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514TH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

MONDAY, MARCH 6TH, 1911, 4.30 P.M.

D. HOWARD, ESQ., D.L., F.C.S., F.I.C. (VICE-PRESIDENT), IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were read and confirmed, and the following elections were announced :—

Member : The Rev. C. C. B. Bardsley, M.A., London.

Associates : T. F. Victor Buxton, Esq., M.A., Herts.
The Rev. P. Rose, Worcestershire.

Hon. Member : The Rev. F. Baylis, M.A., Surrey.

The CHAIRMAN introduced the Rev. Isaac Gregory Smith, LL.D., who then read the following paper :—

PSYCHOLOGY.

By Dr. GREGORY SMITH.

Dr. GREGORY SMITH said (in substance, the Lecture was without MS. or notes) :—

I CONSIDER it an honour to be here ; but I must apologise for my age, which is almost nearer 90 than 80 ; I trust to your tolerance and leniency. I do not apologise for the subject. It is one of deepest interest to everyone practically. We all remember from early days how urgent the question was, " What is this house in which I live ? What is Self ? What am I ? " The little world in man is the most wonderful of all wonders. His environment is very interesting, but the question of Self touches all men more nearly. The study of psychology is the foundation of ethic, and ethic is the foundation of religion. We are apt to leave the subject too much to books, to separate it from actual life. If you have

been students, whether of ancient or modern works, on the subject, am I not right in saying, that just in proportion as a philosopher takes the subject actually, he has a lasting hold upon you. The greatest of all philosophers, Aristotle, in the keen analysis of character and motives which lead to action, is unrivalled; personally, I have derived much also from Locke and the Scotch school of thought. Let us not mix psychology in our minds with ontology or transcendental metaphysic. These soaring aspirations after the unknowable lose touch with what is actual in our lives.

Let us now pass from the general question to the particular. Do you remember the old saying, "Cadit quæstio"? We often misunderstand it. It does not mean "This settles the matter"; it is really the beginning, not the end. Someone projects something, throws it down for discussion. This is the office of a lecturer. He suggests a question for consideration. I am trying to do this to-day. You will supply what is lacking on my part, and correct what is amiss. We must not forget that psychology is progressive. How can it stand still while other sciences are moving on? It is a vital question. We are face to face with materialism, which is making tremendous strides. What would be said of a general who attempts to defend an indefensible post? You younger men far than I will see materialism claiming for itself a great deal of what we have regarded as spiritual. We ought to know where we stand, and draw the line between that in man which is material and the Will. We have called mind and matter two separate things. Let us look carefully at this. In the laboratories it may be shown by-and-by that the mind moves like a machine, goes like clockwork. But the will intervenes; it controls, unless indeed it abdicates its true functions. It exercises supreme authority. I avoid the word "demonstrate." If you get beyond numbers, there can be no demonstrative proof. We must be content with the limitations of our probation and we shall be wise to fall back upon Bishop Butler's wise advice, "Be content with what is probable."

You remember Wordsworth's fine "Ode on Immortality"? Speaking of our birth into this world he says,

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come."

But is it so really? All that we have at starting on the journey of life—a scanty equipment, yet capable of almost endless possibilities—seems to be this; mentally, the sense, that a thing is or is not; emotionally, that a thing is either to

be sought or shunned. What Grote has said of thought, that it is "glorified sensation," is true also of desire. Hope, fear, joy, sorrow, etc., all the many tinted passions, which play so large a part in life, are the outgrowth of the baby's immature cravings for whatever catches its eye; and as intellect and emotion spring out of sensation in the first instance, so they are continually nurtured as they grow by contact with things outside themselves. It would take too long now to try to show in detail how thought and emotion are evolved and stimulated by material objects, and how they seem inseparably connected with the varying phases of brain and heart. Those who are expert in physiology can tell us best.

Memory, imagination, logic, as Grote has well said, are not separate faculties, but only different functions of the mind. All testify to the material character of their origin and gradual development. Memory and logic are obviously each a chain of many links. Imagination, the synthesis of mind and emotion, mechanically calls up a series of pictures following one another like the slides in a magic lantern. The sequence of thoughts, the sequence of emotions is, normally, regular as the tickings of a clock. It is a long way from a child's first glimmerings of perception to Shakespeare's "Hamlet" or Goethe's "Faust"—a long way from a child's first cry for food and warmth to the insatiable cupidity of a Napoleon. But in both cases alike the inception and the fulfilment are material. *But the Will chooses, whether the thought, the desire, shall be permitted or not.* I have a book in the press on this subject. Time forbids more now on this part of our subject.

The Will—this is the question of questions—is it free?

Let us begin by conceding all that we are bound to concede to the determinist and admit that emotions and intellect can react upon the will. The Czar is a despot, but he is influenced by those around him. So the Pontiff in Rome. The will, in like manner is swayed by thought and emotion, and yet has to decide. How far those and other circumstances, in any instance, have exercised a constraint over the will is often very difficult to define. The will may be swayed to and fro by the force of these passing winds; yet every moment we are choosing. If two billiard balls are launched towards each other with equal force and meet, what follows from the impact? A labouring man going home passes a public house where he can have a drink, and the temptation comes. A little way ahead he sees the light in the window of his home drawing him there. Both motives are strong. He does not stand stock still

like the ass between two bundles of hay equally attractive, which could not decide which to attack and died of starvation. The will must decide. When your watch goes wrong, it knows not regret nor remorse; but *we* know that the right thing has not been done, and that the responsibility lies with us for not doing it.

My last words must be of a different kind. If we grasp this important truth, that our mental and emotional faculties are not the Self, it is easier to imagine the life beyond this. The rich man does not take his money there. Apply this thought to persons more gifted than others mentally. If these were part of the personality and not the robe which wraps the person, would not those who are not clever be grievously handicapped as compared with others? Again, we have to estimate ourselves and others rightly. Can we do it fairly and reasonably unless we bear in mind that the intention, that is the will, is the main factor in the sum? We must make allowance for drawbacks and disadvantages. Circumstances which seem to be part of us are yet not the Self, but only belong to it. The choice which the Will makes, the decision between right and wrong is what man is responsible for. "Judge ye what I say."

Discussion.

The Chairman said: We have all listened with very great interest to this suggestive address. We have heard of progressive psychology, but let us consider what progress really means. I would warn those who are younger than I am against the temptation to think that a new nomenclature is a new science, a mere restatement is not real progress.

The problem of psychology is an old one, and I really doubt if there is much progress since Aristotle, Aquinas, and Locke dealt with it.

For myself no advance of materialism can rid me of the feeling that came upon me in my father's garden that I, a small boy 65 years ago, was *I*, that I was not the garden and not anyone else.

A fuller knowledge of the physical machinery of thought may dim our apprehension of the individual will behind the brain, but it is still there.

A man driving a horse over a common evidently goes where the stronger of the two wills directs; a train weighing hundreds of tons seems governed by merely physical laws as it rushes onward, but the fate of the train and all the passengers is governed by the judgment and will of the man in the signal box who, with a touch on a lever, turns it right or wrong at a junction.

Lieut.-Colonel ALVES said: I want to ask the speaker two questions. First, what is ontology, and second, what is the soul? I have a fairly clear idea of what spirit and body are, but what is the soul? In Genesis ii we are told, "Man became a living soul," but in the Bible even fish are spoken of as living souls, and we have the expression "Love the Lord thy God with all thy soul," as different from heart, mind, and strength. What is the soul? Is it generated through union of spirit and matter, or is it the combination of these two? Without doubt the proportions of a person's brain affect his feelings, making him, as regards this life and the next, either cheerful or despondent, without any real reason for either of such feelings. The material element in man affects unquestionably his "soul's" views of things, and must not be confounded with the things themselves; nor must we confound the corrupted spirit of the natural life, the property of every man with the Divine Spirit, the property of regenerated man alone.

Colonel Alves subsequently communicated the following:—

It seems to me that the Church generally has fallen into error from deriving its idea of the "soul" from heathen philosophy instead of the Bible, making it for all without exception, either the essential individual existing from eternity to eternity, or else something implanted in each individual at or before birth, being specially created for the purpose by the Almighty, and, of course, absolutely sinless.

This doctrine leads, I think, to one of two conclusions:—(1) Pure Pelagianism, or, (2) Evil lying in matter, tainting the sinless soul. Neither conclusion is scriptural.

Our Lord's incarnation is spoken of by many as a "great mystery." It seems to me to be the solution of a great mystery. In His case, the Holy Ghost quickened the form from which grew the material part of His human nature; and in this material part, derived from His mother, herself a sinner and needing a Saviour, resided no sin.

We know also that "in Adam all die," and that Eve is "the mother of all living." Is it not then to be inferred that by the fall, the natural spirit of human life became tainted, this taint affecting the material—otherwise untainted element.

The heavens had probably become unclean before Adam's creation, by reason of Satan's fall; the natural breath of life passing through Divinity would, for Adam, become purified, rendering him sinless; but, not being itself Divine, leaving him in a condition in which he was liable to fall, "aseptic," not "antiseptic."

If, as I am inclined to think, the "Soul" is the combination of Spirit, natural for all men, and Divine also for Christians only, with the body, all separated at death, the Divine Spirit alone being reunited to the Christian's body in Resurrection, the command to sanctify the "Soul" (set it on the Lord's side) becomes intelligible instead of mysterious.

These remarks are not given as dogma, but to promote thought and enquiry into the matter from Holy Scripture, which alone can throw any light on this particular branch of the subject of "Psychology."

The Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S., said: We have all listened I am sure with very great interest to this paper. Like the last speaker, I could not help feeling that there were many questions I should like to have had answered. May I say how the matter presents itself to me? All our psychology and all our philosophy must begin with self-consciousness. It is our self-consciousness which gives the denial to pantheism, and it is our self-consciousness which determines our personality and individuality. How early self-consciousness begins in the infant mind we do not know. Probably very early. Then from self-consciousness we proceed to the discovery of many other faculties possessed by the self-conscious being. But in order that these faculties may be exercised upon the external world, we are endowed with a physical organisation. The power, however, to receive impressions and to produce effects resides in the person, the *ego*; it is the *ego* that sees not the eye, and the *ego* is able to exert itself in proportion to the strength or efficiency of the physical organisation. Our reason, imagination and memory appear to be dependent upon organic conditions.

I should like to have heard from our lecturer what the "new psychology" has to say concerning the evidence for spiritual

existences apart from material organisms. What is the value of the alleged evidence of spiritism? Then there is the question of the so-called "subliminal consciousness." Wherein does this differ from what used to be called "unconscious cerebration" or the unconscious growth of ideas in the mind? In the sphere of religious experience is what we call conversion, the uprushing of the sub-conscious self? And if so, how does this affect what we have been accustomed to regard as the work of the Holy Spirit? Does it put conversion into a new category? A man awakens suddenly to the idea that he may become a painter or an author, he determines and determines successfully that he will. Does such an uprush of conscious capability belong to the same category as religious conversion? Personally, I do not think so. But I should like to have had the difference discussed.

In dealing with the will the speaker was not so clear as one could have wished. There is a danger of confusing the will with the person. The will is a faculty just as is the reason, the imagination, or the memory. There is an *ego* behind the will. The Greeks distinguished between the two by the use of the verb ἐθέλω. Strictly speaking, the question is not that of the "freedom of the will," but are we free to will? The will is the faculty or power of self-determination.

Eventually, I suppose it is only the physical that is dropped. Everything affecting the *ego* remains. The old Romans believed that the soul was stripped and brought before Rhadamanthus the judge, and upon the naked spirit were seen the scars left by every evil thought, word and deed. The thought is a very terrible one. Here, however, we get into mysteries which we are unable to fathom. But we are "fearfully and wonderfully made."

Bishop THORNTON asked: Does Dr. Smith consider that man has a consciousness of God, and would this also come to him through sensation?

The Rev. J. M. TURNER said: I have come here by kind invitation in the attitude of a learner, and I could have wished Dr. Gregory Smith had spoken for hours instead of minutes. He has spoken of the connection between sensations and perceptions, but I should like to know the connection between them and the conceptions of the human mind, for this I think makes the great distinction between the animal and the human.

Herbert Spencer, in taking up the theory of evolution, tries to bridge the gulf between the animal and the human, but this seems to me to be a failure.

As regards the physical side, he traces out a connection nicely enough, but in his attempt to trace out a connection psychologically, the result does not appear so satisfactorily.

I should like some criticism of this attempt to apply the theory of evolution in the sphere of psychology.

Professor LANGHORNE ORCHARD said: We shall all agree that, by his able and suggestive address on psychology, the speaker has well deserved our thanks. Some statements, however, call for criticism:—

I cannot agree that "thought is glorified sensation," even though to the proposition be attached the justly honoured name of Grote. Sensation can never pass into thought. Besides sensation, there must be (in order that thought may be possible) the fundamental mental equipment including the intuition of causality—that every change implies a cause. The first thing a child does is to seek some cause of some sensation. This action, by the child, is thought.

With regard to ethics and religion, the speaker seemed to think that religion is founded upon ethics. The reverse is the fact. Moral conduct is impossible without character, and character is impossible without thought. The empire of true ethics—the ethics of the supreme moral law—extends to thoughts, purposes, aims.

I agree with the learned doctor as to the will. This is the person willing—not the same thing as the man himself, but the man making choice and determining. Character is formed by successive choices of will as to how we act in our environment, whatever that environment be. Character, which is the one thing that we carry away into the future world, is the dynamic resultant of a series of will choices. Our primary environment is of course independent of our own arrangement, but we may afterwards modify it and be responsible for doing so, or for not doing so.

Something was said about imagination and emotion. These things are not independent of will. A foolish boy grows up with a depraved vicious imagination, because he chose to be idle and to regale himself with impure literature. In presence of distress and suffering, I may choose to give vent to emotions of pride and arrogance, or to those of pity and compassion.

Dr. GREGORY SMITH replied as follows :—

To Colonel Alves' questions.—There is too frequently a careless use of the word soul. It is a remarkable instance of the vagueness and confusion of thought. "Soul" is used sometimes for the heart; at other times as the immortal part of us. Scientific men say that there is a parallel action of mind and brain, and again of emotions and the heart. The word soul needs definition. Ontology is transcendental metaphysic. It concerns itself with what things really are in themselves, not what they appear to us.

We are more concerned with the relative than the absolute.

To Mr. Tuckwell.—A child has to distinguish itself from surrounding things, this is the beginning of consciousness. Unconscious cerebration is a remarkable fact and indicates that mind acts mechanically.

To Bishop Thornton.—We must go back to the same beginning of thought. The little child looks up to its earthly father, and so ascends to the thought of a heavenly.

To another speaker.—The inquiry whether I am the will or I use the will, is not a question of great moment. The character is the personality. We can recognise evolution in the gradual formation of our being, but the real self is a spark of the light eternal.

Subsequently Dr. GREGORY SMITH writes :—

Professor Orchard's profound remarks required more time than was at our disposal; may I refer him, Mr. Turner and other speakers, of whose remarks time prevented me from taking particular notice, to my book on *Practical Psychology*, Bennett and Co.

Bishop WESTCOTT in *The Gospel of Life*, chap. viii, says :—"Man, made in the image of God, is an indivisible being. We naturally, even necessarily, speak of 'body' and 'soul' in such a way as to imply that man's soul is the real 'self,' complete and separable from his 'body.' Yet careful reflection will show that such language simply expresses an abstraction. There is undoubtedly an antithesis in man, an organism and something which works through the organism. But the living man, the self, is not a part of this antithesis: he consists in combination of both parts. He can no more conceive himself remaining without the one factor than

without the other. It is not necessary for us to enter on any discussion of the principles of biblical psychology. We may at once admit that as far as the constitution of man falls within the range of his own observation, we have no more reason to expect to find in the Bible a revealed system of psychology than to expect to find there a revealed system of physics. But Scripture distinctly recognizes different elements in man corresponding with his different relations to being, and leads us to look for the preservation of all in future. It lends no support to the famous utterance of Plotinus, who thanked God that 'he was not tied to an immortal body.' It lends no support to the view that the body as such is the mark of the soul's fall. 'May the God of peace himself' (St. Paul writes in his earliest epistle), 'sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit, soul and body, be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who will also do it.' 1 Thess. v, 23." [EDITOR.]