

# **ELEMENTS OF PSYCHOLOGY**

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Elements of psychology by George Croom Robertson & C. A. Foley Rhys Davids

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**GEORGE CROOM ROBERTSON & C. A. FOLEY RHYS DAVIDS**

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*UNIVERSITY EXTENSION MANUALS*

*EDITED BY PROFESSOR KNIGHT*

ELEMENTS OF PSYCHOLOGY

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*The Manuals are also intended to be contributions to the Literature of the Subjects with which they respectively deal, quite apart from University Extension; and some of them will be found to meet a general rather than a special want.*

# Elements of Psychology

By GEORGE CROOM ROBERTSON

LATE GROTE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

*EDITED FROM NOTES OF LECTURES DELIVERED  
AT THE COLLEGE, 1870-1892*

By C. A. FOLEY RHYS DAVIDS, M.A.

FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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IN accepting the flattering invitation of the Editor of this series that I should contribute to it two manuals compiled from George Croom Robertson's college lectures on Psychology and Philosophy, I am doing some injustice to the memory of my revered teacher and friend in order that thereby I may render him a larger justice. It is true that in the opinion of scholars most competent to speak—of Professors Bain, Sully, and James Ward—while it were good that no teaching of such a man should be lost, it would have been repugnant to Professor Robertson's own feelings to see his extemporary discourses in print. They know how he drew a sharp distinction between the style suitable for oral teaching and that appropriate to the literary registration and publication of one's ideas. And the truth and aptness of the spoken matter would of course be liable to every degree of deflexion in passing through the reporting medium. But this compilation does not pretend to clothe the author's ideas in a literary style such as he himself would have approved. The discrepancy in the two styles is illustrated in these pages. The lecture on the growth of the Mind,



not to mention other shorter portions, I have copied *verbatim* from a bundle of the author's notes, entrusted to me by Mr. Charles Robertson, it being, I believe, a chapter in a manual of psychology he was then intending to write. Its flow is smoother, its periods more polished than the more abrupt movement in other lectures. Speaking however as a student of mental philosophy, and not of literature, and without presuming to judge for others, I should have no hesitation in preferring to be led up and into the subject by the more colloquial, direct, and vigorous utterance of the oral style. But this may be in part the effect of treasured associations. That the reporting has at least been so done as to be no unfaithful reflexion of that style is testified to by Mr. Charles Robertson, with whose sanction, promptly and generously accorded, the lectures have been published. 'I recognise,' he writes, 'my brother's thought and manner of expression reproduced with wonderful fullness and accuracy, and feel I am face to face with him.'

As to the more serious objection of a discount on accuracy as to fact and point inevitable in such notes as a student, struggling with the difficulties of his subject, is qualified to take, I may modify if I cannot obviate it by stating the sources and extent of my materials. Twenty-five former students of University College London, who studied under Professor Robertson, have been good enough to send me at my request the notes of the lectures he delivered in their hearing. The response was in nearly every case so prompt and effective that my materials soon amounted to a fairly continuous record of the general and special courses of lectures

as delivered, annually or otherwise, during twenty-one of the twenty-five years of his professoriate; and to have published the whole would have filled at least a third volume. Subjoined are the names of my contributors, to whom I here again offer my hearty thanks:—George A. Aitken, Esq.; Rev. Martin Anstey, M.A.; Mrs. Archer Hind (Miss Laura Pocock); Mrs. Sophie Bryant, D.Sc.; Herman J. Cohen, Esq.; Professor W. Hall Griffin, B.A.; Rev. Isidore Harris, M.A.; H. Frank Heath, Esq., B.A., Ph.D.; Rev. Alfred Hills, B.A.; Principal J. Viriamu Jones, M.A., F.R.S. (University College S. Wales and Monmouthshire); J. Neville Keynes, Esq., M.A., D.Sc.; Benjamin Levenson, Esq., B.A.; Rev. S. Levy, B.A.; J. W. Manning, Esq., M.A.; Miss Dorothy Marshall, B.Sc.; Andrew Ogilvie, Esq., B.A.; Miss Mary A. Robertson, M.A.; Ernest C. Robinson, Esq., M.A.; G. Armitage Smith, Esq., M.A.; President J. G. Schurman, M.A., D.Sc. (Cornell University); Rev. E. H. Titchmarsh, M.A.; H. J. Tozer, Esq., M.A.; Miss Frances A. Welby; Sidney White, Esq., B.A., LL.D.; Miss Eva Whitley, B.Sc.

To some I am more especially indebted, either because (as in the case of Principal Viriamu Jones and Mr. Levy) their notes had been taken down in shorthand and then written out in full, or as being otherwise especially adequate. Collation of these MSS. with my own notes has enabled me to expand, supplement, and verify the latter so as to effect a reproduction better, it may be, at times in its compositeness than any one report, however faithful, could have been. Professor Robertson did not write out his lectures, nor did he leave notes of any except those on Psychology. He

himself regretted that he had not in earlier years written out immediately afterwards what he had just delivered. While lecturing he made no use of notes. He became so intensely absorbed, not only in his subject, but in following the process of its assimilation by every member of his class, that he consulted only the look on their faces. But it was just this considerate procedure of not pressing on to reel off so much of his subject per hour, but of letting his pace in exposition keep time with the signs of following comprehension in his hearers—a wise considerateness to which I have elsewhere borne testimony<sup>1</sup>—that made it possible for all who would to take faithful and readable notes. It tended at times to cause arrears in treatment, and some condensation or omission at the close of a course. But it has enabled me to compile this manual, such as it is, without adding in the text a sentence of my own. I could even add 'or a clause,' since all that I have inserted were merely to expand elliptical utterances that, when spoken as he spoke them, were clear enough. The passages prescribed for reading were those prescribed by himself<sup>2</sup>; the footnotes are also portions of his lectures, where not otherwise indicated, being either parenthetical remarks, or drawn from arguments pursued more in some years than in others, and which, while pertinent, did not

<sup>1</sup> *Mind*, April, 1893:—'George Croom Robertson as a teacher.'

<sup>2</sup> Those in this volume were prescribed in the last course he delivered in Psychology (1891). I have only added, for preparatory reading, references to passages in certain works referred to by him, but not precisely specified. The headings of the lectures and sections, introduced to help the reader, are also mine.