

from the original. The mind is just like a gallery, hung full of conceptions or pictures of things; some of them drawn from the imagination, and some of them drawn from nature, and true to it. A conception, thought of as a mental idea, is a known conception, when it is correct, and we are assured that it is correct. A Known Conception consists thus of two parts, (1) conception, and (2) subjective assurance. This is strictly the philosophical definition.

A Known Conception, thought of merely as a proposition representative of a mental idea, is composed of words, part of which represent the conception, and one of which, the affirmative verb or copula, represents the subjective assurance; thus, as corresponding with the mental idea, it has also two parts. When the verb "to be" or the copula is used, assurance alone is expressed in it; as "John (is) striking James." But the assurance of the proposition may also be expressed in a verb which, at the same time, is also descriptive of the conception; as, "John strikes James." "John striking James" would be the conception alone, without the assurance. The assuring force which is wanting in "striking," is found in "strikes."

An Unknown Conception, of course, is one which we have no subjective assurance of being correct.

An incorrect or Unknown Conception, expressed in a proposition, consequently should never have assurance expressed with it.

A conception may be divided into as many parts as there are words used in expressing it; for each of these words expresses a separate idea. But a very common division is what is called the logical, that which divides the conception into subject and predicate; the subject being the thing spoken of, and the predicate being that which describes or which is affirmed of it. It should not be forgotten, however, that as many things are spoken of in a proposition (any one of which may be used to describe another), you may, in most cases, make anything in the sentence the subject, and put all else in the predicate, and the general conception affirmed, will to all intents and purposes be the same. In truth, it matters but little what division may be made, provided the two philosophical elements, a correct conception and assurance, be properly expressed within it.

Memory.—Definition.

Memory is that power which the mind possesses of retaining, within itself, conceptions and facts within easy reach of the will, so that they may be brought before the attention at our pleasure at any time.*

Imagination.—Definitions and Explanations.

Imagination is that power of the mind by which we are able to inceptively create† either new ideas or new modifications of ideas, differing from those already in the mind. In other words, it is the power of inventing ideas not already existing in the mind. These definitions are general; and the latter is the one mostly used in popular language. It just means the power of inceiving either new thoughts or new combinations of thought, irrespective of the truth or error which these thoughts may represent.

As these definitions are much too general and indefinite for use in a work of this kind, we give a technical definition of imagination, and to which we shall adhere in our treatment of mental phenomena in the subsequent pages.

Imagination is that power of the mind by which we inceptively create or originate conceptions, not contained in known conceptions already existing in the mind. In other words, it is that power of the mind by which we originate conceptions which we do not know to be correct.

Having given these preliminary definitions and explanations of some of the simpler principles of our mental nature, we shall introduce other definitions as we find most convenient during our discussion on man's mental and moral constitution.

* We may not always be latently conscious of everything that is stored up in memory. Memory is not identical with latent consciousness. We may be latently conscious of the present as well as of the past; and the imagination, the feelings, etc., have as much to do with latent consciousness as actually influence it, without its being consciously sensible of its presence. An idea in the memory may often be so dormant as to produce no sensible effect whatever. In the sphere of latent consciousness,—imagination, the subjective feelings, etc., often do their most important work in suggestion, invention, etc.

† To inceptively create an idea, is to originate it in the mind without actual perception. See Definition of Inception on page 9.