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## THE FALLACY OF EXTREME IDEALISM.

By STEPHEN SHIELDON COLVIN, Ph. D.

The attempt to get at reality is as ancient as the history of thought itself. From the days when the Ionian philosophers sought in their conception of the ἀρχή an indestructible and final element down to the latest hypothesis of our own time concerning atoms and energy, the human mind has been seeking something ultimate, something removed from the law of relativity and change; it has been trying to escape from the πόλεμος of Heraclitus. This quest after reality began in Greek thought as a purely physical concept, and although its later history has been more closely connected with metaphysical speculation, it has by no means lost its interest for empirical science. As long as the ideal of research is truth, it cannot be a matter of indifference what the reality is. In fact it is impossible to ignore the problem completely, and some sort of ultimate being must be held to exist; if not explicitly, then implicitly. The far reaching importance of such a conception the history of philosophy has not infrequently shown. The Hegelian notion of reality, which dominated the thinking and to an extent the practice of Europe from the beginning of the present century to the Revolution of 1848; that of Schopenhauer, which later took its place, are examples of this fact. Schopenhauer, in particular, by one brilliant intuition revealed to the world a path to reality which science has since been glad to tread. Even if it were admitted for the moment that the problem were of no importance for empirical science, it must be conceded that it has the greatest meaning for the ethical and religious life. Its importance, however, by no means makes it necessary that every investigation should be prefaced by a consideration of this question, or that it is desirable that sciences should attempt accurately to define its conception of reality on all occasions. This would be a hinderance to progress in certain lines of investigation without doubt; all that is asserted here is that the inquiry has a legitimate function which even the most thorough-going empiricist would do well to consider.

When we look at the question of what the Being of the universe is from the standpoint of the history of this problem we are at once confronted with a difficulty arising partly from the inexact use of philosophic terms. The various views, may,

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however, be in a loose way divided into two opposing lines of thought, namely, Idealism and Realism. These terms, however, have not always had the same meaning attached to them, and in some instances both may be applied to the same system of thought with equal propriety. For example, the great idealist of antiquity, Plato, is from one standpoint a pronounced realist, while on the other hand the realism of Herbert has idealism at its basis. Locke and Hume both accept the conception of naïve realism that there is a world of things outside the mind which impress themselves upon the thinking substance and reproduce their exact counterpart in the world within. Yet these realistic conceptions pass over into their opposite. Berkeley demolishes the conception of corporeal substance, and Hume goes still further. Both the material substance and the *res cogitantes* have vanished under his skeptical treatment. The use of the word idea, by this school, too, has had much to do with unsettling the terminology.

Despite these difficulties, however, it seems possible to divide the idealistic attempts to reach ultimate reality into *three classes*, namely: (1) those which have gone out from *psychological*; (2) those which have gone out from *logical*; and finally (3) those which have gone out from *ethical and religious* considerations. Realism, on the other hand, may perhaps best be considered under the heads of the so-called common sense view of reality, and critical realism which has at its basis both psychological and logical considerations. Idealism, again, may be considered from two separate standpoints according as it places the ultimate reality in a thinking process merely, or grounds it in a being or beings which possess rationality as their most essential characteristic. The first type is the legitimate outcome of the psychological and logical (the epistemological) standpoints; the second may be called ontological idealism or, better, spiritualism, and is the direct antithesis of materialism. This view of reality, however, may be called realism equally as well as idealism. Pure idealism on the other hand may lead to practical materialism, as illustrated in the schools of later Greek philosophy, while realism may possess strong idealistic tendencies, in striking contrast to materialism, especially of the practical sort.

In order to do away with the obscurity which is sure to arise in any discussion of idealism and realism in the present state of philosophic terminology, I venture upon a definition of these two opposing systems of thought which I am aware is in a measure arbitrary and certainly unhistoric, but which seems to have the merit of more or less sharply defining the limits of the two conceptions, and which, further, is the standpoint from

which the discussion in the present paper aims to develop itself. From this standpoint *idealism* may be defined as the assertion that the ideational process is the ultimate and determining reality, that all other reality is secondary to this, and in the last analysis reduces itself to idea. In other words, and more simply, that *without idea there is nothing*. Realism, on the other hand, maintains that with every ideational process there is a beyond, a something to which the idea as far as it is true refers, that is not to be reduced to the idea, that would exist even if the particular idea should vanish, and that is therefore to an extent independent of the idea. Care should be taken, however, in interpreting the word independent. It cannot be taken to mean that the idea and the *other* to which the idea refers are absolutely unrelated. It means simply that the idea is not in the ordinary sense of the word the cause of the other, and that the existence of the object is not absolutely determined by the existence of the *idea* as such. It may be true that the idea as far as it is a psychical fact is so related to the other to which the idea refers that any change in the idea may be attended by a change in the object, but the same may be true of the relation between any two objects in nature. All nature may be so intimately connected that the change in one part may necessitate a change in another. Certain it is that the idea and the other to which it refers in so far as it is a true idea, are closely related, and realism would say that this relation is one of *causality*. It is therefore unjust to realism to say that it separates the idea and its object in such a way that they become independent reals and therefore can never be brought together by any means whatever. Certain realistic systems may have attempted to do this, but even the most radical have left an implicit relation which they have assumed as valid, even while denying that such a relation exists.

The idealistic standpoint of treating the world appears early in the history of philosophy, although the psychological argument against realism belongs more essentially to modern thought. The favorite method of attacking the common-sense view of reality was originally logical rather than psychological. Heraclitus, Parmenides and Empedocles all declare that only through thinking can truth be reached. The senses give illusion. They denied what could not be *rationaly* explained, a course which their successors likewise followed. The Pythagoreans made mathematical thought the measure of reality, and turned their attention to the heavens, the only realm of order and perfection. In all these philosophers may be seen the tendency to over-emphasize the rational faculty—to leave experience full of contradictions in order to satisfy the demands of logic. Zeno, however, was the first philoso-

pher who turned logical laws, pure and simple, upon external reality in order to destroy it, and he used a device which has often been repeated since his day—the employment of the law of the excluded middle to demolish the standpoint of his opponents. Zeno belonged to the Eliatic school and wished to show the unity and absolute simplicity of being. He therefore set about to prove that plurality and motion were impossibilities. This method of attacking reality is perhaps best exemplified to-day by the logical subtleties of Mr. Bradley, who, after proving to the reader's satisfaction that nothing which he has placed his faith on as certainly real can have any existence, then proceeds to build up a notion of reality which opens itself to the same criticism as that which he has so relentlessly destroyed, thus leaving the seeker after truth with nothing in the universe but the barren logical law of the excluded middle. The fallacy underlying this particular form of idealism will be touched upon at greater length in a later part of this paper.

Refuters like Zeno were the Sophists. Protagoras, one of the most celebrated of this school, left logical treatises entitled, *Καταβάλλοντες* and *Ἀητιολογίαι*. With the merely sophistical side of the Sophistic doctrine, with their verbal quibbles, their catch-questions and their ambiguities of speech, we have no concern here. This was not, however, their entire stock in trade. They did really offer serious problems to be considered, and their method of procedure was on the idealistic assumption that that which does not agree with the laws of formal reason must of necessity be unreal. Finally, Gorgias, how far in jest and how far in earnest it would be difficult to say, in his book *Περὶ Φύσεως οὐ περὶ τοῦ ἐπι τοῦ μὴ ὄντος* shows that there can be nothing real except the individual ideas of the moment. Protagoras declares the individual state of consciousness the measure of all things. The subjectivity of the sense perceptions gives no absolute knowledge. Protagoras's reasoning is based to a considerable extent upon psychological considerations as well as upon logical arguments. His position is essentially idealistic in so far as he assumes that we are limited to our ideas as far as knowledge is concerned. There are many points of resemblance between his standpoint and that of Locke and Hume. In so far as he assumes a thinking subject and an independent object his standpoint is realistic, but this assumption leads to an idealistic position very similar to that reached by Locke and Hume.

The tendency of thought started by Socrates and brought into systematic unity by Plato and Aristotle may be regarded, as has already been said, as possessing both idealistic and realistic features. Socrates is a realist in so far as he places over

against the individualistic standpoint of the Sophist's the eternal and abiding nature of the good. Socrates is an idealist, however, in so far as he makes the moral consciousness the basis of his epistemological concept.

Plato's starting point is essentially idealistic. He assumes with Protagoras that perception is relative, and places thought above it. He then takes up Socrates's standpoint and develops a system of ethical rationalism. Plato, however, is a realist in his final notion of the ideas. Ideas have a true existence in the immaterial world. They are the abiding being in the change of phenomena.

Aristotle in his philosophy accepts the Socratic-Platonic doctrine of ideas; and further his conception of reality as the self-determined individual is an out and out idealistic assumption. As far as Aristotle regards species as essences, however, he approaches the realistic position of Plato.

Did space permit, further examples of the mingling of realistic and idealistic conceptions in Greek philosophy might be cited. Enough, however, has been said to show that there is in all the systems of antiquity no sharp division between the two schools of thought. Greek philosophy was always fundamentally realistic in its assumption of the thinking subject and the external world, which impresses itself on the mind as the stamp does on the wax. On the other hand, it always showed a tendency toward idealism, as has already been said, by exalting logic above the intuition of the senses. This standpoint may be better criticised in discussing certain features of modern philosophy, where the idealistic and realistic motives are in sharper contrast.

One of the most characteristic differences between modern and ancient thought is the attempt by the former to do away with all preconceptions, to start with axiomatic truth and to develop all from this standpoint. The *cogito ergo sum* of Descartes and the geometrical methodology of Spinoza are of course classic examples of this attempt. If Descartes had been true to his ideal he would never have got beyond the idealistic assumption contained in his celebrated dictum and would have ended where some of his successors did, in solipsism; but, while he pretended to do away with all pre-suppositions, he was in many respects as thorough-going a dogmatist as the scholastics against whom he rebelled. Those, too, who took up his standard did no better, and the epistemological problem, started with modern philosophy, found no real solution, not even in the great Kant. The line of thought begun by Locke and culminating in the successors of Kant is, perhaps, the most fruitful for a study of the modern epistemological problem, and may therefore be considered at some length.

When Locke laid down the dictum that as a preparation for all metaphysical discussions, the question of the validity and limits of human knowledge must be considered, he mapped out the future of epistemology. Linking his theory of knowledge, too, with empirical psychology, he laid the basis for an idealistic development which later ended in solipsism. And here may be observed the innate contradiction of that idealism which is based on psychological arguments. In order that it may be effective it must assume at the outset, just as Locke's philosophy did, the actual existence of an external world as well as a world of ideas—in other words, it must be naïvely realistic. In accepting this standpoint, however, Locke is finally forced by his reasoning to deny his pre-suppositions. He ends with the assumption that the knowledge of the self is intuitive while the knowledge of all else is inadequate—in fact, substances are unknowable. If Locke had been thoroughly consistent in placing inner experience to the fore, he must have ended where Berkeley did, in doing away with all corporeal substance and in abandoning his distinction between primary and secondary qualities of matter—recognizing in the last analysis that they are all mental states, and as such, not the substance of the supposed object of these mental states. Once admit the thesis of Locke as to the relation of the outer and the inner world and the conclusion is certain. All *esse* is *percipi*. Hume's deductions from Locke's premise must be taken also as perfectly legitimate. According to the standpoint of Hume, all the certainty we have is that of inner phenomena. Mathematics is a perfectly demonstrable science, but only because it relates merely to inner experience. Such notions as substance and causality, however, have no objective validity. Hume reaches the extreme standpoint of the psychological epistemologist. The mind is but a bundle of perceptions. This standpoint, it may be noted, goes beyond solipsism itself, for while the latter view leaves the thinker, Hume's standpoint has nothing but the perceptions themselves to constitute reality. This result is so characteristic of an idealism which starts from psychological considerations that we may stop for a moment to point out more definitely in what the error of the argument consists.

In the case of the philosophy of Locke and Hume the point of departure is the assumption of the common-sense view of reality as valid. There are two distinct entities, mind and matter. Matter acts upon mind, but the impress that it makes is a psychological fact, and as such is distinct from the external matter. What we really know, then, are states of mind and not the thing beyond that causes these states. But cause, thing, substance, are also ideal terms. How can they

be said to have an *external* validity. All we can know are the ideas and their relations. But if this is true, then we have no right to say that there is anything external to these ideas, at least anything we can know. The ideas, then, are the only realities that we can speak about. Here is the conclusion in complete contradiction to the assumption made at the beginning.

Suppose, however, it is objected that it is not necessary to assume an external world at the outset in order to take the psychological standpoint for the development of an idealistic position. Let us begin with the idea and argue that all our psychological processes reveal nothing beyond themselves, and therefore that we can assume nothing external to the *idea*. This is, however, an equally untenable position. If carried out consistently it must mean that we cannot know anything but the present psychological moment. All our past ideas no longer exist as such—they are the other, to which the present idea refers. They are as truly external as the objective world itself. All comparison vanishes on such an assumption; all reasoning is gone. Without the other, the beyond, to which the idea refers, the very distinction between truth and falsehood vanishes. All ethical values too are lost. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." Here is where absolute and consistent idealism goes over into a practical materialism.

But suppose we look at the idea as a psychological fact merely, and not in its reference to an object of knowledge. Can we then consistently maintain that we need not transcend this psychological immanence? No, for here we are confronted with a difficulty as great as the one previously pointed out. Ideas as psychological facts are continually changing, and these changes cannot be explained from their ideal content alone. Therefore one of two assumptions is necessary. Either the ideas are discrete, unrelated facts, and we have an atomistic universe without connection and mutual relation, or there is a basis outside of the mere ideas themselves for the change in the ideas. If either of these two alternatives is accepted, the standpoint of idealism pure and simple must be abandoned. Certainly no idealist of to-day would hold to a world of independent ideas, but he would be equally abandoning his position to seek for a union of the ideas outside of their ideational content.

"But," says the advocate of the idealistic thesis, "although my view may involve difficulties, how are you as a realist to escape from the apparently self-evident proposition that you can know only ideas?" We should not for a moment underestimate the real difficulty that this question raises, yet an answer to the problem involved does not seem altogether im-

possible. The idealist in raising this query seems to be laboring under the fiction of the thing-in-itself, a conception which in various forms has played an important role in epistemology, but which was developed to its true significance in the theory of knowledge by Kant in his attempt to answer the skeptical arguments of David Hume in the "Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding," and in his Essays, which latter seem to have been the source of Kant's knowledge concerning the Scotch philosopher. Kant's well known answer (or rather an attempt at an answer) to Hume's inquiry was that space, time, causality, etc., have a validity as the forms in which the human mind as such grasps the external world and that these forms have an immanent but not a transcendent value. The forms, however, without content cannot perform their function, and experience even in a purely phenomenal world would be impossible. So Kant was forced to posit the thing-in-itself, the unknown and unknowable X, the irreducible surd of knowledge. But at this point Kant departs from his idealistic basis, and asserts the existence of a real apart from knowledge, though without justification in view of his premises and in direct contradiction to his epistemological pre-suppositions. Now what was Kant's so-called thing-in-itself? It was that which was at the basis of knowledge as far as it was real, and as such in direct relation to the ideas as giving it validity. Indeed, the thing-in-itself was related to the idea by the very tie which Kant had assumed had only an immanent and no transcendent application, namely, the law of causality, which Hume had reduced to a mere convention. Thus we see that Kant's alleged thing-in-itself is nothing of the sort, but is really a thing-in-relation. Kant could not avoid this inconsistency in his theory of knowledge after having once assumed his fundamental position, for a real thing-in-itself is unthinkable, it is a nothing, and never could have existed as we attach meaning to the term existence. That which does not enter into relation in some way, does not have the power of acting upon something else, may perhaps be the Eliatic Being, but it has no true reality, and cannot be grasped by thought. *Mere esse is nothing.*

To conclude this part of the discussion. The idealist in making the assumption that we can know nothing but ideas, and hence can never get beyond a psychological basis, is assuming that if there is a beyond it is a thing-in-itself, as are the ideas of which he assumes we have an immediate knowledge. Cast aside the fiction of the unthinkable thing-in-itself, and we have no real difficulty in saying that we can know reality through ideas, even if that reality is not in itself primarily idea. We know a thing as it affects the thinking substance, and this thing is not a mere *esse*, certainly not a

mere *percepti*. Its reality consists in its activity. *It is what it does*, and we know it as an agent. Could we know its complete activity, we should know its complete being. This brief review of the standpoint of psychological idealism may be sufficient to indicate the fallacy on which its suppositions rest, and the contradictions into which it falls when strictly interpreted.

We may now for the moment consider the second method of the idealist in attacking the realist's position, namely, that of the use of the logical law of contradiction, which, as has already been said, was a favorite device of Greek philosophy, and which finds an acute and able expounder in modern philosophy in Mr. Bradley. Mr. Bradley's method of establishing his idealistic position is well illustrated in one of his recent works, "Appearance and Reality." In his discussion the logician takes our ordinary common-sense views of the world, and by applying the law of the excluded middle tries to show that they are self contradictory and hence must be unreal. Then after having reduced the external world to mere appearance, he proceeds to set up his own notion of reality,—a stream of thought ending in the Absolute, a goal which is seemingly the mere negation of thinking. After reading this treatise we are expected to believe that space and time are pure delusions, that substance and causality are mere fictions, good enough, perhaps, for our grandfathers, but clearly unnecessary for up-to-date mental furniture. But after all, Mr. Bradley's arguments are not wholly satisfactory. The law of the excluded middle is a very good one in logic if used with care, but it has very serious limitations. Take, for example, Zeno's classic argument against motion. An object must either move where it is or where it is not. But either case seems a logical impossibility, hence motion is a theoretic contradiction. As a matter of fact, a third possibility is left. A thing can move from where it is to where it is not, and in reality motion is a fact. So, too, with Kant's famous antinomies, the law of the excluded middle becomes inoperative, as he has shown in his analysis. Did space permit, it does not seem impossible to show that Mr. Bradley's arguments are of the type spoken of above; but granted for the time that his logic is perfect, his psychology is bad. If time is not a reality, then our psychical life is not real; if there is no such thing as space or substance, our whole thinking is hopeless, for we cannot get on without employing these notions, so deeply are they interwoven in our experience. Finally, if causality fails, then is our whole reasoning vain. May we not legitimately question the right of logic over experience? Has the law of contradiction a greater value than that of sufficient reason?

There may be difficulties and antinomies in our way of look-

ing at reality, but that does not warrant the logician in discarding the most fundamental of all our intuitions. And he cannot dispense with these ways of looking at reality, even if they could be put aside without falling into contradiction. They are at the very basis of language itself. We may think we have got rid of them, but they are sure to creep into our way of looking at things even if we are the most pronounced of idealists. Further, Mr. Bradley's logic, when turned against his own idealistic position, will demolish it as easily as he has demolished that of the realist. Are ideas substance; have they causal relations; if not, how are we to think of them? I take it that Mr. Bradley's logical idealism is typical of all attempts to demolish external reality by bringing the law of contradiction to bear upon the assumptions of naïve realism, and that if the assumptions on which his epistemology is founded are seen to be false, all idealism of this sort will fall into distrust.

In concluding this part of the discussion, just a word may be said about the idealistic position as founded upon ethical and religious arguments, and here we must turn to Kant in the latter part of his *Critique of the Pure Reason* and in his *Critique of the Practical Reason*. Although there is much doubt as to just how far Kant intended to go in his practical philosophy, there is not a little to show that he never regarded the moral and religious implicates as reaching to the transcendent. God, freedom and immortality are necessary assumptions for the individual life, but may not be ultimate realities. Although Kant's arguments have been used to establish an idealism of an absolute sort since his time, they are not convincing, and should be treated as postulates of faith, rather than as demonstrable certainties.

One of the latest and most able exponents of the idealistic position is Prof. Josiah Royce, and a consideration of idealism may well take account of his position, especially as outlined in his latest work, "The World and the Individual." Prof. Royce is too careful a thinker to fall into the extreme contradictions to which the types of idealism mentioned above are liable. He sees the force of realism and attempts to answer its demands to an extent while still holding to idealism. Notwithstanding this his arguments when held strictly to account make use of the psychological and logical motives just discussed, though often in a form so disguised that it would be difficult to detect them in their purity. One point of view which seems to dominate his whole discussion may be considered as partly logical and partly psychological. It is essentially treating the other to which the idea refers as a purely subjective fact and insisting that it is ideal, since it must be defined in ideal terms. Beside the psychological motive of reducing all to immanent

experience, there is here the thought, apparently, that the mere logical category of identity ( $A=A$ ) cannot be transcended.

In his latest book he discusses four phases of the conception of being, under the heads of Realism, Mysticism, Critical Rationalism and Idealism as he understands and interprets the term. The first three views of the world he analyzes and then rejects as either wholly or partially inadequate, and then builds up his own conception of reality, after having removed the other systems of thought from his path. Of realism, as Prof. Royce interprets it, he has little good to say, except in its demand for individual being. Its great fault, he says, is in attempting to define the reality of the world as something entirely independent of our ideas. "This solution," Prof. Royce says, "must be rejected on the ground that with an independent being our ideas could simply have nothing to do." Further, "ideas, too, are realities, and if realism is true they are therefore in their whole being as independent of their supposed realistic objects as the latter are of ideas. If, then, it makes no difference to the supposed external beings whether the ideas are or are not, it can make no difference to the ideas whether the independent external beings are or are not. The idea can then say to the independent object in a realistic world, 'What care I for you? You are independent of me but so am I of you. No purpose of mine would be unfulfilled if you simply vanished, so long as I then still remain what I am. And I could, by definition, remain in my whole being unaltered by your disappearance.'" Royce asserts that the genuine essence of "realism consists in defining any being as real precisely in so far as in essence it is wholly independent of ideas that while other than itself refers to it." He declares that the realist makes an absolute separation, and of course such a separation can then be bridged over only by an inconsistency in thought and reasoning. Hence, the whole realistic position becomes invalid.

At this point we will not stop to discuss the truth or falsity of this assumption, but pass on to the second view of being according to Royce, that of mysticism and which he thinks comes nearer the truth than realism, but still falls far short of the goal. "Mysticism seeks being as an immediate ineffable fact," but does it at the expense of quenching all ideas and that makes them all alike illusory: "The absolute, then, although the knower, must be in truth unconscious." It is simply by denial of the finite that mysticism reaches the infinite. Yet mysticism, according to Royce, has one great advantage over realism, which is essentially dogmatic, in demanding that you accept as real independent beings, but mysticism, on the contrary, is from the outset reflective and is

founded on an appeal to experience. "It points out to you, first, that if any object is real for you, it is you alone who can find within yourself the determining motive that leads you to call this object real," and this, Royce holds, is one of the essential features of idealism as well. "Realism actually asserts hopeless contradiction, while mysticism is essentially self-conscious and states its own defects." But we must abandon both realism and mysticism, for both are abstractions. "Finite consciousness seeks a meaning that it does not now find present, but this meaning can neither be a merely independent being or a merely immediate Datum."

There is another conception of being which critical rationalism attempts to set forth, and that is,—"To be real means to be valid, to be true, to be in essence the standard of ideas." Prof. Royce proceeds to consider this third conception of reality, subscribing to it, but pronouncing it inadequate as to its extent. There are many such realities, says Prof. Royce, which no one considers as real in the sense that Democritus's atoms are real. "These objects find their whole *esse* in their value as giving warrant and validity to the thoughts that refer to them," and hence have an ideal existence. Such realities are the present price of the market, the social status of any member of the community, an international treaty or the constitution of a State. "There are also the familiar realities in mathematics, as for example, ideal entities of the type called functions. All such beings have their validity alone in relation to ideas, and can only exist as objects of actual or possible knowledge." They belong to the realm of Kant's *Mögliche Erfahrung*. This third conception, says Royce, "is not open to the attacks to which realism lays itself liable of being dogmatic and uncritical. Unlike mysticism, too, it recognizes that to lose sight of the value and positive meaning of finite ideas is to render naught the very objects which the ideas seek." "This view of reality has often appeared in the history of philosophy as a critical attack upon realism. This motive appeared in Berkeley and also in Kant, who layed down the thesis, 'Nur in der Erfahrung ist Wahrheit'—Experience furnishes the only ground for truth."

The third conception of being must be accepted as far as it goes, says Royce. But is it adequate? Can the realm of validity remain merely a realm of validity? This leads to a discussion of what truth really is. Two different views of truth are often advanced. "One asserts that truth has to do with that about which we judge. In the second place truth has been defined as a correspondence between our ideas and their objects." Taking the first definition we find that truth is expressed by means of the judgment, which may either be universal in its form or partic-

ular. The universal form of judgment simply undertakes, as does the hypothetical, to 'exclude from valid reality certain classes of objects. It is based on the principle, *Omnis Determinatio est Negatio.*' Universal judgments state a general abstract fact, they assert what being cannot be, but do not tell us what it is. The particular judgment, on the other hand, is merely empirical and does not get at the final truth. "Both kinds of judgments are indeterminate and cannot be taken as expressing reality in its final form."

Let us consider the other conception of truth, namely, that it consists in the correspondence between the idea and its object. First, arises the question as to what is the object of an idea, and further, what is the relation of correspondence. A correspondence between an idea and its object does not mean, says Royce, that the idea must of necessity be the copy of the object. You cannot look from without as a spectator and view object and idea and say that they do or do not correspond. Every finite idea must be judged from a teleological standpoint, and no external criterion of truth can be applied. The idea must decide its own meaning. Volition must be at its basis.

Now, how can an idea have an object at all to which to correspond? It has been held that the object is the cause of the idea, but how, asks Royce, can this be with ideas of future objects such as my own death? "Further, how about the whole realm of past being which has gone beyond recall. What is the irrevocable past now doing to our ideas that the fact of its irrevocable absence should, as a cause, now be viewed as moulding our ideas?" "It is hopeless to persist in the hypothesis that the object of an idea is, as such, the cause of the idea."

Royce concludes that no such separation between idea and object can be made as critical rationalism would assert and modifies this way of looking at the being of the world by his own conception of idealism. "Idea and object are related because the object does not transcend the idea and always in the last analysis is ideal." "The idea seeks its own, it can be judged by nothing but what it intends." "The object meant by the idea is judged as an object because it is willed to be such, and the will in question is the will that the idea embodies." "Even seemingly passive objects that appear to be forced on us can be understood as objects only when the ideas embody the will to mean them as such objects." When I have an idea of the world, my idea is a will, and the will of my idea is simply my own will itself determinately embodied. Being, finally, is the full and adequate expression of what our finite ideas mean and seek and is grounded in an individual life of experience. This is the aim of Royce's Idealism, a brief outline of which I have attempted to give.

Royce's concept may from this brief statement seem to lay him open to the charge of subjective idealism and to do away with the possibility of distinguishing between truth and error. He himself has foreseen this difficulty and seeks to avoid it. What reply can be made to the objection that common-sense teaches that experiences and experience alone (no matter what your will or its conscious embodiment may be) determines what is and what is not? Royce replies that he perfectly assents to the proposition that experience is the last test of truth. He insists with Kant on the proposition, *Nur in der Erfahrung ist die Wahrheit*. But what is experience? Experience for Royce has a purely ideal definition in the last analysis, and so by appealing to experience you do not get rid of idealism.

But it is a well known fact that ideas themselves conflict—that they offer from time to time no thorough-going consistency. What then is the criterion of truth and of error, and what is ultimate reality?

"Reality," says Royce, "as opposed to illusion, means simply an actual or possible content of experience, not in so far as this experience is supposed to be transient and fleeting, but in so far as it is conceived to be something inclusive and organized, the fulfillment of a system of ideas." But we have no such experience as an actual fact in this world. Hence Royce argues with convincing conclusiveness to the existence of an Absolute Experience, to God. Once grant him his premises and the conclusion must follow. There must be somewhere, somehow a reality—and if that reality is *ideal*, then, since there is no perfect fulfillment of the ideal in the finite, there must be an infinite to realize such a fulfillment.

But now the question arises—are we forced to admit Royce's assumption that the real is the ideal pure and simple. The present discussion would maintain that no such necessity exists. Royce claims in the first place that all other conceptions of reality except his are proved to be either self-contradictory or only partially embody his view of the world. The first view of the world that he criticises adversely, that of realism, he asserts is not to be considered because it separates entirely the idea and its object. This statement may be true when applied to certain systems of realism, but it is not necessarily true. The general conception of realism, that the idea and its object have either a direct or indirect causal connection furnishes a most intimate union, one better comprehended, despite all logical attempts to destroy the notion, than any system of connection which Royce is able to set forth. So far, then, Royce has not succeeded in his critical attack upon realism, and the possibility of a realistic view remains.

Further, how does Royce build up his own idealistic position?

For the most part he succeeds by defining in idealistic terms all conceptions that in any way conflict with his system. Take for example the use which he makes of the term experience. Thought and experience are for him inseparably joined—but how? Experience is allowed to have no separate existence. He asserts that ‘percept and concept, idea and sensation, the rational and the sensory, are connected by the thinking subject,’ and to this proposition realism may well assent until it finds that Royce means that in the connection all is transferred into thought, beyond which there can be nothing. Here, it seems, is the real point of Royce’s whole argument—and here he offers no valid proof for his assertion beyond the familiar one that we are ultimately confined to ourselves—a standpoint of the solipsist. I do not mean to assert that Royce himself makes this statement in so many words, but it is quite possible to reduce his arguments to this basis. Further, take his argument in which he attempts to show that certain ideas have their reality purely on the subjective side, as for example, the credit of a bank or the constitution of a nation. The reply may be made that the idea does not constitute their reality any more than the idea of a horse is responsible for its existence. These realities are psychical in their character, and as such cause the ideas which refer to them. Their *esse* is not wholly in the percipi—our psychical life is by no means exhausted by the idea. Further, mathematical and physical concepts are not determined as real or unreal according to their agreement with other concepts. Does energy really exist? Does or does not n-dimensional space exist? Only in so far as they belong to the structure of the universe,—that is, only in so far as they are able to enter into the causal series, and in some way occasion or determine phenomena.

Finally, Royce has departed from pure idealism when he puts into his notion of reality, the teleological and the will element. The will goes beyond ideas and is not determined by them but itself determines them. It was no mere accident or caprice which led Royce to put this conception of will into reality which sums itself up in the Absolute—in God. For God can be thought of not as limited in *ideas* and therefore all ideas, if reality is merely ideal, must ultimately be true. No, replies Royce. Only those are true which he himself wills. He is self determining. But the will,—what is that? Can that be ideally explained and reduced to idea? If so, then it is a mere term and nothing more. It might have been dispensed with entirely. No, Royce finds the necessity of getting beyond the idea, and here in the last analysis his system has a realistic basis. He has not succeeded in establishing his idealistic position.

In view of this discussion what view can we take of reality? We certainly cannot view the universe from the point of extreme realism, which posits the thing-in-itself, an unthinkable and useless nothing. Neither, on the other hand, are ideas, as such, capable of building a universe. The true ideas themselves must be related, and some set aside as false. But in this way finite experience never can reveal to us the truth, and we have no certain warrant for positing an absolute experience. What, then, is true; what is false? The only thing that we can attach truth to is that which is causally active. The thing is as it acts, and truth consists in defining its activity. We get at truth through the transcendent law of causality, which says that every change in the psychical as well as the physical world has a cause, that every new idea as well as every change in the direction and intensity of motion has its condition, its occasion. Royce speaks with contempt of the notion of brute force, but it is this same brute force that biology tells us has developed the human species to its present evolutionary level. Force, energy, activity, will (call it by what term you may deem best), expressing itself on the ideational side in the law of causality, is the most fundamental fact of our experience. Logical subtleties and epistemological tangles may confuse us, but cannot induce even the solipsist to ignore its practical validity. Being is that which acts, and ultimate reality is a system of ordered activity, in which every part is related to every other part, and consequently in which the thing-in-itself is without meaning and reality.