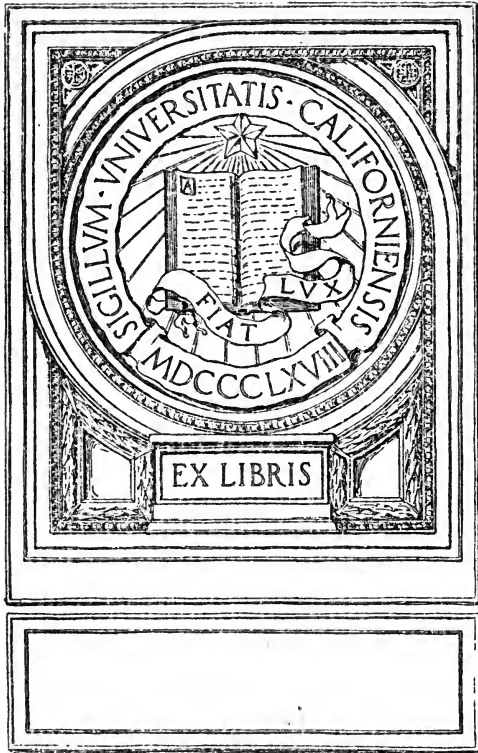


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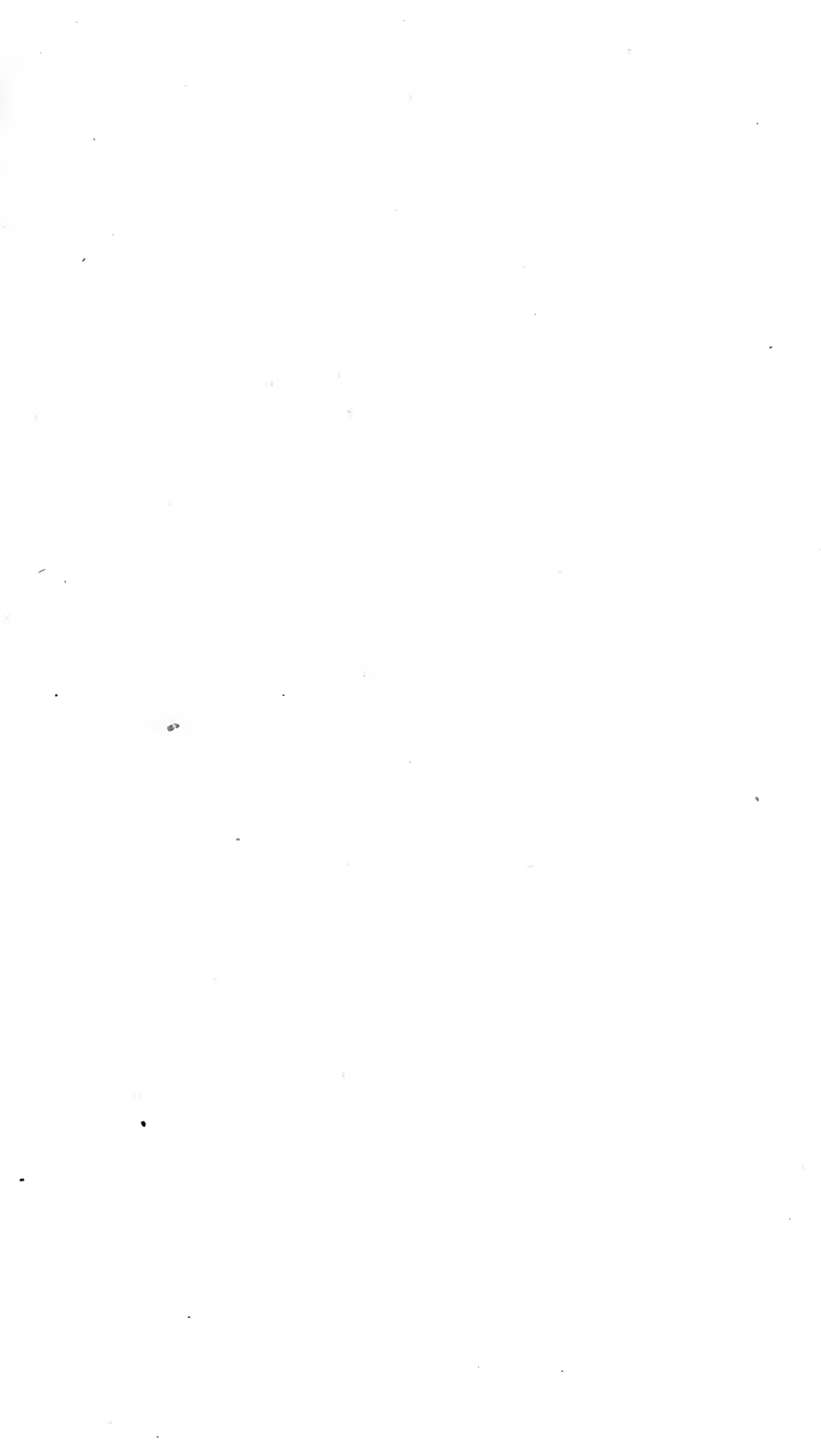


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MIND AND REALITY.

IN an article in MIND XXIII., the present writer attempted a criticism of certain modern hypotheses concerning Reality. Destructive work being much easier than constructive, this second study attempts with some dread the task of considering the whole subject from another point of view. Yet the comfort for the writer lies in the fact that the thoughts here to be set forth are in the main not new. The need seems to be just now that certain ideas known, but in our age too much neglected, should be, not simply revived, but rather reformed, to bring them into closer connexion with modern progress.

This study will fall into two parts. In the first we shall suppose our whole task to be the suggestion of a plausible, *i.e.*, of a simple, adequate, and consistent hypothesis about the nature of external reality. In the second part we shall consider more critically the nature of such hypotheses. In this first part, then, we shall suppose that, by a perfect theory of knowledge, the following result has been reached: Human beings are able to form ideas that correspond in some way with a real world, outside of themselves. That is, the sequence of human ideas corresponds to sequences of external events, or to relations of coexistence among external things. The necessary or uniform connexions of human ideas correspond to regular or to universal connexions among external things. Or, in the brief form of Mr. Herbert Spencer's phraseology, to each necessary relation $a : b$ in human consciousness, there corresponds a relation $A : B$ in the external world. Suppose, then, that all this has been established. No one will admit more readily than the writer that this supposition is merely tentative. The theory of knowledge is yet to be completed, and between its conception and its realisation there are wide oceans of doubt. We shall in fact touch upon the problems of this theory in the second part of our paper. But for the moment suppose admitted what scientific thought generally takes for granted, *viz.*, the correspondence of inner and outer relations in such wise that the former are naturally copies of the latter. And, on this foundation, suppose that we intend to consider what hypothesis as to the nature of the related terms A and B in the external world is, on the whole, the most plausible.

I.

For the sake of avoiding controversy we may for the moment leave out of account two old questions. We cannot really escape either, and both will sternly confront us before we

get in at the door of the temple of certainty. But here at the outset we are playing with hypotheses, and may be absolved from the responsibility of securing ourselves beforehand from all possible attacks. The first is the question of the idealists: How can any reality be conceived unless as implying or including states of consciousness? For the moment we will waive the Berkeleyan contention altogether; for we are not now concerned to prove by metaphysical analysis the universal coincidence of consciousness and reality. We wish merely a plausible hypothesis to be advanced as to the nature of what more popular thought means by reality. The second question that at the outset we avoid is the one concerning the ground of the assumed agreement between the external and the internal orders of facts. Whether this ground lies in a causal determination of our consciousness by the external world, or in a pre-established harmony of both, matters not. We take our stand, then, upon the admitted facts of popular belief. Here are feelings, sequences of feelings, thoughts, trains of thought, systems of scientific belief: all internal facts. Beyond the consciousness of these internal facts stretches (so we now assume, and only assume) another world of facts, in which something corresponds to each one of these feelings, some order of facts to each sequence of feeling, some system of facts and of laws to each properly constituted system of beliefs. The external order of the world beyond corresponds to the order of this internal world of our consciousness, but is not this order. A plausible hypothesis is required as to the nature of this corresponding external order.

Many hypotheses have been suggested in answer to this requirement. The doctrine previously discussed, the doctrine of "Mind-Stuff," was such an hypothesis. Mind-Stuff was to be like in nature to consciousness; but by reason of the simplicity of its ultimate units, each of these was to be again unlike consciousness. For consciousness, it was assumed, is an aggregate of units; each unit by itself has only intensive quality, and, lacking complexity of content, is of course unconscious. Our consciousness, then, is employed in mirroring the complex relations in which the unconscious Mind-Stuff elements outside of us are involved. The usefulness of this hypothesis we have previously tested. But the motives that led to its formation are interesting. These motives were, one may fancy, twofold. There was the influence of Berkeley's argument, reiterated as it has been in so many forms. According to this argument, external reality can be consistently conceived only by assimilating it in nature to consciousness. The second motive was the expressed one of formulating in simple terms the phenomená of

evolution and of physiological psychology. The transition from the material to the conscious, the connexion of the psychical with the physical, could best be conceived by supposing the physical to be but a disguised or attenuated or very simple form of the psychical. The first motive, if it was really very active, we have decided to omit for the moment from consideration. The second and more expressly prominent motive we should consider responsible for the most faulty part of the theory, *viz.*, the undefined double-sided nature of these hybrid Mind-Stuff atoms, the fact that they try to appear among old-fashioned atoms as being quite dead enough for all the purpose of mechanics, while they show their ghostly selves at the gates of psychology, and in very thin voices, with very uncanny behaviour, try to convince us that they are after all really quite alive, and quite ready to take part in the building up of conscious mind.

The Mind-Stuff hypothesis lands us in a dilemma. Either our elementary atoms are as dead as those of Democritus; and then the whole problem of the evolution and the physiology of mind is unsolved: or they have such mental life that out of them complex consciousness can be built up; but then they are Monads, minds of more or less clear consciousness. And in that case, following the reasoning by which the Mind-Stuff theory itself was reached, we are led naturally to the hypothesis that every atom of matter is a little mind; not an intensive element of sensation, but a complex of many elements in a conscious unity of some sort, an apperceptive individual.

To such a hypothesis, be it noticed, we are led only when we accept the method and the premisses that led to the hypothesis of Mind-Stuff, and when we free the conclusion from ambiguity. But the hypothesis in question—that for which the atoms are little conscious souls, with a life of their own, like our human lives, only simpler—will hardly meet very soon with general favour. It is in fact complex and not plausible. And why? Though really better than the Mind-Stuff hypothesis, this other is unacceptable, because it asks us to assume the existence of a conscious reacting thinking being, where no symptom of reaction or of thought or of consciousness appears beyond the simple behaviour of an atom in the presence of other atoms. Better is this hypothesis, that is, more consistent and adequate than the Mind-Stuff hypothesis, because we can form some idea of how a Monad can exist, can enter into relations with other like Monads, can unfold itself, can even, under favourable conditions, develop into a higher order of being, become the theatre of a rational conscious life; while we can form no notion of complex interrelations among absolutely

simple and purely intensive sensation-elements, nor conceive how out of them a complex and united consciousness can be formed. But unsatisfactory is this hypothesis, because we are unwilling to admit a definite conscious life, individual and volitional like our own, unless we see some symptom of life and of volition more marked than an atom has yet shown. Above all, the mark of action with a purpose seems wanting in the case of an atom, whose velocity or whose combination with other atoms is not a reaction determined by any discoverable inner purpose, but simply the result of surrounding conditions modified by the simple nature of the atom. Arbitrary then and confounded seems the hypothesis of any definitely conscious Monad-atoms; for to explain the facts of experience such an hypothesis assumes a whole world of unknown and unknowable facts, *viz.*, the inner life and thought of what seem to us dead atoms. Yet, if arbitrary, the hypothesis is irrefutable. It is, as said, preferable to the Mind-Stuff doctrine; and its consistency, not to mention its poetic charm, will always keep it on the verge of speculative thought, recognised by a fanciful few, and ignored or despised by the common-sense many.

But have we exhausted the possible hypotheses as to the external foundation of the phenomena of experience? By no means. We must indeed pass over those for which the external world is the embodiment of an "Unconscious Mind"; and that simply because we shall look in vain among the volumes of glib writing upon this topic for any clear notion of what people mean by "unconscious mind". If by "unconscious mind" is meant what is generally called matter, we remain just where we were at the outset, with an inquiry before us as to what is the nature of the external fact to which corresponds our idea of matter. But if "unconscious mind" means aught else, then the term seems to be equivalent to "unconscious consciousness". For no idea of a reason or of a thought can be formed in such wise as to separate reason and thought from consciousness. Thought is a series of active conscious states; and all the ingenuity of generations of Von Hartmanns shall not induce us to corrupt our speculation with the monstrous marriages of contradictory notions whereof the "Philosophy of the Unconscious" seems so proud. Yet thus we are not done with hypotheses. Nor are we forced to go back to the vague and uncritical hypothesis that only matter, indefinable inexplicable matter, exists outside of our minds. Of the existence of matter we can give hypothetically some little account. At all events there is Berkeley's hypothesis, which as a mere hypothesis we can examine apart from any study of Berkeley's philosophical arguments for his idealism.

According to Berkeley there exist conscious beings, more or less like ourselves, of whom the head and father is God. Now external to all beings besides God there is a real world. This real world is made up of the eternal system of God's thoughts.

"When I deny sensible things an existence out of the mind, I do not mean my mind in particular, but all minds. Now it is plain they have an existence exterior to my mind, since I find them by experience to be independent of it. There is therefore some other mind wherein they exist, during the intervals between the times of my perceiving them; as likewise they did before my birth, and would do after my supposed annihilation. And as the same is true with regard to all other finite created spirits, it necessarily follows, there is an *Omnipresent Eternal Mind*, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in such a manner, and according to such rules as he himself hath ordained, and are by us termed the *laws of nature*" (*Dialogues between Hylas & Philonous*, III).

This so familiar hypothesis of Berkeley is in part founded upon a thought that for the present we have agreed to neglect, *i.e.*, upon the notion of the external world as the *cause* of our internal impressions. Not being caused by myself, my ideas, reasons Berkeley, must have an external cause. And the only intelligible cause is an active spirit. Yet for our present purpose this thought is not important. We are not asking about the cause of our conscious states, but about the way in which we can most plausibly conceive of an external world corresponding to these states. The correspondence is assumed. Into its ground, be it pre-established harmony or physical influence, we do not just now inquire. Our only criteria of plausibility, causal explanation being dropped, are therefore adequacy, simplicity, and consistency. Is Berkeley's hypothesis consistent with itself, and is it the simplest hypothesis possible? Stripped of non-essential features, the hypothesis is that there corresponds to our consciousness another higher and farther-reaching consciousness, containing all that is abiding in our consciousness, and much more besides. This consciousness is in form and matter a rational spirit, having definite purposes in the creation and education of the various finite spirits. These purposes require for their accomplishment that our conscious states should within certain limits agree with this higher consciousness, correspond to it in form and to a certain extent. This correspondence constitutes what we mean by truth. There is no external world but this other consciousness.

To Berkeley, as we know, the essential part of this doctrine was the teleological part. That God's thoughts and our correspondence thereto result from and express God's purposes in creating the world, this was for Berkeley the main point to be proven. But if the theological element of the doctrine be for

the first left out of account, there is another part that we just now wish to hold fast. *Our thought is true by reason of its correspondence to the facts of an actual consciousness, external to our own*: this hypothesis has an interest apart from its origin and from its original use. Why in philosophy should we be afraid of doctrines because they have an association with some dreaded theological dogma, or with some enthusiastic and overconfident system of the past? About the nature of the external world we have at the outset nothing but hypotheses. Before we test them in any very exact way, we may with safety try to understand them. Perhaps what seemed the wildest of them all may turn out to be the very best. Because a certain hypothesis was put forward rather as a demonstrable and eternal truth than as an hypothesis, shall we reject it without further examination?

The hypothesis now before us is Berkeley's with the teleological element omitted, along with the causal. How this external consciousness comes to affect us, and why it takes just such forms as it does, we care not. This we ask: What is this supposed external consciousness? How does it correspond to our own? We shall not call the supposed consciousness by question-begging names. It is not for us just now either absolute or divine. It is simply consciousness, and external. The hypothesis is that truth consists in some kind of correspondence between our thought and this outer reality. What kind of correspondence?

Two conscious beings can have corresponding states of consciousness, without having like states. The notes of a melody could have corresponding to them the variations in intensity of some source of light. The light-flashes or beats would correspond to the notes of music by having the like rhythm; yet there would be no resemblance in the content. Correspondence may be yet more obscured. The dashes on a piece of paper that has passed under the point of a telegraphic pen, the series of characters printed from the press in a dozen languages, the sounds of the voice of a reader, the series of signals flashed from shore to a distant vessel, all these dissimilar series of events might correspond exactly and throughout, if it were their purpose to convey in various ways the same meaning. In order, then, that my consciousness should correspond to some other consciousness, external to mine, it is only necessary that for each event or fact in my consciousness there should exist some event or fact in the other consciousness, and that some relation existing among my conscious states should be like or parallel to the relation existing among the conscious states external to mine. The more numerous the points of resemblance between

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the two series of states, the closer the correspondence. But correspondence in the abstract implies only some one definite and permanent resemblance found throughout the two series.

Such being the nature of correspondence in general, let us consider our hypothesis more in detail. Suppose that the clock yonder has some such reality as this hypothesis supposes. There is the clock, with its pendulum beating. For me now that clock is a combination of sensations, joined with a belief in certain possible sensations. For one in the same room with me, the clock has a like existence. But suppose that the clock has, apart from my consciousness, apart from the consciousness of any other human being or animal, an existence for some other, as yet undefined consciousness. Suppose that for this consciousness the clock in its whole present condition exists, not at all as a "possibility of sensations," but solely and in all its parts as a present group of sensible facts, standing in definite relations. Suppose that the sensible facts that constitute this clock as it is given to this hypothetical consciousness are in quality unlike the sensations that for me constitute the clock; but that in their relations, in their number, in their grouping, in their differences from one another, these sensible facts as they are for the hypothetical consciousness agree with the sensations and with the "possibilities of sensation" that for me constitute the clock. Suppose that the clock as it is in the hypothetical consciousness endures for a considerable time, and is called the real clock. Then when I shut my eyes or go away or die, there exists still the real clock, *i.e.*, the clock in the hypothetical consciousness. Though all my fellows die there is still the real clock, independent of our consciousness. The clock may for a time go on running; that is, in the hypothetical consciousness there may be a rhythm of sensible events, corresponding to what for me, were I present, would be the rhythm of the pendulum-beats and the movement of the hands.

Now suppose this hypothetical consciousness extended, so that it contains facts corresponding to my ideas of the ether-vibrations that fall upon or that are reflected from the face of this clock. Suppose that it further contains facts corresponding to each of my ideas of the relative position of this clock and of other objects. Suppose at last that the hypothetical consciousness is extended to all the facts of what I call my universe of actual and of possible sensation. Suppose that each possible or actual experience of each moment in my life or in the life of any other animal is represented by some actual momentarily present fact in the hypothetical consciousness. Then consider the hypothetical consciousness at any moment, and see what it will contain. Every material atom, every wave of ether, every

point of space, every configuration of material bodies, every possible geometrical relation, will be represented in the hypothetical consciousness by some definite fact. The relations of these facts will be in nature and in complexity similar to the relations among the facts of my actual or possible sensations. On the other hand, the limits of my possible consciousness at any moment will be the limits of the actual consciousness of this supposed universal Knowing One. What it actually knows, I conceivably might now know. If it is conscious of a certain series of facts, then I might be conscious, were I now on the other side of the moon, of living creatures there. If the hypothetical consciousness contains another set of facts, then I might be unable to find such living beings were I there. And so with all facts of possible experience.

We can easily see how, under this supposition, conformity to the supposed universal consciousness will become on my part a goal of effort. Knowledge of possible experiences is useful to me. But all possible experiences are or will be actual in the hypothetical consciousness. If I am standing near a concealed pitfall, or am in danger of a blow, or in danger of death from poison, that fact, translated into ultimate terms, means, we may suppose, that in the universal consciousness there is now the knowledge of certain relative positions and motions of atoms. The sequence of states in the universal consciousness must be supposed to be a regular sequence, subject to fixed law. But sequence does not now especially concern us; since we speak only of the nature of this external consciousness. It is enough, therefore, to point out that this supposed universal knowing consciousness, this "Not-Ourselves," has, under the conditions stated, all the essential characteristics of a real world. It is beyond us; it is independent of us; its facts have a certain correspondence to our sensations. Under the supposition that by nature we tend to be in agreement with this consciousness, progress in the definiteness and extent of our agreement with it may be both possible and practically useful. This agreement would constitute truth. No other real world need be supposed behind or above this consciousness. Rejection of an old theory and acceptance of a new, as when the Copernican doctrine replaces the Ptolemaic, will mean the growth of a belief that the new system of ideas corresponds more nearly than the old, not with dead matter, but with the sequence of states in the universal consciousness. The universal consciousness itself will be no illusory consciousness. It will not need a further consciousness to support it. It will need no dead matter outside of it. Our nature leads us to look up to it as to our model. Itself is the pattern, looking up to no other model. The purpose of thought

will be conformity with this perfect, untrammelled thought. For us there is a little range of actual sensation, in the midst of a vast ocean of possible sensation. For the universal consciousness there are at any moment only actual data. We see the clock-face; and for us the inside of the clock is possible sensation only. For the supposed consciousness the inside will be as much present as the outside. For us colours and odours suggest possible sensations, which science interprets as being in the last analysis the possible sensations known as atoms, motions, velocities, distances. For the universal consciousness, these atoms, motions, velocities, and distances, or the ultimate facts to which these notions correspond, are not possible but actual data. There need be then, in the last analysis, no dead unconscious atoms, nor yet unconscious little atom-souls, striving, fighting, loving, uniting; there need be in the last analysis only a consciousness of facts corresponding to what we mean by motion, velocity, extension, distance, impenetrability. Corresponding to the relation $a : b$ in our consciousness there will then be the external fact $A : B$, whereof so much is supposed to be known: first, that the relation $a : b$ is somewhat like the relation $A : B$; secondly, that the terms A and B , whatever their particular character, are facts for a consciousness, and nothing but facts for a consciousness. And the hypothetical consciousness for which these facts are all present, together with their manifold relations, this we may call a World-Consciousness. An illusion for my consciousness will mean a failure to correspond with the world-consciousness. A truth for my consciousness will be a relation $a : b$ that corresponds with some relation $A : B$ in the world-consciousness. But for the world-consciousness itself there will be no question of its own truth or falsity. It will be for and in itself. It will not have to create a real world, it will be a real world. It will not have a Nature as its own Otherness, over against itself. It will be in its own facts and in their sequence a nature. It will bear no mystical relation to the individual intelligences, as if they were its "emanations" or its "modes". It will be in and for itself, as independent of them as if they were not. They will be self-existent, devoid of any such unreality as the mystics like to give them. But their whole business and purpose will be to carry out and to make full and definite that correspondence with this universal consciousness upon which their existence and their peace depend. A certain lack of correspondence with the universal consciousness on the part of any animal's ideas will be followed by the cessation of that particular grouping of facts in the universal consciousness that is known to us as this animal's body. With the dissolution of this animal's body will

cease his consciousness, his chance of disagreeing in his states with the states of the universal consciousness, and therefore his lack of correspondence. An ultimate law of sequence, with which, as with all causal connexion, we have here nothing to do, thus binds the individual beings to the World-Consciousness. The whole universe exhibits the phenomenon, first, of one great consciousness, embracing an infinitude of geometrical, physical, chemical, physiological facts, and, secondly, of a vast multitude of individual conscious beings, whose number and sorts we shall never be able to tell, whose destiny, however, demands of all of them a more or less imperfect likeness between their states and the relations thereof on the one hand, and the facts of the universal consciousness on the other hand. The universal consciousness, be it noted, is so called merely as including in its ken all ultimate mathematical and physical facts. Of its nature beyond this we pretend to suppose nothing. And it does not include within itself the individual conscious beings. Our hypothesis is not pantheistic, or theistic. We simply suppose a "Not-Ourselves" that includes all natural knowledge. This is the External Reality.

We have omitted all reference to the teleological element that is generally introduced into any theory of a World-Spirit. So far, in fact, our World-Consciousness is not what people mean by a World-Spirit. A Spirit, "weaving the living robe of Deity," our World-Consciousness is not; for as so far described it does nothing, it merely looks on. It looks at its own states, and these are supposed to be altogether its own, given from no higher source. But as to their succession or their worth, their beginning or their end, we have said nothing. This Consciousness has these states, but we have supposed them to be attended by no emotion of pleasure or of pain, by no modifying reaction of will. This consciousness is not a Creator, it is a Seer. As for the individual conscious beings, it does not make or unmake them by an exercise of power. They, on the contrary, are made and unmade according as there arise or disappear in this universal consciousness certain groups of data that, as represented in our mortal thought, are called organic living bodies, with tissues, motions, structures, functions. These groups pass, and with them the individual consciousness that coexisted with each. This growth and decay is simply a law of experience, an ultimate and inexplicable sequence. But the universal consciousness of nature, for which each of these groups of physical facts existed, that remains. In other words:—Each animal body is represented in the universal consciousness, and exists only in so far as it is represented therein, or is known to its possessor or to other animals. The individual mind that coexists with this

body, has no representative in the universal consciousness, but exists and is real for itself. With the group of facts in the universal consciousness to which, as we say, corresponds our idea of the body, the independent group of facts called the animal's mind lives and dies. The universal consciousness and the individual minds make up together the sum total of reality.

Continuing to mention the consequences of our hypothesis, we see that the well-known questions so often asked of idealists are no longer puzzling when we accept such an idea as the foregoing. Such questions are: What existed before there was any conscious life on the planet? In what sense was there light or heat, matter or motion, before there were eyes to see, tactile organs to feel, animal intelligence to understand these external facts? The question of Kant too about the subjectivity of space would seem to have been answered. Before there were conscious beings on this planet, this planet existed only in and for the universal consciousness. In that consciousness were facts corresponding to all the phenomena, or possibilities of experience, that geological science may declare to have really existed at such a time. When the earth became filled with life, there appeared in the universal consciousness the data known as organisms. And at the same time, beside the universal consciousness, beyond its ken, there arose individual conscious beings, whose states were more or less imperfect copies of the universal consciousness in certain of its facts. Even so, empty space is now existent beyond the borders of finite observation only as a group of states in the world-consciousness. Space is subjective, belonging to the states of the universal consciousness; and yet to us objective, since in thinking it we merely conform ourselves to the universal consciousness. But the consequences of our hypothesis are numberless. Enough has been said of them for the present purpose.

Wild and airy indeed! But why so? Mind-Stuff was a worse hypothesis, because, when you tried to express all its consequences, it became unintelligible. The ordinary uncritical Atomism is a worse hypothesis, because we never get from it the least notion of how this eternally existent matter may look and feel when nobody sees or feels it. The mystical "one substance with two faces" is worse, because that is no hypothesis, only a heap of words. Schopenhauer's *Wille* is worse, because it is only a metaphor. The hypothesis that ascribes to the atoms independent life and volition is no more adequate than our hypothesis, and much less simple. The old-fashioned pantheistic *Welt-Geist* of Schelling and of the romantic philosophy generally is more poetical than our hypothesis, but yet worse for all that; for no one ever comes to understand how this One Spirit is re-

lated to the many individual minds. They are parts of him, or else apart from him. In the one case their invincible confidence that they really exist and are not "things in his dream," is unfounded; in the other case his all-embracing unity is destroyed. In our hypothesis nothing is wonderful but the one miracle of a series of orderly conscious states, following through all time according to fixed laws. Beyond that all is clear. That there should be a consciousness containing ideas of all material relations, is no harder to believe than it is to believe in the ordinary unintelligible world of atoms. That beside this consciousness and in fixed relation to its facts there should exist a great number of different series of conscious states, each series being called an individual, this is no harder to believe than are the ordinary facts of nervous physiology. In reality this hypothesis gives us a simple expression, easily intelligible, for all the facts and laws of physics, of nervous physiology, and of consciousness. Take, as a final example, the man looking at the candle. In the world-consciousness there is the group of states $c, c', c'' \dots$. That is the real candle. In the world-consciousness there is also the group of states $h, h', h'' \dots$. That is the "cerebral image" of the candle, a physiological fact. Finally, according to the laws of reality, the existence in the world-consciousness of the facts $h, h', h'' \dots$ grouped as they are, has co-existent with it the group of ideas C in the man's mind. This group C corresponds more or less completely to the group $c, c', c'' \dots$ as that group exists beyond the man's mind, in the world-consciousness. The group C is the man's idea of the candle. Such is our hypothesis in a nut-shell. We urge for the moment only this in its favour: that it is simple, intelligible, plausible. After all it is but an hypothesis.

II.

But of what use all these hypotheses? They are not philosophy, but at best merely the scaffolding of philosophy. Ontology is play. Theory of Knowledge alone is work. Ontology is the child blowing soap-bubbles. Philosophical analysis is the miner digging for gold. And yet not quite that is ontology. Not all play this occupation of mankind for so many centuries. Ontology, to speak quite carefully about it, is not philosophy, but an education of the philosophic spirit. Had we but the foregoing hypothesis to offer, this article should never have been written. We have suggested and developed the hypothesis merely that in a pure and somewhat simple form we might express the nature of human thought about reality. This nature of thought once grasped, our hypothesis about

reality will become transformed into a philosophical theory of reality. A dogmatic statement prepares us for a critical analysis.

The first impression of one that has fairly comprehended the foregoing hypothesis as to the nature of reality will be that, if an "idealistic" hypothesis, this one is at all events as ethically unsatisfactory as the coldest materialism. Of the aims, of the will, of the worth of this universal consciousness we have been able to say nothing. It was not a Spirit. It was not a product of human desire. It was the material world simply transformed into ideas. All the cold and deadness of inexplicable eternal law in the succession of phenomena was there, unrelieved by any trace of an emotional element. It was mind, but inhuman mind, recalling the address to the "Todesgötter" in Schiller's *Jungfrau* :—

"Bei euch dort unten in der ew'gen Nacht,
Da schlägt kein Herz mehr, da ist alles ewig,
Steht alles unbeweglich fest."

This fact is noticed to ward off the suspicion of any ulterior designs hidden by this our hypothesis. The meaning of the fact may appear before we finish. But now to the philosophic task of testing our hypothesis.

Every belief about an external world is an active assumption or acknowledgment of something more than the data of our consciousness. What is directly given in consciousness is not external. All direct data are internal facts; and in the strictest sense all data are direct. Suppose a merely passive acceptance of what is in consciousness, and you have no belief in an external world. An addition to the data of consciousness, a more or less clearly voluntary reaction, is necessary to the idea of external reality. The truth of this principle appears when our belief in any particular external thing is called in question. I hold that I see yonder a snowy mountain. My companion insists that beyond the wide misty valley there is to be seen only a grey cloud. I reassert my belief, and in the reassertion feel more definitely than at first the active addition of my own belief to the meagre data of sense. The addition existed, however, in my first assertion. Or again, one man is trying, perchance in sport, to make another doubt the existence of material objects. "There is no external reality," says the first. "There are but these states of consciousness in our minds. Nothing beyond them corresponds to them." The second, maintaining the position of the man of common-sense, retorts sharply :—"Doubtless I cannot refute altogether your fine-spun arguments; but they are nevertheless nonsense. For I persist in believing in this world of sense. I live in it, I work for it, my fellows believe in it, our hearts are bound up in it, our success depends upon our

faith. Only dreamers doubt it. I am not a dreamer. Here is a stone; I hit it. Here is a precipice; I fear and shun it. My strongest conviction is concerned with the existence of this world of sense. Do your worst; I am not afraid of talk." Thus then by every device of the active spirit, by reminding himself of his most cherished interests, of his affections and hatreds, by arousing his social sentiments, by bodily acts, the practical man preserves himself from fantastical speculation. When better-trained thinkers call the belief in an external reality "a natural conviction, to be retained until we are compelled to abandon it," or "a convenient working hypothesis, to be received on the testimony of consciousness, testimony assumed to be trustworthy until the opposite is proven," what are these but similar practical considerations, appeals to the will? Concerning data of immediate consciousness such remarks would be wholly out of place. That I see a certain colour at this moment is not a "convenient working hypothesis". Is consciousness merely a "presumably trustworthy witness" when it testifies to the pangs of toothache? Nobody could balance evidence as to the reality of his sensation *quâ* sensation when consciousness is filled with the sound of a street-organ. Sound, colour, pang, these are data, not merely things believed in. But the external world—that is actively accepted as being symbolised or indicated by the present consciousness, not as being given in the present consciousness.

In short, every assertion of an external world, being an assertion of something beyond the present data of consciousness, must spring from an activity of judgment that does more than merely reduce present data to order. Such an assertion must be an active construction of non-data. We do not receive in our senses, but we posit through our judgment, whatever external world there may for us be.

All theories, all hypotheses as to the external world ought to face this ultimate fact of thought. If the history of popular speculation on these topics could be written, how much of cowardice and shuffling would be found in the behaviour of the natural mind before the ultimate question: "How dost thou know of an external reality?" Instead of simply and plainly answering: "I know the external world only as something that I accept or demand, that I posit, postulate, actively construct on the basis of sense-data," the natural man gives us all kinds of vague compromise answers: "I believe in the external reality with a reasonable degree of confidence; the experience of mankind renders the existence of external reality ever more and more probable; the Creator cannot have intended to deceive us; it is unnatural to doubt as to external reality; only young

people and fantastic persons doubt the existence of the external world; no man in his senses doubts the external reality of the world; science would be impossible were there no external world; morality is undermined by doubts as to the external world; the immovable confidence that we all have in the principle of causality implies the fixity of our belief in an external cause of our sensations". Where shall these endless turnings and twistings have an end? The habits of the law-courts as condensed into "rules of evidence," the traditional rules of debate, the fashion of appealing to the "good sense" of honourable gentlemen opposite, the motives of shame and fear, the dread of being called "fantastical," Philistine desire to think with the majority, Philistine terror of all revolutionary suggestions, the fright or the anger of a man at finding some metaphysician trying to question what seem to be the foundations upon which one's breadwinning depends: all these lesser motives are appealed to, and the one ultimate motive is neglected. The ultimate motive is the will to have an external world. Whatever consciousness contains, reason will persist in spontaneously adding the thought: "But there shall be something beyond this". The beyond can never be proven, because never verified. Verification is transformation of non-data into data. The external reality as such (*e.g.*, the space beyond the farthest star, any space not accessible, even whatever is not at any moment given in so far as it is viewed from that moment, in particular every past event) is never a datum. But the very nature of the postulate of external reality both forbids and renders needless the actual verification. We construct but do not receive the external reality. The "immovable certainty" is not such a dead passive certainty as that with which we receive a pain or an electric shock. The certainty of an external world is the fixed determination to make one, now and henceforth.

But we make, be it noticed, only when we have material with which to make. The sense-datum at any time suggests what external reality we shall at that moment conceive. But without the spontaneity the sense-datum would be no indication to us of an external fact. This being the general truth, there arises the special question, so often discussed: What relation does the external reality bear to the sense-datum? Do we conceive this external reality as being primarily the cause of our consciousness, or as being primarily the external counterpart of consciousness? If the first, the external reality need not resemble consciousness; if the second, this reality must be conceived as resembling consciousness.

Modern thought seems at first sight to have decided this

question once for all. The ether-waves that cause but that do not resemble colour-sensations, the molecular vibrations that have no likeness to the feeling of heat, seem decisive of the whole matter. But if these instances indicate a disposition to regard external reality as the cause of consciousness, and as therefore possibly wholly unlike consciousness, they also equally indicate a disposition to regard our thoughts as destined to copy more or less perfectly an external reality. I have a sensation a , supposed to be caused by the wholly unlike molecular vibration V . But of the external fact V I have an idea v . And this idea is supposed to resemble the external thing. V is not the direct cause of v , but only of a . Yet V resembles v . The resemblance of v and V —is that known through the postulate of causality?

Doubtless the answer will be made that the resemblance of v and V is known or believed by means of a course of reasoning that throughout depends on the postulate of causality. "If," some one may say, "I assumed no external cause for a , I should never reach the idea of this cause as being the particular group of molecular vibrations or of ether-waves known to me as V , and conceived by means of the idea v ." But, on the other hand, we may rejoin, if I conceived of the external reality solely as the cause of a , not as having any necessary likeness to any idea that I might form, how should I ever render definite my idea of the cause of a ? The external reality would remain what it was at the outset, an unknown postulated cause of our conscious states. No labour would ever make it knowable. At every step of the process by which I proceed, from the sensation a to the definite idea v of its cause V , I depend for my progress on the assurance that external reality is with me, not merely as the unknown cause, but as the counterpart of my conscious states. This whole process involves, for example, constant accumulation, classing and sifting of experiences. Any text-book on Heat, on Optics, on Physiological Psychology, will illustrate sufficiently what is meant. But how is the accumulation of experiences possible? Only through constant backward reference in consciousness, and so only through constant assumption that present conceptions are adequate representatives of past experience. Now, if we are serious with ourselves, we shall find that truly past experiences, of whatever kind, are as much truly external facts, when viewed from the present moment, as are the sodium and hydrogen in the sun, or the buttons on our neighbour's coat. The past is not a present datum, otherwise it would not be past, but present. The past is postulated as an external reality. Now this or that past event is indeed a cause of my present consciousness of some event; but my confidence that

there has actually been a series of past events is not a judgment of causality. I believe in a past as I believe in a future, not to satisfy my faith in the principle of causality, but to satisfy my tendency to postulate an indefinite time-stream, like in nature to my present succession of immediately given states. I believe in a real time, not primarily as the cause but as the counterpart of my notion of time. How otherwise shall I form the idea of a cause at all, unless I have already assumed the reality of time? A cause for my belief in the past is to be conceived, if at all, only as already a past fact. The conception that it is to create is a condition of its own existence, unless indeed one has admitted what we wish admitted, that, however the case may be with the belief in any one past fact, the belief in past reality as such is prior to our belief that our present state has been caused by the past. But the same priority of the belief in some agreement between my idea and the external reality, is found in all departments of thought. A material cause of my experience is a cause in space. But, however I came by the idea of space, my present belief in the reality of space precedes any particular belief in a material cause for a particular sensation, and renders the latter belief possible. The conception of reality furnished by the search for causes is thus always subordinate to the conception of reality furnished by our first postulate. This first postulate is, that our ideas have something beyond them and like them. So at each moment of my life I postulate a past and future of my own, like my present consciousness, but external thereto. So my social consciousness, my original unreflective tendency to work with and for other beings, implies the postulate of the external existence of my fellow-men, like myself and like my ideas of them. So to the present intuition of the space in the retinal field or at my finger tips I join the postulate of an infinitely extended not perceived space, like the perceived space, and like my space-ideas.

The external reality conceived by us is therefore conceived through a spontaneous reaction of the receiving consciousness in presence of the sense-data received. The forms of this reaction it is the purpose of the Critical Philosophy to define. The task set by Kant has not yet been accomplished. But the fact of some reaction seems established. And the general law of the process seems to be that the external reality is conceived after the pattern of the present data, with such modification as is necessary to bring the conception into harmony with already established habits of thought, and with the conceived results of previous experience. The aim of the whole process seems to be to reach as complete and united a conception of reality as is possible, a conception wherein the greatest fulness of data shall

be combined with the greatest simplicity of conception. The effort of consciousness seems to be to combine the greatest richness of content with the greatest definiteness of organisation.

This character of our activity in forming our notion of reality implies the subordination of the causal postulate to other motives. In the scientific field the postulate of Causality is predominant, because there the notion of a world of uniform sequences in time and in space has been already postulated, and what remains is to fill out the picture by discovering the particular sequences. But if I try to banish altogether from my notion of external reality the idea that it is an adequate counterpart of my subjective states of consciousness, what will remain? Simply the notion of an utterly unknowable external cause of my sensations. Of this nothing will be said, but that it is. Science, experience, serious reflection about reality will utterly cease. I shall have remaining a kind of Disfigured Realism, where the real will be an unknowable, as unreal as possible. But reintroduce the omitted postulate, admit that reality is conceived as the counterpart of consciousness, and then the principle of causality can be fruitfully applied. Then indeed experience may lead us to conceive the external reality as unlike this or that suggestive sensation, unlike this or that provisional idea. But we shall be led to new conceptions, and shall be able to make definite progress, so long as we postulate some sort of Likeness between inner and outer.

In brief, as causality means uniform sequence, the acceptance of any causal relation as real involves a conception of the uniform sequence that is to be accepted. When finally accepted, the sequence in question is conceived as a real fact, wholly or partially external to present consciousness, but like our present idea of itself. Causal sequence cannot therefore be placed first, as giving us a totally undefined notion of an external reality; but second, as enabling us to develop in detail the idea that reality is like our own states of consciousness. Of course to prove by actual verification that the external reality is like our states of consciousness, this we can never accomplish. But from the outset we have seen that verification is in this field impossible. The whole of external reality, past, present, future, all that is outside of what one now sees and feels, all space, time, matter, motion, life beyond this immediate experience,—all that is for each one a postulate, a demand, an assertion, never a datum, never as a whole verifiable. Since we believe in this external reality, if experience suggests with sufficient force the idea that some causal sequence is real, our postulate that such suggestions have their counterpart in an external world leads us to regard the conceived causal sequence as an externally real

fact. Not however do we first conceive of the external reality as cause, and then in the second place only find it to be or not to be the counterpart of present consciousness. All our thinking is based on the postulate that the external reality is a counterpart and not merely a cause. If with time, we drop anthropomorphic conceptions of external reality, we do so only because, in the presence of a larger and fuller experience, we no longer find old conceptions, founded largely on lower forms of emotion and on narrower experience, adequate to our notion of the external counterpart of consciousness. For demons and entities we substitute atoms and etherial media, not because we abandon the position that external reality resembles our ideas, but because wider experience is found to be best reduced to unity by the latter, not by the former ideas. The atoms and the media are themselves only provisional notions, since more experience may be better reduced to unity, for all we yet know, by some other ideas. But throughout remains the postulate: external reality is somewhat like our ideas of its nature.

We have been betrayed by the doctrine that we have combated into forms of speech that do not adequately express the Critical notion of reality. We hasten to complete our conception by adding the omitted elements. External reality is like our conceptions of it: so much, we have seen, is universally postulated (postulated, be it noticed, not directly experienced, not forced upon us from without). But the kind of likeness still remains to be defined. Can the external reality be conceived as being, although in nature like our conscious states, yet in no necessary relation to consciousness, as being neither a consciousness nor for a consciousness? The answer is the whole struggle of idealistic thought, the whole progress of philosophical analysis in modern times. One cannot go over the field again and again for ever. The state of the controversy can be roughly stated thus:—When the notion of external reality is based solely upon the application of the notion of causality, all degrees of likeness or unlikeness between thought and things are assumed, according to the tastes of individual thinkers. External reality is once for all absolved from the condition of being intelligible, and becomes capable of being anything you please, a dead atom, an electric fluid, a ghost, a devil, an Unknowable. But if the subordinate character of this postulate of causality is once understood, the conception of reality is altered. What is real must be not only vaguely correspondent to an ill-defined postulate, but in a definite relation of likeness to my present consciousness. That this is the actual postulate of human thought is shown by those systems themselves that ignore the postulate of likeness, and has been illustrated in the foregoing. But what forms does

this postulated likeness take? For the first, the postulated likeness between my idea and the external reality may be a likeness between my present conscious state and a past or future state of my own, or between this present state and the conscious state of another being. The whole social consciousness implies the postulate of a likeness between my ideas and an actual consciousness external to mine, fashioned in my own image. But the second generally recognised form in which the postulate of the likeness of internal and external appears, is the form according to which I postulate that a present idea of my own is not like one of my own past or future states, not like any actual past or future state in another being of my own kind, but like a possible experience. That our ideas can adequately express possibilities of sensation that are actually never realised, either in ourselves or in any other known creature, this is a familiar postulate of natural science. The laws of nature are generally, as is admitted by all, what Lewes called "ideal constructions," expressing experiences for us never realised, but permanently possible. And so extended is the use of the concept of possible experience, that, as we know, Mill in one of his most interesting chapters, gave "permanent possibility of sensation" as an adequate definition of matter.

Now the position of modern phenomenism is, that by these two postulates or forms of the one postulate of Likeness, the whole notion of external reality is exhausted.

The external world means, according to this position, the possible and actual present, past, and future content of consciousness for all beings. And this result of modern phenomenism we accept. As for the detailed proof, we cannot go over that well-beaten battle-field here. More or less purely the position is maintained by the whole army of modern idealists. The position is maintained in Fichte's *Bestimmung des Menschen* and other shorter philosophic essays (less clearly, we think, though much more at length, in the two larger expositions of the *Wissenschaftslehre*), in the Hegelian *Phänomenologie*, in Schopenhauer's *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, in Ferrier's *Institutes of Metaphysic*, in J. S. Mill's *Examination of Hamilton*, in Mr. Shadworth Hodgson's *Time and Space and Philosophy of Reflection*, in M. Renouvier's *Logique Générale*, in lesser books innumerable, e.g., in Prof. Baumann's *Philosophie als Orientirung über die Welt* (in the first chapter), in Prof. Schuppe's *Erkenntnisstheoretische Logik*, in Prof. Bergmann's *Reine Logik*. Not of course that all this multitude of thinkers, different in method, in ability, in aim, in everything but in the fact that they are post-Kantian idealists, would accept the foregoing statement as a fairly complete account of their doctrines. Some of them would laugh at the

simplicity of our terms. But, we maintain, in substance they all agree about one fundamental truth, *viz.*, that thought, when it inquires into its own meaning, can never rest satisfied with any idea of external reality that makes such reality other than a datum of consciousness, and so material for thought. Sensualism and the most transcendent *a priori* speculation agree in coming at last to flee in ceaseless unrest from every support for an external reality that may seem to offer itself beyond the bounds of consciousness. This phenomenism of post-Kantian speculation we accept.

All external reality is then postulated as being not merely like conscious data, but in truth an actual or a possible datum of some present, past, or future consciousness. But there remains in this definition of the postulate still one obscure point. What is meant by possible consciousness? What can there be for consciousness beyond the grand total of all actual past and future states of consciousness in all beings? For what purpose and by what right shall we build a world of possibility above or beside the world of actual experience? This question seems too little appreciated and too much evaded by most thinkers. When Mill called matter a "permanent possibility of sensation," he left room open for the puzzling question: But what is this creature called a possibility? Is it an actual fact? Then what actual fact? If not actual, then in being a mere possibility matter is non-existent.

This scholastic character of the abstract noun "possibility" was remarked and criticised by Prof. Max Müller in an article in MIND III.¹ We shall not find in most writers on this subject less scholastic or better defined terms for naming the same aspect of the postulate of external reality. In fact, if we suppose that one surveys the whole range of actual consciousness, past, present, and future, and postulates no facts that are not for and in consciousness, it is difficult to see what will be the meaning of any added "possible reality". Possible, for the first, is anything that one conceives, in so far as one conceives it at all. I could possibly have wings and a long tail, an hundred eyes, and a mountain of gold. All that is possible, but in what sense? In this sense, that I do actually imagine myself as possessing these things. "Empty possibilities," or "im-

¹ P. 347: "If therefore Mill and his followers imagine that by defining Matter as the permanent possibility of sensation, and Mind as the permanent possibility of feeling, they have removed the difficulty of Kant's *Ding an sich*, they are mistaken. Their possibility of sensation, if properly analysed, means things or substances which can become objects of sensation." Prof. Müller's result is not one that we can wholly accept; his criticism of the word possibility is important.

aginations as one would," are facts of consciousness in so far forth as they are imagined; and they have no other existence. The world of truth is not enriched by these possibilities, whose whole existence is in the actual conscious idea of them. But not in this sense is matter to be a "permanent possibility of sensation". The icebergs in the polar seas are to be real, not in so far as I now imagine them, but in so far as there exists or holds good the law, that were I present, I should see them, were I to touch them I should feel them, and that both seeing and feeling would be determined in certain ways beyond the control of my will. The pages of that closed book, the bones inside the body of that cat, my own brain, the molecules of the oxygen that I am breathing, all these, in so far as they are not now actually in any consciousness, are to be still real as "possible experiences". But what kind of unreal reality is this potential actuality?

If we inquire into the motive that leads us to postulate these possible experiences, we shall find it to be at least in part the effort to apply the postulate of uniformity to our confused actual experience. Our actual experience is not always governed by obvious laws of regular sequence. But in postulating consciousness beyond our own immediate data we are led, by a certain prejudice in favour of unity and simplicity, to postulate that the real successions of facts are uniform, whatever may be the case with the fragments of reality that fall within our individual experience. I see an apple fall, and no more than that. But I postulate that if I could have had experience of all the facts, I should have observed a series of material changes in the twig on which the apple hung, that would have sufficed to restore the broken uniformity and continuity of my experiences. In this way it is that, as remarked above, the conception of causal sequence does not create, but organises and perfects our notion of external reality. There is something beyond our experience, *viz.*, another experience: that is the first postulate. Experiences form an uniform and regular whole of laws of sequence. That is the other postulate, subordinate to the first. This postulate helps to form for us our idea of the material world beyond individual consciousness; an idea that science accepts for its uniformity, without inquiring further into its nature, while a more critical reflection declares that the facts assumed as existent beyond the range of individual conscious beings are "possible experiences".

If we try to express the nature of this assumption of "possible experiences," we must therefore take account of the fact that they are assumed to satisfy the secondary and subordinate postulate of uniformity, by filling up the breaks and gaps in the postulated actual experiences of ourselves and of our fellow-

beings. They lead us therefore to the conception of one uniform absolute experience. This absolute experience, to which all facts would exhibit themselves in their connexion as uniformly subject to fixed law, is conceived as "possible". But once again, what does that mean? Is the meaning only the empty tautology that if all the gaps and irregularities of individual experience were got rid of by means of connecting links and additional experiences, these gaps and irregularities would disappear? Is the meaning only this, that if there were an absolute experience of an absolutely regular series of facts, this experience would be absolute and uniform? Or again, is it enough to say that any possible experience, an iceberg in the polar sea, my brain, the inside of yonder book, exists for me only as "my representation"? Of course, I know of it only what I conceive of it, yet I postulate that it has some reality beyond my representation. This postulate is for us in this discussion an ultimate fact of which we want to know, not the justification (for there is none higher than the fact itself of the postulate), but the meaning. I know of my fellow only what I conceive of him. Yet I postulate that my conception of him is like him, whereas I do not postulate that my conception of a dragon is like any real animal. Just so I postulate that my conception of the "possible experience" called an atom or the North Pole, is valid beyond my experience, and beyond the actual experience of any known animal. But I do not postulate that my conception of the possibility that future men might have wings and tails is like any future reality whatever, or in any way valid beyond my conception.

Here then is our dilemma. Matter as a mere possibility of experience is more than any animal's known actual experience. And yet this matter is to be real for consciousness. Nor is it to be real for consciousness simply in so far as the possible experience is represented or conceived. The reality consists not merely in the representation in present consciousness of a possible experience, but in the added postulate that this conception is valid beyond the present consciousness. How is this postulate to be satisfied?

Let us sum up the conditions to which our notion of external reality is subject. External reality is something postulated, not given; it is for us because we will it to be. To a portion of our conscious states we ascribe a validity beyond the present. This ascription of validity is the source of our whole knowledge of the external world: *e.g.* of our belief in our own past and future states, in our neighbour's existence, and in the existence of space, of matter, and of motion. The external reality is always conceived as more or less completely the counterpart of our idea of

it and, hence, as in nature like the facts of our consciousness. The idea that we at any moment form of the reality beyond ourselves is the expression of the effort to reduce to unity the present sense-data and the present conception of our own past experience. This reduction to unity takes place in certain forms. Thus we conceive the external reality as in space and in time, and, in the second place, as in causal relation to ourselves. The conception of causal relations thus projected into the external reality becomes, when completed, the conception of a completely united and uniform whole of facts. We conceive the external reality as subject to fixed laws of sequence, certainly existent, even though, in our limited experience, they be undiscoverable. As subject to such laws the external reality is a whole, possessing organic unity. But the external reality is also conceived as being real for consciousness and real only for consciousness. The external reality, being an organic whole, must therefore be conceived as the object of an absolute experience, to which all facts are known, and for which all facts are subject to universal law. But there thus arises an obscurity in our theory of reality. The real is to be only for consciousness. Consciousness is, however, postulated only as existent in our fellow-beings. And yet the postulated reality is to be an organic whole, containing series of facts that to these beings are known only as possible, not as actual experiences.

We are then in this position. To complete our theory, we "want a hero". Not, to be sure, a Don Juan, but an hypothetical subject of the "possible experiences". This hypothetical subject we shall postulate only as an hypothesis. That is, its existence is not a necessary result of the postulate that there is an external reality. One can form other hypotheses. But this hypothesis has the advantage of being simple and adequate. Moreover, to assume a consciousness for which the "possible experiences" are present facts, is to do no more than our theory seems to need; whereas any other hypothesis (Berkeley's theological hypothesis, for example, in its original form) seems to assume more than is demanded by our purely theoretical conception of reality. For the sake then of expressing one aspect of our fundamental postulate, we shall suggest what of course never can be proven, that all the conceived "possible experiences" are actual in a Consciousness of which we suppose nothing but that it knows these experiences, or knows facts corresponding in number and in other relations to these experiences. This Consciousness is the Universal Consciousness of the first part of our paper.

The cold and deadness of this universal Knowing One is thus explained. We do not endow it with life and with will; and

that because for our present purpose to endow it with knowledge is enough. We do not give it physical power over its own phenomena, or over the lives of individual beings; because we now need it only to complete our conception of an absolute experience. The conception of causality is, as we have seen, subordinate to the conception of reality. Causal sequences, seen in the absolute experience, will appear only as ultimate facts of sequence, uniformities that have not been formed, laws without any law-giving force above them, truths and not deeds. For our present purpose, that is enough. But our hypothesis is plastic. An ethical theory of reality, if such can be established, has but to speak the word, and our Universal Consciousness will be transformed into what he now is not, an active Spirit. To his infinite intuition he will join infinite power, and will not only see but make his own states. For the present nothing of this appears. No heart beats in the world; but that is only because no heart beats in any theory as such. If for another philosophy this Universal Consciousness becomes creative, his action will not interfere with his knowledge. It is with his knowledge alone that we are now concerned.

And thus we come to see the meaning of our hypothesis. It is not an attempt to give a psychological explanation of our consciousness, but to express in a simple form, though not in the only form, our natural postulates about external reality. Its value lies not in itself, but in the convenient expression that it gives of the purposes of human thought. It is not a demonstrable truth, but, as the writer holds, a convenient expression of one side, the theoretical, of our postulates about reality. In such a sense our hypothesis may serve, if it has the good fortune, to express some of those motives in the formation of our ideas of reality that were so well stated in Prof. James's article on "The Sentiment of Rationality," in *MIND* XV.

At all events it seems well to show that an idealistic theory of reality is possible that, on the one hand, adequately expresses the postulates of natural science and, on the other hand, avoids any tendency to mingle unduly the ethical with the theoretical, the teleological with the physical. Be it understood then that the writer is fully conscious of the indemonstrable nature of the hypothesis advanced, in so far as it is an hypothesis, and that he admits, in fact insists, that the value of such hypotheses lies not at all in themselves as ontological speculations about an Absolute, but in their success as expressions of the fundamental postulates and purposes of that source of all truth, Conscious Thought.

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