Knowledge  Sept 1929

I have always said that a belief was knowledge if it was
(i) true (ii) certain (iii) obtained by a reliable process.

But the word ‘process’ is very unsatisfactory; we can call
inference a process, but even then unreliable seems to mean
only a fallacious method, not a false belief as it is supposed to do.

Can we say that a memory is obtained by a reliable process?

I think perhaps we can if we mean the causal process
connecting what happens with my remembering it:

We might then say the belief must be caused by what are
not beliefs in a way that can be more or less relied on to give
true beliefs, and if in this train of causation occur other
intermediary beliefs these must all be true ones.

E.g. is telepathy knowledge? — is it sufficient
to mean (i) taking it there is such a process, can it be
relied on to create true beliefs in the telepathic
(within some limits e.g. when what is believed is about the telepath’s
thoughts)
or (ii) suppressing me as a question closes the feeling of being

telepathed to guarantee truth.

But for female intuition, impression, character etc.

perhaps say not (iii) obtained by a reliable process
but (iii) formed in a reliable way
We say I know however whenever we are certain without reflecting on reliability. But if we did reflect then we should remain certain if and only if we thought our way reliable. (Suffering us to know it, if not taking it merely as described it would be the same e.g. God but it isn't any kind as sufficiently reliable process). For to think the way reliable is simply to formulate in a variable hypothetically the habit of following the way.

One more thing. Russell says in his Problems of that there is no doubt that we are sometimes mistaken, so that all our knowledge is infected with some degree of doubt. Moore used to deny this, saying of course it was self-contradictory which is more radically and ignorant of the kind of knowledge meant.

But substantially the point is this: we cannot without self-contradiction say

$$\exists q \land q \land \neg \exists q \land q$$

One of the is false. Otherwise it would not be a contradiction.

But we can be certain that one is false and must yet be certain of each; but each is then infected with doubt.

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