

It has been urged that pleasure and pain make up feeling as feeling. The first differentiation of Pain is through cognition of object painful. This state is Fear. Difference in intensity is developed very early, so we have Terror and Fear proper. Cognition of time soon differentiates—under immediate form as Alarm and under more distant form as Dread. Far later Horror as altruistic form of terror will arise. We merely give this as an approximate illustration of the correct form and method of evolutionary classification. The development of mind as a whole must be followed. Pleasures and Pains would appear as the two great correlated classes into which the emotions would divide, and each would in interdependence be differentiated by the forms of cognition and volition as these severally arise.

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MR. MERCIER'S CLASSIFICATION OF FEELINGS.

By CARVETH READ.

A plan of classifying the Emotions, or rather of providing a substitute for such a classification, had occupied me for some time, when there appeared in MIND a series of remarkable and in many ways admirable articles on the Classification of Feelings by Mr. Mercier: articles of such excellence that it would have been absurd to proceed with what I had to say without some examination of them. And whilst the publication of my own notions is still unavoidably postponed, it seems best to print at once the following controversial matter. Mr. Mercier begins by professing a general adherence to Mr. Spencer's psychology, and to the principle of Evolution; but, finding some fault with that philosopher's classification of Feelings, he proposes to set forth another more in accordance with the rest of the system. The objections he raises against Mr. Spencer's doctrine as expounded in *Psychology*, § 480, must be allowed, I think, to have some foundation in the text. He shows that the same feeling, Terror, may be classed as Presentative-representative, Representative, or Re-representative; and that feelings so different as Blueness and Triumph seem to be sometimes included in one class (MIND XXXV. 326-8). Confining attention to § 480, these objections seem pertinent; but this leads me to make three remarks. First, Mr. Spencer in classifying feelings has not resorted to as much abstraction as he might legitimately have done, but has rather dealt with total states of consciousness. Thus Terror at sight of a snake, Terror at thought of a snake, and Terror without definite occasion on going into the dark, seem, as Mr. Mercier points out, to be placed in three different classes. But surely the element of Terror is the same in all these cases; and, as to the ancient essential body of it, is in each case of the same degree

of representativeness. Secondly, Mr. Spencer has unfortunately omitted in this passage to remind his readers of the distinction (prominent enough in earlier sections) between feelings peripherally and centrally initiated. This distinction of course traverses those that have respect to representativeness, and had Mr. Mercier remembered it he would not have thought Mr. Spencer unable to separate Blueness and Triumph; for, when both are representative, Blueness is definitely representative of one sort of peripheral feeling, whereas Triumph (though, in its several elements, remotely) is not as a whole definitely representative of any peripheral feeling. It would be well, I think, to make the distinction of Peripheral and Central Excitation fundamental, and ground that of Representativeness upon it. Blueness and Triumph would then appear to be separated not merely by specific difference, but as belonging to different orders. Thirdly, what I have just said must occur to any one who reads § 480 by the light of § 481. For we there learn that the chief value of Representativeness as a principle of the classification of states of consciousness, arises from its generally implying corresponding degrees of integration, definiteness and complexity. Now this is, no doubt, true in some sort of either peripherally or centrally excited feelings in classes severally, but not if we take them together. The power of sustaining the feeling of Blue in idea implies a greater integration of consciousness than does the feeling of Blue from immediate stimulus; but is the idea of Blue to be compared with Terror in respect of integration and complexity? To compare the two great orders of peripherally and centrally excited feelings with respect to definiteness seems merely inappropriate: since in the former case definiteness is understood of comparison or relationality; in the latter it means speciality of impulse or of the control of conduct.

The explanations of Mr. Spencer's doctrine which I have now offered will, I hope, serve to parry Mr. Mercier's objections to it; and, by way of a general excuse for the criticisms which I purpose making upon the latter author's classification of feelings, I may say that Mr. Spencer's classification seems to me, as far as it goes, a more natural outgrowth of his own system and of the principle of evolution. Mr. Mercier complains (p. 329) of Mr. Spencer's not explicitly expressing the emotional element of mind in terms of the correspondence between the organism and its environment (though he admits that this seems to be taken for granted), and consequently of classifying feelings "from a standpoint mainly subjective". But this is hardly just. The terms Presentative-representative, Representative, Re-representative have an objective reference. They denote stages in the growth of feeling, accompanying the organisation of cognitions, during the extension and increase of the correspondence (between minds and the world) in space, time, speciality, generality, complexity, as set out in *Psych.*, Part iii. Bearing this in mind, we shall easily detect

an error in Mr. Mercier's first principle, which will explain most of the shortcomings in his classification. "Feeling," he says (p. 331), "is the correspondence of states in the organism with interactions between the organism and the environment." Feeling then "must vary as this interaction varies, and it must be possible to obtain a classification of feelings from a classification of the actions". Now, waiving other remarks that might be made upon this statement, we must observe that it omits a most important qualification. It should be enlarged as follows (to begin with his own words): "It must be possible to obtain a classification of feelings from a classification of the interactions" *in all their degrees of extension in space and time, and in all their possible combinations special, general and complex.* Whoever refers to Mr. Mercier's classificatory Tables may judge how far they realise such a principle as this. From them we might suppose that the forces of the environment only approach the organism in single file; that the organism deals with the environment by a series of uncoordinated movements; and that our feelings, just as distinct and structurally on a level, pair off with these interactions. But surely the conduct of life is not so easy, and we are not so simple-minded.

Taking the above principle as amended, observe its impracticability. All the interactions of organism and environment, in all degrees of remoteness and combination, would be hard to classify in any detail; and if they were so classified we could not presume that corresponding with every member of the classification there would be recognisable a variety of feeling. Accordingly, whilst keeping in view (as Mr. Spencer has done) the objective reference of feeling, the basis of any treatment of the feelings (whether a classification or some substitute for one) must be subjective. We must begin with the feelings as given by introspection; and, having made a first distribution of them according to their apparent agreements and differences, we must let them guide us to the circumstances of their origin and growth; whence we may learn further and better particulars to correct our first impressions. Of this work a good deal has been done already, partly as usual by common sense, partly by scientists. We have not to build a new house on a sand-patch of our own reclaiming, but to lend a hand to the workmen upon a public edifice.

If the application of Mr. Mercier's principle according to its complete statement is impracticable, what are the results of working it out in the imperfect form which it has in his articles? Let me begin by drawing attention to some improvements that might perhaps be made in his classification without regard to its principle. And, first, some alterations seem desirable in naming the feelings themselves. Feelings that are excited by interactions differing only in degree of energy, whilst similar in kind and in circumstances, usually themselves differ only in degree, and should be designated accordingly. Thus in Table iii. (p. 345)

Hate, Fear, Terror, would be better called Fear of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd degree; Suspicion, Apprehension, Hope, would be better as three degrees of Apprehension; Mortification, mentioned twice, Defeat, Despair, as four degrees of Defeat. Other similar cases might be shown, but these will serve to illustrate my meaning. The adoption of this plan of naming would further facilitate the avoidance of unsuitable names. Hate is very unsuitable for the 1st degree of Fear, being at least as much akin to Anger, and moreover no mere transitory feeling, but a settled affection or disposition to irascible feeling of peculiar character. Suspicion, too, is properly a feeling that arises not so much from the uncertainty of a cognition in regard to a noxious agent as from a belief in the cunning and secrecy of its attack. And what shall we say to Hope as aroused by the uncertainty of the cognition of an overwhelming noxious agent? Several other names in Table iii. alone seem ill-chosen—as Resignation, Courage, Mortification, Meekness, Resentment, Contempt, Scorn.

Again, some Feelings are misplaced, of which the worst case is that of Religion (MIND XXXVII. 17), classed amongst feelings corresponding with interactions neither conservative nor destructive, as genus 4—"the relation of the organism to the unknown". Surely this is following Mr. Spencer where he is least to be followed. Even granting the soundness of his argument in *First Principles*, Part i., it must still be remembered that feelings respond not to facts but to cognitions, and that the religious object has very rarely hitherto been cognised as unknown. The place of Religion seems to be amongst the first order of Social-conservative emotions of Table i. (p. 4); where in fact we find Piety, though in what exact sense is uncertain. The religious cognition has indeed rarely been of an agent steadily beneficent to the community (as Mr. Mercier makes the object of Piety to be), but rather of one whom it was important to keep so as much as possible. But that the feeling is of a social nature is shown by its being reached apparently only at a certain stage of social growth, by its rites, by its contagiousness, by early gods being often (if not always) ancestors or kings, by the differentiation of social sections to maintain public worship, and by its being in general a supplement of law: though in its later growths it may aid in reforming law, as in our Puritan rebellion, when 'men of religion' beat the 'men of honour'; which, I think, by a sense of the unknown they would hardly have accomplished. Such reflections suggest that the view of Martyrdom (p. 12), as a sense that public reprobation is undeserved, must be inadequate: has it not rather been hitherto a sense of 'the perfect witness of all-judging Jove'? As to the connexion of Religion with Art, which Mr. Mercier points to in justification of his classing, that is only to a small extent directly psychological, chiefly historical; priest-hoods having alone had in early times the culture, wealth and leisure requisite for elaborate Art.

Striking omissions from this scheme are perhaps not numerous. I note chiefly Sociality, the feeling that grows from the mere presence of the community, and which is most noticeable in the effect of the absence of its conditions, producing homesickness, distress of exile, *Heimweh*. Sympathy, too, or rather the sympathetic transfiguration of other feelings is wanting :— the name Sympathy at p. 15, Table xiv., should surely be Compassion. *Weltschmerz* deserves recognition now-a-days. So I think do Malice and Malevolence in Table xiv. of the Sympathetic Feelings. Loyalty, too, and the peculiar class-feeling of Honour or 'the point of Honour', should appear in the social group. Perhaps the great generality, speciality or indirectness of some of these led to their being overlooked.

I now come to objections which seem to me to lie against Mr. Mercier's classification because of the principle on which it is based. We saw that that principle fails to take account of the remoteness, speciality, generality and complexity of some of the interactions between the organism and the environment. Mr. Spencer has shown at great length how a cognitive correspondence of the organism to the environment develops; and, though I cannot point out any explicit statement of his that alongside of the cognitive an emotional correspondence grows up, I believe every one will admit that this is a part of his doctrine; and that the two parallel growths proceed upon similar principles, namely, by the integration of simpler cognitions on the one hand, and of simpler feelings and groups of feelings on the other, into more special, general, complex cognitions and emotions. It follows from this (as Mr. Spencer shows) that neither Emotions nor Cognitions<sup>1</sup> can, except in the crudest way, be classified at all, because they cannot be separated.

<sup>1</sup> This seems a good place to notice Mr. Mercier's earlier classification of Cognitions in *MIND XXX.*, p. 260-7. He there criticises Mr. Spencer's classification of Cognitions according to representativeness, much as we have seen him above take exception to Mr. Spencer's classification of Emotions; but with less force, and in a style less safe from the charge of being merely verbal. Mr. Mercier regards the fundamental distinction of cognitions as lying between those that establish a new relation in consciousness, and those that merely revive a former one: degree of representativeness he admits as a principle for subdividing these main classes. But he seems to admit also that in every cognition there is some element of novelty; which requires the establishment of a new relation in consciousness; and plainly the seriality of consciousness makes it impossible to have twice an identical experience. Now cognition is the classification of experiences; which will vary from the most particular recognition to the most abstract subsumption; will vary too in the complexity of the terms and relations classified: and of these variations representativeness seems the best mark. I may add that as Cognitions, like Emotions, develop by integration and by differentiation from common bases, they too can be only very imperfectly classified; and although a tabular scheme of their mutual relations, analogous to that which I have in view for Emotions, may be suggested, it will perhaps be still more difficult to realise.

If it is true that the simpler emotions enter into the more complex, and are elements of them; if the activity of the more complex consists in the simultaneous activity of simpler ones; if (physiologically considered) it is probable that complex emotions do not depend on special cerebral tracts, but chiefly on centres of the co-ordination of those tracts that simpler feelings depend on,—it follows that complex emotions cannot be classed apart from the simpler. And if one simpler emotion enters into several complex ones, the complex cannot be classified apart from one another. As we cannot classify animals and the entrails of animals, so we cannot classify the feelings of Proprietary Justice and of Property, nor Love and Admiration; nor Awe and Fear. And if the feeling of Property enters into both Justice and personal Love, we cannot separate and classify Love and Justice: it is not as if Property were a generic attribute in which Love and Justice resembled each other; the common element is not a mere resemblance; it is a true identity—one root common to two trees that have other roots distinct. Yet all over Mr. Mercier's tables these feelings are widely distributed. And this is an inevitable result of the imperfect principle on which he proceeds, in regarding feelings as corresponding to single interactions of organism and environment, and overlooking the correspondence of the higher feelings with groups of interactions. If feelings have equal simplicity of excitation, why have they not equal simplicity of constitution? And surely that is not the case. If, on the other hand, some feelings correspond to groups of interactions between organism and environment, and therefore have a complex excitation, their constitution may be equally complex. And what more natural, what better economy, than that their constitution should be the union of simpler feelings severally corresponding to those interactions that together make up the groups of interactions to which they (the complex feelings) correspond? The having no regard to such considerations as these seems to me the fundamental weakness of Mr. Mercier's scheme, and one that must greatly lessen its value to Psychology; though it may have seemed a brilliant, I may say, dazzling performance to many readers—as to me certainly for a time it did, in spite of an indefinite suspicion that its acceptance implied the 'labefaction' of all the principles of the science. It would indeed be too much to declare such a classification useless: every catalogue made upon a principle not only aids the memory and facilitates a survey of the subject, but is pretty sure in some way to disclose important relationships, and so to be light-giving and suggestive. But to put it forward as carrying out the doctrine of Evolution was particularly unfortunate; for every such classification must follow the lines of origin, growth and pedigree, and precisely these the scheme before us tends to conceal and obliterate. It cannot therefore, I think, become incorporated with Psychology.

For the same reason such a system can give little assistance to Sociology as not readily lending itself to the explanation of different types of national, or of savage, barbarous and civilised character. Hence it can throw little light upon the practical sciences of human life that depend upon these more theoretic sciences of human nature: I mean, it cannot much help us in Politics, Ethics, Education, Æsthetic. Yet in these departments just views of the nature and relationships of our emotions are perhaps more important than of any other portions of our mental frame. Man, according to the paradox, is not a rational animal; he is at least as much an emotional one. The arousing of emotion is to life at large what tact is to social intercourse, an instinctive guidance by clues too subtle and manifold for reason to follow or comprehend; it is character, confidence, virtue, happiness, the support and the reward of exertion, the cement of families and states.

There is a well-known doctrine of Mr. Spencer's in relation to Ethics, that the gradual growth and organisation of the feelings, by coordinating the springs of our various activities, at last establishes the moral control of action. The power of an emotion over action is, he says, great in proportion (1) to the number of elementary experiences from which it is derived, or to its representativeness; and (2) to the degree of its integration, or the ease and certainty with which the whole emotion, if at all excited, comes into operation. The most representative feelings are the higher moral feelings; which, therefore, if sufficiently integrated, would overpower every other and guide the whole career of life. If it were possible then to classify feelings according to their closest resemblances and alliances, the moral feelings would be exhibited in their relations to all beside, and a great deal of light would be cast upon Ethics. The same classification might subserve the theory of Education by exhibiting the scope and organisation of our emotional nature at several stages of life. And if it were possible to indicate by it the political character, some light would be thrown upon Politics. At least, by help of a judicious commentary, it might illustrate the variations of political character among primitive tribes, among despotic or among free nations, and even among the several parties of the same nation. And we might learn perhaps that to understand the nature and growth of emotion is to have a well-grounded hope for the future of mankind. For the growth of civilised character is that kingdom whose coming is without observation, and by a stealthy prevalence transforms and ameliorates the world.

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