

Lecture II.

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TRUTH

The nature and value of the ideal of Absolute Truth formed the topic of our first lecture. Our result was briefly this: — The assertions, and the ideal complexes which are equivalent to assertions, — that is, the affirmations and denials, — of which our thoughtful life consists, form the subjects to which the predicates *true* and *false* are to be attributed in these lectures. These affirmations and denials are a portion of our conduct. For to affirm and to deny are ways of acting. Each assertion is itself a deed. The modes of conduct that consist of assertions make up that portion of our conduct which through interpretation and characterization of objects, gives us counsel for the direction of the rest of our conduct. Thoughts are thus deeds which advise or counsel other deeds. Now those of our voluntary deeds which do not consist in thus giving counsel, such deeds as are of the nature of walking, singing, or handiwork, — deeds which are *not* thoughts, — differ from one another in so far as every such deed either does or does not accomplish what in doing just that deed will accomplish. That is [2] each of those deeds either hits or misses its own mark. In what way any deed hits or misses its mark depends of course, from our side as voluntary agents, upon what we intend when we do our deeds. If a clown in the circus-ring intends to seem to do stupid things and to be awkward, then his tumblings and his other seeming failures constitute his success in his art. If an actor wants to portray a stuttering person, then while he thus portrays the stuttering person, his halting speech is actually skillful. And so, in general, in order to know whether an individual deed is a hit or a miss, you must take account of the purpose of the doer. In so far success and failure, hit and miss, are terms of a profoundly relative application. They are, upon one side, totally relative to the purposes of the doer. But this whole matter of our activity has also another aspect. Each single voluntary deed once done is irrevocable. Considered in itself if indeed it is a voluntary deed it is precisely *either* a hit *or else* a miss. It wins what it was intended to win, or else it does not. Now whatever character, — the character of a hit or the character of a miss, — the single deed has, belongs to it, when it is once done, forever. Or, at all events, the view which thus regards our individual deeds is the view which is characteristic of our decisive moods, and [3] of all decisive people, and has precisely that value, as a view about the nature of conduct, which belongs to decisiveness and to decisive people and undertakings. “Act always in all your deliberate business, as a person who never hopes to undo anything that he has done”: — this is a maxim which is part of the consciousness of every business like person, whatever his calling.

Now the assertion which counsels the deed that is a hit, is, in so far as it concerns just that deed, a true judgment. The assertion that counsels the deed which is a miss, is in just so far a false judgment. And truth and falsity are characters that belong to individual assertions in the same irrevocable way in which

the character of being a hit or a miss belongs to the deed which the assertion in question counsels. If the difference between doing and not doing a determinate deed is conceived as an absolute difference in precisely this sense, that the opportunity to accomplish the single deed is unique, and can never recur, — precisely so the corresponding difference between the truth and the falsity of a determinate judgment, whose object and whose counsel are also determinate, is rightly to be conceived as absolute. One who judges, chooses indeed his own object, and the sort of correspondence with his own object that he intends his assertion to possess, and in so far the truth of his assertion is indeed wholly relative [4] to his own purposes. But he also gives counsel. His judgment includes the imperative: *Act thus; do this*. For he interprets objects for the sake of guiding adjustments to them. Herein his judgment commits itself to its own fate; and as a counsel to do what, when done, is either a hit or a miss, the judgment itself is, from the point of view of its own purposes either a hit or a miss. And this character as a giver of true or of false counsel is precisely the character which our ideal of absolute truth assigns to the judgment. The ideal which thus views truth as absolute, because the decisions which are true or false are regarded as individual acts of counsel, whose character is as irrevocable as is the doing or not doing of any other determinate deed, — this ideal is itself a valuable ideal. It has all the value that voluntary decisiveness can give to life. It is an ideal at once philosophical and business-like.

If, by a concrete even if inadequate illustration I may try to get the view that is here in mind clearly before you, I may well suggest a case that constitutes, I hope, such an illustration.

Let such of our deeds as are voluntary choices, but *not* thoughts, be illustrated, for the moment, by the deeds of a player in a game, where, the rules of the game are so precise and so well enforced that each of his deeds is, for the purposes of the game, a hit or a miss. It is a good [5] rule in any game upon which definite issues depend, that the player may not at pleasure withdraw any one of his deeds, and say, “I take that back, because I don’t like the result.” If the rules, in any game, permit repeated trials of any sort, still a repeated trial is not precisely the same as the total withdrawal of a decisive deed. Our ideal is that the same act cannot be done twice. The score stands for the irrevocable character of the player’s deeds. Hereupon we may illustrate such of our deeds as are assertions, that is are affirmations or denials, by the supposed utterances of some one who, under the rules of the game, is allowed to coach the player, and to tell him either before the game or from some point of vantage, what to do, — commanding, for instance, “*hold it,*” or “*make this attack,*” or whatever it may be. Now suppose that the player obeys his coach with precision. The coaching itself may not appear on the score, but the player’s deed appears. The coaching is as irrevocable as the playing. Now our lives are, in one aspect, a game precisely in so far as they are not mere series of feelings or moods, or other inarticulate contents, but voluntary enterprises. Practical life when it is voluntary is the player, thought is the coach. The score-card, once filled, remains our [6] score to all eternity. The ideal view that this is the situation is the ideal view according to which

all our judgments, in case their meaning is determinate, are either true or false, and, when true or false at all, are absolutely true or false.

We have now further to develop the meaning of this ideal of absolute truth. Let me conclude this introductory summary by a formal definition of a true judgment. A judgment or assertion is a characterization or interpretation of some object of experience. The purpose of this interpretation or characterization is to guide our voluntary conduct with reference to this object of experience. *A judgment is true if it so guides or counsels our conduct through its interpretation of the object, that the deed which it counsels meets our intent, i.e. fulfills, as far as it goes, the will that we have in mind when, following this counsel we choose this deed.* If we have a definite purpose guiding our will, and if our judgment gives determinate counsel as to what to do or not to do for the sake of this purpose, then the judgment is either true or not true. If not true it is false. And the distinction thus defined is, from the point of view of one, who proposes decisive action, and who guides himself by determinate judgments, an absolute distinction.

I.

Whoever has followed this account of the nature of the [7] truth-relation may at this point ask: In what way does this view of truth differ from the pragmatism of Professor James, or from the various forms of instrumentalism and of humanism which are more or less familiar to the readers of recent discussion. My answer to this question cannot here be complete, and as you know, I do not intend to make this answer more polemical than the necessity of the case requires. Let me sketch a few of the common features of current pragmatism sufficiently to indicate where, as I think, the original differences lie. As you well know, the main point at issue is whether the distinction between truth and error is wisely to be regarded as, in ideal, an absolute distinction, so that, given a determinate judgment whose intention is precise, *either* the predicate true *or else* the predicate false belongs to that assertion, while there is no proper intermediate between these two predicates. I assert that this ideal of the absolute distinction between the predicates true and false is a wise, a valuable, and a definable distinction. You also know, from the foregoing lecture, that I sharply distinguish between thus asserting on the one hand the value and reasonableness of this absolute difference between the predicates *true* and *false*, and deciding on the other hand whether, in an individual case, a proposed assertion is now *known by us* to be actually true, or is *known by us* to be actually false. When I [8] assert that a given judgment is *doubtful*, or is merely *probable*, my predicate belongs to the judgment solely when viewed in the light of the present state of my personal knowledge, or of our human knowledge. Therefore, to call a judgment *doubtful* or merely *probable* is, in my opinion, not to say that it is *neither* true nor false, and is not to say that it stands somehow between true and falsity. In asserting doubt or probability I simply admit that I do not know at

present *which* of the two predicates *true* or *false* actually belongs to the judgment in question. I do not thereby deny that one of these two predicates *does* belong to this judgment, while the other does not so belong. And so the main issue between current pragmatism and my own view is thus far one regarding the basis and the value of the ideal of absolute truth. Our closing lecture will deal with the accessibility of this ideal.

But next, speaking solely as to the ideal of truth, and abstracting for the time from any question as to our present certainty regarding whether to call a given judgment true or false, let me recall a few of Professor James's theses regarding the nature of truth, as well as some of the other now familiar expressions employed by one or another pragmatist: —

“The truth of an idea consists in its agreement with its expected workings.” An idea or assertion “is true if [9] it works.” A true assertion or idea is one that “leads us towards or into the neighborhood of that experience to which it aims to lead us.” “Truth is not a static but a dynamic character of ideas.” “Truth is not a fixed character of ideas or of assertions; it happens to them; they become true by virtue of their leadings.” “True is that which, when put to the test, meets our anticipations.” “The true is the expedient in our ideas, as the right is the expedient in our conduct.” “Truth changes.” “Experience boils over.” “What was true may become untrue, and what was untrue may become true.” What is the relation of my own view of the ideal of truth to these various now fairly familiar statements?

II.

My answer must depend upon emphasizing the topic that I have mentioned in the title to this lecture. I have fully set forth the thesis that all truth is in one aspect practical, since true assertions are acts of counsel whereby we guide and direct our conduct. In the foregoing lecture I also carefully stated my opinion that there is no such thing as *purely* theoretical truth, and that the pure intellect is a myth. But, over against the foregoing assertion I must now with equal definiteness insist that the nature of truth, precisely because truth can be defined [10] only in terms of the decisive will, involves an aspect which we may call its genuinely theoretical aspect. This theoretical aspect of the nature of truth is inseparable from its practical aspect. In my view, the foregoing assertions of current pragmatism misinterpret this theoretical aspect of the nature of truth, and are therefore inadequate accounts of what truth is.

The word theory is widely, and often vaguely used. In its more exact meaning a theory is the portrayal of some coherent system of ideas and of relations of ideas, — a portrayal such that some of the properties of the system in question can be deduced, by logical processes, from the other properties. Thus, by the theory of numbers, one means a portrayal of the constitution of the number-system such that, given certain principles whereby the numbers are defined, the other properties of the numbers, so far as the theory considers them, are deducible from these principles. Now any set of facts or any system of

relations may be said to have a theoretical aspect, in case, and just in so far as, a theory can be constructed which portrays certain properties in question from other properties, i.e. from principles which are used to define the constitution of the system. Thus, once more, there exists a theory of the motions of the planets, just in so far as certain of the [11] properties of the planetary motions, — for instance the approximately verifiable orbits of the planets or their positions at a given time, can be deduced from the assumption that the Newtonian formula of gravitation holds true of the movements and masses that are in question. So much for the general meaning of the words *theory* and *theoretical*. Now my thesis is that truth belongs to assertions in so far as these assertions stand in certain determinate relations to objects. What these relations are, the decisive will of the maker of assertions indeed determines. But a general theory of certain aspects of the decisive will, and of what the will intends, and of the way in which it is guided by judgments, is in my opinion possible. The result is that all truth has certain theoretical aspects; and I believe that these aspects are definable, and that current pragmatism, in the foregoing statements, inadequately defines them. Let me tell you more of what I mean.

III.

First let me illustrate the inadequacy of the foregoing theses of pragmatism by pointing out that they are too vague to enable us thereby to define what it is which any decisive will undertakes to accomplish, and what counsel our judgments give to our will, and what is meant by those “workings” of a judgment which constitute its truth. In contrast with this more or less deliberate vagueness of such current [12] pragmatic theses, let me illustrate the sharpness of the theses whereby, to my mind, the position of absolutism can and should be stated.

“An idea is true if it agrees with its expected workings”: — what is meant by *expected* workings? What is agreement with my *expectations*? *Expectation* is a name for mental states which exist in very various degrees of definiteness. An idle man goes to a holiday festival with a more or less vague expectation of being amused, or sits at home looking out the window with a general expectation that something worth looking at may ere long pass by in the street, or lounges on a hotel piazza in summer time wondering what it is that he is looking for, but expecting as he says, that “something will happen.” The very preciousness of such seasons of idleness lies in the fact that they relieve us for the time from the strain of the decisive will. We expect, at such times, without sharply defining what we expect. We are deciding no definite conduct. We are committed to no precise assertions. Of course the idle moments slip irrevocably by, but their fatal flight is at such times not viewed as the flight of our opportunities for decision: — for our action is reduced to a minimum, and we have just then little at stake. At the end of such a season of idleness, have our expectations been met or not? Yes, and no, and both. For we have made during this time few assertions, have perhaps forgotten what they were, [13] have done little in the

way of conduct, and so have been committed to few or perhaps no sharp antitheses between yes and no? On the other hand we had, in a way ideas. Our ideas in their idle way “worked.” We expected to pass the time. Our expectations were fulfilled. Yet what have we found out about the truth of our ideas? Little or nothing. Bare “expectation” then is not enough. Vague moods of expectation and fulfillment are not sufficient. *What is needed for truth is an issue and a decisive counsel.* The word “expectation” is too deliberately vague. An idea in my opinion is true if it agrees with the object with which it *intends* to agree, in just that determinate way in which it intends to agree therewith. Such agreement is determinate in my present sense when the idea counsels doing or not doing a determinate proposed deed or set of deeds and when this deed, if done, will constitute a definite hit or miss in a course of decisive conduct. The idle man has expectations of all degrees of indeterminateness; and they are met or disappointed with all degrees of indecisiveness. But truth and falsity are present only in case issues are sharply joined, — yes or no.

And next, as current pragmatism asserts, our ideas are true in so far as they “work.” Yes, but in what way can a true or false idea “work.” Only by *giving counsel*, that is, by *implying that, for a given purpose, a determinate deed should be done.* The *implications* of an idea, not its [14] other results are in question. Psychologically or physically, an idea may “work” in all sorts of direct and indirect ways. Some fool in a crowded building cries out, expressing any uncomfortable idea that you may please, — an idea that has anyhow got into his head. A panic may result from psychological workings of this idea. Does the panic involve any testing of the truth or falsity of the idea in question? No necessarily. For the idea and the panic may have been due to mere associations, to dim fears, to anything but the decisive choices of anybody. On the other hand, you may tell us if you will that Newton’s theory of gravitation “works” because, as you may say, computations based upon that theory, and upon its fundamental principles, have been verified in case of some latest refinement of lunar tables and of observation, or by means of the recorded movements of a binary stellar system. Yes, but to what “workings” do you now refer? I answer, to *logical deductions* from the Newtonian principles, — to deductions many of which Newton himself would have been quite unable to make, and some of which it has taken centuries of progress in mathematical analysis to work out, — to deductions which nobody would ever have thought of making who was not guided by the ideal of absolute truth. These deductions, once made, logically result in giving counsel the student of Newtonian [15] theory to enter in certain tables certain numerical values, and then to predict an approximate agreement between these values and certain measurements that can be made by observing certain objects with instruments of precision, devised wholly in the interest of deciding sharply defined issues. The prediction proves to be, within the permissible limits of the errors of measurement, a hit and not a miss. In this case it remains irrevocably and eternally true that Newton’s theory was this time tested with approximate success. As to the result for the theory as a whole, no such single success can

prove Newton's principles absolutely true; nor can any number of such successes prove this. But that is because, guided by the ideal of absolute truth, Newton *so* defined his principles that, if true they would counsel a "non-denumerable" infinite number of possible acts of prediction to be made, and no human being can ever completely test such a set of predictions. It is here the very absoluteness of the truth in question that limits our power to make our verifications complete. As this case suggests, that relations between a judgment and its consequences which constitutes, for the purposes of decisive will, one aspect of the truth of any idea, is what is called a logical relation, that is a relation subject to logical theory. At this point our former analogy between the player and the coach on the one hand, and the will and the judgment on the other hand, does indeed prove defective. For the coach may give counsel, and the player, making a miss [16] if his next deed may say: "You caused me to make that blunder." The coach may reply: "You hadn't your wits about you, or didn't make out what I meant, and so you were to blame for the blunder." Here both may be right. For what the player does may be indeed the "working" of the coach's counsel, but the awkward or blundering working of a rattled player. To whom the error was most due may then remain in doubt. Not so is it however with the only "workings" of an idea that count in determining its truth. The question as to how a given deed is related to the counsel defined by a given judgment, is itself a logical issue, and is one purely of logical fact regarding intentions, with an answer, *yes* or *no*, predetermined by the facts. Did that judgment imply that this deed was to be done? This issue is, for the decisive will, absolute. For a decisive will is one that is consciously guided by grounds, by reasons for a choice. These reasons are stated in judgments. These judgments are themselves deeds. And the ideal of the decisive will is that these deeds of counsel, — these rationally conscious ideas, — should be themselves precise and determinate. In so far as I act from impulse, and without conscious purpose, I may possibly *neither* hit nor miss, but simply act at random. But if I act *knowing what I intend by my act*, then I can so define my will as to make either a hit or a miss. And just so too, if I know what I mean by my judgment, I know whether this judgment does or does not really counsel a given deed. The intent of its counsel is not identical with the psychological or physical consequences of its mere presence [17] in my mind. The logical consequences of a judgment are a matter for logical theory to determine.

IV.

And next, since what a judgment counsels is not necessarily at all identical with the workings, or even with the "expected" workings, that follow its mere occurrence in our life, we cannot say that the truth of an idea is determined by, or consists of, *any series of events* viewed merely as *events*. Logical implications are simply not events. They are theoretical aspects of our intentions.

Let us take a great historical instance, as an example. There can be no ordinarily plausible doubt in the mind of any fair common sense student of history of Christianity that the recorded sayings which

the Gospel attribute to Jesus express ideas that have had great and manifold “workings” in the history of mankind. Some of those ideas you find recorded in the Sermon on the Mount, some in the parables. Suppose one proposes to test the truth of any of these ideas by their “workings.” And suppose one further speaks of the resulting “workings” as “happening” to these ideas. Now all merely historical “workings” viewed as sets of events, are of course very complex affairs. All historical happenings seem to be due to numerous factors. But so long as you have no test of the “workings” but the historical one, you [18] are bound to take such complications as they come, and to unravel them as you can. Glance at certain well known “workings” of the teachings of Jesus. His sayings, or at all events the reports of them, early convinced some people that his teaching had, as such people believed, some divine source. Part of the reason why people thought thus seems to have been the seeming majesty of the sayings, and the apparent authority with which the teacher is said to have spoken. At all events the reported miracles would hardly have produced the success of Christianity had no such sayings or teachings of Jesus been reported; and so the sayings and ideas attributed to Jesus surely had their share in bringing about the later history of Christian theology and religion. It “happened to” these ideas, then, that their author came to be supposed to be divine. And for this result the ideas, as historical factors, had their share of responsibility. Now what “workings” has this idea of Christ’s divinity in its turn brought about? Many workings, — you know how varied they were. The Crusades, the persecutions of heretics, the Holy Roman Empire, the later religious wars, the countless strifes of the sects, the harrying of the Jews, centuries of bloodshed and hatred, — these, along with vast blessings to humanity that I need not enumerate, because they do not here concern my illustration, — [19] these, I say, are amongst the “workings” that have “happened to” the ideas of Jesus. Shelly thought of these sad “workings” when he said:

“See his mild and gentle ghost
Mourning for the faith he kindled.”

Of course my picture is at the moment deliberately one sided. I mention only sad “workings.” But I do so only to ask this plain question. Would it be in the least fair to judge the ethical truth or the real value of the reported sayings of Jesus even if, in fact, these sad events, — these wars, cruelties, and so on, were the *only* discoverable historical workings of Christianity? No, — any fair minded person would say, the sayings must be judged by the counsel that they themselves intend to give. What kind of counsel is implied by the reported ideas of the founder of Christianity? That is what you must ask before you judge the truth of these ideas. Now the question as to the real intent of Christ’s reported sayings is, in one aspect a question of ethical, and in part of logical theory. What did these sayings *imply*?

One cannot escape from this argument by retreating to the position that the truth of the ideas of Jesus must be tested solely by their “expected workings,” as the founder himself expected the *outcome*. To be sure, he presumably did not expect the Crusades or the other religious wars. But apparently he

conceived the “expected workings” of his ideas in intimate relation to some anticipated early [20] end of the world. And so much of his ideas would seem to have been erroneous. Yet not thus is the truth of his ethical sayings to be fairly tested.

The *only* workings by which it would be fair to test the original Christian ethical assertions, would consist of the *implications* of the teachings of Jesus regarding the right way of life. When fairly interpreted, Jesus seems, as an ethical teacher, to have really intended to counsel a certain plan of living. Suppose that plan carried out as he intended it to be carried out, — what *would be* the result? That is the only fair question regarding the truth of his moral teachings. And now such truth, if truth these teachings have, such defect, if they are in any way inadequate to our moral needs, — this truth or error is not anything that merely happens to the teachings of Christ, as the Crusades or as the sectarian persecutions happened. Of course, on the other hand this same truth of the moral teachings of Jesus is not some mere “static” abstraction, divorced from life. It is as “concrete” as life itself. Jesus counselled a very decisive plan of living. If, with just the will about life that you have, or that any of the rest of us have, you or we follow those counsels in individual cases, *would* the result be, from our point of view, and in any one instance, or in some or in all instances, a hit or a miss? That is a perfectly fair question about a perfectly concrete matter. But, as you see it is a question [21] that cannot possibly be answered merely by enumerating the historical “workings” of the ideas of Jesus. And the true answer to this question is no mere event that happens to the ideas in question. It is a relation discovered only by means of fair inferences from the counsels of Jesus. The sayings are indeed practical. But just for that very reason they have their theoretical aspect. They state a theory of life.

V.

And hereupon I come to the very core of my difference with current pragmatism. The truth-relation, we are told is not “static,” but “dynamic.” You get at it by “looking forwards,” not “backwards.” It is “temporal,” not “eternal.” Truth “changes,” “flows,” is “dramatic.” What it “will be” in the future we know not. We know only its “present” states. And all this, we learn, is an inevitable consequence of our situation as men dwelling in a fluent realm of experience, learning what we can from the data of sense and of feeling as they fly. Any other view is a “false abstraction,” a flight from the “concrete” into the realm of shadows!

Now I am still speaking only of the ideal of truth, and not yet of the accessibility of truth. What I have so far pointed out however is that we do *not* make life less but more “concrete” in its interests when we view both [22] our decisive deeds and our determinate counsels as facts each of which is in its individual character irrevocable. You certainly do not make the issues of Christian history less dramatic or more barren when you raise the now so familiar question whether any man has ever lived up to the real

intent of the counsels contained in the sayings attributed to Jesus, and what would be the result if any man did so live. Nor do you resort to barren abstractions when you simply refuse to test ideas merely by their “workings” viewed as events, but on the contrary insist upon testing them in the light of the genuine implications of their own intent.

It is customary for some of our leading thinkers nowadays, to denounce “mere logic.” But logic is concerned, amongst other things, with clearness as to what one intends, counsels, plans, and chooses. And such clearness is the most concrete of states of mind whenever one is concerned with decisive choices.

Now let some one, — let us say a sage of old, or a modern man of science, or a man in the market place, give certain counsel as to how we are to adjust ourselves to any object in the world that you please, or to any sort of business whatever. Let the question arise, What, for a given purpose, is the truth of this counsel? Let the question be [23] answered by showing how the counsel is indeed in agreement with the nature of some object, in so far as this object is sought for some determinate end. The answer points out a genuinely logical relation between an idea and its object, — a relation which in so far constitutes the truth of the idea. Now is this relation itself merely a passing event? Or on the other hand is it “static?” “Is it an occurrence.” Or, on the other hand, is it something “timeless.”

I answer: From the point of view of any will that is concerned with choosing “a course of life,” or with carrying out coherent “plans of action” in a series of individual deeds, this truth relation is neither an “event,” nor an “occurrence,” nor yet something “timeless,” nor yet merely “static.” It is a relation whereby *various possible or real objects*, events, ideas, counsels, and deeds *are joined, in ideal at least, into one significant whole*. The whole is no one event, it is a connected life process. It is no mere set of successive events. It is a significant unity of many events. No one can tell, even in ideal, define its character, who does not in some sense view himself as looking down, as it were from above, upon the stream or course of time, and viewing the coherent sense of a number of various events. [24]

When have the sayings of Jesus, or the counsels of Marcus Aurelius, or the assertions of arithmetic, or the reports of scientific observation, or the propositions of Newtonian theory, or the assertions about objects that you and I may now make, their actual intent, their genuine implications, their real character as counsels to action? I answer: They have their real meaning, not *merely* when they happen to be uttered, nor yet *merely* when they happen to produce, through physical or through psychological “workings,” this or that effect. Nor yet do they possess their meaning in a merely “timeless” sense. The alternative “temporal” on the one hand, “timeless” on the other is a false division of the possibilities. There is a third possibility. The intent, the genuine implications of a determinate statement, *hold, are valid, obtain* neither statically nor dynamically, neither timelessly nor yet merely when the statement is uttered, nor yet merely at any one time, but precisely “for all time.” In other words the truth-relations obtain neither temporally nor timelessly, but *supratemporally*.

VI.

The conception of a realm of facts to which the predicate *supratemporal* can be truthfully applied, is a conception that many people find very difficult. But I know of no more concrete realities than are the supratemporal realities. [25] I am here of course making no effort to present a systematic metaphysic; and I am still dealing only with our ideas and ideals, not with any decision as to what access we mortals have to the objects of such ideas and ideals. But the mere idea of a supramental reality is an extremely familiar idea, although few of us attempt to formulate it very sharply. By a supratemporal fact or reality I mean a reality whose nature and whose character and sense could be adequately observed or experienced only by an observer who could grasp at once, could hold before him in one unity of consciousness, the contents of a number of successive moments or stages of some temporal process. My simplest instance of a supratemporal reality is any musical unity that you please, — a theme, a sequence of themes, a movement, a sonata, a symphony. *When* is the sonata played? When the first chord is struck, or when the last one sounds? Or is the sonata grasped or experienced in its real musical meaning only in so far as one hears first one phrase and then another, the mere succession of chords, bars, phrases? No the sonata, when played, — e.g. Beethoven's *Sonata Appassionata*, appears to the appreciative hearer not as a mere sequence of tones, but as something whose musical sense he grasps only in so far as he approaches a power to hold at once in consciousness the whole contents of the temporal sequence of the movements and of the parts of each movement. The sonata exists, as a mystical entity, only in the totality which its successive chords, phrases, themes, parts, movements consti- [26] tutes. Time-inclusion, in so far as you can get the experience of including many successive instants in one survey, — this alone gives you the power to experience the real sonata. In a word, the sonata itself is neither a mere sequence of events in time, nor yet a "timeless" fact; it is a supratemporal, a time-inclusive reality. Only a synoptic experience can grasp it. It is not merely a "dynamic" affair of successive stages, and it is still less a "static" fact. It is simply supratemporal. That is, it is a significant unity of many time sequences in one significant whole.

Now I assert that whatever object of experience you can make an object of your judgment when you aim at truth, is conceived by you not only as a temporal, but also as a supratemporal object. That is, it is conceived as an object that could be fully grasped and exhaustively experienced only by one who could actually grasp at once, and hold before his attention, the contents of widely separated temporal sequences of experience. Think of any object you please, and consider how you view it as related to the rest of the world. You will find that this object, if completely known at all, would have to be known by one who assigned to it its real place in the whole of experience, and who consequently had before him at once the whole sequence of experience. Your idea of any objective fact whatever is [27] therefore, an idea of an object that, however temporal it is, is also supratemporal. If the real object of which you make assertions

were fully experienced by you in its real place in the world, you would be in possession of a synoptic view of the whole time sequence in which this object has its place.

And now, I assert, the truth or falsity of your intent when by your judgments you give counsel as to how one should adjust himself to this fact, is itself a supratemporal truth or falsity.