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CAN EPISTEMOLOGY BE BASED ON MENTAL  
STATES?

A long-suffering public is not unjustly shy of polemics upon the theory of knowledge. If the age of Kant had become weary of "dogmatism, which teaches us nothing, and scepticism, which does not even promise us anything," our own time has reason, it must be confessed, to be wary of criticism which does not always seem to settle anything.

On the practical side there is no difficulty. Modern science has found a method which works. Abandoning the search for forms and essences, separating and abstracting precisely those aspects of experience with which it wishes to deal, natural science has analyzed these and resolved them in terms of its chosen unit. The social sciences, with greater or less degrees of clearness, are abstracting their aspects of experience, and seeking the unit in terms of which they may formulate their analyses. But the theory of knowledge still suffers from failure to recognize just what aspect of experience it is to study, what the terms are in which it would state its problem, and what the end is which human knowledge must set before itself as its goal. Two hundred years of epistemology<sup>1</sup> find the doctors still at issue as to its first principles, and employing methods and concep-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ladd speaks of his *Philosophy of Knowledge* as a 'pioneer work,' but it would be as true to say that since Locke nearly all English writing on theoretical philosophy has dealt with the theory of knowledge, and this is conspicuously true of work since T. H. Green's *Introduction to Hume*.