

THE RELATIONS OF STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY

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THE tendencies which have contributed to render psychology so largely independent of philosophy are for the most part identical with those which have brought it under the guiding influence of biology. The prevalent disposition to model psychological procedure upon biological patterns is a conspicuous expression of the force of this influence and one which has led to some interesting anomalies in current psychological usages. When one undertakes to treat the mind as an organism, it is natural to suppose that one may adopt the practice of the biological sciences and proceed to the construction of a mental anatomy, dealing with the facts of psychical structure, and a mental physiology, dealing with psychical function. Indeed, this is apparently the precise program which many of our contemporary psychologists attempt to execute. The legitimacy of the distinction between the structure and the function of consciousness is assumed as essentially self-evident. In view of this fact it is not without significance that psychologists should have failed to follow more consistently the example of the biologists in the development by the latter, as relatively independent sciences, of morphology and anatomy, on the one hand, and physiology, on the other. Certainly no psychologist has as yet attempted either a purely structural or a purely functional account of consciousness. Moreover, there is commonly no disposition to countenance the ideal implied in such an undertaking, and in practice psychology appears as a science engaged with both the anatomy and the physiology of the mind. It is the purpose of the present paper to inquire into the nature and relations of these two phases of the psychological field and to point out certain consequences touching the status of psychology among the philosophical sciences, which seem involved in the conclusions we shall reach. It will be convenient to begin with a brief examination of the concept of psychical structure.¹

On the negative side it is clear that in psychology the term "structure" cannot refer to spatial relations, as it does in anatomy and morphology, nor has it often been thought necessary since Descartes's time to call in question the spaceless character of consciousness. The morphological cell and the gross structures of anatomy accordingly find no immediate and perfect analogues in the psychical organism. But con-

¹For typical authoritative statements of the scope and problem of psychology, as contemporary writers regard these, see WUNDT in the *Philosophische Studien*, Vol. XII (1896), pp. 1 ff.; also MÜNSTERBERG, *Aufgaben und Methoden der Psychologie: Grundzüge der Psychologie*, Vol. I, pp. 1-199, *passim*. Professor Münsterberg's exposition in the *Grundzüge* is too elaborate to permit of ready articulation with the common formulæ and too recent to

allow of confident condensation. The independence of psychology from philosophy is ably maintained by Dr. SCRIPTURE in an article entitled "The Problem of Psychology," in *Mind*, Vol. XVI (1891), pp. 305-26.

There is probably no more convenient statement of the generally accepted views concerning the relations of the philosophical sciences to one another than is afforded by LADD's *Introduction to Philosophy*.