

is, in fact, the one self-evident.

fields of vision—to The mind is thus all that is going on

se presentations of may be easily proved them to imply more appear to be some- through the medium lled on a closer ex- which appears to be if nature had in- w that these seem- use of these sense ation, but only the themselves obstruc- they exist.

es in general, the mirror, wherein we actually seen is in else, either in the at all; and this is then, are merely are so is that they m, and all perfect ity, so as to com- ne fact, that with- side world would e to take each of his mind. This,

at up in a house the sun, moon,

My mind looks links only of one

easily be proved by them, unless sensation of sight, ace, which I call at I can put my

the testimony of have that colour inst it; and the e. Then, it is w it, and not a size, and occu- nfirm by touch, that it has six e, etc., the sen- ship the outside. ge in like man- my hands and fracture appear- sh it gives me,

necessary. The joining together med them into sh they came.

This junction of the separate ideas is in reality a process of reasoning; only, in this case, the conceptions which we unite are not drawn from the memory, but acquired immediately by perception.

None of the senses reflect all the qualities of an object at once, although some of them reveal more than others. Sight may give size, form, etc.; but only touch,—hardness, temperature, etc.

The amount of reasoning mixing up with the perceptions necessary to the knowledge of one object alone, is sometimes very great. It is emphatically important, at all times, to bear in mind that in every separate act of perception, the conception created is exactly what appears in the sensation: that is, we conceive of the appearance precisely as it is reflected. But even when these simple conceptions are obtained, reasoning is generally necessary to separate in the sensation what belongs to ourselves and what belongs to the external object, to compare the testimony of the one sense with the testimony of the others, and to conjoin in one all the conceptions or ideas thus interpreted as a truthful transcript of the outside whole. It is not at all necessary to suppose that the sense object is an exact likeness of the external one reflected; for the object seen in vision is but mere colour, not matter, like the outside one. It is quite true that the sense object stands in the relation of an effect on our sensitive organism, from the external object which is the cause. But every effect reflects the properties of the cause; and this is pre-eminently the case in physical sensation. Thus, in touching a hot object I have a sensation of heat swathed in pain. The object is in a hot state, but it is not pain. If I form the idea that the object is pain, I go beyond the testimony of the senses. The true conception of it is that it is an object in that warm state capable of producing the sensations heat and pain. The conceptions obtained thus by perception are not obtained by the testimony of one sense alone, but of all. The one sense asserts and confirms the evidence of the others; for the senses never contradict one another or lead us astray, unless we assume them to say more than they actually do. Thus, in touch I press my finger against a solid object. The sense of sight shows me that the object resists it by the point of my finger becoming flat against it; at the same moment I have a sensation of resistance from it in touch which I ever afterwards know as the sensation of resistance. Any object afterwards giving me that sensation I know to be unyielding or hard.

Also, in sight, I perceive an objective appearance of a certain size and form. I apply to it my fingers, and by touch ascertain that its evidence corresponds to that of sight, teaching me, in addition, that it is also a material solid. Afterwards, I know all objects of such visual appearance to be material solids. So also in regard to the sense of hearing. I hear a sound seemingly proceeding from a person in front of me. By the concurrent testimony of the senses, in connection with reasoning, I know that the sound is merely an effect, produced in me by the oscillation of the air, of which the man's voice is the cause. Also, in the same way, I know what the sound effect in my mind represents in the act of the man who is the ultimate cause. Thus, we should ever bear in mind that the senses are just the reflecting instruments by which we test and come to know the objects in the outside world and form a mental transcript of them. And in all this process, though there would be a great deal of reasoning, the constant reiteration of the process would invariably lead to ellipses and the shortest methods. And as constant, correct practice invariably tends to correct habit, through habit we come to possess what is called acquired perceptions, which are illustrated by the fact, that when we see an object in a bed of colour, we never think of it being else than matter, just because experience teaches us that all such appearances are material.

In acquired perception, all that experience has invariably educed in the past from particular sensations, suggests itself to the mind in the moment of perception, though not literally a part of the actual sense conception. As the use of the senses is generally acquired in childhood, the child is guided, no doubt, in their meaning by what is called rational instinct; but it is well to know that the reliability of the method pursued by this instinct will bear the closest scrutiny of human reason. So also experience gives important aid in promoting acquired perceptions, because it corrects false reasoning and perception.

It is important, then, with reference to perception by sense presentations, to bear in mind the following important facts:—That though the conception created in each separate act of perception is exactly that of the sense presentation, yet in forming a conception of the outside thing presented by it the mind invariably goes beyond the sense presentations which reflect it, and forms its conception of the outside thing, not out of a conjunction of the sense presentations which come from it, but out of a conjunction of facts obtained from them by processes of reasoning confirmed by experience. The sense presentations are infallible and transparent mediums; so the mind forms its conception of outside things correctly and quickly through these mediums, and never makes the mistake of taking the conception of the medium to be that of the thing which it reflects.

In these paragraphs we have devoted some care in illustrating and explaining perception