

CHARLES S. PEIRCE
PAPERS

No. 403

Chapter I. The Law

846. The one law of thought is the law of the association
of ideas. The association of ideas consists in their tendency to
spreading over into one another. This is a power of associa-
tion. Kant, the father of modern philosophy, said that
the function of conception is to reduce the manifold of
sense impressions to unity.

the function of the brain, and especially the memory. The
second impression to which the brain makes way, for
S. 17. Since it manifest in ~~more~~ more than one way. It
is further -
presently a multitude of particular sensations, & the
water acts in another way than man (or animal) could
do now. For having acts like "Bray" in ~~any~~ ^{any} animal
the multitude of sensations, the second giving a unified or
total of sense; and its parts, in the first place, a unity of
consciousness, not segregated into distinct ~~sensations~~, as
it seems to us. And this is true both ⁱⁿ man & though far
doubtless in the other, that of the unification of all of our
senses, & of that of the isolation of different sensations
which we call "sense". And this is the ^{real} ~~first~~ ^{second} ~~third~~
impression established in the natural man.

§ 12. There are distinguishable grades in the process of con-
sideration. That universal conception which is nearest to
sense is the conception of the present, in general. This is a conception
because it is universal. It represents the object of attention, in
general. But the act of attention does not think the object thus
universal. It only sees a factual phenomenon,
any particular thing. It only sees a fact of it. It will know
as one might catch a fly, and make an It of it. It will know
this conception, Dubitance. It is the making of a It out of a
group of Facts.

group of facts.
¶ 17. In like manner, as substance is the generalized ~~mean~~^{as substance} idea of the collection of terms, so we can generalize the quality of speaker. The understanding of a ~~few~~^{few} words in pronouncing something to be true. See To this the notion of ~~understanding~~^{intuition}, & ~~conception~~^{intuition}, and the conception, not of the speaker, but of the question, makes the conception we call Being.

If we say "the Moon is black," the black is the Substance, from which the blackness has not been differentiated; the is, while leaving the substance first as it was and, indeed, that it is about to rationalize its qualities, which it does, for instance, immediately after, by saying that blackness is a quality.

(22) The modern doctor speak of particulars, by which they mean præscissio, or part-cutting; and this we have in logic. But most precision, as a name for the same operation which is otherwise termed abstraction, seems ^{good} enough. What is wanted is that kind of mental separation which results from attention to one element of an idea, and neglect of the rest. It may be doubted whether that is a very successful analysis of the operation. It would be less objectionable to say that in abstraction we suppose one part of a phenomenon, without any particular importance, to consist of a part. Thus, I may suppose the chair on which I am sitting to have no action whatever on light, so that it is quite invisible. Then I ^{presently} abstract its solidity and etc. and abstract from its color and visibility. Again, I can suppose space has the four dimensions I do not myself believe, it has four dimensions, and with all the trouble of a lifetime of contemplating these dimensions, perhaps I cannot clearly imagine four dimensions. But I know perfectly well, having in my time been very diligently studied the subject, how things would look in four dimensions; that is, I can rather slowly and painfully make out the direct appearance which would present themselves to me. I will admit in lucid moments of inspiration and suddenly, I see them. I will admit that having been witness to such scenes and gone over them, actually believed there were four dimensions. I can, therefore, abstract from the indeterminateness of space.

The process of abstraction, or precision, must be carefully distinguished from the process of concreteness, the reverse of which consists in the addition of qualities, the result of which is to produce a complete representation which is more

when, diminished long, is an impossible supposition.

Dissemination is a mere distribution of memory, but it is impossible to suppose there is color, without ~~space~~, ^{color} and ~~space~~. Accordingly, although I can readily suppose the ~~duration~~ of color, from space, yet color, as something objective, or the ~~color~~ in which we understand it, cannot be supposed without time duration, or latent. But we can perfectly well disseminate color from space; for this merely consists in recognizing two color in other ~~things~~ which are necessarily involved in the supposition of space.

Dissociation is imagining one thing without imagining another; and the ~~whole~~ possibility of doing this depends upon the ~~whole~~ ^{value} of our experience, upon our having in play various or conflicting emotion in novel situations, and other accidents of life. One man may be quite unable to dissociate elements of experience which better trained minds can dissociate without difficulty. Very few people can imagine you without imagining color, ~~and~~ ^{and} shape, and they suppose uncolored space to exist.

Decimation is not a reciprocal process. It frequently happens that while A cannot be perceived from B, B can perfectly well be perceived from A. The reason of this is as follows. Elementary concepts depend only on independent occasions of experience; that is, they are produced according to general law, the condition of which is the existence of certain independent acts. If a man's sensations not reduce the impressions upon which the following unity, it is a mere arbitrary addition to them. But if the impressions could be definitely comprehended without exception, the latter would not reduce them to unity. Hence the impression of a more intricate complex cannot be definitely comprehended, unless the neglect of an elementary conception should obviate them. Decimation, on the contrary, requires no other

there is, in general, moreover, why the premises which have been made
it would not be neglected; and therefore the explanatory conception
may frequently be presented from the more abstract consideration
from the impressions;

§21. The facts now collected afford a basis for a systematic method
of seeking out whatever universal elements of being there may be
intermediate between the manifold of substance and the unity of being. It
has been shown that the occasion of the introduction of a universal elemen-
tary conception is either the reduction of the manifold of substance to unity,
or else the expression of substance by another conception. And it has
further been shown that the elements conjunct cannot be supposed
without the conception, whereas the conjunct can properly be supposed
without these elements. Now, empirical psychology, desiderating
a occasion of the introduction of a conception, and not having only to
ascertain what conception already lies in the idea which is annexed to
that of substance by the first conception, but which cannot be supposed
as thinkable ^{as to exist} without the first conception, to have the next conception in order
to proceed from the conception of Being to that of Substance.

It may be noticed that throughout this process, interpretation is not
involved. Nothing is assumed respecting the subjective elements of
consciousness which cannot be readily inferred from the objective
elements. Some psychologists assume that that which is directly in
the mind is the direct possible thing to know. But this is a fallacy.
From the reader do not know that it is possible to be angry without
knowing that one anger. There are different ways in which
things may be considered. It is not enough to be in consciousness,
and to pass over them without ever reception, before they can
be stabilized.

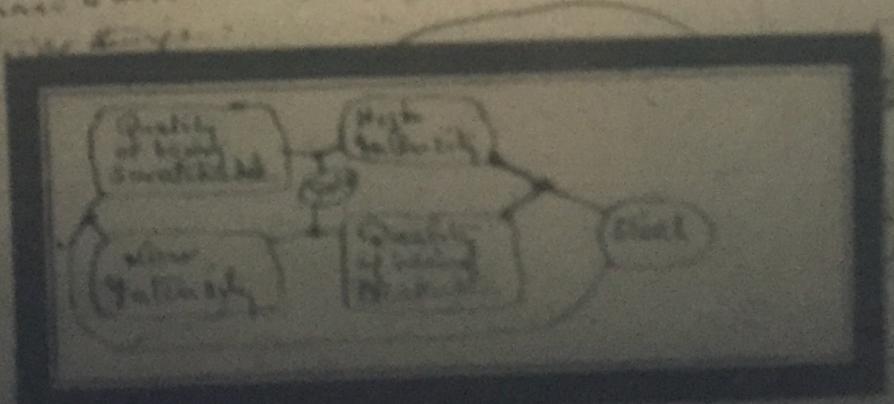
222. The conception of Possessor when something is supposed
attributed to it. True. When we make a judgment, we think in
the first place about something qualitatively or attribute in so far as we
know about that thing. That is, we think that substance of which we
are thinking to have a Quality. & Quality is thus the first conception or
idea in passing from Being to substance.

Quality seems at first sight to be given in the impression; but such ready
interpretation must not be trusted. We judge our conception to be appropriate to
another, more directly experienced. But the conception, which is less experien-
ced and more ideal, that is, more like known to us in what we do not
know, that, I say, is regarded as having a sort of ideal being independent
of its being thus embodied in that particular thing. For instance, upon
watching a tree or an ant, I conceive, what quality what shape, instead, the
tree or the ant which I judge to possess that same movement, as ap-
parently known; but like a ghost - a phantom it has some sort of
inseparability about it which no description however elaborate can completely

*Quality is here used for a character, not considered as related to a
second object. The word quality has several meanings so closely allied that
it has become rather a vague term. It comes from the Latin qualitas, a
word invented by Cicero to translate Aristotle's Greek word hyle. In
Aristotle gives a certain definition of it, which is called the "predicamental"
sense, since in that sense it was taken as a predicament or category, by the
Poles of their logic. Hence he defines it as (1) a character, (2) having a
contrary, (3) admitting of differences of degree, and (4) being a relation in which
things agreed and differ. This is the most proper sense of the word; but as writers
have constantly confounded it with meaning, Aristotle very often uses
it for a character upon which a moral judgment can be passed; and
good characters are often called qualities than bad ones. In French, this
has come to be the most familiar meaning; and it is very common in
the vernacular of our language. This is one of the innumerable instances
which Aristotle has in the nature of expressions we have in the lan-
guage of common existence, qualities to be used - for example in the ex-
pression of pleasure, the virtue, the elements and distinctions
of which are to be had, - of being affirmative or negative
and the like, for the expression of the various qualities.

second. Then I recollect that I was carrying a stone in my hand
 on it, clearly I must have had already some idea of a man. If I
 say, of Instinct, I must already have the idea of instinct. But the
 animal was the only object which suggested that idea, I should not
 be able to separate the idea from that particular animal; and if I
 did not had any means to separate them, I could not attribute for example
 a judge it of that animal. So I must then have an abstract, general
 thought, an idea of instinct; and but that idea, supplementary to the first
 from my previous reflection, is applied to the thing I see before me,
 — that is not seen, but is rather a theory to account for what I see.
 The same thing is true in the case of every judgment. It is
 not given in looking at it as a theory of sense the sense-impression. This
 is the case even with what we called qualities of sensation. I look
 at a black stone. There is a direct intuition of blackness. But if
 I do judge the stone to be black, I am comparing this experience
 with previous experience. I am associating the sensation with an
 auxiliary idea derived from former black objects. Then I say to myself
 the stone is black, I am making a little theory to account for the black
 of it. Say the theory is quite enough for present; that is, that it is only
 the impression thought over again. So it has been put into another
 form of thought. It is in the way of inference, at least, or theory or
 forms.

The best way to think clearly is to think in visual diagrams, rather
 than in words, or auditory images. Suppose we were to compare two metals,
 one like gold, malleable, easily beaten out; the other a
 piece like steel, hard & brittle, but easy to break. Let us make a little
 form of these relations thus:



We can best in order to represent the relations among qualities
we must treat those qualities as objects to which the things are
connected. In the above diagram (and we could not make it
simpler while making it show the same relations) we have ten separate
objects between whom 12 lines are drawn. Two of the objects are the
things, gold and steel; three are the qualities, softness and bulkiness;
two are the intensities; and the remaining four, represented by black
spots, are the facts.

When a quality is thought about as a distinct object, it is said to be
thought abstractly, and is called an abstraction and mount formed
from abstractions — a process of such abstractions are called abstract
reasoning. It is a great blunder in logic to confound abstraction with
thinking with the operation of precision, or separation in definition.
Thinking with the operation of "precision" is "non" abstraction, employing
some degree of contact. But thinking abstractly, in the sense of
isolating characters and thinking of them as distinct objects is the
only way to think clearly and efficiently. Mathematics is only rendered
possible by thinking in this way. One not possessing have a notion
that such thinking is futile and false. It would be false to say
that "softness" and "bulkiness" are things in the same sense in which
chairs and tables are things. But if a chair or a table is a mere
real thing there softness and bulkiness, what makes it all. If it
be accurate fitting and the fiction which holds the different pieces
together for a while? An open gate has a chair or a table in it.
which nothing is holding at it or carrying it? At any rate, as with the
important thought picture of the chair and the table, the fact does
not consist in ^{reality} which binds them together in a con-
nection of experience. If there be qualities
of these same features does not also belong to the words defining
the same? The thought may assist in the same process in
as nothing else can do, but it is no guarantee. The following will