PROBABLE INFERENCE

could not exist until the conclusion was probabilistically recognised; this is inductive or experimental inference. Such a relation may be altogether irrespective of whether the conclusion is recognized or not, yet such that it could not exist if the conclusion fact were not probable; this is probable deduction. Such a relation may consist merely in the premiss facts having some character which may agree with, or be in some other relation to, a character which the concluded fact would possess if it existed; this is presumptive inference.

(1) The first case is that in which we begin by asking how often certain described conditions will, in the long run of experience, be followed by a result of a predesignate description; thus proceeding to note the results as events of that kind present themselves in experience; and finally, when a considerable number of instances have been collected, inferring that the general character of the whole mass of similar events in the course of experience will be approximately of the character observed. For that entire series must have some character; and it would be absurd to say that experience has a character which is never manifested. But there is no other way in which the character of that series can manifest itself than the endless series is still incomplete. Therefore, if the character manifested by the series up to a certain point is not that character which the entire series possesses, still the series goes on. It must eventually tell, however irregularly, towards becoming so; and all the rest of the universe’s life will be a continuation of this inferential process. This inference does not depend upon any assumption that the series will be endless; nor is that the future will be like the past, or that nature is uniform, nor upon any material assumption whatever.

Logic imposes upon us two rules in performing this inference. The first is this: no fact is to interfere in the inference, it is not to be tested; so we must take pains that we do not, in taking the instances from which we are to reason, consider the conditions or relax them from those to which the question referred. The second prescription of logic is that the conclusion be confined strictly to the question.

If the instances examined are found to be remarkable in any other respect than that for which the series is examined, no matter how they may be of the kind of inference of the present kind from that. It would be merely an indefinitely weaker inferential process, as all inferences of the same kind of inference derives its great force from the circumstance that the result is virtually predicted.

(2) The second kind of probable inference is by the definition of it, necessary inference. But necessary inference may be applied to probability as its subject-matter; and it then becomes another aspect, probable inference. If of an endless series of possible experiences a definite proportion will present a certain character (which is the sort of fact called an objective probability), then it necessarily follows that, forsooth or not, approximately the same proportion of any finite portion of that series will present the same character, either as it is, or when it has been sufficiently extended. This is governed by the previous same principle as the inductive inference, but applied in the reverse way. The same prescription of logic apply as before; but, owing to that being now inferred which was in the other case a premise, and conversely, it is not here true that the relation of the premises to the fact stated in the conclusion, which makes the former significant of the latter, requires the recognition of the conclusion. This is probable deduction. It covers all the ordinary and occasional cases of the mathematical doctrine of PROBABILITY (q. v.).

The legitimate results of the calculus of probability are of enormous importance; but others are unfortunately vitiated by confusing mere likelihood, or subjective probability, with the objective probability to which the theory ought to be restricted. An objective probability, as such, may be said to be the only possible justification which an experience of the number of events which present the character of the probability is among the class of the possible character of the event. But the majority of the mathematical treatments on probability follow. Laplace in result to which is very much under consideration of probability led him, Laplace and other mathematicians, though they regard a probability as a ratio of two numbers, they are so limiting ratios of occurrence of different kinds in the course of experience, hold that it is the ratio between numbers of ‘cases’ or special

suppositions, whose ‘possibilities’ (a word not clearly distinguished, if at all, from ‘probability’) are used in the sense that we are aware of no reason for inferring to one rather than to another. This is an error often apparent to consider the kind of fact deduced from it (below), and an ‘inverse probability’ (see that subject under PROBABILITY, where the view of Laplace is criticized).

(3) Probable inference of the third kind includes those cases in which the facts asserted in the premises do not compel the truth of the conclusion, and where the significant observations have not been suggested by the consideration of what the consequences of the conclusion would be, but have either suggested the conclusion or have been remarked during a search in the facts for features agreeable or conflicting with the conclusion. The whole argument then reducts itself to this, that the observed facts show that the truth is similar to the fact asserted in the conclusion. This may, of course, be reinforced by arguments of some other kind; but we should begin by considering the case in which it stands alone. As an example to fix ideas, suppose that I am reading a long anonymous poem. As I proceed, I meet with a trait after trait which seems as if it were written by a woman. In what way do I do this? By analogy I think it plausible that the poet is a woman. The Catholic doctrine of purgatory is an example. The problem of purgatory is to be a state of purification, not of trial. The belief is entertained by many, however, that the period of trial divides the just from the unjust, and death, but extends indefinitely into the future.

Literature: Hodge, Theology; DIDEROT, Christian. Glieschlosh (1808); FERRARI, Eternal Hope; MARTINUS, Christ. Dogmat. (q. v.).

Problem (Gr. ἤμος, from ἀμμαθέν). This is the time elapsed between the death of thezee and the resurrection. (47) A question set forth for discussion with a view to a true and logically consistent solution. The solution usually consists in showing how it is possible, if it is not, and is not possible, that it may be brought about.

Problematic (for deriv. see PROBLEM; the word was not in use in Gr. or Lat., though it possibly occurs; Gr. ἄμοντας, Greek, i., illogicalness; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματικός; Gr. προβληματι
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also under Possibility) in the Kanton and derived systems of logic.

(2) In Greek it would mean pertaining to a problem; but the actual meaning, which is loose, is approximating to the import of an interrogation.

Siegart and others maintain that problematic propositions are not propositions, because they are not assertory. If they are empty, their denial should be absurd, which does not seem to be the case. It is better to say that whatever process as a question so much as to merit examination may properly be termed problematic.

(C.D.

Problematic Realism: see SOLIPHISM.

Procedure (in law) [Lat. procedere, to proceed, through Fr.; Ger. Rechtsverfahren, Verfahren, Rechtsverhandlung; Fr. procédure; Ital. procedura]; the means provided by law for enforcing rights through the action of judicial or administrative tribunals. It includes all matters of process, pleading, practice, and evidence.

(c) The formal mode in which the functions of any branch of government are discharged. Reform procedure: an American system of simplified or "Code" pleading, initiated in New York in 1849, and adopted in England by the Judicature Act of 1873. In early societies rights often spring from forms. "It would be untrue to assert that in one stage of human affairs, rights and duties are rather the adjectives of procedure than procedure a mere appendage to rights and duties." (Maine, Early Hist. of Law, Lect. 15, 252.

(2.43)

Process [Lat. procedere, to proceed; Ger. Process; Fr. procédé, procédures; Ital. processo, Continuativo; CHANGE (q.v.).]

Process (mental): Ger. psychischer Prozeß; Fr. processus psychique (or mental); Ital. processo psichico (or mental). Continuative change in consciousness, or in mental disposition, or in both.

The continuity of mental process is of two kinds: temporal continuity and dispositional continuity, or continuity of interest. By temporal continuity is meant the fact that each state passes into that which succeeds it without a break in time. By continuity of interest is meant the fact that successive states of consciousness may be stages in the development of a single cognitive tendency. Continuity of interest may exist without continuity in time, and continuity in time may exist without continuity of interest. I can to-day resume a problem at the point where

I left it yesterday. In spite of the interval of time, yesterday's train of thought and to-day's have continuity of interest. Again, while meditating on my problem my attention may be diverted by the arrival of a visitor. There is temporal continuity between my mental processes in attacking the problem and in entertaining my guest; but there is discontinuity of interest. Continuity of interest constitutes in part the bond between one individual consciousness and another, which makes possible which is called the 'collective' mind. I may work at my problem up to a certain point, and then communicate my method and results to another. He may continue the same train of thought, and in his turn communicate his results to me. In this way we may solve the problem into operation.

Our minds act as if they were one whole, so far as concerns the attainment of the end which we both pursue. This kind of cooperation is thinking and willing constitutes the psychological cohesion of human society, and binds together the successive generations of mankind. The process, however, though divided among different minds, is individual, not social. Of SOCIAL ORGANIZATION; SOCIAL PROCESS, and TRANSITION.

Other forms of distinguishable mental process, such as cogitation and feeling, have continuity also, which can probably in all cases be reduced to temporal merely (as emotional change produced by external events), or to dispositional merely (as in the continuity of a disturbed cognitive process), or to these two existing together. The further question of the relation of all phenomenal continuity in change to a principle itself not subjected to change, as well as the attempt to consider mental process as an independent system of self-produced 'changes', leads into metapsychology.

(423-235)

Process (social): see SOCIAL PROCESS.


Procreation: see REPRODUCTION (in biology).

Prodigal. Born on the island of Crete in the 5th century B.C. He was a teacher of literature or the art of living, a Sophist, and taught for money at Athens.

Prodigality of Nature. Darwin's expression (Origins of Species) for EXCESS or