

Seventhly, we must advert to the paradox involved in assigning the foundation of realism. Obviously, the foundation can be assigned only by employing propositions. But it is easy to show that the foundation that is assigned cannot consist in propositions. For, if it did, either the propositions in question would be taken in a realist sense, or they would not. If they were, then one would be involved in a petitio principii; one is a realist because one is a realist. On the other hand, if the propositions were not taken in a realist sense, if for ~~example~~ example they were supposed to refer to world of mere phenomena, then one could not conclude to realism; for obviously phenomenalist premisses can yield only phenomenalist conclusions.

Eighthly, we note a corollary that follows from our fifth, sixth, and seventh conclusions. We have seen that the foundation is not to be found in things such as donkeys, or in knowing things, but only in knowing knowing. We have seen that that knowing cannot be analogous and must be proper knowledge of knowing. Finally, we have seen that that proper ~~knowing~~ knowledge must be pre-propositional¹ pre-propositional, that it cannot consist in a set of premisses from which realism is deduced. These considerations bracket our objective, the foundation. Pinned in on either side, the foundation has to reside in the consciousness of ~~knowing~~ knowing that accompanies our cognitive activities.

This conclusion will surprise no one. Prof. Gilson has no partiality in favour of critical realism. Yet, when he gets to the essential point in his Réalisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance, he asserts: 'Or il est certain, et chacun peut l'éprouver en soi-même,....' This appeal to inner experience recalls Aquinas' similar appeal: '.. quilibet in se ipso experiri potest....' From that citation, one can move on to

SIDELIGHTS

The articles I wrote on Verbum some ~~x~~ years ago and my little book on Insight were concerned primarily with simple and verifiable matters of fact. In the articles I asked whether St. Thomas in his trinitarian theory employed a psychological analogy or, on the contrary, took his stand on a more general metaphysical analysis. In the book I asked what happens when one understands and what are the implications of that happening.

But however factual my primary interest was, I could not, of course, prevent mere matters of fact from having a certain bearing on theoretical positions. Indeed, this relevance of fact to theory became very apparent in the reviews and comments of those that found the facts I alleged to be incompatible with the theories they entertained. Then, perspectives and issues shifted away from mere matters of fact to such highly theoretical questions as the ~~existence~~ meaning of a genuine realism, the essence of Kantianism, the implications of transcendental method, or the possibility of a critical realism.

It is to meet this change of ground that the present article is written. Its purpose will not be, of course, either to repeat or to summarize the array of evidence that elsewhere I have assembled, for repetition is not possible and summary is not adequate. Nor will its procedure be to prescind from questions of fact and to attempt to settle issues in some theoretical vacuum, for in that fashion nothing is ever settled. Rather, I shall presuppose the matters of fact, that have not been seriously challenged, and I shall attempt to indicate the sidelights they cast upon the theoretical questions whose solution cannot afford to ignore fact.

It will be noted at once that A cannot be a set of premisses and B their conclusion. It is true that in this fashion one could satisfy the second and third requirements, namely, if A then B, and if not A then not B. But, manifestly, a deductive procedure cannot satisfy the first condition. For either the premisses would be understood in a realist sense, or else they would not. If they were, the argument would be a petitio principii: one bases one's realism on one's realism. On the other hand, if the premisses are not taken in a realist sense, then the conclusion cannot be taken in a realist sense; for instance, if the meaning of the premisses was restricted to a world of mere appearance, then the meaning of the conclusion would be under the same restriction.

From this, however, it does not follow that there can be no foundation for realism. No doubt, one cannot assign a foundation without using propositions. But it does not follow that the foundation itself must be propositions. It can be a reality.

The reality in question, however, must be of a peculiar type. For unless it is somehow known, the first requirement will not be met; and, at the same time, if it is known through the truth of true propositions, then one will be in the logical difficulties already mentioned. It follows then that the foundation must be a reality that is known prior to the use of propositions.

What is it? One might think that any of the many objects contained in the external world meet the case. But of themselves they clearly do not, for while they are necessary conditions of realism, they are not sufficient conditions of realism; ~~they very well can exist without men existing, and unless men exist, there~~ they are necessary conditions of realism, for if there is no external world, then realist assertions of an external world cannot be true; they are not sufficient conditions, for an external world can exist and the affirmation of realism need not follow;