Thirdness is found wherever one thing brings about a Secondness between two things. In all such cases, it will be found that Thought plays a part. By thought is meant something like the meaning of a word, which may be “embodied in,” that is, may govern, this or that, but is not confined to any existent. Thought is often supposed to be something in consciousness; but on the contrary, it is impossible ever actually to be directly conscious of thought. It is something to which consciousness will conform, as a writing may conform to it. Thought is rather of the nature of a habit, which determines the suchness of that which may come into existence, when it does come into existence. Of such a habit one may be conscious of a symptom; but to speak of being directly conscious of a habit, as such, is nonsense. In a still fuller sense, Thirdness consists in the formation of a habit.


References: EP 2:269

Date of Quote: 1903