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## DOES MY NEIGHBOR EXIST?<sup>1</sup>

Kant has said that there are some questions which should never be asked, and there is apostolic authority for the injunction to "avoid foolish questions". Only the fool has said in his heart that he is alone in the universe; but since philosophy has seriously raised the question of the existence of my neighbor and of the way in which I may come to know him, it may be not without interest to notice (i) how the problem has emerged, (ii) the importance of the problem for modern philosophy, and (iii) some leading solutions that have been offered.

I. Our social environment is no doubt the most important factor in our every-day life. The belief in the existence of other men's consciousness, as Clifford has said, "dominates every thought and every action of our lives." On the other hand there is a sense in which we not only die alone, as Pascal says we do, but live alone as well. One man's thought and feeling is not directly accessible to the consciousness of another, and each man has an unsharable feeling, to use James' language, "of the pinch of his own individual destiny as he privately feels it rolling out on fortune's wheel."

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,  
With echoing straits between us thrown,  
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,  
We mortal millions live alone.

How for the philosopher this "unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea" is to be crossed or bridged is the question before us in this paper.

Some of the problems of philosophy are perennial and

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<sup>1</sup>This paper was read at a conference of former students in the division of Philosophy, Psychology and Anthropology at Columbia University, April 18th, 1916.

recurrent, coming up in every period of reflective thought. The relation of the One to the Many has been a persistent problem from the dawn of Greek philosophy until James discovered a "pluralistic universe" and Bradley preached the doctrine of a monistic Absolute composed of finite centres. Again, from the time of the Eleatics and of Heraclitus till now the pendulum of philosophic thought has kept swinging from one extreme to the other: Being—Becoming, Being—Becoming.

The question of the existence and knowledge of other selves did not emerge as a problem of philosophy till comparatively recent times. Berkeley, whose profound influence upon subsequent thinkers is coming more and more to be recognized, may be said to have started the discussion; while the elements of the problem did not escape the attention of so acute a thinker as Augustine. In his treatise on the Trinity (viii. 6), speaking of the knowledge of a righteous man, Augustine says: "We say, indeed, not unfitly, that we therefore know what a mind is, because we too have a mind. For neither did we ever see it with our eyes, and gather a special or general notion from the resemblance of more minds than one, which we have seen; but rather as I have said before, because we too have it. For what is known so intimately, and so perceives itself to be itself, as that by which also all other things are perceived, that is, the mind itself? For we recognize the movements of bodies also, by which we perceive that others live besides ourselves; since we also so move our body in living as we observed those bodies to be moved. For even when a living body is moved, there is no way opened to our eyes to see the mind, a thing which cannot be seen by the eyes." If any moderns can be found who are so foolish as to be Solipsists, Augustine may teach us that the animals know better; for he goes on to say: "Neither is this, as it were, the property of human foresight and wisdom, since brute animals also perceive that not only they themselves live, but also other brute animals interchangeably, and the one the other, and that we ourselves do so" (Shedd's translation).

Limiting the objects of knowledge to ideas and spirits, Berkeley is often accused of giving no account of the way in which we come to know the existence of other (finite) spirits, and even of cutting off all possible avenues through which such knowledge could come. He does face the question, however, in a passage which his editor, Fraser, describes as "one of the most important sections in the book". In his *Principles of Human Knowledge* (Pt. i, sec. 145) Berkeley says: "I perceive several motions, changes, and combinations of ideas, that inform me there are certain particular agents, like myself, which accompany them and concur in their production. Hence, the knowledge I have of other spirits is not immediate, as in the knowledge of my ideas; but depending on the intervention of ideas, by me referred to agents or spirits distinct from myself as effects or concomitant signs." Berkeley recognizes that the communication between minds is not direct, and that the ideas of bodily motion in two different minds are numerically distinct. He says (sec. 147): "It is evident that in effecting other persons the will of man has no other object than barely the motions of the limbs of his body; but that such a motion should be attended to, or excite any idea in the mind of another, depends wholly on the will of the Creator." My body, conceived as an idea impressed on my mind by the Divine Spirit, has no power to excite an idea in the mind of another. A kind of double miracle would be necessary, in the view of Berkeley's critics; the Divine Spirit must not only impress on my mind the idea of my body, but must on occasion excite in the mind of another the idea of my bodily motion, from which the existence of my mind may be inferred.

In the opinion of Fraser, Berkeley left the question of the knowledge of other selves just where he found it; but this was not the view of some critics who accused him of Egoism, the equivalent of the modern Solipsism. Thus Thomas Reid strenuously contends (Essay vi, ch. 5) that we cannot communicate except through the senses, "and until

we rely on their testimony, we must consider ourselves alone in the universe". Bishop Berkeley did not duly consider that "by depriving us of the material world, he deprived us at the same time of family, friends, country and every human creature. . . . Ideas [ideas of my own mind] are my only companions. Cold company, indeed! Every social affection freezes at the thought."

J. S. Mill, in his *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy* (vol. i. ch. 12), addressed himself to our problem, and remarked: "I conclude that other human beings have feelings like me, because, first, they have bodies like me, which I know, in my own case, to be the antecedent condition of feelings; and because, secondly they exhibit the acts and external signs, which in my own case I know by experience to be caused by feelings. . . . In my own case I know that the first link produces the last through the intermediate link [feeling], and could not produce it without. . . . The generalization merely postulates that what experience shows to be a mark of the existence of something within the sphere of my own consciousness, may be concluded to be a mark of the same thing beyond that sphere." Here again the critic will insist that if body and bodily motion have no existence except as ideas in my mind, I have no right to infer the existence of other minds which are not in my consciousness and are independent of it.

German as well as English idealists have been charged with Solipsism, as when Lotze in his *Metaphysics* (Bk. i. ch. vii. sec. 95) says that Fichte did not draw the only logical inference that could be drawn, namely, Solipsism. And if you admit the existence of others, then why not of real things?

For the more recent phases of the discussion Clifford's essay on "The Nature of Things-in-Themselves" (1878)<sup>2</sup> was epoch-making. Clifford proposed the term "ejects" for these other minds to distinguish them from the physical objects or phenomena presented to consciousness. The discus-

<sup>2</sup> In his *Lectures and Essays*, p. 274 ff.

sion was advanced by Bradley's chapter on "Solipsism" (xxi) in his *Appearance and Reality* and by Fullerton's chapter on "The Existence of Other Selves" in his *System of Metaphysics* (1904). Solipsism is defined by Schiller as "the doctrine that all existence is experience, and that there is only one experient. The Solipsist thinks that he is the one."<sup>3</sup> On its face it is an absurd doctrine, and it would be hard to find anyone who professed it in its purity.<sup>4</sup> The Solipsist of course ceases to be one when he tries to prove his doctrine to his neighbor, but to accuse one's neighbor of Solipsism has become a recognized and respectable method of philosophical warfare. Thus a critic of Pragmatism says: "The various individual minds in the pluralistic universe of Professor James are more helplessly separated than are the monad beings in Leibnitz's partially pluralistic universe."<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, in the words of Schiller, "that the 'absolute idealist' is a Solipsist need only be barely stated. . . . He is a Solipsist because he believes that the Absolute is the sole experient, and that he is himself the incarnate Absolute."<sup>6</sup> Schiller even attributes "solipsistic leanings" to the New Realism, but it should be observed that writers of various schools find it easier to attribute Solipsism to those who differ from them than to establish their own innocence of the charge.

II. Enough has been said already to show that the question of our title, whether foolish or not, is one of undeniable importance in philosophical debate. The Berkeleyan idealist must face the question, or his right to assume a knowledge of spirits will be challenged and the fabric of his idealism will be threatened. The Kantian idealist in like manner

<sup>3</sup> *Mind*, N. S., vol. xviii, 1909, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> Solipsism might be found in such a statement as the following from H. R. Marshall: "The 'now' of consciousness is all that exists, whether of me or of the universe for me." See Macintosh, *Problem of Knowledge*, p. 103.

<sup>5</sup> J. E. Russell, "Solipsism and Radical Empiricism", *Phil. Rev.*, vol. xv, 1906, p. 610.

<sup>6</sup> *Mind*, N. S. xviii, 1909, p. 171.

will be called upon to justify his assumption of other minds, which he uses to establish the universality and therefore the a priori character of his categories. "Reality", it has been said, "means objectivity, *i.e.*, validity and coherence for other selves than our own";<sup>7</sup> and unless these other selves are given philosophic standing there can be no satisfactory "refutation of idealism" in the Kantian sense, or of subjective phenomenism.

In general it may be said that the world of social intercourse is as important for the philosopher as it is for the man in the street, and the philosopher's ability to account satisfactorily for this basal fact in human life may be taken as the touchstone of his theory. The absolutist must find room in his system for finite selves or centres, for without these there will be no spiritual content in his Absolute. The pragmatist, if he holds that reality is experience, must show how other selves can exist outside of and transcending his experience. The pampsyichist, holding that all existence is soul-like and that physical facts are but symbols of soul activities, will be concerned to justify his belief in social intercourse on the human plane. Finally the pluralist should find the threatened spectre of Solipsism especially disquieting.

We are not surprised, then, to see sober and weighty writers, who do not delight in riddles of the sphinx, giving their attention to what Royce describes as "that most familiar and most profoundly metaphysical of the problems of common sense, the problem: What reason can any one of us give for holding that the mind of his neighbor is real at all?"<sup>8</sup> The problem seems to lie heavy upon the philosophical conscience of the time, and it may repay us to glance a little more closely at some typical solutions which have been offered.

III. These solutions may be conveniently classed under six heads; (1) the non-rational, (2) the anti-metaphysical

<sup>7</sup> D. G. Ritchie, *Philosophical Studies*, p. 187.

<sup>8</sup> *Problem of Christianity*, vol. ii, p. 314.

or scientific, (3) the moral, (4) the social, (5) the theistic, and (6), the common-sense or realistic.

(1) The non-rational solution, despairing of giving any reasonable account of our conviction that other selves exist, appeals to sentiment, faith, or some other sub-rational or suprarational process. Clifford, for instance, very frankly says: "How consciousness can testify to the existence of anything outside of itself, I do not pretend to say; I need not untie a knot which the world has cut for me long ago. It may very well be that I myself am the only existence, but it is simply ridiculous to suppose that anybody else is."<sup>9</sup> Flournoy dismisses the question with a shrug of the shoulders: "To admit that there are no other *Egos* than my own . . . brrr! the bare idea of this solitude gives me a chill in the spine; and I am not astonished that all the phenomenalist philosophers are in fact unfaithful to their system."<sup>10</sup> W. McDougall maintains that "Solipsism is an impossible attitude for a sane man. We affirm that each of us can escape from Solipsism only by an act of faith or will that posits a real world of which he is a member."<sup>11</sup> Similarly C. A. Strong, saying that the philosopher who denied the existence of other minds would never gain a hearing, adds: "We may therefore (employing a procedure like that of the philosophers of common-sense, but with how far less risk of being challenged?) take the knowledge of other minds for granted, and use it as a test of epistemological principles."<sup>12</sup> Philosophers who refuse to philosophize when the central and most important department of knowledge is concerned, can have but little quarrel with the advocates of common sense who assert the reality of the material world, or with the mystics who claim to have an immediate assurance of the presence of God.

(2) Starting from the basis of a "sound idealism", but eschewing metaphysics as "built either on air or on quick-

<sup>9</sup> *Lectures and Essays*, p. 276.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Ladd, *Philosophy of Mind*, p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> *Body and Mind*, p. 180.

<sup>12</sup> *Why the Mind Has a Body*, pp. 219, 220.

sands",<sup>13</sup> K. Pearson believes that the sole gate-way to knowledge is the "scientific method", that is, the classification and description of perceptual facts. In this scheme of things, my neighbor who is admittedly not a perceptual fact, and can claim to be a "metaphysical" reality if there is any such reality, appears to be an unwelcome intruder. "The greatest assumption of everyday life—the inference which the metaphysicians tell us is wholly beyond science—namely, that other beings have consciousness as well as ourselves, seems to have just as much or as little *scientific* validity as the statement that an earthgrown apple would fall to the ground if carried to another star. Both are beyond the range of experimental demonstration, etc."<sup>14</sup>

Not content to leave his fellow-men in this anomalous position, Pearson seeks to rescue them from the "arid field of metaphysical discussion", and to bring them within the confines of science. To Clifford's statement that another's feelings "cannot by any possibility become objects in my consciousness", he replies that "were all physiological knowledge and surgical manipulation sufficiently complete, it is conceivable that it would be possible for me to be conscious of your feelings, to recognize your consciousness as a direct sense-impression; let us say, for example, by connecting the *cortex* of your brain with that of mine through a suitable commisure of nerve substance. The possibility of this verification of other-consciousness does not seem more remote than that of a journey to a fixed star."<sup>15</sup>

Assuming the brain connection to be physiologically possible, the psychological result is highly problematical. What A would experience if his brain were joined to B's would probably be a sense-impression of a physical process in B's brain; or conceivably there might result a sort of fusion or confusion of consciousness—literally two souls with but a single thought, but neither soul conscious that its thought

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<sup>13</sup> *Grammar of Science*, 3rd ed., part i, p. 17.

<sup>14</sup> P. 15.

<sup>15</sup> P. 50.

was shared by the other. That any conceivable connection could make B's thought and feeling, as B's, a matter of direct experience for A is not only improbable, but is very likely impossible. This is the opinion, at any rate, of Ward who believes that "immediate experience of another subject is beyond any knowledge that we have or can conceive; in fact it might, I think, be fairly maintained that the very idea involves a contradiction."<sup>16</sup> Similarly Bradley says that "to be possessed directly of what is personal to the mind of another, would in the end be unmeaning."<sup>17</sup> If human society cannot become the object of science until the possible success of Pearson's experiment be proved, philosophers run the risk of being condemned to solitary confinement in the prison of Solipsism.

(3) A solution from the standpoint of ethics is suggested by Stratton in his *Psychology of the Religious Life*. Of the demand for a world of moral relations, he says: "Were it not for its prompting, there is no compulsive reason, according to our present knowledge, for believing in the existence of other minds. If in fashioning our idea of the world, we were to surrender wholly to the scientific spirit; making no assumption that was not absolutely needed to explain, getting our facts into the snuggest possible arrangement, never multiplying essences beyond mere causal necessity—if we were to accept without shadow of reserve this rigid scientific method, each, so far as we now can see, would rest convinced that his was the only mind in the universe." But ours must be a world of mutual recognition and regard. "An ineradicable sense of the value of others requires that they, too, be real"; and it is added that "the enlargement of the universe according to the ways of religion is, in the main, but a further yielding to this rightful impulse."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Realm of Ends*, p. 236.

<sup>17</sup> *Appearance*, p. 343. R. B. Perry thinks that "the same soul or nervous system, or whatever was filling the office of subject, might come to fill also the office of object." *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 298.

<sup>18</sup> Pp. 364, 365.

(4) It is a paradox to say that all knowledge, including the knowledge of other selves, is a social product; yet this is virtually the view of some thinkers of high authority, such as Ward and Royce. Starting from the world of social intercourse as the world best known to us, Ward maintains that all reality is to be regarded as a community of conscious monads *en rapport* with one another and open to one another's influence. To the question how we reach the knowledge of other selves, Ward, in common with most philosophers, gives the common-sense answer: "We infer other consciousnesses through the actions of their bodies. . . . Only the bodies and their movements are presented as objects, the indwelling selves (or souls) and their experiences are not thus presented."<sup>19</sup> Quoting a statement of Ritchie, that experience cannot testify to anything more than the existence of the subject—"the existence of a plurality of selves is an inference, a hypothesis to explain the phenomena"—Ward remarks: "But drawing inferences and framing hypotheses presupposes a self-conscious intelligence already possessed of that objective experience, which by implying its own universality and necessity, implies also a plurality of selves. On this assumption then we come to deadlock or find ourselves revolving in a hopeless circle."<sup>20</sup>

The trouble is, obviously, that the knowledge of other selves is both a result of experience (through a knowledge of bodily movement) and a presupposition of experience. Ward believes, however, that we can escape from the circle and that "the escape is simple, once we recognize that experience from the outset involves both subject and object, both self and other, and that the differentiation of both factors proceeds *pari passu*".<sup>21</sup> But is the escape so simple after all? The appearance of simplicity perhaps comes from equating the expressions, "both subject and object", "both self and other" (selves?). The object, according to

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<sup>19</sup> *Realm of Ends*, pp. 28, 29.

<sup>20</sup> P. 129.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

idealism, is a part of the subject's consciousness, while the object or other self is transcendent. The escape from the deadlock seems precarious, and if it is closed the community of conscious monads will disappear, and a barren Solipsism alone remain.

While the eloquence of Ward's argument in his transition from pluralism to theism will be welcomed as a valuable contribution to theistic literature, we may recognize the hazard of staking the fortunes of theism, as Ward would have us do, upon a theory of knowledge which finds it difficult to justify rationally our belief in our fellowmen.

For Royce in his *Problem of Christianity*, as for Ward, the existence of a world of social intercourse is of fundamental importance. The conception of the community is central alike in his interpretation of Christianity and in his construction of the real world. While criticizing the common-sense view of James, Royce admits that we learn the secrets of another's mind "only through his expressive movements",<sup>22</sup> but later develops a threefold argument for the social origin of the knowledge of other selves. First, the fundamental cognitive process, says Royce, following Pierce, is not perception nor conception but interpretation, and interpretation is a triadic process. There are two ideas which are compared and interpreted by a third mediating idea. Thus there is needed for knowledge a community of interpretation. But, second, appeal is made to the social character of our knowledge of the physical world. Belief in the reality of the physical world is held to be inseparable from our belief in the reality of a community of interpretation. "For common sense, the physical objects, especially when they appear to us in the field of sight and touch, are regarded as essentially common objects, the same for all men."<sup>23</sup> "The physical world is an object known to the community, and through interpretation."<sup>24</sup> The state of

<sup>22</sup> Vol. ii, p. 21.

<sup>23</sup> Vol. ii, p. 246.

<sup>24</sup> Vol. ii, p. 324.

the case seems to be that we know other minds through their bodies, but can know these bodies only as "common objects", as objects "known to all men".

But the argument for the social origin of knowledge is supplemented by a third consideration. "I postulate your mind, first, because, when you address me, by word or gesture, you arouse in me ideas which, by virtue of their contrast with my ideas, and by virtue of their novelty and their unexpectedness, I know to be not any ideas of my own."<sup>25</sup> "The reason, then, for 'postulating your mind' is that the ideas which your words and movements have aroused within me are not my own ideas, and cannot be interpreted in terms of my own ideas."<sup>26</sup> It is hard to see how this third argument brings support to the theory of the social origin of the knowledge of other minds. If these ideas excited by my neighbor's gestures are "not my own" merely in the sense that the ideas of a tree or a table or a flash of lightning are not my own, as not due to my own volition, there is, so far, no more reason in the one case than in the other for the postulate of another mind. If, however, these ideas "not my own", excited by my neighbor's bodily movements, are ideas of *his* affection, or interest, or displeasure, then the inference to another mind is made on the common-sense basis of the observed movements of his body. The theory of "social" origin must in this case be modified or there will be no escape from the old circle.

(5) W. E. Hocking would agree with Ward and Royce that the world of knowledge is a common world, but the other knower in his case is not my neighbor nor human society but God. "As it seems to me", he says, "this present World of nature *is* known to me as being, in just this sense, a common World: it seems to me, indeed, that it is not otherwise known—that is, that a knowledge of Other

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<sup>25</sup> Vol. ii, pp. 319, 320.

<sup>26</sup> Vol. ii, p. 322.

Knower is an integral part of the simplest knowledge of Nature itself."<sup>27</sup> Again he says, in italics:

*"It is through the knowledge of God that I am able to know men; not first through the knowledge of men that I am able to know or imagine God."*<sup>28</sup>

Abandoning the cosmological argument for the being of God, Hocking pins his faith to a form of the ontological argument, which "reasons that because the world is not, God is".<sup>29</sup> "It is because we cannot infer from nature to God along causal or other natural lines, and only because of this, that the idea of God implies existence."<sup>30</sup> Hocking's theistic solution of the problem of the knowledge of other selves is a part of his larger theory that it is only as we bring to experience, as a sort of "concrete a priori" principle, the idea of God that we can have knowledge either of the world or of our fellowmen. By his theistic argument for God as Other Knower, Hocking thus seeks to correct or supplement the theory that knowledge is "social" in its origin, where social is used in its ordinary sense.

(6) The common-sense solution of our problem is that we come to a knowledge of other minds through the observation of their bodies and bodily movements. The argument is well put by Bradley, although he denies reality in the full sense to both body and soul. "I arrive at other souls", he says, "by means of other bodies, and the argument starts from the ground of my own body."<sup>31</sup> The known connec-

<sup>27</sup> *Meaning of God in Human Experience*, pp. 268, 269.

<sup>28</sup> Pp. 297, 298.

<sup>29</sup> P. 312.

<sup>30</sup> P. 313.

<sup>31</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, p.225. In his *Essays on Truth and Reality*, 1914, Bradley says: "The whole Universe is directly aware of itself in each finite centre, but so as not there to be aware of the contents of any other finite centre *as they are experienced immediately by itself within that other centre*. The highest all-embracing experience is never reached in any finite mind. How this is possible, I repeat, is inexplicable" (p. 349 n.). From the standpoint of our discussion, the elements of Bradley's doctrine, allowing for its extreme difficulty, appear to be as follows: The Self cannot be asserted as a reality. There are, however, finite centres; these finite centres reflect the Universe; and the

tion between my thoughts and purposes and my own bodily movements is supposed to hold in the case of the movements of other bodies. Baldwin has shown how closely the knowledge of self, of society and of the physical world are connected. "To get the mental and the social, one must get the trans-subjective also, the physical."<sup>32</sup> Again he says: "To deny the trans-subjective reference, while retaining the subjective point of view, therefore, is to cut off the *inter-subjective*—to deny knowledge of other persons or communication with them."<sup>33</sup> In an earlier work Baldwin has said: "The subjective becomes *ejective*; that is, other people's bodies, says the child to himself, have experiences *in them* such as mine has. They are also *me's*; let them be assimilated to my me-copy."<sup>34</sup> It is significant that a number of writers accept provisionally the common-sense view of the matter, even where this view is afterward modified in the interest of a metaphysical theory. And the common-sense view will of course gain in prestige to the extent that the other solutions of the problem we have examined are regarded as unsatisfactory.

From our survey of the problem of the knowledge of other selves two corollaries suggest themselves.

I. All systems of idealism which deny the extra-mental reality of body seem to deprive themselves of the only accessible avenue of communication between minds, and thus are threatened with the philosophical bugbear of subjectivism or Solipsism. To say, moreover, that knowledge is a

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Universe is probably composed of nothing beside these finite centres (with no marginal content in the absolute Experience). Each finite centre, however, while reflecting the Universe so composed, has no means of knowing that its neighboring centre exists. Bradley appreciates the difficulty, and adds to the note already quoted: "I fully understand that the logical result of applying here an 'Either—or', is either a denial of any self or else an assertion of Solipsism, whichever of these alternatives you please. But I do not see how it can be right to suppose that I accept either of these alternatives" (p. 349 n.).

<sup>32</sup> *Genetic Theory of Reality*, p. 183.

<sup>33</sup> P. 182.

<sup>34</sup> *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, 4th ed., 1906, p. 14.

social product, or that "the validity of knowledge is finally social", does not meet the difficulty, but raises the previous question: How do we come, then, to the knowledge of society? There is no doubt that the emergence of the problem of the existence and knowledge of other selves has placed the dominant idealism rather on the defensive. If we reduce bodies to states of consciousness, there is no medium of communication between minds. It is not surprising that Realism, even if it has been often refuted, as Ward maintains, has been emboldened by the situation to utter in a very audible whisper its *E pur se muove*.

2. The knowledge of other selves is bound up closely not only with the knowledge of the world, but with the knowledge of God. If it is true that "Solipsism necessarily denies validity to the principle of causation",<sup>35</sup> the converse is true, namely, that the inference we make to the existence of other minds depends upon that principle. If causation be reduced to mere customary sequence in the phenomenal series, then the other selves are not reached, as they lie beyond or below the series of sense-impressions. But if a real cause be recognized in the self, to account for the expressive movements of the body, then the way may be open to apply the principle of causation more widely in the metaphysical sphere. If my own self and my neighbor's self are regarded as real and as real causes, then the causal inference may possibly be extended so as to issue in a cosmological argument, in which an Infinite Cause could be substituted for an infinite series of phenomenal causes. The study of the problem of other minds might thus lead to a cosmological argument instead of to the form of ontological argument which Hocking has adopted.

The existence of other minds is sometimes spoken of as a postulate which "works well", but it is surely more than a methodological postulate, true or useful for some purposes but not true for others. These other selves have, at any rate, as secure a standing in reality as anything finite can

<sup>35</sup> W. McDougall, *Body and Mind*, p. 134.

have. If a postulate, their existence is a postulate of the metaphysical order, and the question recurs as to the reason for making such a postulate.

The extreme "behaviorists" in psychology may seek to escape the problem altogether by abandoning the introspective standpoint and reducing consciousness to a relation between physical objects and the nervous system. Such an escape, however, is scarcely possible; for any body of knowledge, such as the behaviorist psychology, implies a knower, and surely, again, I am not the only knower in the universe.

The distinction between body and mind, made in the common-sense solution of our problem, may be called dualism; but it need not be a crass dualism, if the physical order is regarded as the medium of communication between minds. The primacy of the spirit may be maintained. We may still believe that

. . . of the soul the body form doth take;  
For soul is form, and doth the body make;

and we need not be unsympathetic toward the poetic interpretation of nature, nor blind to the spiritual aspects of existence.

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