Occasional Notes.

PSYCHOLOGY THE SCIENCE OF MIND.*

Psychology as the science of mind dates from the middle of the nineteenth century, when the physicist came to the aid of the psychologist. The physiologist had entered the field some thirty years before that, but his methods effected little progress, as he had not yet learned that a purely physical inquiry can never reveal a mental act.

To go further back, although the philosophy or phenomenology of mind (to give the subject its ancient title) began its severance from pure speculation and superstition in the middle of the sixteenth century, it remained very largely a branch of metaphysics and the battle-ground of the rival schools of sensationalists and transcendentalists. It was not, therefore, surprising that from the first, introspectionists and physiologists were at daggers drawn in their attempts to explain the phenomena of mind. When, however, these phenomena became the subject of careful experiment and exact measurement, both rivals were to some extent chastened in their aspirations.

The appearance of Fechner's great work, *Elemente der Psychophysik*, in 1860, was an important landmark in this progress to the status of a pure science, but it was not until 1880, when Sir Francis Galton announced the results of his "inquiry into human faculty and its development," that psychology as a true science was born.

Galton had studied the differences in the imagery of different persons, and his method and the facts it revealed pointed the way to the solution of a 2,000-year-old problem. Great credit, however, was due to Prof. J. McK. Cattell, first of Pennsylvania and later of Columbia University, who refined and extended Galton's methods.

The most important results were:

1. The establishment of mental tests of ability. Mental facts rather than physical facts (physiognomy, phrenology, anatomical stigmata, and so forth) came to be relied upon in estimating the state of the mind.

* "The Introduction to Great Britain's Contribution to the International Mental Hygiene Library," *vide Mental Hygiene*, vol. xiv, No. 2, April, 1930, pp. 429–444.

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2. The formulation, in due course, of laws having a genuinely scientific foundation, embracing cognition, affection, and conation. The decisive factor here was the fine work of Spearman and his assistants; his mathematical method of measuring correlations of psychological data, his discovery —or perhaps one should say his demonstration and measurement—of a general factor of ability, "G," underlying all abilities, and other fundamental work.

Thus the re-naming of the philosophy or phenomenology of mind, "psychology" by one Rudolphus Goelenios of Marburg in 1594 has come to be justified, and for the future we must define psychology as "the science of the abilities of man to think, feel, and do." Modern psychology can rightfully claim a place among the biological sciences, and may with confidence look forward to a linkage with them. Metaphysics can resume its own sphere without again encroaching on psychology, and be more read and better understood; while psychology can surrender to logic that which it ought never to have claimed.

We must not, however, be led to think that these were the only events of great importance in British developments in mental hygiene.

About the time when the physiologist came to the aid of the psychologist, which happened first in Germany, biological and dynamic conceptions in psychology began to take a firmer hold and relieved in a wonderful way the materialistic stagnation in psychiatry. The term "biology" was unknown until 1802, but the subject it defined made immense strides from Darwin's work in 1859 and, among other achievements, vitalized psychology. Animal psychology began to take shape in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but in 1896 Lloyd Morgan placed it on a more scientific basis when he published his *Animal Life and Intelligence*. As part of the biological advance, the remarkable developments of abnormal psychology in France and Germany, which have been reflected in this country in the work of Jones, Rivers, Stoddart, Hart, Crichton-Miller, Bradley and a host of others, must not be omitted. Again, the "hormic" psychology of Aristotle, represented chiefly among living psychologists by McDougall, and lately further rationalized and amplified by Devine in his application of it to psychiatry, has found an important place in British psychiatry and psychology and has acted as a curb on the extreme mechanistic or behaviouristic school.

The influence of Mott's monumental work in neurology, psychiatry

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and sociology is too large a subject to be more than mentioned here. It is fully dealt with in the *Mott Memorial Volume*.

The great point of all these developments—especially the advent of biological and dynamic conceptions in both normal and abnormal psychology, the invention of mental tests of ability, and so forth—is that they have enabled the mental-hygiene movement in Great Britain (1922) to broaden its outlook and invade, as in America, the ever-widening field of sociology, perhaps in these days the science most active in the welfare of humanity.

Sociology, as a science, arose about the same time that physiology invaded the realm of psychology, and, curiously, we owe it to Comte (1839), an agnostic in psychology.

A historical *résumé* such as the above is essential to a satisfactory stock-taking in the literary field of the present-day mental-hygiene movement. We must first, however, briefly describe the delimitation in this country of mental hygiene as brought about by the facts of history. This is a difficult matter, for of late events have been rapid, and stabilization, let alone finality, cannot yet be announced. Some facts in this regard are, however, apparent

1. Mental hygiene is a part of the larger subject of public health, the modern conception of which embraces preventive medicine in every direction.

2. Mental hygiene will always be a mosaic of subjects such as psychology, psychiatry, eugenics, biology, sociology, and so forth. Religion, ethics, and law cannot be excluded, as they vitally affect the life both of the community and the individual.

3. Mental hygiene is needed only as a dynamic body of knowledge. Though the theoretical aspects are amply cared for otherwise, the study of them is essential to mental hygiene as a dynamism.

4. The literary field of mental hygiene is necessarily wide and includes every body of knowledge likely to increase our insight in the many and difficult problems mental hygiene is out to solve.

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