

parison or a warning, a provision for the supply of a human want or a prohibition — not in a solitary instance is a drink that is manifestly alcoholic commended as a beverage, nor in one instance is a beverage that is characteristically nutritious condemned.

(To be continued.)

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## ARTICLE VI.

### HARTMANN'S PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS.<sup>1</sup>

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THE critical philosophy of Kant was an attempt to limit the field of human knowledge to the boundaries of experience and phenomena. It laid down, as he himself said, the "indispensable prolegomena necessary for any future philosophy." It gave what seemed to be, in 1787, the date of the second edition of the "Critique," the death-blow to all attempts to establish a philosophy of the Absolute. But within forty years of the death of the great Königsberger three philosophies of the Absolute arose in Germany. Fichte, with his "subjective idealism"; Schelling, with his "polar logic"; and Hegel, with his "pure being" and "pure nothing," attempted to discover the Unconditioned. After the uselessness of the dialectic of Hegel had been fully proved, Schopenhauer's "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung" attempted a new solution of the old problem; and in the closing years of the last decade Eduard von Hartmann took up the glove which Kant threw down eighty years before, and pub-

<sup>1</sup> Eduard von Hartmann is one of the youngest as well as one of the last of German philosophers who have achieved a trans-Atlantic reputation. Born at Berlin in 1840, he was educated at a gymnasium of his native city, and at the school of artillery. In 1861, entering the army, he received an officer's commission; but in the next year an accident to the foot, followed by an incurable disease, obliged him to retire from his chosen profession. Confined by the disease to his room, he began to devote himself to literary pursuits, and in them he soon proved himself a master-workman. In 1868 he published the first edition of his principal philosophic work, "Philosophie des Unbewussten,"

lished his "Philosophie des Unbewussten" as a final attempt to found a philosophy of the Absolute. The Unconscious is Hartmann's Absolute. What the Idea is to Plato and Hegel, what Substance is to Spinoza, what the Ego is to Fichte, what the Subject-Object is to Schelling that is the Unconscious to Hartmann: it is the noumenon, the Ding-an-sich, the real Being, of which all else is only shadow and reflection.

The starting-point of that system, of which this Article is intended to be a *resumé*, is a remark of Kant, that to have ideas and not to be conscious of them is an apparent contradiction, since how can you know that you have ideas unless you are conscious of them? But the contradiction is only apparent; for although you cannot be immediately, you can be mediately, conscious of having such ideas.<sup>1</sup> In the examination, therefore, of the principle of the Unconscious, it is necessary to abandon the deductive method of the dogmatists and of the philosophers of the Absolute, and to attempt to arrive at speculative results by the inductive method of natural science. The first duty is to collect data relating to the principal phenomena of animate existence—relating to the voluntary movements of the body, to reflex

which by the extensiveness and minuteness of the scientific knowledge it displayed, the rigor of its logic, and in the novelty of the method it proposed for solving the old problem of the Absolute, at once attracted the attention of the German philosophic world. Its success was as immediate as that of the great work of his father in philosophy was slow in coming. Schopenhauer waited a quarter of a century for the second edition of his "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung," but in the first eight years succeeding the publication of Hartmann's treatise, it passed through no less than seven editions. Von Hartmann is one of the most diligent as well as one of the most prolific of the German writers on philosophy. Among his more recent works are, "Selbstzersetzung d. Christenthums u. die Religion der Zukunft" (The Self-Destruction of Christianity, and the Religion of the Future); "Kritische Grundlegung d. transcendentalen Realismus" (Critical Foundation of Transcendental Realism), and "Wahrheit u. Irrthum im Darwinismus" (Truth and Error of Darwinism). His last work, at the present writing, "Neu Kantianismus, Schopenhaueranismus u. Hegeleanismus in ihrer Stellung zu den philosophischen Aufgaben der Gegenwart," is an examination of the philosophy of Kant, Schopenhauer, and Hegel in their relation to the philosophic problems of the present day.

<sup>1</sup> Kant, Anthropologie, § 5: "Von den Vorstellungen, die wir haben, ohne uns ihrer bewusst zu sein."

action, to the *vis medicatrix naturae*, to instinct human and animal, to sensual love, to feeling, to sensation, to thought, to the origin of language, to aesthetic theories, to music, and to history; and, secondly, it is necessary to demonstrate that these phenomena are the results of the action of the Unconscious.

The voluntary movements of the human body are due to the working of the Unconscious. I will to raise my little finger, and it is raised. How is it raised? The will cannot immediately raise it, for if the finger nerve be cut the finger is not raised. What then is the causal connection between a volition whose content is the conception<sup>1</sup> (*Vorstellung*) of a raised finger and the nerve which raises the finger? Practice, habit, cannot form that connection, for practice facilitates only what is already known. The association of muscular feeling with the act does not explain the connection, for the muscular feeling is only an intermediate link between the volition and the outward act, and therefore it needs to be explained itself. The correct solution is the following: The conscious volition to raise the finger produces an unconscious volition to strike the point *x* in the brain, in order thereby to raise the finger. The unconscious volition to strike *x* contains an unconscious conception of the position of the point *x*. This unconscious conception is obtained by distinguishing *x* from other points in the brain. The solution, therefore, is that every voluntary movement presupposes an

<sup>1</sup> At the suggestion of the editor, I render *Vorstellung* by conception. This term I use, however, not in the sense in which it is usually employed in philosophical nomenclature, as the process of arriving at concepts, but in the sense that finds its best authority in the writings of Dugald Stewart. Stewart, to be sure, applies the word both to "that power of the mind which enables it to form a notion of an absent object of perception, or of a sensation which it has formerly felt" (*Works*, i. 99), and to an act of this power. In the latter sense he writes of "the conception of an absent object of sense" (*Ibid.*, p. 100), "a very strong conception of the sounds which," etc. (*Ibid.*, p. 100), and in this sense I employ it. This philosophical use of the term corresponds very closely to its meaning in the common expression, "I have no conception of it." In this sense it is equivalent to Locke's "Idea"; but with the meaning that is now assigned to this word it is not a proper rendering of *Vorstellung*.

unconscious conception of the position of the end of the nerve in the brain which executes the movement.

Instinct also furnishes a case of the action of the Unconscious. Instinct is action with a purpose, but without consciousness of the purpose. To solve this old riddle of philosophy three theories have been proposed. It has been argued that instinct is the result of corporeal organization; but this theory is overthrown by the fact that to corporeal organizations of identical structure different kinds of instinct belong. Corporeal organizations of different structure give rise, moreover, to the same kind of instinct. Some web-footed fowls are land animals, and others are water animals. Spiders of the same species spin different kinds of webs, and birds of the same species build different kinds of nests. American monkeys, having tails, live in trees; African monkeys, without tails, also live in trees. Instinct, therefore, cannot be the result of corporeal organization. The usual theory, again, that instinct is the result of mental mechanism, is also false. For though this mechanism remains constant in its constitution and nature, instinct exhibits variations in its character and action. If mental mechanism were the true theory of instinct, animals would always do the same things in the same way. This, however, is not the case. The migratory instinct in birds appears only at intervals. The spider's instinct to mend his broken web appears only in case the web is broken. Instinct is not, therefore, the result of mental organization. It is, however, in the third place, the result of the working of the Unconscious. For instinct and the Unconscious work by identical methods. Each has an unconscious will and an unconscious conception. Each obtains the result of its work ignorant both of the method by which it works and of the result to be attained. But instinct is not confined to the brute creation. Man, in his fear of death, in his sense of shame, in his feeling of nausea, in his sympathy with both pain and pleasure, possesses it in an eminent degree. But these familiar phenomena are only the reflection of the noumenon universal and eternal — the Unconscious.

The manifestations of the Unconscious exhibited by the *vis medicatrix reparatrixque naturae* are similar to those of instinct. When worms of a certain species are cut into several parts each part puts forth a new head and a new tail, and performs all the normal functions of any member of the species. Each section of a divided star-fish develops into a perfect fish. When the fins of a fish are removed, the most important ones are first restored. If a bone is broken in either man or brute, the Unconscious makes a stronger joint than before the fracture. If a snake's skin becomes so injured that it is not worth repairing, he sloughs it off, and another straightway grows. In all these cases the Unconscious works through the *vis medicatrix naturae*. This recuperative power is greater in animals than in man, and greater in the lower than in the higher animals. The hair and the nails are the only examples of its working in the case of man. For in man the *vis reparatrix* is directed from the external object and act to the mind and the subjective condition.

In the phenomena of reflex action evidence is also found of the existence and action of the Unconscious. Accepting the definition of Wagner, the physiologist, reflex action is best defined as action caused by sensual excitement (*excitirende Reiz*) touching a nerve which imparts the excitement to the brain. By the interposition of the brain the excitement passes over to a motor nerve, and by means of muscular action it makes itself felt.

The most familiar instances of reflex action occur when one is about to receive a sensation. When you are on the point of touching an object, the particles in your finger-tips unconsciously move. When you are about to taste, your mouth unconsciously waters. When you are about to listen, the auditory nerves are unconsciously stretched. The Unconscious through reflex action protects the body from injury. It raises the arm to avert an impending blow. It turns the head to avoid a threatening missile. It lets fall the curtain of the eye to shut out an atmospheric mote. It is the power

by which the somnambulist scales roofs upon which no man in his waking moments could for an instant stand. It is likewise the power by which mules climb mountain paths whence man would instantly fall and be dashed in pieces in the gorge below. It is likewise by the same power, in its manifestation of reflex action, that I, as I sit at my desk, write letters and words without any conscious thought of either their appearance or their individual meaning.

It is in the act of thinking that the Unconscious very strongly manifests itself. All thought consists in analyses, syntheses, and relations of (*Begriffe*) concepts. Sir William Hamilton likewise says that all thought consists in analyzing, conjoining, and disjoining ideas. The conjoining of similar, and the disjoining of dissimilar, ideas is not dependent upon the conscious mind. The great discoveries of science, as gravitation, consist in uniting ideas which properly belong together, yet which have previously been separated. But the uniting of similar ideas is a process of the Unconscious. The Unconscious likewise gives the concept of relation. The concept of equality, as that which exists between our idea of two dice, neither exists in the objects themselves, nor is obtained by the working of the conscious mind. It must, therefore, be given by the Unconscious. The phenomenon of memory also exhibits the action of the Unconscious. Memory consists in the presence of a conception which calls up a similar conception that previously existed in the mind. No nexus of which the individual is conscious binds together the two conceptions; but the presence of the one always causes the return of the other. A nexus, therefore, of which the individual is unconscious must connect them. The processes of thought and of memory, therefore, depend upon the working of the Unconscious.

Aesthetic judgment and art production also depend upon the action of the same omnipotent power. Two theories of the Beautiful are pitted against each other, each of which contains truth. The first, beginning with Plato, and possessing as its modern expositors Kant and Schopenhauer,

asserts that in the emotion of the Beautiful the mind goes beyond the individual object, present to the senses here and now, to the perfect idea of the object, to its ideal, which is beyond time and space, and exists in eternal changelessness. The Beautiful is, according to the first and great idealist, the Platonic Idea; and the aesthetic judgment is, according to Kant, *a priori* synthetical. The second theory maintains that beauty contains only sensual elements, with all ugly elements rejected. It exhibits the principle of the empiricists that beauty depends upon psychological and physiological conditions. This latter theory fails to indicate the reason that the sentiment of beauty arises in the human mind. The ideal theory is right in placing the realm of the Beautiful beyond the realm of consciousness; but wrong in denying a process of the Beautiful, and in substituting for the process a ready-made product. The only fact of which we are conscious in aesthetic judgment is delight, enjoyment; but as consciousness explains not the method by which this delight and enjoyment arises, they must necessarily arise from a process of the Unconscious. The aesthetic judgment is empirical, *a posteriori*, in its application and purpose, but its judgment-seat, the supreme court where its decisions are debated and delivered, is in the Unconscious. In art production, likewise, the Unconscious rules. Every work of art possesses a single conception, a fundamental idea; but taste, criticism, labor, may suggest partial conceptions which help to complete and perfect the central idea. It is, however, the Unconscious that decides upon the method for its completion and perfection. Schelling, therefore, says that the artist is impelled by a power unknown and of which he is unconscious. The one grand idea which he is embodying in marble or on canvas comes to him from the realm of Unconsciousness. The association of ideas, also, which aids him in his work, depends upon conditions of which he is ignorant. For this association conscious reason might grope in vain; but from the darkness of the Unconscious it flashes into the artist's brain without labor and without warning.

The formation and growth of language is also the work of the Unconscious. All philosophy is involved in language, and may be evolved by the analyzing of language. The philosophy of Kant, and of Schelling began with the examination of the principles of language; and from these principles are derived the fundamental ideas of their philosophies. The idea of substance is derived from that of subject, and the idea of attribute from that of predicate. At present language and abstract thought exist together: as fast as we tunnel through, to use Sir William Hamilton's figure, the sand-bank of thought, the stones of language must be built into walls and arches, to allow farther progress into the boundless mine. But it was not so at first. As no clear consciousness can exist without language, the origin of language must have preceded the origin of consciousness. Language is, therefore, the gift of the Unconscious. It sprang from the unconscious working of the unconscious genius of humanity. Its complexity is so intricate that it is not the creation of a single mind. Its harmony is so simple, its unity so complete, that it is not the common creation of the diverse workings of several minds. Fundamental words, as "being," "becoming," exist in every language; and the co-operation of several minds in the formation of a language presupposes the existence and the use of language. Language grows, moreover, by the same unconscious method by which it originates. Beginning with syllables, it proceeds through single words and agglutinates to different languages. Whenever a new word is desired, the sign of a new idea, the unconscious mind presents it ready-made for the purpose.

The method by which sensation or sense-perception arises indicates the action of the Unconscious. Sensation, in common parlance, depends upon a certain contact between the senses and the external world. This external world exists. For (1) to receive sensations the senses must be open; if sensations came from within the condition of the senses would not affect the character of the sensations. (2) Sensations are produced without law, but states of conscious-



ness are subject to law. (3) The verdicts of several senses agree, as the verdict of smell, sight, and taste in regard to food. If the Ego alone exists, the Ego creates these different sensations, and one sensation calls up the others. This, however, is not the case; for often these sensations exist separately. (4) The objects of sensation seem to be bound together in a fixed order. Effect can be thought before cause; but in the external world cause always precedes effect. (5) Three senses, at least, lead us to believe in the existence of bodies like our own; and from the action of these bodies we infer that the same causes animate them as animate our own bodies. Now from the contact of our organs of sense with this external world which we believe to exist arises sensation. Of sensation we are conscious; but of the method by which sensation arises we are utterly unconscious. We know we have a sensation; but how or why we have it we know not. The process, therefore, by which sensation arises is the work of the Unconscious.

To sum up, then, the work and functions of the Unconscious: It guides the voluntary movements of the body; it controls instinct; it works through the *vis medicatrix naturae*; it directs reflex action; it governs the method and qualifies the result of thought; it manifests its power in aesthetic judgment and art production; it originates language; and is the fountain-head of sensation.

The Unconscious, moreover, possesses many excellences of which the Conscious is deprived. (1) The Unconscious is never weary or sick; the Conscious is both weary and sick. Consciousness depends on the brain and nerves, and is therefore liable to both weariness and sickness. Unconsciousness, being independent of the brain and the nerves, is free from these afflictions. (2) The Unconscious never wavers or doubts. It acts instantaneously. Though it acts in time, it requires no duration of time for its action. (3) The Unconscious never errs. The mistakes made by the Unconscious through the faculty of instinct are only apparent. For (a) the organism is formed with certain propensities, as

a hornless calf to bunt, and a snake-eater to tear in pieces a dead snake. These apparent mistakes arise from a muscular propensity of the animal, not from the action of the Unconscious. (b) Habit destroys instinct, as a domesticated animal eats poisonous herbs, which a native does not. (c) The apparent errors of instinct spring from the conceptions of the conscious intellect, not from the action of the unconscious, as in case a hen endeavors to hatch a china egg. (4) In the Unconscious will and conception are always united; but in the Conscious there is no will without a conception, though a conception may exist without a will. In consciousness, therefore, the conception, the intellect, is emancipated from the slavery of the will.

What, then, is the method by which from this ocean of the Unconscious arises the island of consciousness. Consciousness is caused by the vibration of the nerves of the brain. An object in the external world, making an impression on the brain, produces a sensation. This sensation, presenting itself at the bar of the Unconscious, surprises the Unconscious. The Unconscious had not willed its appearance. Surprised and indignant, therefore, at this invasion of its recognized right, it awakens into consciousness. Thus the Unconscious becomes conscious. A similar explanation of the origin of consciousness is given by Fichte in his *Anstoss*, by Schelling, and by Böhme.

The capstone of this philosophy, as of that of Arthur Schopenhauer, is pessimism. As the Unconscious becomes conscious only through the non-satisfaction of its will, so it is maintained in this state of consciousness only through the will's continued state of non-satisfaction. Whenever the will is satisfied with its condition, it becomes unconscious. Like a spoiled child, it always feels its pain, but never recognizes its pleasures. The world of conscious existence is therefore a world of misery, pain, despair. It is, however, the best of all possible worlds, since it sprang from the perfect wisdom of the unconscious; and it is impossible to imagine a better world of its kind. Yet it is so bad, so full

of pain, misery, and death, that its non-existence would be preferable to its existence. By what method, then, shall man escape from this purgatory of conscious existence? The heaven of Schopenhauer's philosophy is attained by an absolute negation of the will. Will is the only real existence. The essence of will is desire. The essence of desire is want. The essence of want is misery. The essence of existence, therefore, is misery. And the negation of the will is, therefore, the negation of misery and of existence. And so by a philosophic jump is gained, in Schopenhauer's system, the heaven of Nirvana.

It is also evident that, as all misery springs from the subjection of the intellect to the will, the heaven of existence can be attained by the emancipation of the intellect from this slavery. This emancipation can be gained by an increase of knowledge. For knowledge and will are contraries. Knowledge is subjective, impassive; will is objective, active. By the cultivation of knowledge, therefore, the power of the will is weakened. As in the highest form of aesthetics man is a pure knowing subject, so in all the experience of life, every increase in knowledge is succeeded by a corresponding decrease in the power of the will. This is the path that leads to the philosopher's heaven. It is the heaven of pure knowledge; and at its door lies, fettered and chained, man's first and last enemy, the will.