

Lecture I. THE NATURE AND THE USE OF ABSOLUTE TRUTH.

I propose, in these lectures, to undertake a task of a somewhat definitely limited interest and scope. I want to define and to defend the concept of Absolute Truth. In particular, I want to show: First that we all use the conception, or the idea, or, if you prefer another word, the Ideal, of absolute truth as a concept, an idea, an ideal, that is of use to us for the purposes both of common sense and of science; Secondly, I want to show why this ideal of absolute truth is a useful ideal, - useful for the purposes of daily life, useful for the purposes of scientific inquiry, and useful for any ethical, or metaphysical or religious interests that any of us may chance to possess; and Thirdly, I want to indicate the sense in which, as I suppose, our ideal of absolute truth is an ideal of something that is, in some regions of our life and in some degree accessible to us. I have called this task limited in character and scope. Some of you will regard it, in advance, as a homelessly vast and vague undertaking. Yet I call it limited, because in my own mind it is closely connected with other philosophical tasks of which, as I prepare these lectures, I shall inevitably be almost constantly aware, but

which I must not here attempt to accomplish or even to discuss. As I speak, I shall be thinking of numerous logical and metaphysical problems whose solution is bound up with the particular problem here in question, and I shall be tempted to discuss those other problems with you; while, you, if you take interest in those other problems, will yourselves have them in mind, and will be estimating what I here say in the light of what you think about these other issues. Therefore, whatever I say, you will at the end of these lectures find to have been very fragmentary. I shall have suggested to you countless questions that I shall here have no time to answer, even if I had the power to answer them. I shall leave you dissatisfied. My argument, after it has been stated, will appear to you to have been, if I may adapt a well-known phrase, a mere playing with pebbles on the shore of the great ocean of truth, while the ocean itself is left unexplored beyond us. This is the sort of limitation that I mean when I call my present task limited. Let me admit all this at the outset. I shall not content you. But if I leave you with a sort of discontent which may help, however little, to make you better explorers in the ocean of truth in the future, I shall have done all that in these lectures I can hope to do.

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I.

I have chosen to use the expression "Absolute Truth" in my title partly because this phrase is, at the moment extremely unpopular. Of course unpopularity is not in itself an unmixed good. But sometimes, it helps one to be frank and independent. And this is such a time. What is often called "Absolutism" is nowadays a favorite target for the joyous ridicule of skilful humorists and for the more serious scorn of impressive public teachers, of the leaders of the thought of the day, and of all who are, so to speak, in the fashion. It seems fair of course to suppose that if a man is a believer in what he calls Absolute Truth, he must be some sort of "Absolutist." And you all know in advance what the leaders of opinion today counsel you to think of Absolutists and of Absolutism. One who declares any truth to be absolute, appears, in Mr. Schiller's eyes to be assuming that he is personally in very much the same position as that which the dogma of Papal Infallibility attributes to the Pope, whenever the pope is solemnly and officially defining the faith of the Church. And such infallibility is something that plainly no merely mortal philosopher speaking as an individual ought to attribute to himself. And so an absolutist seems to be (to say the least), intolerably presumptuous. Meanwhile, you all know other

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attributes which have been declared by high authority, to belong to Absolutism and to Absolutists. Absolutism is futile, for who, as they say, can find the Absolute either in the market place or in the laboratory? And who would know what to do with it if he found it. As for the Absolutist himself, he is variously yet quite authoritatively, characterized in current literature as a fantastic dreamer and also as a cold and barren intellectualist, as a mystic and also as a logic-chopper, as a partisan of the merely abstract reason, and also as an sentimental obscurantist. All these things you have heard. Of course I do not think these statements to be correct, or I should be no Absolutist. But, I accept quite deliberately and cheerfully this present unpopularity of the name Absolutist. Some people, who are fond of whatever happens to be the latest tendency in current opinion, are also fond, as they say, of watching the "passing of Absolutism." Some of them say that they like to be "in at the death" of Absolutism. Now I confess that I was much affected in my childhood by that now so antiquated and threadbare word about how "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again." That old word by itself proves nothing, solves no problem, has no sort of authority, being merely a phrase of a poet. But I confess that, seeing some reason to believe, as I shall try to show you, that that old word expressed in its way a real fact, I am personally fond of going out to see

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truth rise again! I believe that I have often seen it rise again. It has the divine halo of Resurrection. And whenever I see truth, it has to my mind a certain character of absoluteness about it which makes me love to share the present unpopularity of the word absolute.

I.

So much for a mere suggestion of my programme. And next for a preliminary sketch of some features of our problem.

Common sense is well acquainted with the predicates true and false. No doubt these words are used more or less equivocally by common sense. But without repeating the efforts so often made to distinguish the principal senses attributed to the predicates true and false, I am here quite ready to agree with many of my opponents in this discussion so far as to say that, in these lectures I shall mean by the words true and false predicates that are properly applied to assertions, to affirmations and denials, to judgments, to propositions, and to ideas only in so far as ideas are of the nature of assertions or of propositions, or of analogous complexes. Thus we commonly say that the assertion " $2+2=4$ " is true. We should very generally agree that the assertion " $2+2=5$ " is false. A mining promoter may give you a true or false account of his mine. That is, he may make true or false statements about it. A man may make a true or false

complaint when he brings a suit in court against a man or against a corporation. A lover or a business man may make a true or false promise: but his promise is true or false, for our present purposes because he says: "I will do thus and so," that is, truth or falsity belongs to his promise in so far as it involves an assertion about his intended acts. Now you know that, by a certain more or less natural transfer, we often do indeed apply the adjectives true or false to mere feelings, to emotions, to moods, to appearances, and on occasion to physical things, or to still other objects which we do not regard as assertions, or as directly partaking of the nature of affirmations or denials. Thus one may speak of a true lover, or of a false friend, or of true and false emotions of love or hate. One may ask whether a broken line should be called a true curve, or may talk of a true gentleman, or of false that is of counterfeit money. In countless other instances, and with very various motives one may thus transfer the predicates true and false to physical or to moral or to mathematical or to psychological objects which are not viewed as ideas or as assertions about any object. It is however no part of my present purpose to discuss the variety of such transferred meanings of the words true and false, or to define or to defend or to assail such transfers. The predicates true and false shall here be used in their natural application to ideas about objects, in so far as these ideas involve some form of affirmation or of denial regarding their objects.

Now common sense does not confine itself to using merely these predicates true and false as the sole one which can be applied where the truth or the falsity of assertions is in question. Common sense also knows of various other predicates which seem to be closely related to the predicates true and false, but which are not intended to be identical in meaning with these predicates. An assertion may be offered for my assent or dissent. The assertion may be an assertion that such a man (I will not here mention names) is to be the next President of the United States. Instead of saying, "This assertion is true" or "This assertion is false," I may comment upon it by saying: "This assertion is doubtful; "This assertion is probable;" "This assertion is very highly improbable; " or finally, "This assertion is conditionally or relatively true." What I ordinarily mean by such comments, - by the predicates doubtful, probable, improbable, more or less probable or improbable, relatively or conditionally true, - what, I say, such comments and predicates mean for my ordinary common sense, it is not altogether easy to define in a few words. But I call attention to these alternative predicates here, first because their relation to the predicates "true" and "false" has been, I think, too much neglected in many recent discussions of the problem as to the nature of truth.

and secondly because the vagueness which some people appear to feel regarding the meaning of these alternatives predicates, and about their relation to the predicates true and false, is responsible for the need that I myself find for using, on the present occasion, the term absolute truth. As you will later see, while I am quite willing to use the term "absolute truth," and to enjoy its unpopularity, I do so with a feeling that, as a fact, the expression is redundant. In my opinion, while there are the most varied sorts and degrees of probability and while the probability of given assertions varies in the most interesting way, with time and with the state of our own experience, and with all sorts of human fortunes, there is only one sort of truth. That is to say, a perfectly determinate assertion, with a precise meaning, is to my mind just either true or false. To call it "absolutely true" really means no more than ought to be meant by calling it "true." And this I say with the fullest recognition of the difficulties of the problem before us, and without any desire to prejudice your own minds in advance of our further study. What the predicate true means is not easy to define. My assertion that I mean precisely the same by truth and by absolute truth, viewed as the property of a given perfectly determinate assertion, is meant simply as a preliminary confession of a thesis which I am going to explain in what

follows. I do not say that this thesis is in the least obvious or axiomatic. I have for years been familiar with the reproaches that my dear friend James heaped upon all who loved or made anything that they called absolute. And yet I insist that, as a fact, this is my thesis. I will soon tell you why. When however I mention, in this preliminary sketch, the alternative predicates probable, improbable, and the rest, I do so to hint that even an absolutist who defines truth as a predicate which has a precise and absolute meaning, and who sees no difference whatever between the predicate "true" and the predicate "absolutely true," when these predicates are rightly applied to assertions whose meaning is precisely determinate, need not on that account fail to recognize that most of the assertions of daily life and of the sciences in so far as they deal with empirical data, are for us men only probable, ^{just because they} ~~are~~ are not certainly known by us to be true. An absolutist, as I shall show you, -an absolutist of my own type, -need make no more pretense to infallibility than does any other rightly considerate person. Moreover, with James, he can recognize all those endlessly fluent variations of human experience which so often turn the confident assurances of one generation into the mere probabilities, or the improbabilities, or the errors, - perhaps into the exploded and abandoned superstitions, - of a

generation of men. Probability, for reasons that we shall later see, is often the most fluent and shifting of predicates. Of probability as a predicate of beliefs, can therefore be truly asserted what James asserts of the predicate truth. Probability namely happens to ideas and to assertions. It is an incident of their fortunes. It often waxes and wanes like the temperature of the seasons. Sometimes it abides long without notable alteration. But again it changes with the "cosmic weather." It comes and goes. Some of the human hypotheses, some of the assertions that men make, it long favors so that, as the pragmatists say, they "work," and prosper for their time as they work, and grow fat with assurance. Then perhaps fortune changes; probability takes wings like riches, and leaves the plundered hypotheses so poor that none do them reverence. They die and are forgotten. Whoever has what James calls the dramatic temper, which James thinks characteristic of all pragmatists, and which was certainly characteristic of himself, can truthfully take all the joy that he wishes in watching the fortunes of the predicate probable. Why this is true, we shall later see. And one of such dramatic temper can say, and can, once more, truly say, that probability is upon one side of our life, indeed the guide of life. Probability is the predicate applicable to a vast class of financial, of social, and of scientific propositions, - propositions

whereof we know not whether they are true or not. And whatever you can now say about who is to be the next President of the United States has at present, at best, only some degree of probability; and all such probabilities as you know are subject to large possible surprises before the next Presidential year.

But all the while, in my opinion, these variations of probability are not variations in truth, but X be only determinate individuals

A complete theory of truth, therefore, must take account

man. Then for an absolute but not the assertion: X will be next president of the United States is even more absolutely true or else absolutely false. But for us men in our present state of knowledge probable may be the best predicate to use.

not only of the predicates "true" and "false," but of the ~~absolute~~ ^{other} predicates "probable" or "improbable." Most of the recent confusions regarding our topic might have been avoided had this work been carefully done. I have noticed with surprise how little attention many recent writers give to the concept of probability. Meanwhile, I have suggested, in the foregoing list of predicates, another alternative predicate, namely the predicate relatively true, or conditionally true. Now here again is a predicate which, despite its somewhat technical character, common sense frequently recognizes. Thus some one might comment upon the proposition: "X will be next President of the United States," by saying: - "Yes that proposition is true not unconditionally but conditionally, and relatively, hypothetically, or with reference to certain possibilities. "If, namely, he lives, becomes a candidate in due time is nominated, accepts nomination, is elected, inaugurated, etc." then he will be the next president." I mention this somewhat unfruitful instance of so called relative truth, merely to illustrate the sort of thing that some people seem to have in mind when they oppose the absolutist. "Unfruitful

as this instance of relative truth is" they may say, "we have to confess that we mortals have access not to absolute truth, but only to some such relative truth as the foregoing instance suggests. Our most fruitful assertions are at best only relatively true, conditionally true. The eclipses predicted for the coming year or years, will occur, if the laws of nature remain uniform, if the computations have been correctly made, and so on. Nothing nearer the absolute than this sort of thing is knowable to us mortals. Our truth then is relative, -never absolute."

Now what if anything is meant by such relative truth as opposed to absolute, or, as I should also say, to simple truth; I must later attempt to discuss more at length. In this opening sketch I may simply point out in passing that an absolutist such as I am may assert, and that in fact I shall assert this, viz.:- The truth of any hypothetical proposition, such as, "If A, then B," is precisely the same in its character as the truth of any so-called categorical proposition. Whatever truth is, it does not alter its character because the assertion that is in question is long, or complex, or hard to understand, if only the whole proposition whose truth or falsity is to be considered, when once understood, or when taken as a whole, turns out to have a precisely definite meaning. When I assert:-"If A then B," I do not assert A, nor yet do I assert B. Hence no question about the truth of A or the truth of B is so far before me at all. What I assert is that the antecedent A implies the consequent B. For all that I so far say they might both be

false or both true, or the antecedent may be false and nevertheless the consequent may be true. About all that, in asserting "If A then B," I assert nothing. Hence it does not help me much to say that, in case I can know this sort of proposition to be true, B may be said to possess a peculiar sort of truth, called conditional truth,- a sort of truth, which is as such opposed to absolute truth. The whole issue regarding our knowledge of the truth of conditional propositions is this:- Can we know any of them to be true at all? If we can, then the whole proposition: "If A then B" is itself known to be not conditionally or relatively true, but true, whatever this may mean. And the truth of conditional assertions, if they are true at all, is of the same sort as the truth of categorical assertions.

One more preliminary remark is needed regarding the predicates which common sense applies to propositions. I have spoken of the predicates "probable" and "improbable." We are all of us familiar with still another predicate, namely the predicate "certain." Now, in my opinion, the predicate "certain" does not mean the same as the predicate "true." "We shall win," says the college leader sometimes to the team or to his other fellows: "we shall win, that is certain." Now often common sense, and alas, not infrequently, the philosophers, in their discussion of the meaning of truth, confuse the predicate "true" or "absolutely true" with the predicate "certain" or "absolutely certain" and hence accuse an absolutist of being a person

who is peculiarly prone to assert that many truths which more cautious theorists believe to be only more or less probable or improbable, are "absolutely certain." Now and absolutist, like anybody else, should be aware that he, as an individual may feel certain of many propositions that, as they say, are in truth "not so" at all. Moreover, whatever truth is, there need be no question that "certainty" is as variable a predicate in its application to propositions as any human predicate can be. And an individual man's "certainties" are just as much subject to criticism when he defines it in any other terms. Certainty is a predicate applicable to propositions is so far as the mind of some human being has feelings of assurance when he considers his own views about those propositions. In so far, certainty is a private affair. No assertion that is true, even if it be absolutely true, need appear certain to any individual man, unless he has the good fortune to acquire the private state of mind called certainty, regarding that assertion. And no false statement can be found so absurd that some human being may not feel perfectly certain of its truth. Certainty, like probability, comes and goes, only with more capriciousness than does the predicate "probable," for reasons which we shall later see. For the rest, what is often called "self-evidence," or "absolute and immediate certainty," is a predicate of propositions which is often assigned to them because

a state of mind which no absolutist of my own type regards as a really enlightened or enlightening state of mind. This I can say in advance of all the rest of our discussion of truth, viz. that if any proposition about any topic in heaven or earth seems to you "self-evident," or "immediately certain," you may regard such self-evidence as an excellent ground for the presumption that you do not understand the so-called self-evident proposition, and do not comprehend the matter that is in question, and do not yet know whether or why that proposition is true. "Self-evidence" viewed just as a state of mind practically is often a wholesome state, - a result of the play of mere instinct or of blind habit. But it is never the result of wisdom. It is never the expression of enlightenment, for reasons which we shall later see, can ever be understood by us mortals in terms of mere self-evidence. And all sorts of falsities can seem self-evident to this or to that individual.

Do not then confound a tendency to define truth in absolute terms with the assertion that any truth is either self-evident, or otherwise, to any one man, certain. Of course whoever believes that we are reasonable beings at all, or that any proposition is true, holds that certainty and truth can be brought into some more or less close relation. But what that relation is, we have yet to see.

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 judgements. These judgements 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

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 the history of Christianity that the recorded sayings which the Gospels attribute to Jesus express ideas that have had great and manifold "workings" in the history of mankind. Some of these 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

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, -

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 do 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

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 own 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

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 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

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

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 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. This 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, 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.

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 the 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} ~~although~~ 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 yet 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 alone 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 seem to find very difficult. But I know of no more concrete realities than are the supratemporal realities.

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 supratemporal 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 musical entity, only in the totality which its successive chords, phrases, themes, parts, movements consti-

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 judgments 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

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therefore, an idea of an object that, however temporal it is, is also suprastemporal. 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 judgements you give counsel as to how one should adjust himself to this fact, is itself a supra-temporal truth or falsity.