the self brings us at once to the next and final stage of our inquiry.

IV.

I have so far spoken of self-consciousness as it appears in more or less explicitly social relations. But, one may reply, "Are we not, at pleasure, self-conscious when we are quite alone? Does not one reflect, does not one judge one's self? Is lonely meditation free from self-consciousness? Is not conscience a self-conscious affair? And yet in such cases does one contrast an Ego with any literal non-Ego? In such processes is not the Ego explicitly related to just the Ego, alone by itself? And are there not, in the phenomena of insanity, many alterations of this sort of purely internal self-consciousness?" I reply at once that my theory is precisely *that habits once acquired in social intercourse can and do hold over when we are alone, and can then apply within the content of one's own mind.* The transition is simple. First I can dramatically remember my actually past imitative deeds, my quarrels, my successful social feats, my chagrins, my questionings, my criticisms of others, and the bearings of others towards me. In all such cases I am self-conscious over again in memory, by virtue of our now familiar contrast-

effect. Further, as just seen, my emotions can vaguely suggest social situations, indefinite in character to any degree. By coalescence, a vast group of social habits of judging others, and of feeling myself judged by them, can get woven into a complex product such as is now my conscience. Conscience is a well-knit system of socially acquired habits of estimating acts—a system so constituted as to be easily aroused into conscious presence by the coming of the idea of any hesitantly conceived act. If conscience is aroused in the presence of such a hesitant desire to act, one has, purely as a matter of social habit, a disposition to have present both the tendency to the action, and the disposition to judge it, standing to one another in the now familiar relation of Ego and non-Ego. Which one of them appears as the Ego, which the non-Ego, depends upon which most gets possession, in the field of consciousness, of the common sensibility. If the tendency to the estimated act is a passionate tendency, a vigorous temptation, and if the conscientious judgment is a coldly intellectual affair, then the situation dimly reminds me of cases where other people, authoritative and dignified rather than pleasing, have reproved my wishes. Conscience is then the colder non-Ego, the voice of humanity, or of God. My common sensibility merges with my passion. The reproof perhaps shames me; yet *I* want to have my way; only that other, that authoritative inner non-Ego, my conscience, will not let me go free. But if, on the other hand, the conceived act is less keenly desired, and if my conscientious plans are just now either fervently enthusiastic or sternly resolute in my mind, then it is my conscience which merges with my common sensibility, and I myself am now, in presence of the conceived act, as if judging another. I feel then secure in my righteousness, and I look with disdain upon that which would tempt me if I were weaker, but which now is a mere non-Ego. It is in a similar fashion, by a dramatic imitation not of actual, but of abstractly possible social relations, that I can question myself, and wait for an answer, can reflect upon my own meaning, can admire myself, love myself, hate myself, laugh at myself, in short do or suffer in presence of my own states and processes whatever social life

has taught me to do or to suffer in presence of the states and processes of others. In every such case the central Ego is so much of my conscious process as tends more to merge with the common sensibility. My inner, but more peripheral, relative non-Ego is so much of my conscious process as tends more to resemble, in interest, in general tone or in uncontrollable unexpectedness, the experiences which, in ordinary social life, are due to other people. Yet since all these inner contrasts are constantly corrected by my habits of external perception and of memory, which remind me all the while of a literal non-Ego outside of all these processes, this inner sundering normally remains only, as Professor Ladd has called it, dramatic—a sort of metaphor, which I can correct at pleasure, saying at any moment, “but all this is merely Ego, after all. The real non-Ego is the world of live other people yonder.”

Thus the normal inner life of reflection, of conscience, of meditation, and of the so-called ‘spiritual Ego’ in general, is simply, in us human beings, an imitation, a brief abstract and epitome, of our literal social life. We have no habits of self-consciousness which are not derived from social habits, counterparts thereof. Where the analogy of our relations to our fellows ceases, reflection ceases also. And this is precisely what constitutes the limitation of our reflective processes in philosophy and in psychology.

But surely, if this summarizes the conditions of our normal self-consciousness, when we are thinking alone, it also gives room for indefinitely numerous abnormal variations. Suppose that there appear in the conscious field hallucinations of the muscular sense, of the sort so well described in Cramer’s noted monograph. Let these be motor speech hallucinations. Then the patient may observe the puzzling phenomenon that, whenever he thinks, there is some mysterious tendency present that aims to objectify his thoughts, in spoken words. Somebody or something either takes his own thoughts away from him and speaks them, or forces him, willy nilly, to speak them himself. The thoughts are his own. The sounding of them forth, in this way, is not his. His thoughts run off his tongue, get spoken in his

stomach, creak out in his shoes as he walks, are mockingly echoed or in the end commented upon by another power. This other power, this stealing of his thoughts, involves of course a deep disturbance of his self-consciousness, which tends gradually to pass over into a regular system of delusions. Yet what does the process mean? It means, at first, merely the appearance of uncontrollable elements of consciousness, which by virtue of the habits connected with the uncontrollable in general cannot get merged in the common sensibility, and which are yet in a problematic and painfully intimate relation to what he does recognize as his own. This foreign power need not for a good while behave *enough* like the true voice of another to become a genuine hallucinatory comrade or enemy, as it would do and does if the patient hears his voices without of himself recognizing their close relation to his stream of thought. But in this uncontrollable hallucinatory thinking aloud there is enough suggestion of the foreign to make the patient feel that his own thoughts are getting somehow estranged from him. That these are his own thoughts he at first knows, by virtue of the general contrasts between real Ego and real non-Ego still present to him. That they are getting estranged he knows, for that is to any one a relative non-Ego which behaves more or less as one's original social non-Ego, one's fellow in society, behaves. His behaviour is relatively uncontrollable; and so is here that of the patient's thoughts.

Or again, suppose that one's depressed emotional condition, as in melancholia, or at the outset of a delirium of suspicion or of persecution, contains emotions resembling the normal emotions of conscientious guilt, or the feeling of social dread. Then these feelings tend to assimilate in one's actual surroundings, or in one's memories, data which suggest, to one patient an actually believed social condemnation of his deeds, or an actual judgment of his inner conscience passed upon his sinfulness, while to another patient his own sorts of emotion suggest an especially hostile scrutiny of his appearance by the passers by, or an inner sense that he must hide from possible scrutiny. On the other hand, feelings quite the reverse of these suggest to the exalted general

paralytic whatever remembered or fancied social relations, expressing his vast powers, the fragments of left-over social habits which still survive in his chaos permit him, in passing, to express.

Or, once more, another patient has present to consciousness two or more streams of feelings, impulses, thoughts, which are sharply contrasted with one another, while the portions of each stream more or less hang together, by virtue of common contents or tone. All of these streams belong to his general Ego,—this he recognizes by the normal contrast with the actual external world. But meanwhile they have their inner contrast, which is no longer, like the just mentioned contrasts in normal consciousness, a source of merely dramatic metaphor. This abnormal contrast is intense, uncontrollable, continuous. Now let the reflections or the context of these streams be such as in any fashion to remind the patient of any social relation, contest, rivalry, quarrel, criticism, pity, questioning, discussion; and then the patient can only say: ‘There are in me two or more selves, I am divided.’ If one of the streams involves more of the common sensibility than does the others, or more of the sense of control, the patient may speak of the less favored streams as other selves, or as the ‘Other Fellow’ without having any full-fledged delusion of a real outside oppressor. And in all this there will be mere associations of ideas, mere socially acquired habits,—no new mysteries of self-hood whatever. Yet how complex the physical and psychological background of such abnormal habits may be, I will try to illustrate, as I close, by a single case.

(To be concluded.)