

THE
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REAL AND IDEAL RELATIONS.*

NO two terms in the whole vocabulary of philosophy have changed their meaning and even reversed their application so frequently as the words *real* and *ideal*, and no terms have proved so indispensable. We may form the most determined resolution to dismiss the distinctions implied in realism and idealism. It is no use: we only furnish a new instance of the maxim *Naturam furca expelles*.

The terms real and ideal in fact express a distinction which is fundamental in human experience and is apparent in the first moment of reflection. Self-consciousness reveals us to ourselves in two kinds of relation to our environment: in a real relation and in an ideal relation. Real relations bind us to the material world of things, the physical world; ideal relations bind us to the spiritual world of persons; they are the basis of social, moral and religious institutions. The two kinds of relation, mutually exclusive and never identical, lead to a distinction of nature in our own self-consciousness, the distinction between a body which suffers and acts and a mind which knows and understands, between reality or fact and knowledge or truth.

Real relations are *constitutive* of the physical world of which our body is part; ideal relations are *representative* of the universe which our mind apprehends. Examples of real relations are: The conflict of Greeks and Trojans on the plains of Ilium—the clash of forces, the death-dealing blows, the fortified city, the ships on the sea-strand—in so far as the conflict was an actual occurrence under spatio-temporal conditions and involving phys-

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