



Aristotelian Society Synopses I

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Aristotelian Society Synopses I

Contributions (on bit.ly/ib-biblio 20 and 25) to J. W. Scott (ed.), *A Synoptic Index to the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 1900–1949* (Oxford, 1954: Basil Blackwell), 013 [sic]

BERLIN, I.

1 *Induction and hypothesis*. Symposium Suppl. XVI (1937), pp. 63–102

Synopsis: **A** The problem about inductive generalizations is not how we know them to be true, but how we justify rational belief in them, 63–5 **B** Layout of the present argument 66–8 **C** No statement can express knowledge, if it either (i) is merely verbal, or (ii) may be erroneous, 69–72 **D** The real problem of induction, 72–5 **E** We do know some general propositions (not definitions or the tautologies which follow from them) *a priori*. We do make ‘intuitive inductions’, 75–7 **F** An intuitive induction is not a tautology, yet its contradictory is meaningless, 75–8 **G** Criticism of the Kantian doctrine of categories, in the light of intuitive induction, 78–9 **H** No causal proposition can obtain support from any *a priori* truth; and if we still say we ‘know’ such propositions, how can we not ‘know’ hypotheses? 79 ff **I** The nature of hypotheses. Criticism of Miss Macdonald’s views, 80–8 **J** What exactly is being asserted when nature is said to be uniform? 89–91 **K** The logical character of what is thus asserted: it is a general proposition and it is empirical, 91–2 **L** It is not tautological or (even) *a priori*, 92 **M** Criticism of Ramsey’s account of the ‘rationality’ of our belief in it, 93–6 **N** What would be the case if the proposition that Nature is uniform were false? (We ought to be able to answer this, if the proposition is empirical), 96–9 **O** Conclusions (i) Simples must repeat themselves pattern-wise if induction is to give original information, (ii) The only ‘proof’ that they do must be circular, but (iii) to accept some uniform repetitions among events as probable, gives *some* probability that *all* make a pattern—a probability which every further evidence of pattern increases; and (iv) in asking whether we ‘know’ nature to be uniform, we are not asking, literally, anything but are putting a pseudo-question, 99–102

2 *Verification*, Vol. XXXIX (1938–39), pp. 225–48

Synopsis: **A** Our contention, namely that the verification criterion is not in principle capable of being applied to the whole field of empirical belief and knowledge, 225–7 **B** The task which was set: to find a criterion of whether an issue is about the facts of experience or not, 225–7 **C** The original form of the verification criterion, 227 **D** Its defence against the first criticisms, 228–9 **E** The ill-success of this defence, 229–31 **F** Efforts to rehabilitate it by taking as the criterion of a proposition’s having significance, its verifiability ‘in principle’, 231–2 **G** Is even this position secure? The classes of proposition which it still leaves without significance: (i) general propositions (which neither Ayer nor Popper succeeds in saving), 232–5 **H** (ii) Propositions other than categorical, e.g. those both singular and hypothetical, 235–8 **I** Are these verifiable even in principle? 238–42 **J** (iii) Propositions e.g. about material objects or about other selves. These also are not in principle conclusively verifiable, 242–4 **K** Verifiability as depending, in the last resort, on intelligibility, and not vice versa, 244–8

‘Induction and Hypothesis’, in *Knowledge and Foreknowledge* (the Symposia read at the Joint Session of the Aristotelian Society and the Mind Association, University of Bristol, 9–11 July 1937), *Aristotelian Society* supplementary vol. 16 (1937), 63–102

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A The problem about inductive generalisations is not how we know them to be true, but how we justify rational belief in them, 63–5

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C No statement can express knowledge, if it either (i) *is* merely verbal, or (ii) *may* be erroneous, 69–72

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F An intuitive induction is not a tautology, yet its contradictory is meaningless, 75–8

G Criticism of the Kantian doctrine of categories in the light of intuitive induction, 78–9

H No causal proposition can obtain support from any a priori truth; and if we still say we ‘know’ such propositions, how can we *not* ‘know’ hypotheses? 79 ff.

I The nature of hypotheses. Criticism of Miss Macdonald’s views, 80–8

J What exactly is being asserted when nature is said to be uniform? 89–91

K The logical character of what is thus asserted: it is a general proposition and it is empirical, 91–2

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‘Verification’ (‘Verifiability in Principle’ in list of contents), *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 39 (1938–9), 225–48; **page references to CC2 added in red**

Synopsis:

A Our contention, namely that the verification criterion is not in principle capable of being applied to the whole field of empirical belief and knowledge, 225–7 **15–17**

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G Is even this position secure? The classes of proposition which it still leaves without significance:

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I Are these verifiable even in principle? 238–42 **28–33**

J (iii) Propositions e.g. about material objects or about other selves. These also are not in principle conclusively verifiable, 242–4 **33–5**

K Verifiability as depending, in the last resort, on intelligibility, and not vice versa, 244–8 **35–40**

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