

## CHAPTER II.

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### THE CONTENT AND RANGE OF CONSCIOUS LIFE.

It has been noted that the science of education postulates an ideal end for the individual life, and claims that this end may be obtained by a proper development of that life through effort. The attempt to discover a rational ground for this hypothesis will involve an examination into the genesis and content of conscious life, and the circumstances and conditions of its extension. How are these foundation principles of the science to be discovered and established?

Our conscious life is recognized in experience, as single and individual. Investigation shows, however, that, in each of its modes, it presents a variety of aspects, according to the manner in which it is viewed. These are capable of analysis and classification. Without dogmatizing, therefore, at this early stage, in regard to the source or nature of the conscious subject or ego, let us investigate whether such an analysis will afford any explanation of the essence of conscious life, and the field of its possible activities.

Examining the primary facts of conscious life, we discover that they present the following phases or aspects:

- 1st. Every conscious state is a self-conscious state, or stands in an internal relation to the conscious life, as possessing value or interest,—it is an affective state.
- 2nd. These modifications of consciousness present an external aspect, distinguished from their subjective aspect.
- 3rd. Conscious life presents an aspect of impulse or activity, in which the two former aspects, the affective and the objective seek to adjust and identify themselves in the form of knowledge.