

**THE FEELINGS OF MAN,
THEIR NATURE, FUNCTION
AND INTERPRETATION**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649291007

The feelings of man, their nature, function and interpretation by Nathan A. Harvey

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NATHAN A. HARVEY

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THE FEELINGS OF MAN

Their Nature, Function and Interpretation

By

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BALTIMORE
WARWICK & YORK, Inc.
1914

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PREFACE.

The New Psychology is distinguished from the Old especially by the greater emphasis it is inclined to lay upon physiological processes. The past twenty or thirty years have seen greater progress in the development of psychology than has been made before since 1691, when Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* was published. This progress has been accomplished largely by the study of physiological changes as they are associated with psychological processes. But the physiology is still physiology, and the psychology is still psychology, and no thorough amalgamation of the two series of processes has yet been successfully accomplished.

In the present book an attempt is made to bring about a closer union of the two series of phenomena than is ordinarily undertaken. The doctrine of parallelism, or correspondence, is invoked to furnish a tentative justification for an interpretation of mental processes in physiological terms.

It must be recognized that the doctrine of parallelism asserts no finality, but represents rather an armistice between two hostile philosophical camps. Psychology can well afford to assume this position which the doctrine of parallelism represents, for it professedly deals with phenomena, and not with ultimate finalities.

The plan of the book demands the postulation of a physiological hypothesis, which is incapable of direct verification, but which is demanded to explain the relation of directly observed phenomena to each other. Such an hypothesis is of the same nature for psychology as

the atomic theory or the electron theory is for chemistry, and has the same value for psychology that the representation of forces by lines has for physics. In no other way does it seem possible to bring the full effect of the studies in physiology for the past twenty-five years to the interpretation of psychological phenomena.

Psychology may be written without reference to physiological processes, just as physics and chemistry may be studied without referring to atoms or electrons or the parallelogram of forces; but so helpful are the connotations of these physical hypotheses that nearly all teachers use them. We shall find equal or greater value arising from the employment of a physiological hypothesis in psychology.

In developing a hypothesis of this nature, it will readily be recognized that much modification of the simple hypothesis may be necessary in order to make it accurate throughout, and applicable to every case, or capable of explaining all observed phenomena. As complex as our hypothesis may seem, it is probable that the physiological changes that occur are many times as complex as the statement of the simple hypothesis will indicate.

As there is no method of demonstrating the hypothesis by direct observation of the physiological changes, its truth or falsity must be judged by its ability to explain all the observed phenomena. In so far as we are able to explain by the hypothesis all observable phenomena, we may accept it as true. Certainly such an hypothesis is within the bounds of possibility, and we are by its means able to bring the results of physiological investigations to the proper understanding of phenomena universally recognized as psychical.

NATHAN A. HARVEY.

Ypsilanti, Michigan, October 8, 1913.

THE FEELINGS OF MAN

Their Nature, Function and Interpretation

CHAPTER I.

MEANING OF THE TERMS.

The word feeling is used in various ways to signify many different things. It has a well recognized meaning nearly synonymous with the sense of touch. We may tell by feeling whether a surface is smooth or rough, hot or cold, wet or dry. While this is a very common meaning, it is not the meaning generally employed in psychology.

Feeling also describes the general state of health; as when we say that we feel bad, or sick, or well. It designates the general sensation which scarcely permits of being localized. It refers to the state of the body as a whole, and not to any special mental process. Closely related to this use of the word is one that indicates certain special sensations, as when we say that we feel cold or hungry. Cold and hunger are strictly sensations, and the use of the word feeling to describe them is no longer in conformity with the prevailing usage that discriminates sensation from the affective process. This use of the word feeling cannot be described as psychological, nor one in which it will be employed as a psychological term.

Feeling also has a use in the description of a picture, or other work of art. As there employed, it means a particular characteristic of the artistic production that renders it capable of appealing to the emotional or feeling side of the nature of the individual. It is rather a figurative use, and not at all scientific in its application. It is not truly a psychological meaning.