

THE PERCEPTUAL PROCESS by A. Campbell Garnett. *George Allen & Unwin, 21s.*

Professor Garnett wishes to defend the following theses: (1) that the analysis of mental life remains the most important task of the philosopher (2) that the analysis of ordinary language is a valuable tool in this task, but is not enough (3) that the failures of 'scientific introspection' and the disclosures of psychoanalysis have not invalidated the philosopher's armchair method of reflection on personal experience.

As for the first thesis, Garnett states that all the various branches of philosophy are analyses of different phases of mental life. This highly questionable assertion is nowhere really argued for. As for the second, it is stated that the distinctions which language makes must correspond to distinctions which both speaker and hearer can find within their experience, but that not all distinctions in experience are so mirrored. On the other hand, attention to ordinary language reveals distinctions which introspection obscures. As for the third, Garnett is concerned to defend G. E. Moore as against William James. The former maintained that the sort of reflective analysis of mental life which issues in the various brands of idealism, overlooks the distinction between the act of awareness and the sense *qualia* of which we are aware. The latter, however, an accomplished practitioner of introspection, declared that introspection simply did not reveal such acts over and above the flux of sense. Garnett believes that there are such acts, but that they are not revealed by James' sort of introspection – special concentration of attention on immediate experience. Immediate experience includes all that is subjective in the sense of 'private', and the correlative 'objective', in this sense, refers to what is public. But immediate experience also includes much that is objective in the sense of being the object of attention; here the correlative 'subjective' refers to the attending. But concentration of attention is always concentration on the object (in the latter sense).

Thus introspection misses subjective activity. Apparently the solution to this problem is relaxation, for the self can only catch a glimpse of its own activity in its relaxed, ordinary activity and reflection.

Garnett concentrates his analysis on 'observation'. The fact that we observe a succession of events and not merely separate, static instants requires us to recognise a distinction between observing and what we observe. Observing is a peculiar sort of reaction to something which appears. What is called the 'span of attention' is the holding together of a limited number of distinguishable items in the unity of present experience. The active part of this process is the selective emphasis or concentration on some items rather than others. The person attending is the only one who can report it, though others may have evidence for agreeing or disagreeing with his report. The attention we thus report is a brief event, something we do, an action.

According to Ryle, however, 'observing', 'experiencing', and 'noticing' are dispositional rather than episodic. Garnett maintains that observation involves a private act, and sensations, defined as the presence in experience of sense *qualia*, can be objects of observation. An item of experience must be noticed. He agrees with Ryle that we are 'trying to find something out' about what we notice.

We notice (i) body sensations, such as tickles, pain, cold, muscular strain (ii) sensations which, though connected with a special sense organ, appear as associated with something else besides our body (iii) relations of space, time, degree and qualitative distinction between sense *qualia* (iv) 'physical things' or 'material objects'.

What does the claim to notice (iv) involve? Following C. D. Broad, a physical object has duration, extension, is independent of the perception of any observer, is public, it inter-

acts with other physical objects, and it has qualities other than the relational properties of space and time.

Lockian theories of perception, it is claimed, have been closer to common sense than naive realism. Tactile, thermal and gustatory sensations, though caused by features of the object, have their locus in the body. The representative theorist merely appeals to physiological facts about sense organs and their stimuli and extends the causal hypothesis to all our perceptions. For the Lockian, however, what we observe can never be a physical object. The phenomenalist alternative is examined and found lacking. Austin, it is held, was right in much of what he said about the sense-datum theorist, but, Garnett insists, we still can and must distinguish between sense experience immediately given and what we infer from it. 'I see a pig' is a claim to have in experience certain *qualia*, to have noticed them, and to have succeeded in finding something out about them, namely, that they reveal a pig. Garnett's own view is a reformulation of the causal theory, with the addition that the physical object, with which the *qualia* of sense are associated, is given as a non-sensory element in experience. Avoiding the epistemologist's preoccupation with sight, he concentrates on 'pushing', 'pressing', 'knocking', appealing to the common-sense preference for grasping, holding and pushing as tests of reality. The achievement claim made by verbs of perception is the claim to have found out about a relation between particular sensory *qualia* and a potential centre of resistance. The experience involved in finding an actual centre of resistance, that of 'pressure', is not simply the experience of a sense *quale*, but of a dynamic process – the process of resistance. The finding of an obstacle or centre of resistance is the finding of something other than sensory *qualia*, for the latter are passively received, they cannot be pushed or pressed. The dynamic notion of resistance cannot be derived from

kinaesthetic sensations of pressure, hardness, muscular and tendon strain. Such sensations do not constitute a 'sensation of resistance', for the notion of resistance is intelligible only as correlative to effort, yet these can be felt without making any effort or trying to do anything. Such sensations are felt 'in us', whereas the centre of resistance is something other than the feeling, striving agent. 'The finding of actual obstacles is the finding of an other-than-onself, a centre of resistance as opposed to oneself as a centre of efforts'. The analysis of physical objects as centres of resistance, it is claimed, fulfills Broad's criteria.

The view which finally emerges bases itself on the Whiteheadian distinction between 'casual efficacy' (our experience of centres of resistance) and 'presentational immediacy' (our experience of sense *qualia*). Sense *qualia* function as mental symbols of the physical events causally connected with them. The paradoxes of the pure Lockian view and the implausibilities of phenomenism are avoided by denying that our knowledge of the physical world is exclusively derived from sense *qualia*. Sense *qualia* are private and mental, but the reality which they symbolize and which we encounter in effort-making is public and physical.

Garnett's thesis is well-argued and free from deliberate obscurity posing as profundity, but one cannot imagine it shaking current orthodoxies. He picks holes in the polished anti-dualist theses of Ryle, but nowhere really comes to grips with Wittgenstein's subtle, many-sided and complex attacks on mental acts as private events and sense-data as private entities. However, it is good to be reminded that there is a complexity in the concept of a sense-datum which the Wittgensteinian often overlooks. And students of the history of philosophy may well find, as did the present reviewer, that Garnett's use of Whitehead illuminates the very obscure theory of perception held by that author.

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THE PHENOMENON OF MAN by Pere Teilhard de Chardin. *Fontana*, 5s.;

THE FAITH OF TEILHARD DE CHARDIN by Henri de Lubac, S.J. *Burns Oates*, 30s.;

TEILHARD DE CHARDIN AND THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST by Christopher Mooney, S.J. *Collins*, 30s.;

GOD'S WORLD IN THE MAKING by Peter Schoonenberg, S.J. *Gill*, 16s.

Père Teilhard de Chardin died in April 1955. In April 1965, French publishers, booksellers and even radio, could devote a whole fortnight to the man and his thought. The interest has been extraordinary and there is no sign of it

abating. The English-speaking world is only beginning to catch up and still we have to rely largely on translations from foreign languages for books about him. But it is significant that at least one of these present