

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

### THREE WINDOWS INTO REALITY\*

**T**HERE are many aspects as there are many approaches to reality. It matters little with what self-consistent or rational theory we approach nature, she is certain to answer back in kind with some knowledge. All approaches have to be made, however, through the experiences of human consciousness; and all, however varied in result, are stamped with the hallmark of the interpreter. It may well be a source of wonder that with such diverse fundamental assumptions nature should appear so accommodating in informing us, but not if we reflect upon the fact that the human mind itself is a part of that nature which it essays to interpret. As itself a product of nature its normal workings insure its capacity to achieve some truth no matter by what means or in what direction it seeks. In the realm of human thought we are never free from its implications, and when all is said and done can never be more sure of our universe than we are of ourselves, of our own existence, of the validity of our own experience. Many men have pretended to escape the shadow of their own minds to find refuge in some Absolute, but in vain. Neither the Absolutes of space, time, or matter, with which the scientist has hitherto beguiled himself, nor the Absolute Idea or Reason of the philosopher, nor the infallibilities of revelation of a divine Absolute by which the theologian has driven home his dogma; none of these has cleared itself of this fateful "shadow that walks by him still", the necessity for individual judgment. Each in its own field has at one time or another laid exclusive claim to enlightenment. Each has been at some time denied by the others. Let us discuss these various aspects of the approach to reality, for truths appear to be of

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