of a "personal" God, is to trifle indecently with a subject which deserves some respect.

What is necessary, in short, is to begin by looking at the question disinterestedly and looking at it all round. In this way we might certainly expect to arrive at a rational discussion, but I do not feel any right to assume that we should ever arrive at more. Perhaps the separation of the accidental from the essential in religion can be accomplished only by a longer and a ruder process. It must be left, perhaps, to the blind competition of rival errors, and to the coarse struggle for existence between hostile sects. But such a conclusion, once more, should not be accepted without a serious trial. And this is all that I intend to say on the practical problem of religion.

I will end this chapter with a word of warning against a dangerous mistake. We have seen that religion is but appearance, and that it cannot be ultimate. And from this it may be concluded, perhaps, that the completion of religion is philosophy, and that in metaphysics we reach the goal in which it finds its consummation. Now, if religion essentially were knowledge, this conclusion would hold. And, so far as religion involves knowledge, we are again bound to accept it. Obviously the business of metaphysics is to deal with ultimate truth, and in this respect, obviously, it must be allowed to stand higher than religion. But, on the other side, we have found that the essence of religion is not knowledge. And this certainly does not mean that its essence consists barely in feeling. Religion is rather the attempt to express the complete reality of goodness through every aspect of our being. And, so far as this goes, it is at once something more, and therefore something higher, than philosophy.

Philosophy, as we shall find in our next chapter, is itself but appearance. It is but one appearance
among others, and, if it rises higher in one respect, in other ways it certainly stands lower. And its weakness lies, of course, in the fact that it is barely theoretical. Philosophy may be made more undoubtedly, and incidentally it is more; but its essence clearly must be confined to intellectual activity. It is therefore but a one-sided and inconsistent appearance of the Absolute. And, so far as philosophy is religious, to that extent we must allow that it has passed into religion, and has ceased, as such, any longer to be philosophy. I do not suggest to those who, dissatisfied with religious beliefs, may have turned seriously to metaphysics, that they will not find there what they seek. But they will not find it there, or anywhere else, unless they have brought it with them. Metaphysics has no special connection with genuine religion, and neither of these two appearances can be regarded as the perfection of the other. The completion of each is not to be found except in the Absolute.
CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ABSOLUTE AND ITS APPEARANCES.

We have seen now that Goodness, like Truth, is a one-sided appearance. Each of these aspects, when we insist on it, transcends itself. By its own movement each develops itself beyond its own limits and is merged in a higher and all-embracing Reality. It is time that we endeavoured to close our work by explaining more fully the character of this real unity. We have certainly not attempted to do justice to the various spheres of phenomena. The account which we have given of truth and goodness is but a barren outline, and this was the case before with physical Nature, and with the problem of the soul. But to such defects we must resign ourselves. For the object of this volume is to state merely a general view about Reality, and to defend this view against more obvious and prominent objections. The full and proper defence would be a systematic account of all the regions of appearance, for it is only the completed system which in metaphysics is the genuine proof of the principle. But, unable to enter on such an undertaking, I must none the less endeavour to justify further our conclusion about the Absolute.

There is but one Reality, and its being consists in experience. In this one whole all appearances come together, and in coming together they in various degrees lose their distinctive natures. The essence of reality lies in the union and agreement of existence and content, and, on the other side, ap-
pearance consists in the discrepancy between these two aspects. And reality in the end belongs to nothing but the single Real. For take anything, no matter what it is, which is less than the Absolute, and the inner discrepancy at once proclaims that what you have taken is appearance. The alleged reality divides itself and falls apart into two jarring factors. The "what" and the "that" are plainly two sides which turn out not to be the same, and this difference inherent in every finite fact entails its disruption. As long as the content stands for something other than its own intent and meaning, as long as the existence actually is less or more than what it essentially must imply, so long we are concerned with mere appearance, and not with genuine reality. And we have found in every region that this discrepancy of aspects prevails. The internal being of everything finite depends on that which is beyond it. Hence everywhere, insisting on a so-called fact, we have found ourselves led by its inner character into something outside itself. And this self-contradiction, this unrest and ideality of all things existing is a clear proof that, though such things are, their being is but appearance.

But, upon the other hand, in the Absolute no appearance can be lost. Each one contributes and is essential to the unity of the whole. And hence we have observed (Chapter xxv.) that any one aspect, when viewed by itself, may be regarded as the end for which the others exist. Deprived of any one aspect or element the Absolute may be called worthless. And thus, while you take your stand on some one valuable factor, the others appear to you to be means which subserve its existence. Certainly your position in such an attitude is one-sided and unstable. The other factors are not external means to, but are implied in, the first, and your attitude, therefore, is but provisional and in the end untrue. It may however have served to indicate that truth which we
have here to insist on. There is nothing in the Absolute which is barely contingent or merely accessory. Every element, however subordinate, is preserved in that relative whole in which its character is taken up and merged. There are main aspects of the universe of which none can be resolved into the rest. Hence from this ground we cannot say of these main aspects that one is higher in rank or better than another. They are factors not independent, since each of itself implies and calls in something else to complete its defects, and since all are over-ruled in that final whole which perfects them. But these factors, if not equal, are not subordinate the one to the other, and in relation to the Absolute they are all alike essential and necessary.

In the present chapter, returning to the idea of the Absolute as a whole of experience, I will from this point of view survey briefly its main aspects. Of the attitudes possible in experience I will try to show that none has supremacy. There is not one mode to which the others belong as its adjectives, or into which they can be resolved. And how these various modes can come together into a single unity must remain unintelligible. Reserving to the next chapter a final discussion on the positive nature of this Unity, I will lay stress here on another side. The Absolute is present in, and, in a sense, it is alike each of its special appearances; though present everywhere again in different values and degrees. I shall attempt in passing to clear up some questions with regard to Nature, and I will end the chapter with a brief enquiry as to the meaning of Progress, and as to the possibility of a continuance of personal life after death.

Everything is experience, and also experience is one. In the next chapter I shall once more consider if it is possible to doubt this, but for the pre-
sent I shall assume it as a truth which has held good. Under what main aspects then, let us ask, is experience found? We may say, speaking broadly, that there are two great modes, perception and thought on the one side, and will and desire on the other side. Then there is the aesthetic attitude, which will not fall entirely under either of these heads; and again there is pleasure and pain which seem something distinct from both. Further we have feeling, a term which we must take in two senses. It is first the general state of the total soul not yet at all differentiated into any of the preceding special aspects. And again it is any particular state so far as internally that has undistinguished unity. Now of these psychical modes not any one is resolvable into the others, nor can the unity of the Whole consist in one or another portion of them. Each of them is incomplete and one-sided, and calls for assistance from without. We have had to perceive this in great part already through former discussions, but I will briefly resume and in some points supplement that evidence here. I am about to deal with the appearances of the Absolute mainly from their psychical side, but a full psychological discussion is impossible, and is hardly required. I would ask the reader, whose views in certain ways may be divergent from mine, not to dwell on divergencies except so far as they affect the main result.

(1) If we consider first of all the aspect of pleasure and pain, it is evident that this cannot be the substance or foundation of Reality. For we cannot regard the other elements as adjectives of, or dependents on, this one; nor again can we, in any way or in any sense, resolve them into it. Pleasure and pain, it is obvious, are not the one thing real. But are they real at all, as such, and independently of the rest? Even this we are compelled to deny. For pleasure and pain are antagonistic; and when in the Whole they have come together with a balance
of pleasure, can we be even sure that this result will be pleasure as such?\textsuperscript{1} There is however a far more serious objection to the reality of pleasure and pain. For these are mere abstractions which we separate from the pleasant and the painful; and to suppose that they are not connected with those states and processes, with which they are always conjoined, would be plainly irrational. Indeed pleasure and pain, as things by themselves, would contradict their known character. But, if so, clearly they cannot be real in themselves, and their reality and essence will in part fall beyond their own limits. They are but appearances and one-sided adjectives of the universe, and they are real only when taken up into and merged in that totality.

(2) From mere pleasure and pain we may pass on to feeling, and I take feeling in the sense of the immediate unity of a finite psychical centre. It means for me, first, the general condition before distinctions and relations have been developed, and where as yet neither any subject nor object exists. And it means, in the second place, anything which is present at any stage of mental life, in so far as that is only present and simply is.\textsuperscript{2} In this latter sense we may say that everything actual, no matter what, must be felt; but we do not call it feeling except so far as we take it as failing to be more. Now, in either of these senses, is it possible to consider feeling as real, or as a consistent aspect of reality? We must reply in the negative.

Feeling has a content, and this content is not consistent within itself, and such a discrepancy tends to destroy and to break up the stage of feeling. The matter may be briefly put thus—the finite con-

\textsuperscript{1} See above Chapter xvii. and below Chapter xxvii.

\textsuperscript{2} Compare Chapters ix., xix., xx. and xxvii., and \textit{Mind}, N. S. 6. I had hoped elsewhere to write something on the position to be given to Feeling in psychology. But for the purpose of this volume I trust, on the whole, to have said enough.
tent is irreconcilable with the immediacy of its existence. For the finite content is necessarily determined from the outside; its external relations (however negative they may desire to remain) penetrate its essence, and so carry that beyond its own being. And hence, since the "what" of all feeling is discordant with its "that," it is appearance, and, as such, it cannot be real. This fleeting and untrue character is perpetually forced on our notice by the hard fact of change. And, both from within and from without, feeling is compelled to pass off into the relational consciousness. It is the ground and foundation of further developments, but it is a foundation that bears them only by a ceaseless lapse from itself. Hence we could not, in any proper sense, call these products its adjectives. For their life consists in the diremption of feeling's unity, and this unity is not again restored and made good except in the Absolute.

(3) We may pass next to the perceptual or theoretic, and again, on the other side, to the practical aspect. Each of these differs from the two foregoing by implying distinction, and, in the first place a distinction between subject and object. The perceptual side has at the outset, of course, no special existence; for it is given at first in union with the practical side, and is but slowly differentiated. But what we are concerned with here is to attempt to apprehend its specific nature. One or more elements are separated from the confused mass of feeling, and stand apparently by themselves and over against this. And the distinctive character of such an object is that it seems simply to be. If it appeared to influence the mass which it confronts, so as to lead that to act on it and alter it, and if such a relation qualified its nature, the attitude would be

1 This distinction, I have no doubt, is developed in time (Mind, No. 47); but, even if we suppose it to be original, the further conclusion is in no way affected.
practical. But the perceptual relation is supposed to fall wholly outside the essence of the object. It is in short disregarded, or else is dismissed as a something accidental and irrelevant. For the reality, as thought of or as perceived, in itself simply is. It may be given, or again sought for, discovered or reflected on, but all this—however much there may be of it—is nothing to it. For the object only stands in relation, and emphatically in no sense is the relation in which it stands.

This is the vital inconsistency of the real as perception or thought. Its essence depends on qualification by a relation which it attempts to ignore. And this one inconsistency soon exhibits itself from two points of view. The felt background, from which the theoretic object stands out, is supposed in no way to contribute to its being. But, even at the stage of perception or sensation, this hypothesis breaks down. And, when we advance to reflective thinking, such a position clearly is untenable. The world can hardly stand there to be found, when its essence appears to be inseparable from the process of finding, and when assuredly it would not be the whole world unless it included within itself both the finding and the finder. But, this last perfection once reached, the object no longer could stand in any relation at all; and, with this, its proper being would be at once both completed and destroyed. The perceptual attitude would entirely have passed beyond itself.

We may bring out again the same contradiction if we begin from the other side. As perceived or thought of the reality is, and it is also itself. But its self obviously, on the other hand, includes relation to others, and it is determined inwardly by those others from which it is distinguished. Its content therefore slides beyond its existence, its "what" spreads out beyond its "that." It thus no longer is, but has become something ideal in which
the Reality appears. And, since this appearance is not identical with reality, it cannot wholly be true. Hence it must be corrected, until finally in its content it has ceased to be false. But, in the first place, this correction is merely ideal. It consists in a process throughout which content is separated from existence. Hence, if truth were complete, it would not be truth, because that is only appearance; and in the second place, while truth remains appearance, it cannot possibly be complete. The theoretic object moves towards a consummation in which all distinction and all ideality must be suppressed. But, when that is reached, the theoretic attitude has been, as such, swallowed up. It throughout on one hand presupposes a relation, and on the other hand it asserts an independence; and, if these jarring aspects are removed or are harmonized, its proper character is gone. Hence perception and thought must either attempt to fall back into the immediacy of feeling, or else, confessing themselves to be one-sided and false, they must seek completion beyond themselves in a supplement and counterpart.

(4) With this we are naturally led to consider the practical aspect of things. Here, as before, we must have an object, a something distinct from, and over against, the central mass of feeling. But in this case the relation shows itself as essential, and is felt as opposition. An ideal alteration of the object is suggested, and the suggestion is not rejected by the feeling centre; and the process is completed by this ideal qualification, in me, itself altering, and so itself becoming, the object. Such is, taken roughly, the main essence of the practical attitude, and its one-sidedness and insufficiency are evident at once. For it consists in the healing up of a division which it has no power to create, and which, once healed up, is the entire removal of the practical attitude. Will certainly produces, not mere ideas, but actual existence. But it depends on ideality and mere appear-
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ance for its starting-point and essence; and the harmony which it makes is for ever finite, and hence incomplete and unstable. And if this were not so, and if the ideal and the existing were made one, the relation between them would have disappeared, and will, as such, must have vanished. Thus the attitude of practice, like all the rest, is not reality but is appearance. And with this result we may pass onwards, leaving to a later place the consideration of certain mistakes about the will. For since the will implies and presupposes the distinction made in perception and idea, we need hardly ask if it possesses more reality than these.

(5) In the æsthetic attitude we may seem at last to have transcended the opposition of idea to existence, and to have at last surmounted and risen beyond the relational consciousness. For the æs-

1 In the foregoing chapter we have already dealt with the contradictions of Goodness. For the nature of Desire and Volition see Mind, No. 49. Compare also No. 43, where I have said something on the meaning of Resolve. There are, indeed, instances where the idea does not properly pass into existence, and where yet we are justified in speaking of will, and not merely of resolve. Such are the cases where I will something to take place after my death, or where again, as we say, I will now to do something which I am incapable of performing. The process here is certainly incomplete, but still can be rightly called volition, because the movement of the idea towards existence has actually begun. It has started on its course, external or inward, so as already to be past recall. In the same way when the trigger is pressed, and the hammer has also perhaps fallen, a miss-fire leaves the act incomplete, but we still may be said to have fired. In mere Resolve, on the other hand, the incompatibility of the idea with any present realization of its content is recognised. And hence Resolve not aiming straight at present fact, but satisfied with an ideal filling-out of its idea, should not be called volition. The process is not only incomplete, but it also knowingly holds back and diverges from the direct road to existence. Resolve may be taken as a case of internal volition, if you consider it as the bringing about of a certain state of mind. But the production of the resolve, and not the resolve itself, is, in this case, will.
thetic attitude seems to retain the immediacy of feeling. And it has also an object with a certain character, but yet an object self-existent and not merely ideal. This aspect of the world satisfies us in a way unattainable by theory or practice, and it plainly cannot be reduced and resolved into either. However, when we consider it more narrowly, its defects become patent. It is no solution of our problems, since it fails to satisfy either the claims of reality or even its own.

That which is aesthetic may generally be defined as the self-existent emotional. It can hardly all fall properly under the two heads of the beautiful and ugly, but for my present purpose it will be convenient to regard it as doing so. And since in the Absolute ugliness, like error and evil, must be overpowered and absorbed, we may here confine our attention entirely to beauty.

Beauty is the self-existent pleasant. It is certainly not the self-existent which enjoys its own pleasure, for that, so far as one sees, need not be beautiful at all. But the beautiful must be self-existent, and its being must be independent as such. Hence it must exist as an individual and not merely in idea. Thoughts, or even thought-processes, may be beautiful, but only so if they appear, as it were, self-contained, and, in a manner, for sense. But the beautiful, once more, must be an object. It must stand in relation to my mind, and again, it must possess a distinguished ideal content. We cannot say that mere feeling is beautiful, though in a complex whole we may find at once the blended aspects of feeling and of beauty. And the beautiful, last of all, must be actually pleasant. But, if so, then once more it must be pleasant for some one.¹

Such an union of characters is inconsistent, and

¹ The possibility of some margin of pleasure falling outside all finite centres, seems very slight (Chapter xxvii.). So far as that pleasure is an object, the relation is certainly essential.
we require no great space to point out its discrepancy. Let us first abstract from the pleasantness and from the relation to me, and let us suppose that the beautiful exists independently. Yet even here we shall find it in contradiction with itself. For the sides of existence and of content must be concordant and at one; but, on the other hand, because the object is finite, such an agreement is impossible. And thus, as was the case with truth and goodness, there is a partial divergence of the two aspects of extension and harmony. The expression is imperfect, or again that which is expressed is too narrow. And in both ways alike in the end there is want of harmoniousness, there is an inner discrepancy and a failure in reality. For the content—itself in any case always finite, and so always inconsistent with itself—may even visibly go beyond its actual expression, and be merely ideal. And, on the other side, the existing expression must in various ways and degrees fall short of reality. For, taken at its strongest, it after all must be finite fact. It is determined from the outside, and so must internally be in discord with itself. Thus the beautiful object, viewed as independent, is no more than appearance.¹

But to take beauty as an independent existence is impossible. For pleasure belongs to its essence, and to suppose pleasure, or any emotion, standing apart from some self seems out of the question. The beautiful, therefore, will be determined by a quality in me. And in any case, because (as we have seen) it is an object for perception, the relation involved in perception must be essential to its being. Either then, both as perceived and as emotional, beauty will be characterized internally by what falls outside itself. And obviously in this case it will

¹ The question of degrees in beauty, like that of degrees in truth and goodness, would be interesting. But it is hardly necessary for us to enter on it here.

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have turned out to be appearance. Or, on the other hand, it must include within its own limits this external condition of its life. But, with that total absorption of the percipient and sentient self, the whole relation, and with it beauty as such, will have vanished.

The various aspects, brought together in the aesthetic object, have been seen to fall apart. Beauty is not really immediate, or independent, or harmonious in itself. And, attempting to satisfy these requirements, it must pass beyond its own character. Like all the other aspects this also has been shown to be appearance.

We have now surveyed the different regions of experience, and have found each to be imperfect. We certainly cannot say that the Absolute is any one of them. On the other hand each can be seen to be insufficient and inconsistent, because it is not also, and as well, the rest. Each aspect to a certain extent, already in fact, implies the others in its existence, and in order to become Reality would have to go on to include them wholly. And hence Reality seems contained in the totality of these its diverse provinces, and they on their side each to be a partial appearance of the universe. Let us once more briefly pass them in review.

With pleasure or pain we can perceive at once that its nature is adjectival. We certainly cannot, starting with what we know of pleasure and pain, show that this directly implies the remaining aspects of the world. We must be satisfied with the knowledge that pain and pleasure are adjectives, adjectives, so far as we see, attached to every other aspect of experience. A complete insight into the conditions of these adjectives is not attainable; but, if we could get it, it doubtless would include every side of the universe. But, passing from pleasure and pain to Feeling, we can verify there at once the
principle of discord and development in its essence. The sides of content and existence already strive to diverge. And hence feeling changes not merely through outer force but through internal defect. The theoretical, the practical, and the aesthetic aspect of things are attempts to work out and make good this divergence of existence and idea. Each must thus be regarded as a one-sided and special growth from feeling. And feeling still remains in the background as the unity of these differences, a unity that cannot find its complete expression in any or in all of them. Defect is obvious at once in the aesthetic attitude. Beauty both attempts and fails to arrive at immediate reality. For, even if you take it as real apart from relation to a perciept, there is never entire accordance between its two demands for completeness and harmony. That which is expressed in fact remains too narrow, and that which is wider remains imperfectly expressed. And hence, to be entirely beautiful, the object would have also to be completely good and wholly true. Its idea would require to be self-contained, and so all-embracing, and to be carried out in an existence no less self-sufficient. But, if so, the distinctive characters of truth and goodness and beauty would have vanished. We reach again the same result if we turn to the theoretical aspect of the world. Perception or theory, if it were but true, must also be good. For the fact would have to be so taken that it exhibited no difference from the thought. But such a concord of idea and existence would certainly also be goodness. And again, being individual, it would as certainly no less be beautiful. But on the other hand, since all these divergences would have been absorbed, truth, beauty and goodness, as such, would no longer exist. We arrive at the same conclusion when we begin from the practical side. Nothing would content us finally but the complete union of harmony and extent. A reality that sug-
gested any idea not existing actually within its limits, would not be perfectly good. Perfect goodness would thus imply the entire and absolute presence of the ideal aspect. But this, if present, would be perfect and absolute truth. And it would be beautiful also, since it would entail the individual harmony of existence with content. But, once again, since the distinctive differences would now have disappeared, we should have gone beyond beauty or goodness or truth altogether.¹

We have seen that the various aspects of experience imply one another, and that all point to a unity which comprehends and perfects them. And I would urge next that the unity of these aspects is unknown. By this I certainly do not mean to deny that it essentially is experience, but it is an experience of which, as such, we have no direct knowledge. We never have, or are, a state which is the perfect unity of all aspects; and we must admit that in their special natures they remain inexplicable. An explanation would be the reduction of their plurality to unity, in such a way that the relation between the unity and the variety was understood. And everywhere an explanation of this kind in the end is beyond us. If we abstract one or more of the aspects of experience, and use this known element as a ground to which the others are referred, our failure is evident. For if the rest could be developed from this ground, as really they cannot be, they with their differences can yet not be predic-

¹ I have not thought it necessary here to point out how in their actual existence these aspects are implicated with one another. All the other aspects are more or less the objects of, and produced by, will; and will itself, together with the rest, is an object to thought. Thought again depends on all for its material, and will on all for its ideas. And the same psychical state may be indifferently will or thought, according to the side from which you view it (p. 474). Every state again to some extent may be considered and taken as feeling.
ated of it. But, if so, in the end the whole diversity must be attributed as adjectives to a unity which is not known. Thus no separate aspect can possibly serve as an explanation of the others. And again, as we have found, no separate aspect is by itself intelligible. For each is inconsistent with itself, and so is forced to take in others. Hence to explain would be possible only when the whole, as such, was comprehended. And such an actual and detailed comprehension we have seen is not possible.

Resting then on this general conclusion we might go forward at once. We might assume that any reduction of the Absolute to one or two of the special modes of experience is out of the question, and we might forthwith attempt a final discussion of its nature and unity. It may however be instructive to consider more closely a proposed reduction of this kind. Let us ask then if Reality can be rightly explained as the identity of Thought and Will. But first we may remind ourselves of some of those points which a full explanation must include.

In order to understand the universe we should require to know how the special matter of sense stands everywhere to its relations and forms, and again how pleasure and pain are connected with these forms and these qualities. We should have to comprehend further the entire essence of the relational consciousness, and the connection between its unity and its plurality of distinguished terms. We should have to know why everything (or all but everything) comes in finite centres of immediate feeling, and how these centres with regard to one another are not directly pervious. Then there is process in time with its perpetual shifting of content from existence, a happening which seems certainly not all included under will and thought. The physical world again suggests some problems. Are there really ideas and ends that work in Nature?
And why is it that, within us and without us, there is a knowable arrangement, an order such that existence answers to thought, and that personal identity and a communication between souls is possible? We have, in short, on one side a diversity and finitude, and on the other side we have a unity. And, unless we know throughout the universe how these aspects stand the one to the other, the universe is not explained.

But a partial explanation, I may here be reminded, is better than none. That in the present case, I reply, would be a serious error. You take from the whole of experience some element or elements as a principle, and you admit, I presume, that in the whole there remains some aspect unexplained and outstanding. Now such an aspect belongs to the universe, and must, therefore, be predicated of a unity not contained in your elements. But, if so, your elements are at once degraded, for they become adjectives of this unknown unity. Hence the objection is not that your explanation is incomplete, but that its very principle is unsound. You have offered as ultimate what in its working proclaims itself appearance. And the partial explanation has implied in fact a false pretence of knowledge.

We may verify this result at once in the proposed reduction of the other aspects of the world to intelligence and will. Before we see anything of this in detail we may state beforehand its necessary and main defect. Suppose that every feature of the universe has been fairly brought under, and included in these two aspects, the universe still remains unexplained. For the two aspects, however much one implies and indeed is the other, must in some sense still be two. And unless we comprehend how their plurality, where they are diverse, stands to their unity, where they are at one, we have ended in failure. Our principles after all will not be ultimate, but will themselves be the twofold appearance of a unity left un-
explained. It may however repay us to examine further the proposed reduction.

The plausibility of this consists very largely in vagueness, and its strength lies in the uncertain sense given to will and intelligence. We seem to know these terms so well that we run no risk in applying them, and then imperceptibly we pass into an application where their meaning is changed. We have to explain the world, and what we find there is a process with two aspects. There is a constant loosening of idea from fact, and a making-good once more in a new existence of this recurring discrepancy. We find nowhere substances fixed and rigid. They are relative wholes of ideal content, standing on a ceaselessly renewed basis of two-sided change. Identity, permanence, and continuity, are everywhere ideal; they are unités for ever created and destroyed by the constant flux of existence, a flux which they provoke, and which supports them and is essential to their life. Now, looking at the universe so, we may choose to speak of thought wherever the idea becomes loose from its existence in fact; and we may speak of will wherever this unity is once more made good. And, with this introduction of what seems self-evident, the two main aspects of the world appear to have found an explanation. Or we possibly might help ourselves to this result by a further vagueness. For everything, at all events, either is, or else happens in time. We might say then that, so far as it happens, it is produced by will, and that, so far as it is, it is an object for perception or thought. But, passing this by without consideration, let us regard the process of the world as presenting two aspects. Thought must then be taken as the idealizing side of this process, and will, on the other hand, must be viewed as the side which makes ideas to be real. And let us, for the present also, suppose that will and thought are in themselves more or less self-evident.
Now it is plain, first, that such a view compels us to postulate very much more than we observe. For ideality certainly does not appear to be all produced by thought, and actual existence, as certainly, does not all appear as the effect of will. The latter is obvious whether in our own selves, or in the course of Nature, or again in any other of the selves that we know. And, with regard to ideality or the loosening of content from fact, this is everywhere the common mark of appearance. It does not seem exclusively confined to or distinctive of thinking. Thought does not seem co-extensive in general with the relational form, and it must be said to accept, as well as to create, ideal distinctions. Ideality appears, in short, often as the result of psychical changes and processes which do not seem, in the proper sense, to imply any thinking. These are difficulties, but still they may perhaps be dealt with. For, just as we could set no limits to the possible existences of souls, so we can fix no bounds to the possible working of thought and will. Our mere failure to discover them here or there, and whether within ourselves or again outside us, does not anywhere disprove their existence. And as souls to an unknown extent can have their life and world in common, so the effects of will and thought may show themselves there where the actual process is not experienced. That which comes to me as a mechanical occurrence, or again as an ideal distinction which I have never made, may none the less, also and essentially, be will and thought. And it may be experienced as such, completely or partly, outside me. My reason and my plan to other finite centres may only be chance, and their intelligible functions may strike on me as a dark necessity. But for a higher unity our blind entanglement is lucid order. The world discordant, half-completed, and accidental for each one, is in the Whole a compensated system of conspiring particulars. Everything there is the joint result of two functions which in their
working are one, and every least detail is still the outcome of intelligence and will. Certainly such a doctrine is a postulate, in so far as its particulars cannot be verified. But taken in general it may be urged also as a legitimate inference and a necessary conclusion.

Still in the way of this conclusion, which I have tried to set out, we find other difficulties as yet unremoved. There is pleasure and pain, and again the facts of feeling and of the æsthetic consciousness. Now, if thought and will fail to explain these, and, they, along with thought and will, have to be predicated unexplained of the Unity, the Unity after all is unknown. Feeling, in the first place, cannot be regarded as the indifferent ground of perception and will; for, if so, this ground itself offers a new fact which requires explanation. Feeling therefore must be taken as a sort of confusion, and as a nebula which would grow distinct on closer scrutiny. And the æsthetic attitude, perhaps, may be regarded as the perceived equilibrium of both our functions. It must be admitted certainly that such an attitude if the unity alike of thought and will, remains a source of embarrassment. For it seems hardly derivable from both as diverse; and, taken as their unity, it, upon the other side, certainly fails to contain or account for either. And, if we pass from this to pleasure and pain, we do but gain another difficulty. For the connection of these adjectives with our two functions seems in the end inexplicable, while, on the other hand, I do not perceive that this connection is self-evident. We seem in fact drifting towards the admission that there are other aspects of the world, which must be referred as adjectives to our identity of will and thought, while their inclusion within will or thought remains uncertain. But this is virtually to allow that thought and will are not the essence of the universe.
Let us go on to consider internal difficulties. Will and understanding are to be each self-evident, but on the other hand each evidently, apart from the other, has lost its special being. For will presupposes the distinction of idea from fact—a distinction made actual by a process, and presumably itself due to will. And thought has to start from the existence which only will can make. Hence it presupposes, and again as an existing process seems created by, will, although will on its side is dependent on thought. We must, I presume, try to meet this objection by laying stress on the aspect of unity. Our two functions really are inseparable, and it therefore is natural that one should imply and should presuppose the other. Certainly hitherto we have found everywhere that an unresting circle of this kind is the mark of appearance, but let us here be content to pass on. Will and thought everywhere then are implicated the one with the other. Will without an idea, and thought that did not depend upon will, would neither be itself. To a certain extent, then, will essentially is thought; and, just as essentially, all thought is will. Again the existence of thought is an end which will calls into being, and will is an object for the reflections and constructions of theory. They are not, then, two clear functions in unity, but each function, taken by itself, is still the identity of both. And each can hardly be itself, and not the other, as being a mere preponderance of itself; for there seems to be no portion of either which can claim to be, if unsupported and alone. Will and thought then differ only as we abstract and consider aspects onesidedly; or, to speak plainly, their diversity is barely appearance.

If however thought and will really are not different, they are no longer two elements or principles. They are not two known diversities which serve to explain the variety of the world. For, if their difference is appearance, still that very appearance
is what we have most to explain. We are not to go outside will and thought, in order to seek our explanation; and yet, keeping within them, we seem unable to find any. The identity of both is no solution, unless that identity explains their difference; for this difference is the very problem required to be solved. We have given us a process of happening and finitude, and in this process we are able to point out two main aspects. To explain such a process is to say why and how it possesses and supports this known diversity. But by the proposed reduction to will and thought we have done little more than give two names to two unexplained aspects. For, ignore every other difficulty, and you have still on your hands the main question, Why is it that thought and will diverge or appear to diverge? It is in this real or apparent divergence that the actual world of finite things consists.

Or examine the question from another side. Will and thought may be appealed to in order to explain the given process in time, and certainly each of them contains in its nature a temporal succession. Now a process in time is appearance, and not, as such, holding of the Absolute. And, if we urge that thought and will are twin processes reciprocal and compensating, that leaves us where we were. For, as such, neither can be a predicate of the real unity, and the nature of that unity, with its diversity of appearance, is left unexplained. And to place the whole succession in time on the side of mere perception, and to plead that will, taken by itself, is not really a process, would hardly serve to assist us. For if will has a content, then that content is perceptible and must imply temporal lapse, and will, after all, surely can stand no higher than that which it wills. And, without an ideal content, will is nothing but a blind appeal to the unknown. It is itself unknown, and of this unknown something we are forced now to predicate as an adjective the un-
explained world of perception. Thus, in the end, will and thought are two names for two kinds of appearance. Neither, as such, can belong to the final Reality, and, in the end, both their unity and their diversity remains inexplicable. They may be offered as partial and as relative, but not as ultimate explanations.

But if their unity is thus unknown, should we call it their unity? Have they any right to arrogate to themselves the whole field of appearance? If we are to postulate thought and will where they are not observed, we should at least have an inducement. And, if after all they fail to explain our world, the inducement seems gone. Why should we strain ourselves to bring all phenomena under two heads, if, when we have forced them there, these heads, with the phenomena, remain unexplained? It would be surely better to admit that appearances are of more kinds, and have more aspects, than only two, and to allow that their unity is a mode of experience not directly accessible. And this result is confirmed when we recall some preceding difficulties. Pleasure and pain, feeling, and the æsthetic consciousness would hardly fall under any mere unity of intelligence and will; and again the relation of sensible qualities to their arrangements, the connection of matter with form, remained entirely inexplicable. In short, even if the unity of thought and will were by itself self-evident, yet the various aspects of the world can hardly be reduced to it. And, on the other side, even if this reduction were accomplished, the identity of will and thought, and their diversity, is still not understood. If finitude and process in time is reduced to their divergence, how is it they come to diverge? The reduction cannot be final, so long as the answer to such a question falls somewhere outside it.

The world cannot be explained as the appearance
of two counterpart functions, and with this result we might be contented to pass on. But, in any case, such functions could not be identified with what we know as intelligence and will; and it may be better perhaps for a little to dwell on this point. We assumed above that will and thought were by themselves self-evident. We saw that there was a doubt as to how much ground these two functions covered. Still the existence of an idealizing and of a realizing function, each independent and primary, we took for granted. But now, if we consider the facts given to us in thinking and willing, we shall have to admit that the powers required are not to be found. For, apart from the question of range, will and thought are nowhere self-evident or primary. Each in its working depends on antecedent connections, connections which remain always in a sense external and borrowed. I will endeavour briefly to explain this.

Thought and will certainly contain transitions, and these transitions were taken above as self-evident. They were regarded as something naturally involved in the very essence of these functions, and we hence did not admit a further question about their grounds. But, if we turn to thought and will in our experience, such an assumption is refuted. For in actual thinking we depend upon particular connections, and, apart from this given matter, we should be surely unable to think. These connections cannot be taken all as inherent in the mere essence of thought, for, most of them at least seem to be empirical and supplied from outside. And I am entirely unable to see how they can be regarded as self-evident. This result is confirmed when we consider the making of distinctions. For, in the first place, distinctions largely seem to grow up apart from our thinking, in the proper sense; and, next, a distinguishing power of thought, where it exists, appears to rest on, and to work from, prior difference. It is thus a result due to acquired and empirical rela-
tions.\(^1\) The actual transitions of thinking are, in short, not self-evident, or, to use another phrase, they cannot be taken as immanent in thought. Nor, if we pass to volition, do we find its processes in any better case; for our actions neither are self-evident nor are they immanent in will. Let us abstract from the events in Nature and in our selves with which our will seems not concerned. Let us confine our attention wholly to the cases where our idea seems to make its existence in fact. But is the transition here a thing so clear that it demands no explanation? An idea desired in one case remains merely desired, in another case it turns into actual existence. Why then the one, we enquire, and not also the other? "Because in the second place," you may reply, "there is an action of will, and it is this act which explains and accounts for the transition." Now I will not answer here that it is the transition which, on the other hand, is the act. I will for the moment accept the existence of your preposterous faculty. But I repeat the question, why is one thing willed and not also the other? Is this difference self-evident, and self-luminous, and a feature immediately revealed in the plain essence of will? For, if it is not so, it is certainly also not explained by volition. It will be something external to the function, and given from outside. And thus, with will and thought alike, we must accept this same conclusion. There is no willing or thinking apart from the particular acts, and these particular acts, as will and thought, are clearly not self-evident. They involve in their essences a connection supplied from without. And will and thought therefore, even where without doubt they exist, are dependent and secondary. Nothing can be explained in the end by a reduction to either of these functions.

\(^1\) On this point see *Mind*, No. 47.
This conclusion, not dependent on psychology, finds itself supported and confirmed there. For will and thought, in the sense in which we know them, clearly are not primary. They are developed from a basis which is not yet either, and which never can fully become so. Their existence is due to psychical events and ways of happening, which are not distinctive of thought or will. And this basis is never, so to speak, quite absorbed by either. They are differentiations whose peculiar characters never quite specialize all their contents. In other words will and thought throughout depend on what is not essentially either, and, without these psychical elements which remain external, their processes would cease. There is, in brief, a common substance with common laws; and of this material will and thought are one-sided applications. Far from exhausting this life, they are contained within it as subordinate functions. They are included in it as dependent and partial developments.

Fully to work out this truth would be the business of psychology, and I must content myself here with a brief notice of some leading points. Thought is a development from a ground of preceding ideality. The division of content from existence is not created but grows. The laws of Association and Blending already in themselves imply the working of ideal elements; and on these laws thought stands and derives from them its actual processes. It is the blind pressure and the struggle of changed sensations, which, working together with these laws, first begins to loosen ideal content from psychical fact. And hence we may say that thought proper is the outcome, and not the creator, of idealizing functions. I do not mean that the development of thought can be fully explained, since that would imply a clear insight into the general origin of the relational form. And I doubt if we can follow and retrace in detail the transition
to this from the stage of mere feeling. But I would insist, none the less, that some distinguishing is prior to thought proper. Synthesis and analysis, each alike, begin as psychical growths; each preceeds and then is specialized and organized into thinking. But, if so, thought is not ultimate. It cannot for one moment claim to be the sole parent and source of ideality.¹

And if thought is taken as a function primary, and from the first implied in distinction and synthesis, even on this mistaken basis its dependent character is plain. For the connections and distinctions, the ideal relations, in which thought has its being—from where do they come? As particular they consist at least partly in what is special to each, and these special natures, at least partly, can be derived from no possible faculty of thinking. Thought's relations therefore still must depend on what is empirical. They are in part the result of perception and mere psychical process. Therefore (as we saw above) thought must rest on these foreign materials; and, however much we take it as primary and original, it is still not independent. For it never in any case can absorb its materials into essential functions. Its connections may be familiar and unnoticed, and its sequences may glide without a break. Nay even upon reflection we may feel convinced that our special arrangement is true system, and may be sure that somehow its connections are not based on mere conjunction. But if we ask, on the other hand, if this ideal system can come out of bare thought, or can be made to consist in it, the answer must be different. Why connections in particular are just so, and not more or less otherwise—this can be explained in the end by no faculty of thinking. And thus, if thought in its origin is not secondary, its essence remains so. In its ideal matter it is a result from mere psychical

¹ With the above compare, again, *Mind*, No. 47.
growth, its ideal connections in part will throughout be pre-supposed and not made by itself. And a connection, supposed to be made, would even be disowned as a fiction. Hence, on any psychological view, these connections are not inherent and essential. But for the truer view, we have seen above, thought altogether is developed. It grows from, and still it consists in, processes not dependent on itself. And the result may be summed up thus; certainly all relations are ideal, and as certainly not all relations are products of thinking.\(^1\)

If we turn to volition, psychology makes clear that this is developed and secondary. An idea, barely of itself, possesses no power of passing over into fact, nor is there any faculty whose office it is to carry out this passage. O\(_1\), for the sake of argument, suppose that such a faculty exists, yet some ideas require (as we saw) an extraneous assistance. The faculty is no function, in short, unless specially provoked. But that which makes will, or at least makes it behave as itself, is surely a condition on which the being of will is dependent. Will, in brief is based on associations, psychical and physical at once, or, again, upon mere physiological connections. It pre-supposes these, and throughout its working it also implies them, and we are hence compelled to consider them as part of its essence. I am quite aware that on the nature of will there is a great diversity of doctrine, but there are some views which I feel justified in not considering seriously. For any sane psychology will must pre-suppose, and must rest on, junctions physical and psychical, junctions which certainly are not will. Nor is there any stage of its growth at which will has absorbed into a special essence these pre-

\(^1\) How what seems a faculty of analysis can be developed I have endeavoured to point out in the article above referred to.

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supposed workings. But, if so, assuredly will cannot be taken as primary.¹

The universe as a whole may be called intelligible. It may be known to come together in such a way as to realize, throughout and thoroughly, the complete demands of a perfect intellect. And, every single element, again, in the world is intelligible, because it is taken up into and absorbed in a whole of this character.² But the universe is not intelligible in the sense that it can throughout be understood; nor, starting from the mere intellect, could you anticipate its features in detail. For, in answering the demands of the intellect, the Whole supplements and makes good its characteristic defects, so that the perfected intellect, with these, has lost its own special nature. And this conclusion holds again of every other aspect of things. None of them is intelligible, as such, because, when become intelligible, they have ceased also, as such, to be. Hence no single aspect of the world can in the end be explained, nor can the world be explained as the result either of any or all of them. We have verified this truth above in the instance of thought and of will. Thought is not intelligible because its particular functions are not self-evident, and because, again, they cannot be derived from, or shown to be parts immanent in itself. And the same defect once more belongs also to will. I do not mean merely that will's special passages are not intellectual. I mean that they are not intelligible, nor by themselves luminous, nor in any sense self-evident. They are occurrences familiar more or less, but never containing each in itself its own essence and warrant. That essence,

¹ I have left out of the account those cases where what works is mainly Blending. Obviously the same conclusion follows here.
² It is intelligible also, I have remarked above in Chapter xix., in the sense of being distinguishable content.
as we have seen, remains a fact which is conditioned from without, and it therefore remains everywhere partly alien. It is futile to explain the whole as the unity of two or more factors, when none of these can by itself be taken as evident, and when the way, in which their variety is brought together, remains in detail unintelligible.

With this result it is time that we went forward, but I feel compelled, in passing, to remark on the alleged supremacy of Will. In the first place, if will is Reality, it is incumbent on us to show how appearance is related to this ground. And, on our failure, we have an unknown unity behind this relation, and will itself must take the place of a partial appearance. But, when we consider will's character, the same conclusion is in any case plain. What we know as will implies relation and a process, and an unsolved discrepancy of elements. And the same remark holds of energy or activity, or of anything else of the kind. Indeed, I have dwelt so often on this head that I must consider it disposed of. I may, however, be told perhaps that this complexity is but the appearance of will, and that will itself, the real and supreme, is something other and different. But, if so, the relation of appearance to this reality is once more on our hands. And, even apart from that, such an appeal to Will-in-itself is futile. For what we know as will contains the process, and what we do not know as will has no right to the name. It may be a mere physical happening, or may imply a metaphysical Reality, and in either case we have already dealt with it so far as is required. In short, an appeal to will, either in metaphysics or in psychology, is an uncritical attempt to make play with the unknown. It is the pretence of a ground or an explanation, where the ground is not understood or the explanation discovered. And, so far as metaphysics is concerned, one can perhaps account for
such a barren self-deception. The mere intellect has shown itself incompetent to explain all phenomena, and so naturally recourse is had to the other side of things. And this unknown reality, called in thus to supply the defects of mere intellect, is blindly identified with the aspect which appears most opposed. But an unknown Reality, more than intellect, a something which appears in will and all appearance, and even in intellect itself—such a reality is not will or any other partial aspect of things. We really have appealed to the complete and all inclusive totality, free from one-sidedness and all defect. And we have called this will, because in will we do not find one defect of a particular kind. But such a procedure is not rational.

An attempt may perhaps be made from another side to defend the primacy of will. It may be urged that all principles and axioms in the end must be practical, and must accordingly be called the expression of will. But such an assertion would be mistaken. Axioms and principles are the expression of diverse sides of our nature, and they most certainly cannot all be considered as practical. In our various attitudes, intellectual, æsthetic, and practical, there are certain modes of experience which satisfy. In these modes we can repose, while, again, their absence brings pain, and unrest, and desire. And we can of course distinguish these characters and set them up as ideals, and we can also make them our ends and the objects of will. But such a relation to will is, except in the moral end, not inherent in their nature. Indeed the reply that principles are willed because they are, would be truer than the assertion that principles are just because they are willed. And the possible objection that after all these things are objects to will, has been anticipated above (p. 474). The same line of argument obviously would prove that the intelligence is paramount, since it reflects on will and on every other aspect of the world.
With this hurried notice, I must dismiss finally the alleged pre-eminence of will. This must remain always a muddy refuge for the troubled in philosophy. But its claims appear plausible so long only as darkness obscures them. They are plainly absurd where they do not prefer to be merely unintelligible.

We have found that no one aspect of experience, as such, is real. None is primary, or can serve to explain the others or the whole. They are all alike appearances, all one-sided, and passing away beyond themselves. But I may be asked why, admitting this, we should call them appearances. For such a term belongs solely of right to the perceptual side of things, and the perceptual side, we agreed, was but one aspect among others. To appear, we may be told, is not possible except to a percipient, and an appearance also implies both judgment and rejection. I might certainly, on the other side, enquire whether all implied metaphors are to be pressed, and if so, how many phrases and terms would be left us. But in the case of appearance I admit at once that the objection has force. I think the term implies without doubt an aspect of perceiving and judging, and such an aspect, I quite agree, does not everywhere exist. For, even if we conclude that all phenomena pass through psychical centres, yet in those centres most assuredly all is not perception. And to assume that somehow in the Whole all phenomena are judged of, would be again indefensible. We must, in short, admit that some appearances really do not appear, and that hence a license is involved in our use of the term.

Our attitude, however, in metaphysics must be theoretical. It is our business here to measure and to judge the various aspects of things. And hence for us anything, which comes short when compared with Reality, gets the name of appearance. But we
do not suggest that the thing always itself is an appearance. We mean its character is such that it becomes one, as soon as we judge it. And this character, we have seen throughout our work, is ideality. Appearance consists in the looseness of content from existence; and, because of this self-estrangement, every finite aspect is called an appearance. And we have found that everywhere throughout the world such ideality prevails. Anything less than the Whole has turned out to be not self-contained. Its being involves in its very essence a relation to the outside, and it is thus inwardly infected by externality. Everywhere the finite is self-transcendent, alienated from itself, and passing away from itself towards another existence. Hence the finite is appearance because, on the one side, it is an adjective of Reality, and because, on the other side, it is an adjective which itself is not real. When the term is thus defined, its employment seems certainly harmless.

We have in this Chapter been mainly, so far, concerned with a denial. All is appearance, and no appearance, or any combination of these, is the same as Reality. This is half the truth, and by itself it is a dangerous error. We must turn at once to correct it by adding its counterpart and supplement. The Absolute is its appearances, it really is all and every one of them. That is the other half-truth which we have already insisted on, and which we must urge once more here. And we may remind ourselves at this point of a fatal mistake. If you take appearances, singly or all together, and assert barely that the Absolute is either one of them or all —the position is hopeless. Having first set these down as appearance, you now proclaim them as the very opposite; for that which is identified with the Absolute is no appearance but is utter reality. But we have seen the solution of this puzzle, and we
know the sense and meaning in which these half-truths come together into one. The Absolute is each appearance, and is all, but it is not any one as such. And it is not all equally, but one appearance is more real than another. In short the doctrine of degrees in reality and truth is the fundamental answer to our problem. Everything is essential, and yet one thing is worthless in comparison with others. Nothing is perfect, as such, and yet everything in some degree contains a vital function of Perfection. Every attitude of experience, every sphere or level of the world, is a necessary factor in the Absolute. Each in its own way satisfies, until compared with that which is more than itself. Hence appearance is error, if you will, but not every error is illusion. At each stage is involved the principle of that which is higher, and every stage (it is therefore true) is already inconsistent. But on the other hand, taken for itself and measured by its own ideas, every level has truth. It meets, we may say, its own claims, and it proves false only when tried by that which is already beyond it. And thus the Absolute is immanent alike through every region of appearances. There are degrees and ranks, but, one and all, they are alike indispensable.

We can find no province of the world so low but the Absolute inhabits it. Nowhere is there even a single fact so fragmentary and so poor that to the universe it does not matter. There is truth in every idea however false, there is reality in every existence however slight; and, where we can point to reality or truth, there is the one undivided life of the Absolute. Appearance without reality would be impossible, for what then could appear? And reality without appearance would be nothing, for there certainly is nothing outside appearances. But on the other hand Reality (we must repeat this) is not the

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1 On the difference between these see Chapter xxvii.
sum of things. It is the unity in which all things, coming together, are transmuted, in which they are changed all alike, though not changed equally. And, as we have perceived, in this unity relations of isolation and hostility are affirmed and absorbed. These also are harmonious in the Whole, though not of course harmonious as such, and while severally confined to their natures as separate. Hence it would show blindness to urge, as an objection against our view, the opposition found in ugliness and in conscious evil. The extreme of hostility implies an intenser relation, and this relation falls within the Whole and enriches its unity. The apparent discordance and distraction is overruled into harmony, and it is but the condition of fuller and more individual development. But we can hardly speak of the Absolute itself as either ugly or evil. The Absolute is indeed evil in a sense and it is ugly and false, but the sense, in which these predicates can be applied, is too forced and unnatural. Used of the Whole each predicate would be the result of an indefensible division, and each would be a fragment isolated and by itself without consistent meaning. Ugliness, evil, and error, in their several spheres, are subordinate aspects. They imply distinctions falling, in each case, within one subject province of the Absolute's kingdom; and they involve a relation, in each case, of some struggling element to its superior, though limited, whole. Within these minor wholes the opposition draws its life from, and is overpowered by the system which supports it. The predicates evil, ugly, and false must therefore stamp, whatever they qualify, as a mere subordinate aspect, an aspect belonging to the province of beauty or goodness or truth. And to assign such a position to the sovereign Absolute would be plainly absurd. You may affirm that the Absolute has ugliness and error and evil, since it owns the provinces in which these features are partial elements. But to assert that it
is one of its own fragmentary and dependent details would be inadmissible.

It is only by a licence that the subject-systems, even when we regard them as wholes, can be made qualities of Reality. It is always under correction and on sufferance that we term the universe either beautiful or moral or true. And to venture further would be both useless and dangerous at once.

If you view the Absolute morally at all, then the Absolute is good. It cannot be one factor contained within and overpowered by goodness. In the same way, viewed logically or æsthetically, the Absolute can only be true or beautiful. It is merely when you have so termed it, and while you still continue to insist on these preponderant characters, that you can introduce at all the ideas of falsehood and ugliness. And, so introduced, their direct application to the Absolute is impossible. Thus to identify the supreme universe with a partial system may, for some end, be admissible. But to take it as a single character within this system, and as a feature which is already overruled, and which as such is suppressed there, would, we have seen, be quite unwarranted. Ugliness, error, and evil, all are owned by, and all essentially contribute to the wealth of the Absolute. The Absolute, we may say in general, has no assets beyond appearances; and again, with appearances alone to its credit, the Absolute would be bankrupt. All of these are worthless alike apart from transmutation. But, on the other hand once more, since the amount of change is different in each case, appearances differ widely in their degrees of truth and reality. There are predicates which, in comparison with others, are false and unreal.

To survey the field of appearances, to measure each by the idea of perfect individuality, and to arrange them in an order and in a system of reality and merit—would be the task of metaphysics. This
task (I may repeat) is not attempted in these pages. I have however endeavoured here, as above, to explain and to insist on the fundamental principle. And, passing from that, I will now proceed to remark on some points of interest. There are certain questions which at this stage we may hope to dispose of.

Let us turn our attention once more to Nature or the physical world. Are we to affirm that ideas are forces, and that ends operate and move there? And, again, is Nature beautiful and an object of possible worship? On this latter point, which I will consider first, I find serious confusion. Nature, as we have seen, can be taken in various senses (Chapter xxii.). We may understand by it the whole universe, or again merely the world in space, or again we may restrict it to a very much narrower meaning. We may first remove everything which in our opinion is only psychical, and the abstract residue—the primary qualities—we may then identify with Nature. These will be the essence, while all the rest is accessory adjective, and, in the fullest sense, is immaterial. Now we have found that Nature, so understood, has but little reality. It is an ideal construction required by science, and it is a necessary working fiction. And we may add that reduction to a result, and to a particular instance, of this fiction, is what is meant by a strictly physical explanation. But in this way there grows up a great confusion. For the object of natural science is the full world in all its sensible glory, while the essence of Nature lies in this poor fiction of primary qualities, a fiction believed not to be idea but solid fact. Nature then, while unexplained, is still left in its sensuous splendour, while Nature, if explained, would be reduced to this paltry abstraction. On one side is set up the essence—the final reality—in the shape of a bare skeleton of primary qualities;
on the other side remains the boundless profusion of life which everywhere opens endlessly before our view. And these extremes then are confused, or are conjoined, by sheer obscurity or else by blind mental oscillation. If explanation reduces facts to be adjectives of something which they do not qualify at all, the whole connection seems irrational, and the process robs us of the facts. But if the primary essence after all is qualified, then its character is transformed. The explanation, in reducing the concrete, will now also have enriched and have individualized the abstract, and we shall have started on our way towards philosophy and truth. But of this latter result in the present case there can be no question. And therefore we must end in oscillation with no attempt at an intelligent unity of view. Nature is, on the one hand, that show whose reality lies barely in primary qualities. It is, on the other hand, that endless world of sensible life, which appeals to our sympathy and extorts our wonder. It is the object loved and lived in by the poet and by the observing naturalist. And, when we speak of Nature, we have often no idea which of these extremes, or indeed what at all, is to be understood. We in fact pass, as suits the occasion, from one extreme unconsciously to the other.

I will briefly apply this result to the question before us. Whether Nature is beautiful and admirable will depend entirely on the sense in which Nature is taken. If the genuine reality of Nature is bare primary qualities, then I cannot think that such a question needs serious discussion. In a word Nature will be dead. It could possess at the most a kind of symmetry; and again by its extent, or by its practical relation to our weaknesses or needs, it might excite in us feelings of a certain kind. But these feelings, in the first place, would fall absolutely within ourselves. They could not rationally be applied to, nor in the very least could
they qualify Nature. And, in the second place, these feelings would in our minds hardly take the form of worship. Hence when Nature, as the object of natural science, is either asserted to be beautiful, or is set up before us as divine, we may make our answer at once. If the reality of the object is to be restricted to primary qualities, then surely no one would advocate the claims we have mentioned. If again the whole perceptible world and the glory of it is to be genuinely real, and if this splendour and this life are of the very essence of Nature, then a difficulty will arise in two directions. In the first place this claim has to get itself admitted by physical science. The psychical has to be adopted as at least co-equal in reality with matter. The relation to the organism and to the soul has to be included in the vital being of a physical object. And the first difficulty will consist in advancing to this point. Then the second difficulty will appear at once when this point has been reached. For, having gone so far, we have to justify our refusal to go further. For why is Nature to be confined to the perceptible world? If the psychical and the "subjective" is in any degree to make part of its reality, then upon what principle can you shut out the highest and most spiritual experience? Why is Nature viewed and created by the painter, the poet, and the seer, not essentially real? But in this way Nature will tend to become the total universe of both spirit and matter. And our main conclusion so far must be this. It is evidently useless to raise such questions about the object of natural science, when you have not settled in your mind what that object is, and when you supply no principle on which we can decide in what its reality consists.

But turning from this confusion, and once more approaching the question from, I trust, a more rational ground, I will try to make a brief answer. Into the special features and limits of the beautiful in
Nature I cannot enter. And I cannot discuss how far, and in what sense, the physical world is included in the true object of religion. These are special enquiries which fall without the scope of my volume. But whether Nature is beautiful or adorable at all, and whether it possesses such attributes really and in truth,—to the question, asked thus in general, we may answer, Yes. We have seen that Nature, regarded as bare matter, is a mere convenient abstraction (Chapter xxii.). The addition of secondary qualities, the included relation to a body and to a soul, in making Nature more concrete makes it thereby more real.\(^1\) The sensible life, the warmth and colour, the odour and the tones, without these Nature is a mere intellectual fiction. The primary qualities are a construction demanded by science, but, while divorced from the secondary, they have no life as facts. Science has a Hades from which it returns to interpret the world, but the inhabitants of its Hades are merely shades. And, when the secondary qualities are added, Nature, though more real, is still incomplete. The joys and sorrows of her children, their affections and their thoughts—how are we to say that these have no part in the reality of Nature? Unless to a mind restricted by a principle the limitation would be absurd, and our main principle on the other hand insists that Nature, when more full, is more real. And this same principle will carry us on to a further conclusion. The emotions, excited by Nature in the considering soul, must at least in part be referred to, and must be taken as attributes of Nature. If there is no beauty there, and if the sense of that is to fall somewhere outside, why in the end should there be any qualities in Nature at all? And, if no emotional tone is to qualify Nature, how and on what principle are we to

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\(^1\) I do not think it necessary to restate any qualification required here by parts of Nature taken as not perceived. I have dealt with this sufficiently in Chapters xxii. and xxiv.
attribute to it anything else whatever? Everything there without exception is "subjective," if we are to regard the matter so; and an emotional tone cannot, solely on this account, be excluded from Nature. And, otherwise, why should it not have reality there as a genuine quality? For myself I must follow the same principle and can accept the fresh consequence. The Nature that we have lived in, and that we love, is really Nature. Its beauty and its terror and its majesty are no illusion, but qualify it essentially. And hence that, in which at our best moments we all are forced to believe, is the literal truth.

This result however needs some qualification from another side. It is certain that everything is determined by the relations in which it stands. It is certain that, with increase of determinateness, a thing becomes more and more real. On the other hand anything, fully determined, would be the Absolute itself. There is a point where increase of reality implies passage beyond self. A thing by enlargement becomes a mere factor in the whole next above it; and, in the end, all provinces and all relative wholes cease to keep their separate characters. We must not forget this while considering the reality of Nature. By gradual increase of that reality you reach a stage at which Nature, as such, is absorbed. Or, as you reflect on Nature, your object identifies itself gradually with the universe or Absolute. And the question arises at what point, when we begin to add psychical life or to attribute spiritual attributes to Nature, we have ceased to deal with Nature in any proper sense of that term. Where do we pass from Nature, as an outlying province in the kingdom of things, to Nature as a suppressed element in a higher unity? These enquiries are demanded by philosophy, and their result would lead to clearer conclusions about the qualities of Nature. I can do no more than
allude to them here, and the conclusion, on which
I insist, can in the main be urged independently.
Nothing is lost to the Absolute, and all appearances
have reality. The Nature, studied by the observer
and by the poet and painter, is in all its sensible
and emotional fullness a very real Nature. It is in
most respects more real than the strict object of
physical science. For Nature, as the world whose
real essence lies in primary qualities, has not a high
degree of reality and truth. It is a mere abstrac-
tion made and required for a certain purpose. And
the object of natural science may either mean this
skeleton, or it may mean the skeleton made real
by blood and flesh of secondary qualities. Hence,
before we dwell on the feelings Nature calls for
from us, it would be better to know in what sense we
are using the term. But the boundary of Nature
can hardly be drawn even at secondary qualities.
Or, if we draw it there, we must draw it arbitrarily,
and to suit our convenience. Only on this ground
can psychical life be excluded from Nature, while,
regarded otherwise, the exclusion would not be
tenable. And to deny aesthetic qualities in Nature,
or to refuse it those which inspire us with fear or
devotion, would once more surely be arbitrary. It
would be a division introduced for a mere work-
ing theoretical purpose. Our principle, that the
abstract is the unreal, moves us steadily upward.
It forces us first to rejection of bare primary
qualities, and it compels us in the end to credit
Nature with our higher emotions. That process
can cease only where Nature is quite absorbed into
spirit, and at every stage of the process we find
increase in reality.

And this higher interpretation, and this eventual
transcendence of Nature lead us to the discussion
of another point which we mentioned above. Ex-
cept in finite souls and except in volition may we
suppose that Ends operate in Nature, and is ideality, in any other sense, a working force there? How far such a point of view may be permitted in æsthetics or in the philosophy of religion, I shall not enquire. But considering the physical world as a mere system of appearances in space, are we on metaphysical grounds to urge the insufficiency of the mechanical view? In what form (if in any) are we to advocate a philosophy of Nature? On this difficult subject I will very briefly remark in passing.

The mechanical view plainly is absurd as a full statement of truth. Nature so regarded has not ceased at all (we may say) to be ideal, but its ideality throughout falls somewhere outside itself (Chapters xxii. and xxiii.). And that even for working purposes this view can everywhere be rigidly maintained, I am unable to assert. But upon one subject I have no doubts. Every special science must be left at liberty to follow its own methods, and, if the natural sciences reject every way of explanation which is not mechanical, that is not the affair of metaphysics. For myself, in other ways ignorant, I venture to assume that these sciences understand their own business. But where, quite beyond the scope of any special science, assertions are made, the metaphysician may protest. He may insist that abstractions are not realities, and that working fictions are never more than useful fragments of truth. And on another point also he may claim a hearing. To adopt one sole principle of valid explanation, and to urge that, if phenomena are to be explicable, they must be explained by one method—this is of course competent to any science. But it is another thing to proclaim phenomena as already explained, or as explicable, where in certain aspects or in certain provinces they clearly are not explained, and where, perhaps, not even the first beginning of an explanation has been made. In these lapses or excursions beyond its own limits
natural science has no rights. But within its bound-
daries I think every wise man will consider it sacred. 
And this question of the operation of Ends in 
Nature is one which, in my judgment, metaphysics 
should leave untouched.

Is there then no positive task which is left to 
metaphysics, the accomplishment of which might be 
called a philosophy of Nature? I will briefly point 
out the field which seems to call for occupation. 
All appearances for metaphysics have degrees of 
reality. We have an idea of perfection or of in-
dividuality; and, as we find that any form of exist-
ence more completely realizes this idea, we assign 
to it its position in the scale of being. And in this 
scale (as we have seen) the lower, as its defects are 
made good, passes beyond itself into the higher. 
The end, or the absolute individuality, is also the 
principle. Present from the first it supplies the test 
of its inferior stages, and, as these are included in 
fuller wholes, the principle grows in reality. Meta-
physics in short can assign a meaning to perfection 
and progress. And hence, if it were to accept from 
the sciences the various kinds of natural phenomena, 
if it were to set out these kinds in an order of merit 
and rank, if it could point out how within each 
higher grade the defects of the lower are made 
good, and how the principle of the lower grade is 
carried out in the higher—metaphysics surely would 
have contributed to the interpretation of Nature. 
And, while myself totally incapable of even assist-
ing in such a work, I cannot see how or on what 
ground it should be considered unscientific. It is 
doubtless absurd to wear the airs of systematic 
 omniscience. It is worse than absurd to pour scorn 
on the detail and on the narrowness of devoted 
specialism. But to try to give system from time to 
time to the results of the sciences, and to attempt 
to arrange these on what seems a true principle 
of worth, can be hardly irrational.
Such a philosophy of Nature, if at least it were true to itself, could not intrude on the province of physical science. For it would, in short, abstain wholly and in every form from speculation on genesis. How the various stages of progress come to happen in time, in what order or orders they follow, and in each case from what causes, these enquiries would, as such, be no concern of philosophy. Its idea of evolution and progress in a word should not be temporal. And hence a conflict with the sciences upon any question of development or of order could not properly arise. "Higher" and "lower," terms which imply always a standard and end, would in philosophy be applied solely to designate rank. Natural science would still be free, as now, to use, or even to abuse, such terms at its pleasure, and to allow them any degree of meaning which is found convenient. Progress for philosophy would never have any temporal sense, and it could matter nothing if the word elsewhere seemed to bear little or no other. With these brief remarks I must leave a subject which deserves serious attention.

In a complete philosophy the whole world of appearance would be set out as a progress. It would show a development of principle though not a succession in time. Every sphere of experience would be measured by the absolute standard, and would be given a rank answering to its own relative merits and defects. On this scale pure Spirit would mark the extreme most removed from lifeless Nature. And, at each rising degree of this scale, we should find more of the first character with less of the second. The ideal of spirit, we may say, is directly opposite to mechanism. Spirit is a unity of the manifold in which the externality of the manifold has utterly ceased. The universal here is immanent in the parts, and its system does not lie somewhere outside and in the relations between them. It is above the relational form and has absorbed it.
in a higher unity, a whole in which there is no division between elements and laws. And, since this principle shows itself from the first in the inconsistencies of bare mechanism,¹ we may say that Nature at once is realized and transmuted by spirit. But each of these extremes, we must add, has no existence as fact. The sphere of dead mechanism is set apart by an act of abstraction, and in that abstraction alone it essentially consists. And, on the other hand, pure spirit is not realized except in the Absolute. It can never appear as such and with its full character in the scale of existence. Perfection and individuality belong only to that Whole in which all degrees alike are at once present and absorbed. This one Reality of existence can, as such, nowhere exist among phenomena. And it enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress.

It may repay us to discuss the truth of this last statement. Is there, in the end and on the whole, any progress in the universe? Is the Absolute better or worse at one time than at another? It is clear that we must answer in the negative, since progress and decay are alike incompatible with perfection. There is of course progress in the world, and there is also retrogression, but we cannot think that the Whole either moves on or backwards. The Absolute has no history of its own, though it contains histories without number. These, with their tale of progress or decline, are constructions starting from and based on some one given piece of finitude. They are but partial aspects in the region of temporal appearance. Their truth and reality may vary much in extent and in importance, but in the end it can never be more than relative.

¹ The defect and the partial supersession of mere mechanical law has been touched on in Chapters xxii. and xxiii. It would be possible to add a good deal more on this head.
And the question whether the history of a man or a
world is going forwards or back, does not belong to
metaphysics. For nothing perfect, nothing genuinely
real, can move. The Absolute has no seasons, but
all at once bears its leaves, fruit, and blossoms.¹
Like our globe it always, and it never, has summer
and winter.

Such a point of view, if it disheartens us, has
been misunderstood. It is only by our mistake that
it collides with practical belief. If into the world of
goodness, possessing its own relative truth, you will
directly thrust in ideas which apply only to the
Whole, the fault surely is yours. The Absolute's
caracter, as such, cannot hold of the relative, but
the relative, unshaken for all that, holds its place in
the Absolute. Or again, shutting yourself up in
the region of practice, will you insist upon applying
its standards to the universe? We want for our
practice, of course, both a happening in time and a
personal finitude. We require a capacity for be-
coming better, and, I suppose too, for becoming
worse. And if these features, as such, are to qualify
the whole of things, and if they are to apply to ul-
timate reality, then the main conclusions of this work
are naturally erroneous. But I cannot adopt others
until at least I see an attempt made to set them out
in a rational form. And I can not profess respect
for views which seem to me in many cases insincere.
If progress is to be more than relative, and is some-
thing beyond a mere partial phenomenon, then the
religion, professed most commonly among us, has
been abandoned. You cannot be a Christian if you
maintain that progress is final and ultimate and the
last truth about things. And I urge this considera-
tion, of course not as an argument from my mouth,
but as a way of bringing home perhaps to some
persons their inconsistency. Make the moral point
of view absolute, and then realize your position.

¹ This image is, I believe, borrowed from Strauss.
You have become not merely irrational, but you have also, I presume, broken with every considerable religion. And you have been brought to this by following the merest prejudice.

Philosophy, I agree, has to justify the various sides of our life; but this is impossible, I would urge, if any side is made absolute. Our attitudes in life give place ceaselessly the one to the other, and life is satisfied if each in its own field is allowed supremacy. Now to deny progress of the universe surely leaves morality where it was. A man has his self or his world, about to make an advance (he may hope) through his personal effort, or in any case (he knows well) to be made the best of. The universe is, so far, worse through his failure; it is better, so far, through his success. And if, not content with this, he demands to alter the universe at large, he should at least invoke neither reason nor religion nor morality. For the improvement or decay of the universe seems nonsense, unmeaning or blasphemous. While, on the other hand, faith in the progress or persistence of those who inhabit our planet has nothing to do with metaphysics. And I may perhaps add that it has little more to do with morality. Such faith can not alter our duties; and to the mood, in which we approach them, the difference, which it makes, may not be wholly an advantage. If we can be weakened by despondence, we can, no less, be hurried away by stupid enthusiasm and by pernicious cant. But this is no place for the discussion of such matters, and we may be content here to know that we cannot attribute any progress to the Absolute.

I will end this chapter with a few remarks on a subject which lies near. I refer to that which is commonly called the Immortality of the Soul. This is a topic on which for several reasons I would rather keep silence, but I think that silence here
might fairly be misunderstood. It is not easy, in the first place, to say exactly what a future life means. The period of personal continuance obviously need not be taken as endless. And again precisely in what sense, and how far, the survival must be personal is not easy to lay down. I shall assume here that what is meant is an existence after death which is conscious of its identity with our life here and now. And the duration of this must be taken as sufficient to remove any idea of unwilling extinction or of premature decease. Now we seem to desire continuance (if we do desire it) for a variety of reasons, and it might be interesting elsewhere to set these out and to clear away confusions.\footnote{The so-called fear of extinction seems to rest on a confusion, and I do not believe that, in a proper form, it exists at all. It is really mere shrinking from defeat and from injury and pain. For we can think of our own total suicase, but we cannot imagine it. Against our will, and perhaps unconsciously, there creeps in the idea of a reluctant and struggling self, or of a self disappointed, or wearied, or in some way discontented. And this is certainly not a self completely extinguished. There is no fear of death at all, we may say, except either incidentally or through an illusion.}
The question of possibility.

There is one sense in which the immortality of souls seems impossible. We must remember that the universe is incapable of increase. And to suppose a constant supply of new souls, none of which ever perished, would clearly land us in the end in an insoluble difficulty. But it is quite unnecessary, I presume, to hold the doctrine in this sense. And, if we take the question generally, then to deny the possibility of a life after death would be quite ridiculous. There is no way of proving, first, that a body is required for a soul (Chapter xxiii.). And though a soul, when bodiless, might (for all we know) be even more subject to mortality, yet obviously here we have passed into a region of ignorance. And to say that in this region a personal
continuance could not be, appears simply irrational. And the same result holds, even if we take a body as essential to every soul, and, even if we insist also (as we cannot) that this body must be made of our everyday substance. A future life is possible even on the ground of common crude Materialism. After an interval, no matter how long, another nervous system sufficiently like our own might be developed; and in this case memory and a personal identity must arise. The event may be as improbable as you please, but I at least can find no reason for calling it impossible. And we may even go a step further still. It is conceivable that an indefinite number of such bodies should exist, not in succession merely, but all together and all at once. But, if so, we might gain a personal continuance not single but multiform, and might secure a destiny on which it would be idle to enlarge. In ways like the above it is clear that a future life is possible, but, on the other hand, such possibilities are not worth much.

A thing is impossible absolutely when it contradicts the known nature of Reality. It is impossible relatively when it collides with some idea which we have found good cause to take as real. A thing is possible, first, as long as it is not quite meaningless. It must contain some positive quality belonging to the universe; and it must not at the same time remove this and itself by some destructive addition. A thing is possible further, according as its meaning contains without discrepancy more and more of what is held to be real. We, in other words, consider anything more possible as it grows in proba-

1 I have attempted to show this in an article on the Evidences of Spiritualism, *Fortnightly Review*, December, 1885. It may perhaps be worth while to add here that apparently even a high organism is possible, which apart from accidents would never die. Apparently this could not be termed impossible in principle, at least within our present knowledge.

2 See, above, Chapter xxiv., and, below, Chapter xxvii.
bility. And "Probability," we are rightly told, "is the guide of life." We want to know, in short, not whether a thing is merely and barely possible, but how much ground we have for expecting it and not something else.

In a case like the present, we cannot, of course, hope to set out the chances, for we have to do with elements the value of which is not known. And for probability the unknown is of different kinds. There is first the unknown utterly, which is not possible at all; and this is discounted and treated as nothing. There is next something possible, the full nature of which is hidden, but the extent and value of which, as against some other "events," is clear. And so far all is straightforward. But we have still to deal with the unknown in two more troublesome senses. It may stand for a mere possibility about which we know nothing further, and for entertaining which we can find no further ground. Or again, the unknown may cover a region, where we can specify no details, but which still we can judge to contain a great diversity of possible events.

We shall soon find the importance of these dry distinctions. A bodiless soul is possible because it is not meaningless, or in any way known to be impossible. But I fail to find any further and additional reason in its favour. And, next, would a bodiless soul be inmortal? And, again, why after death should we, in particular, have any bodiless continuance? The original slight probability of a future life seems not much increased by these considerations. Again, if we take body to be essential—a body, that is, consisting of matter either familiar or strange—what, on this ground, is our chance of personal continuance after death? You may here appeal to the unknown, and, where our knowledge seems nothing, you may perhaps urge, "Why not this event, just as much as its contrary
and opposite?" But the question would rest on a fallacy, and I must insist on the distinction which above we laid down. In this unknown field we certainly cannot particularize and set out the chances, but in another sense the field is not quite unknown.\footnote{The probability of an unknown event is rightly taken as one half. But, in applying this abstract truth, we must be on our guard against error. In the case of an event in time our ignorance can hardly be entire. We know, for example, that at each moment Nature produces a diversity of changed events. The abstract chance then, say of the repetition of a certain occurrence in a certain place, must be therefore much less than one half. On the other side again considerations of another kind will come in, and may raise the value indefinitely.}

We cannot say that, of the combinations possible there, one half is, for all we know, favourable to a life after death. For, to judge by actual experience, the combinations seem mostly unfavourable. And, though the character of what falls outside our experience may be very different, yet our judgment as to this must be affected by what we do know. But, if so, while the whole variety of combinations must be taken as very large, the portion judged favourable to continued life, whether multiform or simple, must be set down as small. Such will have to be our conclusion if we deal with this unknown field. But, if we may not deal with it, the possibility of a future life is, on this ground, quite unknown; and, if so, we have no right to consider it at all. And the general result to my mind is briefly this. When you add together the chances of a life after death—a life taken as bodiless, and again as diversely embodied—the amount is not great. The balance of hostile probability seems so large that the fraction on the other side to my mind is not considerable. And we may repeat, and may sum up our conclusion thus. If we appeal to blank ignorance, then a future life may even have no meaning, and may fail wholly to be possible. Or if we avoid this worst extreme, a future life may be but barely possible.
But a possibility, in this sense, stands unsupported face to face with an indefinite universe. And its value, so far, can hardly be called worth counting. If, on the other hand, we allow ourselves to use what knowledge we possess, and if we judge fairly of future life by all the grounds we have for judging, the result is not much modified. Among those grounds we certainly find a part which favours continuance; but, taken at its highest, that part appears to be small. Hence a future life must be taken as decidedly improbable.

But in this way, it will be objected, the question is not properly dealt with. "On the grounds you have stated," it will be urged, "future life may be improbable; but then those grounds really lie outside the main point. The positive evidence for a future life is what weighs with our minds; and this is independent of discussions as to what, in the abstract, is probable." The objection is fair, and my reply to it is plain and simple. I have ignored the positive evidence because for me it has really no value. Direct arguments to show that a future life is, not merely possible, but real, seem to me unavailing. The addition to general probability, which they make, is to my mind trifling; and, without examining these arguments in detail, I will add a few remarks.¹

¹ The argument based on apparitions and necromancy I have discussed in the article cited above, p. 503. There, on the hypothesis that extra-human intelligences had been proved, I attempted to show that the conclusions of Spiritualism were still baseless. I had no space there to urge that the hypothesis itself is ridiculously untrue. The spiritualist appears to think that anything which is not in the usual course of things goes to prove his special conclusion. He seems not to perceive any difference between the possible and the actual. As if to open a wide field of indefinite possibilities were the same thing as the exclusion of all others but one. Against the spiritualist, open or covert, it is most important to insist that all the facts shall be dealt with, whether in man alone or, perhaps also, in the lower animals.
Philosophy, I repeat, has to justify all sides of our nature; and this means, I agree, that our main cravings must find satisfaction. But that every desire of every kind must, as such, be gratified—this is quite a different demand, and it is surely irrational. At all events it is opposed to the results of our preceding discussions. The destiny of the finite, we saw everywhere, is to reach consummation, but never wholly as such, never quite in its own way. And as to this desire for a future life, what is there in it so sacred? How can its attainment be implied in the very principles of our nature? Nay, is there in it, taken by itself, anything moral in the least or religious at all? I desire to have no pain, but always pleasure, and to continue so indefinitely. But the literal fulfilment of my wish is incompatible with my place in the universe. It is irreconcilable with my own nature, and I have to be content therefore with that measure of satisfaction which my nature permits. And am I, on this account, to proclaim philosophy insolvent, because it will not listen to demands really based on nothing?

But the demand for future life, I shall be told, is a genuine postulate, and its satisfaction is implicated in the very essence of our nature. Now, if this means that our religion and our morality will not work without it—so much the worse, I reply, for our morality and our religion. The remedy lies in the correction of our mistaken and immoral notions.

The unbroken continuity of the phenomena is fatal to Spiritualism. The more that abnormal human perception and action is verified, the more hopeless it becomes to get to non-human beings. The more fully the monstrous results of modern séances are accepted, the more impossible it becomes, in such a far-seeing and such a silly world of demons, to find any sort of test for Spirit-Identity. As to facts my mind is, and always has been, perfectly open. It is the irrational conclusions of the spiritualist that I reject with disgust. They strike me as the expression of, and the excuse for, a discreditable superstition.
about goodness. "But then," it will be exclaimed, "this is too horrible. There really after all will be self-sacrifice; and virtue and selfishness after all will not be identical." But I have already explained, in Chapter xxv., why this moving appeal finds me deaf. "But then strict justice is not paramount." No, I am sure that it is not so. There is a great deal in the universe, I am sure, beyond mere morality; and I have yet to learn that, even in the moral world, the highest law is justice. "But, if we die, think of the loss of all our hard-won gains." But is a thing lost, in the first place, because I fail to get it or retain it? And, in the second place, what seems to us sheer waste is, to a very large extent, the way of the universe. We need not take on ourselves to be anxious about that. "But without endless progress, how reach perfection?" And with endless progress (if that means anything) I answer, how reach it? Surely perfection and finitude are in principle not compatible. If you are to be perfect, then you, as such, must be resolved and cease; and endless progress sounds merely like an attempt indefinitely to put off perfection.¹ And as a function of the perfect universe, on the other hand, you are perfect already. "But after all we must wish that pain and sorrow should be somewhere made good."

On the whole, and in the whole, if our view is right, this is fully the case. With the individual often I agree it is not the case. And I wish it otherwise, meaning by this that my inclination and duty as a fellow-creature impels me that way, and that wishes and actions of this sort among finite beings fulfil the plan of the Whole. But I cannot argue, therefore, that all is wrong if individuals suffer. There is in life always, I admit, a note of sadness; but it ought not to prevail, nor can we truly assert that it does so. And the universe in its attitude towards

¹ The reader, who desires to follow out this point, must be referred to Hegel's *Phanomenologie*, 449–460.
finite beings must be judged of not piecemeal but as a system. "But, if hopes and fears are taken away, we shall be less happy and less moral." Perhaps, and perhaps again both more moral and more happy. The question is a large one, and I do not intend to discuss it, but I will say so much as this. Whoever argues that belief in a future life has, on the whole, brought evil to humanity, has at least a strong case. But, the question here seems irrelevant. If it could indeed be urged that the essence of a finite being is such, that it can only regulate its conduct by keeping sight of another world and of another life—the matter, I agree, would be altered. But if it comes merely to this, that human beings now are in such a condition that, if they do not believe what is probably untrue, they must deteriorate—that to the universe, if it were the case, would be a mere detail. It is the rule that a race of beings so out of agreement with their environment should deteriorate, and it is well for them to make way for another race constituted more rationally and happily. And I must leave the matter so.1

1 I have said nothing about the argument based on our desire to meet once more those whom we have loved. No one can have been so fortunate as never to have felt the grief of parting, or so inhuman as not to have longed for another meeting after death. But no one, I think, can have reached a certain time of life, without finding, more or less, that such desires are inconsistent with themselves. There are partings made by death, and, perhaps, worse partings made by life; and there are partings which both life and death unite in veiling from our eyes. And friends that have buried their quarrel in a woman's grave, would they at the Resurrection be friends? But, in any case, the desire can hardly pass as a serious argument. The revolt of modern Christianity against the austere sentence of the Gospel (Matt. xxii. 30) is interesting enough. One feels that a personal immortality would not be very personal, if it implied mutilation of our affections. There are those too who would not sit down among the angels, till they had recovered their dog. Still this general appeal to the affections—the only appeal as to future life which to me individually is not hollow—can hardly be turned into a proof.
All the above arguments, and there are others, rest on assumptions negativized by the general results of this volume. It is about the truth of these assumptions, I would add, that discussion is desirable. It is idle to repeat, "I want something," unless you can show that the nature of things demands it also. And to debate this special question, apart from an enquiry into the ultimate nature of the world, is surely unprofitable.

Future life is a subject on which I had no desire to speak. I have kept silence until the subject seemed forced before me, and until in a manner I had dealt with the main problems involved in it. The conclusion arrived at seems the result to which the educated world, on the whole, is making its way. A personal continuance is possible, and it is but little more. Still, if any one can believe in it, and finds himself sustained by that belief,—after all it is possible. On the other hand it is better to be quit of both hope and fear, than to lapse back into any form of degrading superstition. And surely there are few greater responsibilities which a man can take on himself, than to have proclaimed, or even hinted, that without immortality all religion is a cheat and all morality a self-deception.
CHAPTER XXVII.

ULTIMATE DOUBTS.

It is time, however prematurely, to bring this work to an end. We may conclude it by asking how far, and in what sense, we are at liberty to treat its main results as certain. We have found that Reality is one, that it essentially is experience, and that it owns a balance of pleasure. There is nothing in the Whole beside appearance, and every fragment of appearance qualifies the Whole; while on the other hand, so taken together, appearances, as such, cease. Nothing in the universe can be lost, nothing fails to contribute to the single Reality, but every finite diversity is also supplemented and transformed. Everything in the Absolute still is that which it is for itself. Its private character remains, and is but neutralized by complement and addition. And hence, because nothing in the end can be merely itself, in the end no appearance, as such, can be real. But appearances fail of reality in varying degrees; and to assert that one on the whole is worth no more than another, is fundamentally vicious.

The fact of appearance, and of the diversity of its particular spheres, we found was inexplicable. Why there are appearances, and why appearances of such various kinds, are questions not to be answered. But in all this diversity of existence we saw nothing opposed to a complete harmony and system in the Whole. The nature of that system in detail lies beyond our knowledge, but we could discover nowhere the sign of a recalcitrant element. We could
perceive nothing on which any objection to our view of Reality could rationally be founded. And so we ventured to conclude that Reality possesses—how we do not know—the general nature we have assigned to it.

“But, after all, your conclusion,” I may be told, “is not proved. Suppose that we can find no objection sufficient to overthrow it, yet such an absence of disproof does not render it certain. Your result may be possible, but, with that, it has not become real. For why should Reality be not just as well something else? How in the unknown world of possibilities can we be restricted to this one?” The objection seems serious, and, in order to consider it properly, I must be allowed first to enter on some abstract considerations. I will try to confine them to what is essential here.

1. In theory you cannot indulge with consistency in an ultimate doubt. You are forced, willingly or not, at a certain point to assume infallibility. For, otherwise, how could you proceed to judge at all? The intellect, if you please, is but a miserable fragment of our nature; but in the intellectual world it, none the less, must remain supreme. And, if it attempts to abdicate, then its world is forthwith broken up. Hence we must answer, Outside theory take whatever attitude you may prefer, only do not sit down to a game unless you are prepared to play. But every pursuit obviously must involve some kind of governing principle. Even the extreme of theoretical scepticism is based on some accepted idea about truth and fact. It is because you are sure as to some main feature of truth or reality, that you are compelled to doubt or to reject special truths which are offered you. But, if so, you stand on an absolute principle, and, with regard to this, you claim, tacitly or openly, to be infallible. And to start from our general fallibility, and to argue from
this to the uncertainty of every possible result, is in the end irrational. For the assertion, "I am sure that I am everywhere fallible," contradicts itself, and would revive a familiar Greek dilemma. And if we modify the assertion, and instead of "everywhere" write "in general," then the desired conclusion will not follow. For unless, once more falsely, we assume that all truths are much the same, and that with regard to every point error is equally probable, fallibility in general need not affect a particular result.\footnote{On this point compare my Principles of Logic, pp. 519-20.} In short within theory we must decline to consider the chance of a fundamental error. Our assertion of fallibility may serve as the expression of modest feeling, or again of the low estimate we may have formed of the intellect's value. But such an estimate or such a feeling must remain outside of the actual process of theory. For, admitted within, they would at once be inconsistent and irrational.

2. An asserted possibility in the next place must have some meaning. A bare word is not a possibility, nor does any one ever knowingly offer it as such. A possibility always must present us with some actual idea.

3. And this idea must not contradict itself, and so be self-destructive. So far as it is seen to be so, to that extent it must not be taken as possible. For a possibility qualifies the Real,\footnote{Ibid. p. 187. The reader should compare the treatment of Possibility above in this volume (Chapter xxiv.), and again in Mr Bosanquet's Logic.} and must therefore not conflict with the known character of its subject. And it is useless to object here that all appearance is self-contradictory. That is true, but, as self-contradictory and so far as it is so, appearance is not a real or possible predicate of Reality. A predicate which contradicts itself is, as such, not possibly real. In order to be real, its particular nature must be modified and corrected. And this
process of correction, and of making good, may in addition totally transform and entirely dissipate its nature (Chapter xxiv.).

4. It is impossible rationally to doubt where you have but one idea. You may doubt psychically, given two ideas which seem two but are one. And, even without this actual illusion, you may feel uneasy in mind and may hesitate. But doubt implies two ideas, which in their meaning and truly are two; and, without these ideas, doubt has no rational existence.¹

5. Where you have an idea and cannot doubt, there logically you must assert. For everything (we have seen throughout) must qualify the Real. And if an idea does not contradict itself, either as it is or as taken with other things (Chapter xvi.), it is at once true and real. Now clearly a sole possibility cannot so contradict itself;² and it must therefore be affirmed. Psychical failure and confusion may here of course stand in the way. But such confusion and failure can in theory count for nothing.

6. "But to reason thus," it may be objected, "is to rest knowledge on ignorance. It is surely the grounding of an assertion on our bare impotence." No objection could be more mistaken, since the very essence of our principle consists in the diametrical opposite. Its essence lies in the refusal to set blank ignorance in the room of knowledge. He who wishes to doubt, when he has not before him two genuine ideas, he who talks of a possible, which is not based on actual knowledge about Reality—it is he who takes his stand upon sheer incapacity. He is the man who, admitting his emptiness, then pretends to bring forth truth. And it is against this monstrous pretence, this mad presumption in

¹ Ibid. p. 517.
² For, if it did, it would split internally, as well as pass beyond itself externally.
the guise of modesty, that our principle protests. But, if we seriously consider the matter, our conclusion grows plain. Surely an idea must have a meaning; surely two ideas are required for any rational doubt; surely to be called possible is to be affirmed to some extent of the Real. And surely, where you have no alternative, it is not right or rational to take the attitude of a man who hesitates between diverse courses.

7. I will consider next an argument for general doubt which might be drawn from reflection on the privative judgment.¹ In such a judgment the Reality excludes some suggestion, but the basis of the rejection is not a positive quality in the known subject. The basis on the contrary is an absence; and a mere absence implies the qualification of the subject by its psychical setting in us. Or we may say that, while the known subject is assumed to be complete, its limitations fall outside itself and lie in our incapacity. And it may be urged here that with Reality this is always the case. The universe, as we know it, in other words is complete only through our ignorance; and hence it may be said for our real knowledge to be incomplete always. And on this ground, it may be added, we can decline to assert of the universe any one possibility, even when we are able to find no other.

I have myself raised this objection because it contains an important truth. And its principle, if confined to proper limits, is entirely sound. Nay, throughout this work, I have freely used the right to postulate everywhere an unknown supplementation of knowledge. And how then here, it may be urged, are we to throw over this principle? Why should not Reality be considered always as limited by our impotence, and as extending, therefore, in every respect beyond the area of our possibilities?

¹ Ibid. pp. 112-115, 514-517. And see, above, Chapter xxiv.
But the objection at this point, it is clear, contradicts itself. The area of what is possible is here extended and limited in a breath, and a ruinous dilemma might be set up and urged in reply to the question. But it is better at once to expose the main underlying error. The knowledge of privation, like all other knowledge, in the end is positive. You cannot speak of the absent and lacking unless you assume some field and some presence elsewhere. You cannot suggest your ignorance as a reason for judging knowledge incomplete, unless you have some knowledge already of an area which that ignorance hides. Within the known extent of the Real you have various provinces, and hence what is absent from one may be sought for in another. And where in certain features the known world suggests itself as incomplete, that world has extended itself already beyond these features. Here then, naturally, we have a right to follow its extended reality with our conclusions and surmises; and in these discussions we have availed ourselves largely of that privilege. But, on the other hand, this holds only of subordinate matters, and our right exists only while we remain within the known area of the universe. It is senseless to attempt to go beyond, and to assume fields that lie outside the ultimate nature of Reality. If there were any Reality quite beyond our knowledge, we could in no sense be aware of it; and, if we were quite ignorant of it, we could hardly suggest that our ignorance conceals it. And thus, in the end, what we know and what is real must be co-extensive, and assuredly outside of this area nothing is possible. A single possibility here must, therefore, be taken as single and as real. Within this known region, and not outside, lies all the kingdom hidden by ignorance; and here is the object of all intelligent doubt, and every possibility that is not irrational.

8. With a view to gain clearness on this point, it
may repay us to consider an ideal state of things. If the known universe were a perfect system, then it could nowhere suggest its own incompleteness. Every possible suggestion would then at once take its place in the whole, a place fore-ordained and assigned to it by the remaining members of the system. And again, starting from any one element in such a whole, we could from that proceed to work out completely the total universe. And a doubt drawn from privation and based upon ignorance would here entirely disappear. Not only would the system itself have no other possibility outside, but even within its finite details the same consummation would be reached. The words "absence" and "failure" would here, in fact, have lost their proper sense. Since with every idea its full relations to all else would be visible, there would remain no region of doubt or of possibility or ignorance.

9. This intellectual ideal, we know, is not actual fact. It does not exist in our world, and, unless that world were changed radically, its existence is not possible. It would require an alteration of the position in which the intellect stands, and a transformation of its whole connection with the remaining aspects of experience. We need not to cast about for arguments to disprove our omniscience, for at every turn through these pages our weakness has been confessed. The universe in its diversity has been seen to be inexplicable, and I will not repeat here the statement made in the preceding Chapter (p. 469). Our system throughout its detail is incomplete.

Now in an incomplete system there must be everywhere a region of ignorance. Since in the end subject and predicate will not coincide, there remains a margin of that which, except more or less and in its outline, is unknown. And here is a field for doubt and for possibility and for theoretical supplement. An incomplete system in every part
is inconsistent, and so suggests something beyond. But it can nowhere suggest the precise complement which would make good each detail. And hence, both in its extent and in its unity, it for some part must remain a mere collection. We may say that, in the end, it is comprised and exhausted only through our incompleteness.

10. But here we must recur to the distinction which we laid down above. Even in an incomplete world, such as the world which appears in our knowledge, incompleteness and ignorance after all are partial. They do not hold good with every feature, but there are points where no legitimate idea of an Other exists. And in these points a doubt, and an enquiry into other possibles, would be senseless; for there is no available area in which possibly our ignorance could fall. And clearly within these limits (which we cannot fix beforehand) rational doubt becomes irrational assumption. Outside these, again, there may be suggestions, which we cannot say are meaningless or inconsistent with the nature of things; and yet the bare possibility of these may not be worth considering. But, once more, in other regions of the world the case will be altered. We shall find a greater or less degree of actual completeness, and, with this, a series of possibilities differing in value. I do not think that with advantage we could pursue further these preliminary discussions; and we must now address ourselves directly to the doubts which can be raised about our Absolute.

With regard to the main character of that Absolute our position is briefly this. We hold that our conclusion is certain, and that to doubt it logically is impossible. There is no other view, there is no other idea beyond the view here put forward. It is impossible rationally even to entertain the question of another possibility. Outside our main result
there is nothing except the wholly unmeaning, or else something which on scrutiny is seen really not to fall outside. Thus the supposed Other will, in short, turn out to be actually the same; or it will contain elements included within our view of the Absolute, but elements dislocated and so distorted into erroneous appearance. And the dislocation itself will find a place within the limits of our system.

Our result, in brief, cannot be doubted, since it contains all possibilities. Show us an idea, we can proclaim, which seems hostile to our scheme, and we will show you an element which really is contained within it. And we will demonstrate your idea to be a self-contradictory piece of our system, an internal fragment which only through sheer blindness can fancy itself outside. We will prove that its independence and isolation are nothing in the world but a failure to perceive more than one aspect of its own nature.

And the shocked appeal to our modesty and our weakness will not trouble us. It is on this very weakness that, in a sense, we have taken our stand. We are impotent to divide the universe into the universe and something outside. We are incapable of finding another field in which to place our inability and give play to our modesty. This other area for us is mere pretentious nonsense; and on the ground of our weakness we do not feel strong enough to assume that nonsense is fact. We, in other words, protest against the senseless attempt to transcend experience. We urge that a mere doubt entertained may involve that attempt, and that in the case of our main conclusion it certainly does so. Hence in its outline that conclusion for us is certain; and let us endeavour to see how far the certainty goes.

Reality is one. It must be single, because plurality, taken as real, contradicts itself. Plurality
implies relations, and, through its relations, it unwillingly asserts always a superior unity. To suppose the universe plural is therefore to contradict oneself and, after all, to suppose that it is one. Add one world to another, and forthwith both worlds have become relative, each the finite appearance of a higher and single Reality. And plurality as appearance (we have seen) must fall within, must belong to, and must qualify the unity.

We have an idea of this unity which, to some extent, is positive (Chapters xiv., xx., xxvi.). It is true that how in detail the plurality comes together we do not know. And it is true again that unity, in its more proper sense, is known only as contradistinguished from plurality. Unity therefore, as an aspect over against and defined by another aspect, is itself but appearance. And in this sense the Real, it is clear, cannot be properly called one. It is possible, however, to use unity with a different meaning.

In the first place the Real is qualified by all plurality. It owns this diversity while itself it is not plural. And a reality owning plurality but above it, not defined as against it but absorbing it together with the one-sided unity which forms its opposite—such a reality in its outline is certainly a positive idea.

And this outline, to some extent, is filled in by direct experience. I will lay no stress here on that pre-relational stage of existence (p. 459), which we suppose to come first in the development of the soul. I will refer to what seems plainer and less doubtful. For take any complex psychical state in which we make distinctions. Here we have a consciousness of plurality, and then over against this we may attempt to gain a clear idea of unity. Now this idea of unity, itself the result of analysis, is determined by opposition to the internal plurality of distinctions. And hence, as one aspect over against
another aspect, this will not furnish the positive idea of unity which we seek. But, apart from and without any such explicit idea, we may be truly said to feel our whole psychical state as one. Above, or rather below, the relations which afterwards we may find, it seems to be a totality in which differences already are combined.¹ Our state seems a felt background into which we introduce distinctions, and it seems, at the same time, a whole in which the differences inhere and pre-exist. Now certainly, in so describing our state, we contradict ourselves. For the fact of a difference, when we realize and express its strict nature, implies in its essence both relation and distinction. In other words, feeling cannot be described, for it cannot without transformation be translated into thought. Again, in itself this indiscriminate totality is inconsistent and unstable. Its own tendency and nature is to pass beyond itself into the relational consciousness, into a higher stage in which it is broken up. Still, none the less, at every moment this vague state is experienced actually. And hence we cannot deny that complex wholes are felt as single experiences. For, on the one side, these states are not simple, nor again, on the other side, are they plural merely; nor again is their unity explicit and held in relation with, and against, their plurality.

We may find this exemplified most easily in an ordinary emotional whole. That comes to us as one, yet not as simple; while its diversity, at least in part, is not yet distinguished and broken up into relations. Such a state of mind, I may repeat, is, as such, unstable and fleeting. It is not only changeable otherwise, but, if made an object, it, as such, disappears. The emotion we attend to is, taken strictly, never precisely the same thing as the emotion which we feel. For it not only to some

¹ Compare here Chapter xix.
extent has been transformed by internal distinction, but it has also now itself become a factor in a new felt totality. The emotion as an object, and, on the other side, that background to which in consciousness it is opposed, have both become subordinate elements in a new psychical whole of feeling (Chapter xix.). Our experience is always from time to time a unity which, as such, is destroyed in becoming an object. But one such emotional whole in its destruction gives place inevitably to another whole. And hence what we feel, while it lasts, is felt always as one, yet not as simple nor again as broken into terms and relations.

From such an experience of unity below relations we can rise to the idea of a superior unity above them. Thus we can attach a full and positive meaning to the statement that Reality is one. The stubborn objector seems condemned, in any case, to affirm the following propositions. In the first place Reality is positive, negation falling inside it. In the second place it is qualified positively by all the plurality which it embraces and subordinates. And yet itself, in the third place, is certainly not plural. Having gone so far I myself prefer, as the least misleading course, to assert its unity.

Beyond all doubt then it is clear that Reality is one. It has unity, but we must go on to ask, a unity of what? And we have already found that all we know consists wholly of experience. Reality must be, therefore, one Experience, and to doubt this conclusion is impossible.

We can discover nothing that is not either feeling or thought or will or emotion or something else of the kind (Chapter xiv.). We can find nothing but this, and to have an idea of anything else is plainly impossible. For such a supposed idea is either meaningless, and so is not an idea, or else its meaning will be found tacitly to consist in experience.
The Other, which it asserts, is found on enquiry to be really no Other. It implies, against its will and unconsciously, some mode of experience; it affirms something else, if you please, but still something else of the same kind. And the form of otherness and of opposition, again, has no sense save as an internal aspect of that which it endeavours to oppose. We have, in short, in the end but one idea, and that idea is positive. And hence to deny this idea is, in effect, to assert it; and to doubt it, actually and without a delusion, is not possible.

If I attempted to labour this point, I should perhaps but obscure it. Show me your idea of an Other, not a part of experience, and I will show you at once that it is, throughout and wholly, nothing else at all. But an effort to anticipate, and to deal in advance with every form of self-delusion, would, I think, hardly enlighten us. I shall therefore assume this main principle as clearly established, and shall endeavour merely to develope it and to free it from certain obscurities.

I will recur first to the difficult subject of Solipsism. This has been discussed perhaps sufficiently in Chapter xxi., but a certain amount of repetition may be useful here. It may be objected that, if Reality is proved to be one experience, Solipsism follows. Again, if we can transcend the self at all, then we have made our way, it may be urged, to something perhaps not experience. Our main conclusion, in short, may be met not directly but through a dilemma. It may be threatened with destruction by a self-contradictory development of its own nature.

Now my answer to this dilemma is a denial of that which it assumes. It assumes, in the first place, that my self is as wide as my experience. And it assumes, in the second place, that my self is something hard and exclusive. Hence, if you are inside you are not outside at all, and, if you are
outside, you are at once in a different world. But we have shown that these assumptions are mistaken (Chapters xxi. and xxiii.); and, with their withdrawal, the dilemma falls of itself.

Finite centres of feeling, while they last, are (so far as we know) not directly pervious to one another. But, on the one hand, a self is not the same as such a centre of experience; and, on the other hand, in every centre the whole Reality is present. Finite experience never, in any of its forms, is shut in by a wall. It has in itself, and as an inseparable aspect of its own nature, the all-penetrating Reality. And there never is, and there never was, any time when in experience the world and self were quite identical. For, if we reach a stage where in feeling the self and world are not yet different, at that stage neither as yet exists. But in our first immediate experience the whole Reality is present. This does not mean that every other centre of experience, as such, is included there. It means that every centre qualifies the Whole, and that the Whole, as a substantive, is present in each of these its adjectives. Then from immediate experience the self emerges, and is set apart by a distinction. The self and the world are elements, each separated in, and each contained by experience. And perhaps in all cases the self—and at any rate always the soul— involves and only exists through an intellectual construction. The self is thus a construction based on, and itself transcending, immediate experience. Hence to describe all experience

1 These terms must not be taken as everywhere equivalent. There certainly is no self or soul without a centre of feeling. But there may be centres of feeling which are not selves, and again not souls (see below). Possibly also some selves are too fleeting to be called souls, while almost certainly there are souls, which are not properly selves. The latter term should not be used at all where there is in no sense a distinction of self from not-self. And it can hardly always be used in precisely the same sense (Chapter ix.).
as the mere adjective of a self, taken in any sense, is indefensible. And, as for transcendence,—from the very first the self is transcended by experience. Or we may in another way put this so. The self is one of the results gained by transcending the first imperfect form of experience. But experience and Reality are each the same thing when taken at full, and they cannot be transcended.

I may be allowed to repeat this. Experience in its early form, as a centre of immediate feeling, is not yet either self or not-self. It qualifies the Reality, which of course is present within it; and its own finite content indissolubly connects it with the total universe. But for itself—if it could be for itself—this finite centre would be the world. Then through its own imperfection such first experience is broken up. Its unity gives way before inner unrest and outer impact in one. And then self and Ego, on one side, are produced by this development, and, on the other side, appear other selves and the world and God. These all appear as the contents of one finite experience, and they really are genuinely and actually contained in it. They are contained in it but partially, and through a more or less inconsiderable portion of their area. Still this portion, so far as it goes, is their very being and reality; and a finite experience already is partially the universe. Hence there is no question here of stepping over a line from one world to another. Experience is already in both worlds, and is one thing with their being; and the question is merely to what extent this common being can be carried out, whether in practice or in knowledge. In other words the total universe, present imperfectly in finite experience, would, if completed, be merely the completion of this experience. And to speak of transcendence into another world is therefore mistaken.

For certain purposes what I experience can be
considered as the state of my self, or, again, of my soul. It can be so considered, because in one aspect it actually is so. But this one aspect may be an infinitesimal fragment of its being. And never in any case can what I experience be the mere adjective of my self. My self is not the immediate, nor again is it the ultimate, reality. Immediate reality is an experience either containing both self and not-self, or containing as yet neither. And ultimate reality, on the other hand, would be the total universe.

In a former chapter we noticed the truths contained in Solipsism. Everything, my self included, is essential to, and is inseparable from, the Absolute. And, again, it is only in feeling that I can directly encounter Reality. But there is no need here to dwell on these sides of the truth. My experience is essential to the world, but the world is not, except in one aspect, my experience. The world and experience are, taken at large, the same. And my experience and its states, in a sense, actually are the whole world; for to this slight extent the one Reality is actually my self. But it is less misleading to assert, conversely, that the total world is my experience. For it appears there, and in each appearance its single being already is imperfectly included.

Let us turn from an objection based on an irrational prejudice, and let us go on to consider a point of some interest. Can the Absolute be said to consist and to be made up of souls? The question is ambiguous, and must be discussed in several senses. Is there—let us ask first—in the universe any sort of matter not contained in finite centres of experience? It seems at first sight natural to point at once to the relations between these centres. But such relations, we find on reflection, have been, so far, included in the percep-
tion and thought of the centres themselves. And what the question comes to is, rather, this, Can there be matter of experience, in any form, which does not enter as an element into some finite centre?

In view of our ignorance this question may seem unanswerable. We do not know why or how the Absolute divides itself into centres, or the way in which, so divided, it still remains one. The relation of the many experiences to the single experience, and so to one another, is, in the end, beyond us. And, if so, why should there not be elements experienced in the total, and yet not experienced within any subordinate focus. We may indeed, from the other side, confront this ignorance and this question with a doubt. Has such an unattached element, or margin of elements, any meaning at all? Have we any right to entertain such an idea as rational? Does not our ignorance in fact forbid us to assume the possibility of any matter experienced apart from a finite whole of feeling? But, after consideration, I do not find that this doubt should prevail. Certainly it is only by an abstraction that I can form the idea of such unattached elements, and this abstraction, it may seem, is not legitimate. And, if the elements were taken as quite loose, if they were not still inseparable factors in a whole of experience, then the abstraction clearly would lead to an inconsistent idea. And such an idea, we have agreed, must not be regarded as possible. But, in the present case, the elements, unattached to any finite centre, are still subordinate to and integral aspects of the Whole. And, since this Whole is one experience, the position is altered. The abstraction from a finite centre does not lead visibly to self-contradiction. And hence I cannot refuse to regard its result as possible.

But this possibility, on the other side, seems to have no importance. If we take it to be fact, we
shall not find that it makes much difference to the Whole. And, again, for so taking it there appears to be almost no ground. Let us briefly consider these two points. That elements of experience should be unattached would (we saw) be a serious matter, if they were unattached altogether and absolutely. But since in any case all comes together and is fused in the Whole, and since this Whole in any case is a single experience, the main result appears to me to be quite unaffected. The fact that some experience-matter does not directly qualify any finite centre, is a fact from which I can draw no further conclusion. But for holding this fact, in the second place, there is surely no good reason. The number of finite centres and their diversity is (we know) very great, and we may fairly suppose it to extend much beyond our knowledge. Nor do the relations, which are "between" these centres, occasion difficulty. Relations of course cannot fall somewhere outside of reality; and, if they really were "between" the centres, we should have to assume some matter of experience external and additional to these. The conclusion would follow; and we have seen that, rightly understood, it is possible. But, as things are, it seems no less gratuitous. There is nothing, so far as I see, to suggest that any aspect of any relation lies outside the experience-matter contained in finite centres. The relations, as such, do not and cannot exist in the Absolute. And the question is whether that higher experience, which contains and transforms the relations, demands any element not experienced somehow within the centres. For assuming such an element I can myself perceive no ground. And since, even if we assume this, the main result seems to remain unaltered, the best course is, perhaps, to discard it as unreal. It is better, on the whole, to conclude that no element of Reality falls outside the experience of finite centres.
Are we then to assert that the Absolute consists of souls? That, in my opinion, for two reasons would be incorrect. A centre of experience, first, is not the same thing as either a soul or, again, a self. It need not contain the distinction of not-self from self; and, whether it contains that or not, in neither case is it, properly, a self. It will be either below, or else wider than and above, the distinction. And a soul, as we have seen, is always the creature of an intellectual construction. It cannot be the same thing with a mere centre of immediate experience. Nor again can we affirm that every centre implies and entails in some sense a corresponding soul. For the duration of such centres may perhaps be so momentary, that no one, except to save a theory, could call them souls. Hence we cannot maintain that souls contain all the matter of experience which fills the world.

And in any case, secondly, the Absolute would not consist of souls. Such a phrase implies a mode of union which we can not regard as ultimate. It suggests that in the Absolute finite centres are maintained and respected, and that we may consider them, as such, to persist and to be merely ordered and arranged. But not like this (we have seen) is the final destiny and last truth of things. We have a re-arrangement not merely of things but of their internal elements. We have an all-pervasive transfusion with a re-blending of all material. And we can hardly say that the Absolute consists of finite things, when the things, as such, are there transmuted and have lost their individual natures.¹

¹ For this reason Humanity, or an organism, kingdom, or society of selves, is not an ultimate idea. It implies an union too incomplete, and it ascribes reality in too high a sense to finite pieces of appearance. These two defects are, of course, in principle one. An organism or society, including every self past present and future—and we can hardly take it at less than this—is itself an idea to me obscure, if not quite inconsistent. But, in any case, its reality and truth cannot be ultimate. And, for

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Reality then is one, and it is experience. It is not merely my experience, nor again can we say that it consists of souls or selves. And it cannot be a unity of experience and also of something beside; for the something beside, when we examine it, turns out always to be experience. We verified this above (Chapters xxii. and xxvi.) in the case of Nature. Nature, like all else, in a sense remains inexplicable. It is in the end an arrangement, a way of happening coexistent and successive, as to which at last we clearly are unable to answer the question Why. But this inability, like others, does not affect the truth of our result. Nature is an abstraction from experience, and in experience it is not co-ordinate with spirit or mind. For mind, we have seen, has a reality higher than Nature, and the essence of the physical world already implies that in which it is absorbed and transcended. Nature by itself is but an indefensible division in the whole of experience.

This total unity of experience, I have pointed out, cannot, as such, be directly verified. We know its nature, but in outline only, and not in detail. Feeling, as we have seen, supplies us with a positive idea of non-relational unity. The idea is imperfect, but is sufficient to serve as a positive basis. And we are compelled further by our principle to believe in a Whole qualified, and qualified non-relationally, by every fraction of experience. But this unity of all experiences, if itself not experience, would be meaningless. The Whole is one experience then, and such a unity higher than all relations, a unity which contains and transforms them, has positive meaning. Of the manner of its being in detail we are utterly ignorant, but of its general nature we

myself, even in Ethics I do not see how such an idea can be insisted on. The perfection of the Whole has to realise itself in and through me; and, without question, this Whole is very largely social. But I do not see my way to the assertion that, even for Ethics, it is nothing else at all (pp. 415, 431).
possess a positive though abstract knowledge. And, in attempting to deny or to doubt the result we have gained, we find ourselves once more unconsciously affirming it.

The Absolute, though known, is higher, in a sense, than our experience and knowledge; and in this connection I will ask if it has personality. At the point we have reached such a question can be dealt with rapidly. We can answer it at once in the affirmative or negative according to its meaning. Since the Absolute has everything, it of course must possess personality. And if by personality we are to understand the highest form of finite spiritual development, then certainly in an eminent degree the Absolute is personal. For the higher (we may repeat) is always the more real. And, since in the Absolute the very lowest modes of experience are not lost, it seems even absurd to raise such a question about personality.

And this is not the sense in which the question is usually put. "Personal" is employed in effect with a restrictive meaning; for it is used to exclude what is above, as well as below, personality. The super-personal, in other words, is either openly or tacitly regarded as impossible. Personality is taken as the highest possible way of experience, and naturally, if so, the Absolute cannot be super-personal. This conclusion, with the assumption on which it rests, may be summarily rejected. It has been, indeed, refuted beforehand by previous discussions. If the term "personal" is to bear anything like its ordinary sense, assuredly the Absolute is not merely personal. It is not personal, because it is personal and more. It is, in a word, super-personal.

I intend here not to enquire into the possible meanings of personality. On the nature of the self and of self-consciousness I have spoken already,¹ and

¹ See Chapters ix. and x. Compare xxi. and xiii.
I will merely add here that for me a person is finite or is meaningless. But the question raised as to the Absolute may, I think, be more briefly disposed of. If by calling it personal you mean only that it is nothing but experience, that it contains all the highest that we possibly can know and feel, and is a unity in which the details are utterly pervaded and embraced—then in this conclusion I am with you. But your employment of the term personal I very much regret. I regret this use mainly not because I consider it incorrect—that between us would matter little—but because it is misleading and directly serves the cause of dishonesty."

For most of those, who insist on what they call "the personality of God," are intellectually dishonest. They desire one conclusion, and, to reach it, they argue for another. But the second, if proved, is quite different, and serves their purpose only because they obscure it and confound it with the first. And it is by their practical purpose that the result may here be judged. The Deity, which they want, is of course finite, a person much like themselves, with thoughts and feelings limited and mutable in the process of time. They desire a person in the sense of a self, amongst and over against other selves, moved by personal relations and feelings towards these others—feelings and relations which are altered by the conduct of the others. And, for their purpose, what is not this, is really nothing. Now with this desire in itself I am not here concerned. Of course for us to ask seriously if the Absolute can be personal in such a way, would be quite absurd. And my business for the moment is not with truth but with intellectual honesty.

It would be honest first of all to state openly the conclusion aimed at, and then to enquire if this conclusion can be maintained. But what is not honest is to suppress the point really at issue, to desire the personality of the Deity in one sense, and then to