



Review

Reviewed Work(s): *The World and the Individual* by Josiah Royce

Review by: John Dewey

Source: *The Philosophical Review*, May, 1900, Vol. 9, No. 3 (May, 1900), pp. 311-324

Published by: Duke University Press on behalf of *Philosophical Review*

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2176386>

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REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

The World and the Individual. Gifford Lectures, First Series :
The Four Historical Conceptions of Being, by JOSIAH ROYCE, Ph.D.,
Professor of the History of Philosophy in Harvard University.
New York, The Macmillan Co., 1900.—pp. xiv, 588.

If the book before us lacked other noteworthy characteristics, it would be remarkable for the simplicity and force with which it grasps a single conception and follows it through its various forms, using it as an instrument of both criticism and construction. Natural religion, the topic *ex officio* of a Gifford lecture, is interpreted from the standpoint of the 'nature of things' or ontology. The aim is so to define Being as to arrive at some conception of what is meant by the reality of God, and of the world and the human individual in relation to God. The originality of which I have spoken does not consist in this fact, nor yet in just taking the epistemological road towards Being. These things, as Professor Royce recognizes, are familiar enough. It is the special way in which the nature of the cognitive idea and its relation to Being are handled, the attempt to center the whole discussion about the nature of the idea as such, that give the book force and freshness, and that challenge the reader to raise the problems anew for himself, to reëxamine his own conceptions, and modify his own method, even if at the end he, like the present writer, finds himself forced to dissent.

We are to start with the world as idea and not as fact. If we start from the world as fact, we are "sunk deep in an ocean of mysteries"; for it is a "defiant mystery." It bewilders, angers, and baffles us in its contrast of order and chaos, its combination of goodness and cruelty. Because this world of fact is persistently baffling, we turn to the world of idea to get the key to unlock it. We find that the defect of the world of fact "is due at bottom simply to the fault of our human type of consciousness" (p. 18). So we must devote ourselves to a criticism of the latter. By this criticism we may purify it; we may raise it to a higher level and thus win insight into reality. This mode of approach at once compels the definition of an idea, and at least a preliminary conception of its relation to reality.

In defining idea, Mr. Royce starts from the familiar conception of recent psychology which views the ideational life from the standpoint

of organism and environment, and thus connects it with the motor or behavior side of experience. An idea of a thing "always involves a consciousness of how you propose to act towards the thing of which you have an idea." Mr. Stout's remark that an idea is a plan of action, or way of constructing an object, is quoted with approval. The idea thus represents a sort of will or active meaning. It is an intention. Or, in the more technical definition, it is "any state of consciousness, whether simple or complex, which, when present, is then and there viewed as at least the partial expression or embodiment of a single conscious purpose" (p. 22). For example, in singing a melody we are conscious that this act partially fulfils and embodies a purpose; as such it constitutes a musical idea. The purpose, so far as embodied, constitutes the internal meaning of the idea.

But finite ideas always appear to have a meaning not exhausted in what is present as internal meaning, or fulfilment of purpose. They at least seem to refer beyond themselves, to objects. This secondary and problematic aspect we may call their apparent *external* meaning. The melody, for example, may be regarded not simply as the fulfilment of the musical purpose, but as meaning, attempting to copy or corresponding to, a certain theme of Beethoven. Indeed, in all our cognitive experience this external meaning *appears* to be fundamental. In knowing, "our ideas seem destined to perform a task which is externally set for them by the real world" (p. 28). Common sense would say that this reference of ideas to facts wholly apart from themselves, and the necessity of correspondence to these external facts in order to secure truth for ideas, is the important thing; and that the mere inner meaning, uncontrolled by such reference, is either just fancy or else a positive source of error. Yet there are reasons for doubting whether the contrast is as ultimate as it seems. In a certain sense the idea must have the primacy. Unless the idea has a meaning, a purpose of its own in relation to the object, unless it assigns its own special task of correspondence, there can be no question of the supposedly external object which is to serve as standard or model; there will be no telling what fact is to be used as basis for judging successful correspondence. The truth, for example, of the meaning that I put into my idea of a cow (so we may paraphrase Professor Royce), cannot be told by sheer reference to *any* object—to object as such; we must first find what object the idea itself means; what is the task of reference and correspondence that it sets for itself—what itself *means* or *intends*. Admitting, then, that we must go to an object, it is to an object selected and determined by the idea itself.

It is this conception that gives unity and characteristic originality to Professor Royce's discussion. It leads him in the end to declare that the whole external meaning, the reference to objects, must be interpreted in terms of the inner purpose of the idea itself. It leads to the interpretation of the apparent external meaning—the dependence upon external things—as in truth only an instrument of the adequate expression and development of a meaning partially fulfilled in the idea itself. It leads, that is, to the proposition that the whole distinction between inner and outer meaning, between the significance that an idea has as an idea, and that which it has as dependent upon an external object, is due to the difference between a partial and a complete embodiment of a purpose. The defect of our "present human form of momentary consciousness, lies in the fact that we just now do not know precisely what we mean" (p. 39). Our ideas, in other words, express our purposes only vaguely, abstractly, without determination—or, as it is afterwards put—they are mere universals. Hence our discontent with our ideas; hence our search for an 'Other,' for the object which, though appearing to be external to the idea, in reality is just the supplementation necessary to give complete fulfilment to the purpose only partially presented in the idea. This completeness of determination of meaning is the individual. Complete will, complete meaning, complete individuality (p. 40), are thus the 'limits' of the development of all ideas. Here we get, in outline, the answer to the question, What is reality? "To be, means simply to express, to embody the complete internal meaning of a certain absolute system of ideas—a system moreover which is genuinely implied in the true internal meaning or purpose of every finite idea, however fragmentary" (p. 36; see also p. 341).

Thus far the discrepancy of external meaning from internal has been treated as problematic only, as due to the abstract reflection of the critic, (*e. g.*, p. 33). In discussing the root ideas that differentiate the various systems of ontology, Professor Royce appears however to indicate that, *for the finite consciousness as finite*, the discrepancy is inherent and necessary. "Experience comes to us, in part, as brute fact . . . merely immediate experience . . . apart from definition, articulation, and in general from any insight into its relationships." But experience "in addition to its mere presence possesses meaning" (pp. 55-56). On this side, we have ideas. These two aspects are at war with each other. The brute, immediate facts are obstacles obdurate to our ideas. There is "endless finite conflict of mere experience and mere idea." So far as the ideas attempt to comprehend,

to master the data in terms of themselves, there is thought. This is the collection of ideas contrasted with fact and yet trying to possess fact. So far as successful, we get an immediate experience luminous with meaning.

Four fundamental ontological conceptions arise as typically different modes of interpreting the relative significance of these two factors, fact and idea, immediacy and thought. The first, technically speaking, is realism, it emphasizes the external independence of the object, and defines reality from this point of view. Mysticism dwells upon that which is actually present in experience, the immediate, and hence defines reality as that in which all otherness is lost in immediacy, and all diversity is at an end. According to the third view, that of critical rationalism, the real is the object which gives truth or validity to our ideas: neither the idea nor the independent object is real, but an object of possible experience which would verify our idea (p. 61). The criticism of realism shows the necessity of defining Being as in essential relation to ideas; that of mysticism, the necessity of conceiving it as fulfilling, and not merely cancelling, the meaning of our fragmentary, finite experiences; while that of the 'Possibility of Experience' theory shows the necessity of conceiving validity and truth to be actually and individually experienced, not merely universally and abstractly possible. The development of these three necessities of interpreting Being, leads inevitably to the fourth, Professor Royce's own conception: viz, that Being is the eternal, exhaustive, determinate, and individual presentation in immediate experiences of the really possible meanings of all ideas—a *totum simul* in a living experience of immediate appreciation of all valid significances, the absolute consciousness. And since, in its individuality, it fulfils the real purpose and strength of all finite consciousnesses, it preserves and validates within itself finite wills and individualities.

Limits of space prevent an adequate exposition of Mr. Royce's statement and criticism of realism and mysticism. Mr. Royce's position, however, is so coherent, so sequential, that if I have been at all successful in reporting it above, even a brief summary will not be wholly meaningless. Strictly consistent or extreme realism asserts the entire independence of the object as regards ideas; it is totally unaffected by them; it is 'whether or no' they are. Hence the theory has really no way of defining Being except as that which is thus independent of ideas—*any* nature or content may be ascribed, and historically has been ascribed to it, provided only it remains wholly other than ideas. But, clearly, if its sole definition is to be independent of

ideas, ideas cannot refer to it, cannot have connection, relation or community as regards it; certainly cannot correspond with it. Hence it is, for us, a realm of nothing at all; moreover, since by the realistic hypothesis this Being was to furnish the standard for truth and falsity of ideas, there is no longer any possibility of discriminating true from false. All ideas equally exist, are "existent entities" on the same footing—the 'forgotten thesis' of realism (p. 134). Realism thus contradicts itself in the most thoroughgoing way.¹

Mysticism realizes that the discrepancy of idea and fact, immediacy and object, is the source of all struggle, failure, and disquietude. It sees the utter impossibility of ending this conflict in terms of the mere 'other,' the independent Being of realism, since it sees not only the contradictory character of such a Being, but also that its apparent or illusory presence is the source of all our woe, intellectual and moral. Hence it seeks Being in the escape from, or destruction of such external being, in the selfhood of sheer immediate distinctionless feeling. Hence the self-contradiction of mysticism; since it can define Being only as the goal of our struggle, only as a 'contrast-effect,' and if the struggle, the finite ideas, are absolutely illusory, Being itself remains absolutely without content. It is a "zero which is contrasted with nothing . . . and thus remains a genuine and absolute nothing" (p. 181).²

In the statement and criticism of the 'Possibility of Experience' theory we enter, in effect upon the exposition of Mr. Royce's own position, for he accepts it as true "as far as it goes," but holds that in order to retain the amount of truth which it possesses, it must be further developed. The transformation resulting from the required development gives his own conception of Being.

¹ It is only fair to say that in this condensation I have omitted reference to the nominally most characteristic feature of Professor Royce's discussion, namely, the consideration of Being as many or one. But, if I understand his argument, the above gives its *real* force; indeed, to be frank, the other phase of his argument seems to me to be either tautology, an elaborate reiteration of the fact that realism has no definition for its real except mere and complete independence of ideas, or else to be fallacious.

² Personally I have found the discussion of mysticism one of the most interesting and enlightening portions of the book. But doubts arise as to the logical conclusiveness of the criticism. Can it be said that mysticism defines Being in terms of *total* contrast with our 'finite' experience? Does it not rather define it exclusively in terms of *one phase* of our present experience—namely, the immediate phase—and insist, *not* upon the illusoriness of the whole 'finite' experience, but upon that of objects 'other than' this immediacy, and consequently upon the need of withdrawal from or negation of these externalities?

Even common sense is quite familiar with objects which obviously have Being only in relation to our ideas: it makes no difficulty, however, in ascribing objective reality to them. In this case objective reality clearly means *truth, validity*. Instances of such beings are the constitution of a state, social status, the commercial realm of credits and debts. Again, mathematical truths, the value of π , the fact that a function continuous within certain intervals need have no differential coefficients within those intervals; and, again, the moral order. In considering cases such as the reality of mathematical truths we come upon a most instructive characteristic. In one sense we seem here to be dealing merely with ideas or meanings, arbitrary constructions of our own definitions, having no necessity except to remain consistent with the intentions we ourselves embody in the definitions. But none the less it is a problem with the mathematician whether within his realm certain new (mathematical) objects may be found; he is liable to error in his assertions about such objects—as is illustrated in the case of the differential coefficient just alluded to, and, in general, he has to experiment, to produce, to wait and observe results, much as does the chemist or astronomer. Moreover, mathematical laws and results, originally quite independent of one another, finally often come together and reveal, in a fertile way, further quite new and unexpected truths—thus again simulating what happens in our knowledge of the physical world.

Philosophically it was Kant who first brought to consciousness the significance of reality as equivalent to validity, and generalized this conception as giving the clue to all Being—save, of course, to the things-in-themselves. He insisted that when we deal with objects other than our present ideas, we mean not objects independent of any knowledge, but *possible objects of experience*. Accordingly, the worth of ideas, the correspondence which they must possess, is decided, not by reference to Being independent of ideas, but by the determinate possibility of objects of experience which would make the ideas valid, true—such questions as arise with reference to the liquid or solid condition of the interior of the earth, the state of parts of the moon beyond direct observation, etc. The whole problem of Being is then one of the validity of ideas, not of the existence or nature of objects just other than ideas.

Mr. Royce, as already intimated, attributes worth to this conception “as far as it goes” (p. 251). He holds, however, that validity as such, or *mere* validity, is not valid; an idea must be immediately fulfilled to be completely or determinately true; it must be actually

experienced, in order to be really '*possible*.' The problem develops as follows: Validity, after all, is an ambiguous term (pp. 261 and 268). On one side, there is always some actual, present experience. Even in mathematics, one does not rely upon *mere* reasoning; one insists upon ability empirically to realize, in inner constructions, in observable symbols, diagrams, etc., the actual course of a certain development; and this, *a fortiori*, is true in what we would term physical truths. But, on the other hand, "the range of valid possible experience is viewed by me as infinitely more extended than my actual human experience" (p. 259). The mathematician goes straight on to assertions about an infinity of objects not actually present, but regarded as valid. Even empirically there are infinite valid possibilities about the commercial world which one does not immediately realize, which, indeed, one deliberately chooses not to realize, such as bankruptcy, bad investments.¹

And so in the case of knowing a ship, unless it has for you, even as a merely valid object in the content of possible experience, more Being than you have ever directly verified, you would call it a figment of the imagination (p. 258). The second meaning of validity is, thus, that the realm of nature, of social life, of mathematical truth, has a character *not* tested, not exhaustively presented. To sum up: on one side is validity living, present in individual experience; on the other side, merely universal, formal, a mere general law. The first sense has the advantage of being given in experience, but the disadvantage of being only the 'creature of the instant,' a limited, fragmentary case. The second sense has the advantage of being eternal, infinite, exhaustive; but it is merely and only possible, not actual. What is the solution of the ambiguity? Clearly, a conception of Being is indicated in which the meaning of validity shall lose this ambiguity, in which the relative advantages of these one-sided conceptions shall be combined in a harmonious, exhaustive whole.

Since for reasons that will appear later, I cannot, without taking too much space, give an exposition apart from criticism of the method by which Mr. Royce moves on from 'Possibility of Experience' to an "individual life, present as a whole, . . . ; at once a system of facts, and the fulfilment of whatever purpose any finite idea, in so far

¹ It is not irreverent to say that in such cases we prefer the solid gains for ourselves, and prefer to leave the experiences of bankruptcy, etc., to God. Since they are "valid possibilities," the very point of Mr. Royce's argument is that they shall not remain *mere* possibilities, but be fulfilled. To deny their fulfilment in God would be to cut the nerve of the argument by which we pass from the third to the fourth conception.

as it is true to its own meaning, fragmentarily embodies . . . ; a life, which is the completed will, as well as the completed experience, corresponding to the will and experience of any one finite idea" (p. 341); I shall, at present, assume this step to be taken, and note the further characteristics of such Being.

In the first place, it solves for us the whole problem of the relation of inner and outer meaning. On one side, the object can have no essential character which is not predetermined by the purpose or meaning of the idea itself. The idea must *mean* the object; and it must also mean, must decide, the *kind* of correspondence that is required between itself and its object; for correspondence varies with the purpose in question, and if at times it demands copying or resemblance, at other times it does not; and even when it does, this is only because the idea itself set out to be just that kind of a copying idea. But since, on the other side, knowing requires effort, and since error is possible, the internal meaning *cannot* precisely predetermine the object, and external meaning is also necessary. The solution is in recognizing that our ideas are finite, fragmentary fulfilments of purpose. As *fulfilments* they predetermine their own objects; but, in so far as the idea is itself vague, abstract, indeterminate, it does not fully understand its own purpose, and to acquire completeness of meaning, individuality of purpose or will, has to hunt for its 'other.' But this is now seen to be no mere external 'other'; it is just that which is required to make an idea truly valid, that is, adequate, determinate (pp. 300-311, 320-335). Thus, real Being is just that being in which idea, inner meaning, and object, external meaning, no longer stand apart, but idea is an exhaustive individual, and object is meaningful.

In the second place, such Being is Unity. Any valid idea must be a consciously experienced fact. Therefore, even if we assume that finite forms of consciousness are sundered, this, as true, valid idea, implies that they are all present in a single consciousness which realizes them all, and the fact of their mutual exclusiveness. "What is, is present to the insight of a single Self-conscious Knower" (p. 400). This abstract logical statement is reinforced by considerations of the material and psychological unity of experience—the unity of the world as known, and of its empirical knower.

In the third place, this unity is not subversive of the multiplicity of finite consciousnesses. Every idea or meaning is a purpose; as such it is a will, or act of will; for, so far as rational, it already embodies, however fragmentarily, a purpose. The complete or perfect

reality can only be an exhaustive, an individualized, realization of these same meanings or wills. Every idea means or wills its own specific unique realization; and this is its individuality—its experience in such form that there can be no substitute for it.¹ Nothing can take its place. How then can the Absolute, which is precisely the complete realization of all purposes only partially fulfilled in us, do other than conserve and present all such wills, or individuals? The meaning of every life is unique, and uniquely maintained in the Absolute. This is just what ethical common sense means by *activity*. You alone mean just this purpose: that is activity. You are yourself, that unique individual, in your meaning, your purpose: that is freedom (pp. 468, 469). Such, then, is in outline the final conception of Being.

I have said that to save time it would be found expedient to combine exposition and criticism as regards the exact steps by which Mr. Royce, through his criticism of 'the possible-experience' theory, passes on to his own. I now return to that point. So far as I can make out, the ambiguity which Mr. Royce attributes to the conception of validity, the contrast between actual, partial experience, and infinite, but merely possible experience, is not inherent in the theory criticised, but results from the fact that Mr. Royce himself gives two different, and quite inconsistent statements of it. If this ambiguity of his own be eliminated, his own theory may conceivably, of course, still be true, but so far as dependent upon the method by which it is arrived at, it falls to the ground.

What are these two differing statements? On the one hand, it is asserted that the theory is committed to "mere possibilities," "empirically valid general truths." It "consciously attempts to define the Real as explicitly and only the Universal" (pp. 240 and 241). Its realities are "merely more or less valid and permanent ideas" (p. 243). In defining possibilities of experience, it "tells you only of mere abstract universals" (p. 269). If we identify, as we must, the inner meaning with the universal, and the empirically experienced objects with the external meaning, then we can say that this theory regards "the antithesis of internal and of external as finally valid" (p. 288). It "leaves Reality too much a bare abstract universal" (p. 290). "All that is thus defined about the object is its mere *what*" (p. 357).

But upon other occasions we have it clearly enough stated that the validity of an idea is dependent upon an experience in which

¹Lack of space compels me to omit the interesting discussion of individuality, even in an object, as dependent upon purpose or will.

that idea shall be empirically verified—in other words, that an idea, *qua* mere idea, cannot be valid. A valid idea, and a possible experience are not synonymous; but the possibility of sense-experience is the test by which the validity of an idea is determined. And, moreover, this possibility is so far from being a *mere* possibility that it must be *necessarily* connected with what is actually experienced, it must, indeed, be necessary to the true, integral meaning of the present experience. The whole point of the argument of Kant is that you cannot draw a line and say this is merely actual, and that merely possible. If the idea of the liquidity of the earth is valid, it is because there is somewhat, which is directly present to us as real, which demands this idea as a part of its *own* meaning. It is only a construction of the present; *and the present apart from such construction* is, in turn, meaningless. That such is the case is brought out in Mr. Royce's quotation from Kant (p. 237) when the test of the validity of an idea is its connection with “our *perceptions according to the principle of the empirical synthesis of phenomena*” (italics mine). And, again, when Professor Royce says (p. 245) that the only basis for the assertion of an unexperienced Being is that an experience of facts sends us beyond themselves, and to further possible experience for their own interpretation. Again, it is a matter of recognizing that our *present experience is interwoven* with the whole context of the realm of valid or of possible experience (p. 248, italics mine. See also bottom of p. 242 and top of p. 243;—on pp. 254–256, it is shown that even mathematical ideas to be valid require immediate presentation).

There can be no question which of these two views comes nearer to representing the true spirit of Kant. Indeed, one rubs one's eyes when one finds the “attempt to define the Real as explicitly and only the universal” associated with the name of Kant. That this view is the rationalism against which the Kant of *critical* rationalism asserted that thought in itself is empty, and can give only consistency, never validity, is of course obvious. Professor Royce confounds in his exposition three notions which Kant carefully distinguishes—and then uses this confusion not only to condemn the theory in question, but to furnish the terms of his own solution. These three notions are: (1) ‘The real’ (in its phenomenal sense, of course, which alone is considered by Mr. Royce). This is immediate sense determined by thought, by mediate conceptions:—so far is Kant, from defining the real as merely universal, merely possible. (2) ‘The valid or true idea.’ Here, of course, his entire point is that the true idea is not a mere idea, any more than it is the real. It differs from the real

in not being directly experienced ; it differs from mere thought in that we have reason for assuming that there is a *possible* experience in which it would be directly presented in sense. (3) And thus there is 'possible experience'—that which tests the validity of an idea. It is neither, *qua* possible, the same as the real, nor is it the same as the valid idea. It is not definable in terms of ideas as such, because of its necessary connection with the content of immediate experience. (On p. 247 it is correctly stated : "Experience furnishes the ground for truth.") Mr. Royce, however, assumes that these three notions are synonymous.¹ Except in so far as he does this, he has no basis for contrasting validity as immediate but fragmentary, with validity as universal, ideal but infinite ;² and no basis for his own positive conception of the really valid idea as itself a living experience. So far as he does this, it is not surprising that he concludes that "all validity, as an incomplete universal conception needs another to give it final meaning" (p. 341).

I am forced to conclude, then, that Mr. Royce's own theory, so far as developed as affording the needed completion of the 'validity' theory, rests upon an elaborate misinterpretation. Barely stated in this way the criticism is merely destructive. But what is enlightening is that precisely this oscillation is required *in order to give Mr. Royce's*

¹ Thus on p. 248 "experience as a whole" is identified with the "realm of truth," and both have a "valid constitution." The realms of 'valid' and of 'possible' experience are identified. On p. 259 we are told of "valid possible experience." In the first paragraph of p. 236 we deal with "objects of possible experience" (3) above ; in the next paragraph with "experience as having a necessary constitution" (1) above ; on the first paragraph of p. 239, it is a world of "valid empirical truth" (2) above. On p. 241, 'substances,' 'causes,' are instanced as cases of Kant's "empirical objects" (1), and these again are "empirically valid general truths!"

² There is no space to make the point good here, but I would ask the reader to go carefully over the discussion of the "universal and particular judgments" (pp. 274-290) and see if there is not exactly the same ambiguity in the treatment of these ideas. Sometimes the universal appears as the abstract, the possibility, the ideal construction, as reasoning which while not real, *i. e.*, presented in experience, is valuable as an instrument for reducing indeterminateness by eliminating possibilities (*e. g.*, pp. 277-279) ; while at other times it appears as our actual present immediate experience of ideas, so far as this is finite, incomplete, and, therefore, *itself* indeterminate, (*e. g.*, pp. 292, 295, and whenever the universal is identified with the 'inner meaning' which is really experienced, but which as 'finite,' 'fragmentary' needs an 'other'). And, of course, the particular goes through similar transformations. At one time the particular judgments are what "*positively assert Being* in the object viewed as external ;" hence, of course, they come in to give concreteness to the mere abstract universal, or ideal construction. But so far as the 'universal' is our present but incomplete, inner meaning, the particulars appear as the ideal possibilities which, *if realized, would* give exhaustiveness or infinitude to our limited present meaning.

own conception its meaning. From one point of view, our starting point is no idea, nor universal: it is actual, immediate experience. But this has to be contrasted with universals, possibilities, in order to be condemned as finite and fragmentary, in order to suggest the contrast of an infinite or exhaustive. Now the other side comes into play; if these possibilities are merely universals, merely possibilities, while the conception of them would convict our present experience of a certain limitation, it would give no basis for the reality of an *infinite experience*. So the scene shifts. It is now our experience, which as such, is *only* universal, only abstract, only indeterminate; and, hence, what it is contrasted with (previously only possibilities, abstractions) becomes the actual, immediate, individual experience.

Professor Royce's argument is in this predicament. Unless he can find something good to say of ideas, and of our experience, there is no ground for defining the Absolute in terms of ideas, or as experience. Hence, at times he insists that, even with us, the truly valid idea is that which is presented in our immediate experience. This point of view comes out in its essential meaning on p. 422, when he says that it is "the wholeness and not the mere fragmentariness, the presence and not the mere absence of unity in our consciousness . . . which guides us towards a positive view of how the unity of Being is . . . attained." It finds expression again on p. 424, when we are told that as to the "general form of the absolute unity, our guide is inevitably the type of empirical unity present in our own passing consciousness." When this necessary homogeneity or community is in mind (required in order intelligibly to describe the Absolute as experience or consciousness at all), validity means present actual experience. *It must mean this for us, or it cannot mean it for the Absolute.* So we have the emphasis on the genuinely Kantian interpretation of reality. But, on the other hand, pretty radical discredit must be cast on our ideas, on our experience; for otherwise there is no ground for making the radical distinction between ourselves as fragmentary, finite, etc., and the infinite or 'completed' consciousness; otherwise we should end as well as begin with Kantianism, with experience as an organized system. Hence the necessity of conceiving our experiences, our ideas, which previously were defined as immediate realities or *presented* purposes, as mere meanings, indeterminate universals at large, and therefore requiring the infinite experience to fulfil them. The dialectic is this: (1) Our experiences are meanings, purposes fulfilled. Then, since reality cannot be conceived apart from experience, *the* reality—absolute reality—is meaning fulfilled. (2) But our purposes are only partially, inadequately,

merely universally or indeterminately, fulfilled. But since absolute reality is meaning fulfilled in experience, it must be exhaustively, eternally fulfilled. The Absolute experiences all at once, adequately and completely, that which we try to experience in pieces, in series and in distorted fashion. The gist of my criticism is that the argument depends upon taking propositions (1) and (2) alternately. They cannot be taken together without destroying each other. Insist upon (1) alone, and you get the system of experience as the Absolute ; insist upon (2) alone, and you cannot get anywhere. Mr. Royce, I say it in no flippant spirit, blows hot and cold upon our 'finite' experience. When he wishes to establish the experienced, the significant character of his Absolute, it is good enough. But when he wishes to give an all embracing, single, exhaustive, *totum simul* character to his Absolute, our finite consciousness appears in a condition which logically would justify no conclusion, and which, practically, would not amount to enough even to suggest the problem of its own nature—mere vague universals, indeterminate possibilities and the like !

To put the matter somewhat more positively : If our experience justifies us in entertaining the idea of the Infinite, the Perfect, as valid, then we are not mere fragments or parts in that Infinite ; it is in and through us, and in such an organic and pervasive way that the contrast between us and it, as the 'finite' over against the 'infinite,' the fragmentary over against the complete, the serial over against the *totum simul* is contradicted. If such be the case, we do not need a definition of the Absolute which makes it the realization of everything we intend but cannot effect ; everything we mean, but cannot express. What we need is a reconsideration of the facts of struggle, disappointment, change, consciousness of limitation, which will show *them*, as they actually are experienced *by us* (not by something called Absolute) to be significant, worthy, and helpful. On the contrary, if we are fragmentary and finite in such a way that our meanings and realizations are not presented in and to us, but only to and in the Absolute, what boots either the Absolute, or the struggle ! Let us eat, drink and be merry—let us glean the satisfactions of our passing life, for as to serious meanings, only the Absolute knows what they mean ; as to serious efforts, only the Absolute experiences their realization—and since he is Absolute, we cannot rob him of that in any case, nor will he grudge us such pleasures as we can snatch as we hurry along. Omar Khayyám knew such philosophy long ago.

Professor Royce has shown his capacity to be sceptical. He has declared that only through doubting does the truth appear. But the

category of the 'finite,' the 'fragmentary,' the 'flying moment,' he seems never to have questioned. It is the one positive, fixed datum. Upon it he builds his whole conception of real or absolute Being—and yet to build upon it at all, he has to combine with it qualities such as meaning, purpose, fulfilment, which contradict this rigid finitude and require its reinterpretation.

I need hardly say in closing that it is quite possible to disagree pretty fundamentally with an author's conclusions, because one is not convinced as to his method, and yet recognize the scope and power of his work, and admire, to the point of envy, his skill in managing the course of his ideas and in presenting them to the reader. The book before us, together with its author's *Conception of God*, can be compared only with Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* in recent metaphysical thought. I should regret, even more than I do, the limitations which have confined me to the bare skeleton of Mr. Royce's argument, were it not that its many admirable traits are so obvious that they cannot fail to secure recognition from any competent reader. Meantime the serious effort critically to face Mr. Royce's method is the tribute—the highest of all tributes, it seems to me—which the importance of his work exacts.

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Kritik der wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnis. Eine vorurteilsfreie Weltanschauung. Von Dr. HEINRICH V. SCHOELER. Leipzig, Verlag von Wilhelm Engelmann, 1898.—pp. viii, 678.

This work was prompted by a serious motive. Twenty years ago the author was one of a group of young men who were enthusiastically devoting themselves at a European university to science and medicine. One, a near friend, had given up wealth and home and friends for science, and had undermined his health by study. As his weakness advanced he impressed upon the author the intellectual disappointment which science had in store for its devotees. When the young man died, Dr. v. Schoeler laid upon himself the task of subjecting the results of science to a searching critique, as free as possible from partisan prejudices, in order to determine how far research has been able to solve the problems of knowledge. This task has occupied the greater part of the time since the event above mentioned, and has led the author into a deep and broad study of both science and philosophy. Nothing in the work is more impressive than the abounding evidence of the tremendous mass of learning