SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES.

LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS.


The writer refers to the original conception of his doctrine by the habits ofmind acquired during a long period of experimental scientific work. The term he borrowed from Kant’s pragmatism. It has been so widely adopted, with so many more or less important variations, that he now puts forward his own view under the name of pragmatism as one phase of the larger doctrine. The preliminary requirement of pragmatism is to dismiss all make-believes. One must start from the beliefs and doubts which one actually entertains; dismissing as make-believe all notion of metaphysical truth and falsity. Belief is a habit of mind, mostly unconscious and entirely self-satisfied. Doubt is the privation of such a habit. Man is able to exert a measure of self-control over his actions, and by a process of self-preparation can impart to action a fixed character best indicated as absence of self-reproach. In time the repetition of this self-preparation tends to eliminate self-reproach entirely. Applied to knowledge, this leads to a state of fixed belief or perfect knowledge. The doctrine of pragmatism was first expressed by the author in the Popular Science Monthly, for January, 1878 as follows: “Consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings you conceive the object of your conception to have. Then your conception of those effects is the, whole of your conception of the object.” This doctrine dismisses almost every proposition of ontological metaphysics as meaningless or absurd, and establishes philosophy among the observational sciences. It does not confine the pragmatist to individual cases, for experiment is always in the interest of future conduct and hence must be generalized. Thought, controlled by a rational experimental logic, tends to the fixation of opinions which do not depend on accidental circumstances and which are independent of what anyone may think of them. These propositions are both real and physically efficient in shaping conduct. The pragmatist’s *summa bonum* is, therefore, not action, but a process of evolution whereby the existent comes more and more to embody propositions of this real character. In terms of formal logic, the essence of pragmatism may be expressed as a proposition parallel to Aristotle’s *dictum de omni*. We call a predication affirmative (be ituniversal or particular) when, and only when, there is nothing among the sensational effects that belong universally to the predicate which will not be (universally or particularly, according as the affirmative predication is universal or particular) sad to belong to the subject. Pragmatism is closely allied to Hegelian absolute idealism, being a genuine triadic movement, but dissent from Hegel’s undue emphasis on the third stage. George H. Sabine.


Universal judgments are of two classes: empirical or closed, dealing with a small group limited in space and time, and absolute or open, dealing with a group not thus limited, e.g., the more general truths of science. ‘Open’ universality properly belongs only to conditional judgments. The true scientific universal claims only possibility, and refers alike to past, present, and future; all this is clearly implied in the conditional form. The categorical judgment, on the other hand, claims a character of present actuality and permanent and eternal reality. But for neither the so-called elements of chemistry nor the laws of their combination, neither the law of gravitation nor the impenetrability of matter, neither atoms and electrons nor energy and its transformations, to say nothing of psychic life, does the scientist claim the ontologically fixed and eternally unalterable character implied in the categorical statement. The only categorical universals for science seem to be certain very general postulates as to the nature of space and time; to throw these into the conditional form would be to lose science and enter metaphysics. Modern science is abstract, and is content to affirm conditionally the possibility of certain necessary relations; categorical judgments belong properly only to history. F. D. Mitchell.


The content of the religious experience is belief in a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward self of one’s residual environment. But it is not a mere belief, for it means to be true. Religious truth is practical, not scientific, and is thus independent of any particular scientific statement. The term God denotes, not a fixed conception whose existence may be affirmed or denied, but my practical faith; it contains an idea of my own interests, an idea of the disposition of the universe toward them, and some plan for