Generalized Percept

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I see an inkstand on the table: that is a percept. Moving my head, I get a different percept of the inkstand. It coalesces with the other. What I call the inkstand is a generalized percept, a quasi-inference from percepts, perhaps I might say a composite photograph of percepts. In this psychical product is involved an element of resistance to me, which I am obscurely conscious of from the first. Subsequently, when I accept the hypothesis of an inward subject for my thoughts, I yield to that consciousness of resistance and admit the inkstand to the standing of an external object. Still later, I may call this in question. But as soon as I do that, I find that the inkstand appears there in spite of me. If I turn away my eyes, other witnesses will tell me that it still remains. If we all leave the room and dismiss the matter from our thoughts, still a photographic camera would show the inkstand still there, with the same roundness, polish and transparency, and with the same opaque liquid within. Thus, or otherwise, I confirm myself in the opinion that its characters are what they are, and persist at every opportunity in revealing themselves, regardless of what you, or I, or any man, or generation of men, may think that they are. That conclusion to which I find myself driven, struggle against it as I may, I briefly express by saying that the inkstand is a *real* thing. Of course, in being real and external, it does not in the least cease to be a purely psychical product, a generalized percept, like everything of which I can take any sort of cognizance.