

PREFACE

THE present work has been written to take the place of my *Outline of Psychology*. The *Outline*, which was stereotyped in 1896, had long passed beyond the possibility of revision, and the continued demand for it showed that there was still room in the science for a text-book which set experimental methods and experimental results in the forefront of discussion. I should have preferred, however ungratefully, to let the book die its natural death; for I feared that it would be impossible to recover the freshness and vigour of the first writing, and I knew that another issue would lay an oppressive tax upon future time and energy. But colleagues and pupils and publisher were insistent, and I finally decided to rewrite. A first part, containing approximately half of the new work, appeared in 1909. For the benefit of those who have purchased this installment, the second part is now issued in separate form. Both parts are comprised in the present volume.

It was the intention of author and publisher that, on the completion of the *Text-book*, the *Outline* should be withdrawn from the market. They look forward to this withdrawal in the near future; meanwhile, so long as the steady demand for the book is kept up, the last edition of the *Outline* will be held on sale.—

It is, I think, unnecessary to apologise for the increase in size. If psychology is to be taken seriously, its problems must nowadays be treated in some detail. Besides, the *Text-book* aims, within its limits and upon the elementary level, at systematic completeness; it is not a digest or redaction of a larger work, to which the student may be referred for further information. I could wish, remembering some of the criticism called forth by the *Outline*, that I had a fully elaborated Systematic Psychology to fall back upon; but I am inclined to believe that, from the student's point of view, a text written expressly for the class-room is more satisfactory than the simplified version of a book written primarily for psychologists.

The *Text-book* follows, in general, the lines laid down in the *Outline*. The only point that calls for special mention here is, perhaps, the scant space accorded to nervous physiology. Readers of the Introduction, and especially of § 9, will acquit me of any desire to minimise the importance of this subject. But I have always held that the student should get his elementary knowledge of the nervous system, not from the psychologist, but from the physiologist; the teacher of psychology needs all the time at his disposal for his own science. It is true that psychology, if it is to be explanatory, must supplement the description of mental processes by a statement of their physiological conditions. But then it is also true, unfortunately, that any such statement, in the present condition of our knowledge, must be largely hypothetical. In a comprehensive work, discussion of the various physiological theories, for instance, of feeling and attention would be altogether in place; to discuss them with beginners strikes me, I confess, as a sheer waste of time. My own

plan is to show, by reference to the theory that appeals to me at the moment as the most plausible, how in principle an explanation is to be worked out. But I am careful to say that the theory itself is simply guess-work, that many other guesses have been made, and that there is a great gulf fixed between established physiological fact and the secondary constructions of physiological psychology.

A special feature of the *Outline* was the paragraph, entitled "Method," in which I showed how the reader might test for himself the statements made in the Section to which it was appended. Some of the methods thus described had been worked out only in my own laboratory; their technique was crude and their range of application restricted. Now, after fourteen years, the variety and refinement of method are so great that an adequate treatment, within text-book limits, is out of the question. Nevertheless, it is important that the student be instructed in method. And if I might offer a suggestion to teachers of psychology who propose to use this book in the classroom, it would be that they go behind my discussion, now and again, to the original sources. A topical lecture, that gives a critical account of the plan, method and results of some single investigation, is not less interesting and may sometimes be more valuable than a logically proportioned review of the entire subject-matter of a Section.

My thanks are due to my wife, and to my colleague, Professor Madison Bentley, for constant advice and assistance during the preparation of the *Text-book*. I dedicated the third edition of the *Outline* to the Regius Professor of Medicine in my old university; it was he who, in 1890, suggested the writing of the book. Sir John Burdon

Sanderson has now laid down a life full of years and honours. I owe him — as who of his pupils does not? — a heavy debt of gratitude; and I dedicate the *Text-book* to his memory.

CORNELL HEIGHTS, ITHACA, N.Y.,

July 15, 1910.

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