

# IN THE WORKS

The text of the second part (R 955) was written at two different times, as shown by the two distinct handwriting qualities (one with regular strokes, the other more emphatic) found in its different sections. Such a *mélange* confirms Peirce's practice of recycling older texts into new ones. Two sections of the text, one in each "hand," discuss the principle of continuity, and Peirce's timing indicates that they were to be read in succession. The lecture also has two different endings, one in the regular hand and thus composed earlier,<sup>5</sup> and the other in the emphatic hand<sup>6</sup>; the latter, although unfinished, was clearly intended to replace the former. Neither is timed (the "70" minute mark occurs earlier), and the first one, though superseded by the second, provides a much richer ending to the

lecture as it not only discusses Darwinian evolution (where the second stops), but also Lamarckian and mechanical evolutions, and then proceeds to talk about spontaneity, law, matter as mind, habit-taking in the universe, personality, synechism, faith, love, telepathy, afterlife, and the immortality of the soul. Given its deep interest, this alternative ending will be published separately in W9.

What evidence do we have for dating ["Scientific Fallibilism"] (as we have decided to name the full lecture) summer 1893 instead of c. 1896 or c. 1897? First, the physical evidence. The handwriting is consistent with 1892–93 documents, a time when Peirce's script abandons some of the looseness and roundedness characteristic of his 1886–90 writings to become slightly more angular and compact (a tendency that will increase until the end of the 1890s). The different papers used (Peerless Record watermark, or 7 7/8" x 9 3/4" paper size) match other documents of the period. We have also found a Century Club letterhead sheet containing an approximate outline of the first part of the lecture, the back of which is inscribed with the roughly penciled date "1893 June 17."<sup>7</sup>

Second, the textual evidence. The fourth sheet in R 860 contains the deleted sentence "A most flagrant offender is a German writer whose book has just been translated, Dr. Ernst Mach." Thomas J. McCormack's translation of Mach's book,<sup>8</sup> to which Peirce heavily contributed, was published by the Open Court after 28 June 1893, the date of the translator's preface. Unless Peirce's statement was anticipatory, R 860 could thus be

dated July or August 1893. One of Peirce's leitmotifs throughout the lecture is his attack against the "cocksureness" of infallibilists and his defense of fallibilism. Such concerns, and terminology, surface elsewhere in 1893: in Peirce's 9 April letter to Carus criticizing the latter for his "homiletic writing to the *Open Court*"; in Peirce's third "Critic of Arguments" paper,<sup>9</sup> received by Carus on 4 May (a misunderstanding prevented its publication in the *Open Court*); in Peirce's "Reply to the Necessitarians" (a long riposte to Carus's criticisms), which appeared in the *Monist* in July and on which Peirce had toiled during the winter; in his "What is Christian Faith?" published in the *Open Court*, also in July; in his *Nation* review, published in early August, of George M. Gould's *The Meaning and Method of Life: A Search for Religion in Biology*; and in his proposed table of contents for his multivolume work *The Principles of Philosophy*, composed in December.

What could have been the occasion for this lecture? The extant correspondence is silent on the matter. There is no trace of any particular invitation made to Peirce in 1893 to deliver such a lecture, and no trace of anyone commenting on its performance. Peirce certainly expected to deliver it, since he took great pains to ready it for oral presentation. But since his timing stops at minute seventy, while the text goes on for another twenty minutes' worth without coming to a definite end, it may also be that the projected lecture was canceled shortly before its scheduled presentation. Another possibility, though less likely, is that Peirce wanted simply to add a philosophical lecture to a collection of lectures he was ready to give at a moment's notice. By the end of 1892, he had already advertised for three such lectures, one on Pythagoras, one on the Constellations, and a fictional work initially titled "Thessalian Topography" (to appear in W8). In June 1893, though to no avail, Peirce asked his friend John Fiske to suggest a good lecture bureau with a capable manager. Following *Nation* editor W. P. Garrison's advice, Peirce also applied in July for a lectureship to the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, but was turned down because there was no vacancy. A few weeks later he persuaded his brother James Mills to intercede with Daniel C.

*Continued at bottom of page 11*

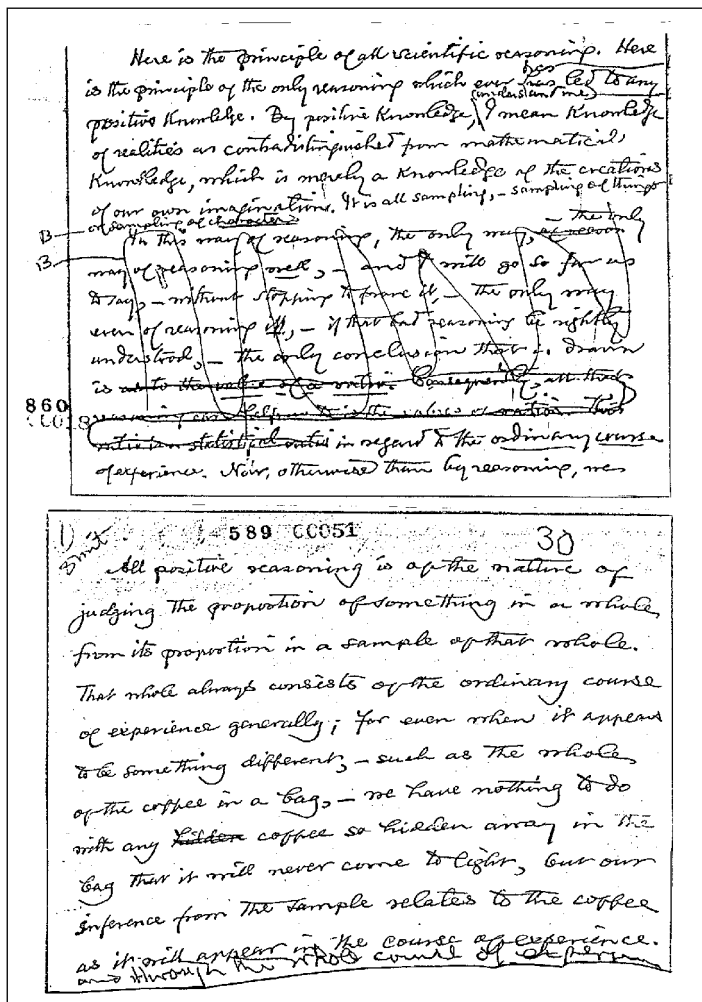


Fig. 2 shows the place in R 860:18 where Peirce decided to drop the rest of that text (deleting the bottom paragraph and interlining a transitional sentence at the end of the previous one) in order to move on to a rewritten second part of the lecture. R 589:51 begins the last of seven alternate sequences, and bears the "30" minute mark.