EXAMINATION OF
McTAGGART'S PHILOSOPHY

Volume II. Part II

BY

C. D. BROAD
LITT.D. (Cantab.); F.B.A.

Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge;
Knightbridge Professor of Moral Philosophy
in the University of Cambridge

OCTAGON BOOKS

BOOK VIII

THE REAL FOUNDATION OF TEMPORAL APPEARANCES
SECTION B

TIME AND ETERNITY

How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest!
Measured this transient world, the race of time
Till time stand fixed. Beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eyes can reach!
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart;
Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain:
Beyond which was my folly to aspire!

Paradise Lost, Book XII

ARGUMENT OF BOOK VIII, SECTION B

In the first chapter of this section we explain and criticise McTaggart's attempt to show that the direction from earlier to later in ostensible *B*-series corresponds to the direction from less to more inclusive in *C*-series. We also consider his remarks on the different emotional effects which otherwise similar beliefs about the ostensible past and the ostensible future have in the ostensible present.

In the second chapter we consider what would be the apparent temporal position of ω-terms as prehended from an r-standpoint. We also consider how r-terms and ω-terms would appear from the ω-standpoint. In connexion with this we are able to knit up certain threads in our account of McTaggart's doctrine of reflexive self-cognition, which have been hanging loose since Sub-section 2·11 of Chap. xxx. Finally, we discuss the appropriateness and inappropriateness of certain temporal metaphors which have been used by

Idealists, by Christians, and by others for eternal things and states.

In the third chapter, which completes the Section and Book VIII, we discuss the duration which would appear *sub specie temporis* to belong to intermediate terms, to final terms, to stretches consisting entirely of the former, and to stretches which include one or both of the latter.

CHAPTER L

DIRECTION IN *C*-SERIES AND
IN OSTENSIBLE *B*-SERIES

Whenever a series is generated by an asymmetrical dyadic relation, it has two opposite intrinsic "directions" or "senses". In an ostensible *B*-series one direction is from earlier to later events, and the opposite direction is from later to earlier events. In a *C*-series one direction is from less inclusive to more inclusive terms, and the opposite direction is from more inclusive to less inclusive terms. We may assume that, when a *C*-series is misprehended as a *B*-series, one of the directions in the former is prehended as one of the directions in the latter, and that the other direction in the former is prehended as the other direction in the latter. But the question remains, "*Which* direction in the one is prehended as a given direction in the other? Are *more* inclusive terms prehended as *later* events, or are they prehended as *earlier* events?" In the general account of McTaggart's theory of *C*-series, which we gave in Chap. XXXIX of the present work, it was stated that the direction from less to more inclusive is prehended as the direction from earlier to later. We have now to consider McTaggart's attempt to justify this part of the theory. He does this in Chaps. LIX and LX of *The Nature of Existence*.

McTaggart denies that we can see any direct connexion between a certain direction in the *C*-series and a certain direction in the ostensible *B*-series. So the argument must appeal to other premises. He thinks that a certain direction in any ostensible *B*-series can be seen to be "more important", in a definable sense, than the opposite direction. He also thinks that a certain direction in any *C*-series can be seen to be "more important", in the same sense, than the opposite direction. And he argues that, when a *C*-series is misprehended as a *B*-series, the more important direction in the

former will be prehended as the more important direction in the latter. He defines the "more important direction" as that which expresses the nature of the series more adequately.

1. The more important Direction in ostensible *B*–Series.

I propose to introduce the subject by considering an example of a spatial series in which one direction would be said to be "more important" than another, but where the greater "importance" is due to extraneous factors.

Consider the Inner Circle railway in London. On this line Sloane Square station is between Victoria and South Kensington stations. There is no intrinsic direction, and therefore no question of opposite intrinsic directions. But, if we are thinking of the outer track, it would be reasonable to say that the important direction is Victoria, Sloane Square, South Kensington. For the tracks are intended for trains to run along, and on the *outer* track a train always gets to Victoria before it gets to Sloane Square, and gets to Sloane Square before it gets to South Kensington. If we are thinking of the inner track, it would be reasonable to say that the important direction is South Kensington, Sloane Square, Victoria. For, on the *inner* track, a train always gets to South Kensington before it gets to Sloane Square, and gets to Sloane Square before it gets to Victoria.

There are two points to notice about this example. (i) The direction in each case is introduced by extraneous considerations, viz., the motion of trains along the tracks. There is no intrinsic direction on either track. (ii) The criterion of importance, as between one direction and another on a given track, *presupposes* that the direction from earlier to later in time is more important than the direction from later to earlier. After all, it is equally true that, on the outer track, a train always gets to South Kensington *after* it gets to Sloane Square, and gets to Sloane Square *after* it gets to Victoria. Why then should we not say that the more important direction on the *outer* track is South Kensington, Sloane Square, Victoria? Only because we attach more importance, for

some reason or other, to the direction from earlier to later than to the direction from later to earlier.

We can now consider McTaggart's attempt in § 698 to show that the direction from earlier to later is more important than the direction from later to earlier. Every term in an ostensible *B*-series is ostensibly changing continually in respect to its *A*-characteristics. This can be regarded as motion of the series of *A*-characteristics, taken as a rigid whole, along a *B*-series taken as a rigid whole. (See the diagrams in Sub-section 2·1 of Chap. xxxv p. 291 of the present volume.) The direction of this motion must be conceived as from the earlier to the later terms and not from the later to the earlier. McTaggart concludes from this that the direction from earlier to later expresses the nature of an ostensible *B*-series more adequately than does the direction from later to earlier.

Presumably a similar argument would prove that the direction from future, through present, to past is more important than the direction from past, through present, to future. For the change of events in respect to their *A*-characteristics can equally be regarded as the motion of a *B*-series, as a rigid whole, along the series of *A*-characteristics as a rigid whole. And now the motion must be conceived as from future, through present, to past, and not as from past, through present, to future.

Now I believe that this criterion of the relative importance of the two opposite directions is quite futile when applied to the ostensible *B*-series themselves. No doubt it is true that the characteristic of presentness will alight on *A* *before* it alights on *B*, and will alight on *B* *before* it alights on *C*, if and only if *A* is *earlier than B* and *B* is *earlier than C*. But it is equally true that the characteristic of presentness will alight on *C* *after* it alights on *B*, and will alight on *B* *after* it alights on *A*, if and only if *C* is *later than B* and *B* is *later than A*. Now, if the first fact suffices to show that the natural and fundamental direction is *ABC*, why does not the second and equivalent fact equally show that the natural and fundamental direction is *CBA*? The same question arose about the

directions on the outer track of the Inner Circle railway, and
there the answer was that we *presuppose* that the direction in
time from earlier to later is more important than the direction
from later to earlier. But here we are faced with the following
dilemma. If we do not make this assumption, the facts
adduced by McTaggart have no tendency to show that one
direction in an ostensible *B*-series is in any sense more funda-
mental than the other. If, on the other hand, we do make the
assumption, it is circular to use the facts adduced by
McTaggart as an argument to prove that the direction from
earlier to later is more fundamental than the direction from
later to earlier. I have no doubt that we *do* hold that the two
directions are not on a level, and that the former is, in some
sense, more important than the latter. But, if we have any
reason for doing so, it cannot possibly be the reason given by
McTaggart in § 698.

2. The more important Direction in *C*–Series.

Even if McTaggart's criterion of the relative importance of
the two directions in an ostensible *B*-series were valid, it
could not be applied to *C*-series. This he recognises in § 712.
For in a *C*-series there is no question of change, and therefore
no question of any characteristic running along the series in
one direction rather than the other. It might be doubted
whether any distinction between the relative importance of
two opposite directions in a series is possible except by
reference to some actual or possible process of change which
successively affects the various terms of the series. In §§ 713
and 714, however, McTaggart professes to give examples in
which one direction in a series can be singled out as specially
important without any such reference to change or motion.

The first example is that of a series of propositions of the
following kind. We start with two self-evident propositions
p_1 and p_2. Together they entail but are not entailed by p_3,
which is *not* self-evident. Then there is another self-evident
proposition p_4. This and p_3 together entail and are not entailed
by p_5, which is not self-evident. And so on. We thus get the
series $p_1, p_2, p_3, p_4, p_5, \ldots p_{2n-1}, p_{2n}, p_{2n+1}$. The general rules

are as follows. (i) Reckoning from the left in this row of
symbols every *even* term symbolises a *self-evident* proposition.
(ii) Reckoning from the left every *odd* term, except the first, is
(*a*) entailed by its two immediate predecessors in conjunction,
(*b*) does not entail them, and (*c*) is not self-evident. (iii) The
first term symbolises a proposition which is self-evident.

According to McTaggart the direction $p_1 p_2 \ldots p_{2n+1}$ is the
fundamental direction of such a series, though the terms and
the relations in the series are, of course, timeless. (Naturally
we are concerned with the non-spatial order of the propo-
sitions symbolised, and not with the spatial order of the
symbols.) His reason appears to be that inference is possible
only in one direction. It is possible to know p_1 and p_2 directly,
since they are self-evident. It is possible to know directly
that they together entail p_3. And from this non-inferential
knowledge it is possible to pass by inference to knowing p_3.
But it would not have been possible to start by knowing p_3.
For p_3 is not self-evident, and we can get to know it only by
first knowing p_1 and p_2 and seeing that they together entail p_3.
In the same way we can get to know p_5 by inference from our
previous knowledge of p_3 and p_4. But we cannot know p_5
before we know p_3 and p_4.

It seems to me that here too a reference to time and change
is essential. One must know p_1 and p_2 *before* one can know p_3;
one must know p_3 and p_4 *before* one can know p_5; and so on.
But why does this mark out the direction $p_1 p_2 p_3 \ldots$ as
specially important as compared with the opposite direction?
It is equally true that one can know p_5 only *after* knowing
p_4 and p_3; that one can know p_3 only *after* knowing p_2 and p_1;
and so on. The fact seems to be this. It is only by reference to
a possible process of *change*, viz., change from being con-
templated to being known by a rational being, that one
direction can be singled out from another in the series of pro-
positions. And, even so, it is only because the direction from
earlier to later in time is assumed to be more important than
the opposite direction that this reference to change enables us
to mark out one direction as more important than the other.

McTaggart's second example, which he gives in §714, is

taken from Hegel's dialectic. I propose to ignore it, since it is very doubtful whether any series has the properties which Hegel ascribed to the series of categories which has Pure Being at one end and the Absolute Idea at the other.

In any case McTaggart admits, in §§715 and 716, that these considerations will not enable us to single out one of the two directions in a *C*-series as specially important. For a *C*-series neither is, nor is uniquely correlated with, a series of propositions of the kind mentioned in §713. And it neither is, nor is uniquely correlated with, a series of categories arranged in the form of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

We must therefore try to see whether there is anything in the known nature of the terms and the relation of a *C*-series to single out one direction as more important than the other. McTaggart thinks that this can be done as follows.

Each different *C*-series has at one end a certain different ω-prehension. At the other end it is bounded by mere nonentity, i.e., complete absence of content. This boundary is common to all *C*-series. Now the position of any pre-maximal term in any *C*-series is completely determined by the ratio which the increment from the lower bound of the series to the term in question bears to the increment from the lower bound to the maximal end-term of the series. (See Section 5 of Chap. XXXIX of the present work.) On the other hand, the ω-prehension which comes at the end of a *C*-series does not have its position there determined by its relations to the other members of the series. It comes at the end because it is the one ω-prehension in a certain self of a certain object. And the property of being an ω-prehension can be fully described without reference to the other members of the series of which it is an end-term. Again, if we attempt to describe any premaximal term, such as P_{12}^r, in a *C*-series as a misprehension in P_1 of P_2, we can understand this description only by contrasting it with P_{12} which is the one completely correct prehension in P_1 of P_2. But the property of being a completely correct prehension in P_1 of P_2 can be understood without reference to the existence of incorrect prehensions in that self of that object.

It appears, then, that in any *C*-series the pre-maximal terms derive their character and their position in the series from the ω-prehension which is the maximal end-term, whilst the latter does not derive its character or position from the pre-maximal terms. Again, the terms do not derive their character or position from the mere non-entity which is the common boundary of all *C*-series in the other direction. McTaggart concludes that the direction from less to more inclusive is the fundamental direction in a *C*-series. For it is the direction in which the terms approach more and more nearly to that ω-prehension from which they all derive their character and position. In the opposite direction the terms approximate more and more nearly to mere non-entity, in which there is nothing characteristic of one *C*-series rather than another.

This argument would be more impressive if it were certain that no *C*-series has a minimal end-term. If, and only if, this were so, every *C*-series would have a *lower limit*, in the technical sense explained in Sub-section 4·1 of Chap. XXXIX of the present work; and the lower limit of any *C*-series would be of zero extent in the *C*-dimension. Even then it would not be correct to say that different *C*-series would have the same lower limit. For the lower limit of any *C*-series would be a term of zero extent in the *C*-dimension which is *co-extensive* in the determining-correspondence dimension with the ω-prehension which is the maximal end-term *of that series*. So, even on this hypothesis, it is not correct to say that all *C*-series have a *common* lower limit. But, as we know, McTaggart does not claim to prove that no *C*-series has a minimal end-term. If each *C*-series had a minimal end-term, and therefore had not a lower limit, McTaggart's remark that all *C*-series have non-entity as their lower boundary would become completely trivial. Obviously the various *C*-series would have each its own minimal end-term; and the statement that they had non-entity as their common lower boundary would amount to the triviality that there can be no term between the *minimal* end-term of any series and nothing at all. On neither alternative, then, can any stress be laid on

the alleged fact that all *C*-series have a lower boundary which is *common* to all and therefore *characteristic* of none. I think, however, that this would not affect McTaggart's contention that the intermediate terms derive their character and position from the maximal end-term in a way in which it does not derive its character or position from them.

I should have thought that, by analogy with his treatment of this question about *C*-series, McTaggart could have given a much more plausible reason than he does for taking the direction from earlier to later as the fundamental direction in ostensible *B*-series. The primary ostensible *B*-series for each of us is the series of his own ostensibly successive total states of consciousness from birth to the present time. Now it might fairly be said that, if such series are followed backwards towards infancy, they are found converging to a common lower limit of impersonal nescience, a "night in which all cows are black", to use Hegel's phrase. It is the latest stages in each, integrating, as they do, all that has gone before, which are most characteristic of each individual and his doings and sufferings. This seems to me to be a much better reason than McTaggart gives for taking the direction from earlier to later as fundamental in the ostensible *B*-series. And it is plainly analogous to the reason which he gives for taking the direction from less to more inclusive as fundamental in the *C*-series.

However this may be, the position now reached is as follows. In every ostensible *B*-series there is one direction, viz., that from earlier to later, which is more important than the other. In every *C*-series there is one direction, viz., that from less inclusive to more inclusive, which is more important than the other. Now it is certain that the direction from less to more inclusive is prehended *either* as the direction from earlier to later *or* as the direction from later to earlier. It is plainly foolish to assume, quite gratuitously, that temporal misprehension involves the additional error of prehending as the more important direction that which is the less important.

3. The emotional Influence of Pastness and Futurity.

In §§ 700 to 709, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*
McTaggart discusses an interesting and important psycho-
logical fact and its implications. The alleged fact is this.
Other things being equal, the memory of past evil pains one
less than the anticipation of future evil of the same amount;
and the memory of past good pleases one less than the antici-
pation of future good of the same amount.

It is assumed that the present belief that one has suffered
evil in the past is, *as such*, to some extent painful; quite apart
from any evils which this past evil may have produced in the
present or be going to produce in the future, and quite apart
from any fears which one's knowledge of past evils may have
engendered. Similarly, it is assumed that the present belief
that one has enjoyed good in the past is, *as such*, pleasant to
some extent; quite apart from any good results which this
past good may have produced in the present or be going to
produce in the future, and quite apart from any hopes which
one's knowledge of past goods may have engendered. And it
is assumed that the expectation of future evil is, as such,
painful; and that the expectation of future good is, as such,
pleasant.

In order to get a fair comparison it is probably best to
compare remembrance of some past good enjoyed or past
evil suffered by oneself with anticipation of some future good
to be enjoyed or future evil to be suffered by oneself. In that
case it does seem quite clear that McTaggart is right. It will
be noticed that all the extraneous considerations which we
have mentioned above are such as would tend to make the
memory of past evil *more* painful and the memory of past
good *more* pleasant. And yet, in spite of this, the memory of
past evil tends to be *less* painful than the anticipation of an
equal future evil, and the memory of past good tends to be
less pleasant than the anticipation of future good.

The fact cannot be explained by purely cognitive differences.
We are generally less certain in our anticipations than in our
memories; and it seems most unlikely that a weaker present

conviction about our probable condition at some other time should, *as such*, affect us more strongly than a stronger present conviction does. Again, we can generally picture the remembered past more vividly than the anticipated future; and yet it is the latter which affects us more strongly than the former.

It would be no ultimate answer to say that the remembrance of past evil is accompanied by relief, which is a pleasant feeling, and that the anticipation of future evil is accompanied by apprehension, which is an unpleasant feeling. For this merely shifts the problem one step backwards. Relief is the kind of pleasant feeling which we have on believing that an evil is *past*, and apprehension is the kind of unpleasant feeling that we have on believing that an evil is *still to come*. But the question remains as to why the belief that an evil is past should be pleasantly toned, and why the belief that an equal evil is yet to come should be unpleasantly toned.

In §703 McTaggart says that he does not know of any reason for this greater importance which we attach to the future than to the past. There may be a reason, as yet undiscovered. But it may be just an ultimate fact, comparable to the fact that all human beings dislike the sensation of being burnt and like the sensation of moderate warmth. Even if the preference should have no reason, it is not "unreasonable", in the sense of being contrary to reason. It would be contrary to reason to hold that, of two otherwise precisely similar states of affairs A and B, A is intrinsically better than B because A is future and B is past. But it is not through any such mistake as this that the anticipation of a future good is more pleasant than the memory of an equally great past good.

In §704 McTaggart says that this greater present importance of the future over the past will not be destroyed through our ceasing to believe in the reality of Time. One will still misprehend some terms as future events and others as past events; and it will still be the case that the former misprehensions will have a greater emotional effect than the latter on that state of oneself which one misprehends as present.

3·1. *The emotional Influence of Earlier and Later*. In §§ 705 to 707, inclusive, McTaggart raises and discusses a very important question bearing upon the present topic. It is this. If *A* is future when *B* is past, *A* is of course later than *B*. But the converse does not hold. *A* may be later than *B* when they are both future or both past. Now does the greater present importance of anticipating the good or evil *A*, as compared with remembering the equally good or evil *B*, depend on the fact that *A* is *future* when *B* is *past* or on the fact that *A* is *later than B*?

McTaggart accepts the former alternative. Suppose that *A* and *B* are both past and that I remember both of them. Suppose that I judge both of them to be equally good or equally bad. Then I am not more pleased or pained, as the case may be, by my memory of the later state *A* than by my memory of the earlier state *B*, assuming that my memory is equally clear and vivid in both cases. This seems to be true.

Next let us suppose that *A* and *B* are both future; and that *A*, as in the last example, is later than *B*. The mere fact that *A* is later than *B* does not at any moment make the expectation of *A* more pleasant than the expectation of *B*, if *A* and *B* are judged to be equally good. But there is this difference from the case where both *A* and *B* are past. *A* will continue to be anticipated after *B* has ceased to be anticipated and has become remembered. And the pleasure of anticipation will therefore be enjoyed for longer in connexion with the more remote future good *A* than in connexion with the equally good but less remotely future *B*. If we suppose that *A* and *B* are two equally great evils, a similar consequence follows. The displeasure of anticipation will be suffered for longer in connexion with the more remote future evil *A* than in connexion with the equally bad but less remotely future *B*. (It is, of course, assumed in all this that any additional uncertainty of actually experiencing the more remotely future good or evil has been discounted.)

Now, if an ostensible *B*-series is of finite duration, the earlier in it an event comes the greater proportion does the time during which it can be remembered bear to the time

during which it can be anticipated. If the event be good, the memory of it will be less pleasant than the anticipation of it. If the event be bad, the memory of it will be less unpleasant than the anticipation of it. Conversely, if an ostensible *B*-series is of finite duration, the later in it an event comes the greater proportion does the time during which it can be anticipated bear to the time during which it can be remembered. If the event be good, the anticipation of it will be pleasanter than the memory of it. If the event be bad, the anticipation of it will be more unpleasant than the memory of it. Therefore, from a hedonic point of view, it is desirable, *caeteris paribus*, that those *evil* states which are anticipated and remembered should come *early* in the ostensible *B*-series, and that those *good* states which are anticipated and remembered should come *late* in the series. This will ensure that the evil states will be remembered for longer than they are anticipated, and will thus minimise the secondary displeasures of memory and anticipation. And it will ensure that the good states will be anticipated for longer than they are remembered, and will thus maximise the secondary pleasures of memory and anticipation. And so a life which contains a given amount of anticipated and remembered *primary* good and evil will contain the most favourable balance of *secondary* pleasure and pain if the primary evil comes towards the beginning and the primary good comes towards the end.

According to McTaggart, this is the only rational ground for preferring a life in which primary evil is followed by primary good to a life in which the same amount of primary good is followed by the same amount of primary evil.

It must be noted that the argument applies only to those good or evil states which are anticipated and remembered. Again, it assumes that the whole duration of the series is finite, and that any state which can be anticipated or remembered will actually be either anticipated or experienced or remembered at every moment in the series. Since these conditions are by no means fulfilled in our lives, it will be worth while to consider how the argument is affected if they break down.

Suppose that the second condition were fulfilled without the first. Then, no matter where an event came in the series, it would be anticipated and remembered for an *infinite* time if it were anticipated and remembered at all. Suppose, again, that the first condition were fulfilled without the second. Let the total duration of the series be D, and let the maximum duration for which an event can be anticipated be d_1 and the maximum duration for which it can be remembered be d_2. Let us suppose that $d_1 + d_2 < D$. What are the consequences of these not unreasonable suppositions?

The maximum satisfaction will be got out of any good event by its being anticipated for the full time d_1 and remembered for the full time d_2. It is therefore undesirable that it should come too near the end of the series. For, if it is nearer to the end than by the amount d_2, it will be *remembered* for *less* than d_2; whilst it cannot be *anticipated* for *more* than d_1 wherever it comes in the series. It is also undesirable that it should come too near the beginning of the series. For, if it is nearer the beginning than by the amount d_1, it will be *anticipated* for *less* than d_1; whilst it cannot be *remembered* for *more* than d_2 wherever it comes in the series. In the first case some of the pleasure of memory will be cut off; in the second case some of the pleasure of anticipation will be cut off. Since the pleasures of anticipation are, *caeteris paribus*, greater than those of memory, it is more undesirable that a good event should come so near the beginning as to cut off a certain amount of anticipation than that it should come so near the end as to cut off an equal amount of memory. If we take a duration d_1 from the beginning of the series and a duration d_2 from the end of the series, it is a matter of indifference where a good event falls within the interval between the end of the former and the beginning of the latter. The maximum possible secondary pleasure will be produced by it.

Let us next consider an evil event. The maximum of secondary displeasure will be produced by it if it falls anywhere within the interval just mentioned. If it falls outside this interval, it is better that it should happen towards the beginning than towards the end of the series. For, if it happens

near the end, the duration of unpleasant memory is reduced below the maximum d_2, but the duration of unpleasant anticipation remains at the maximum d_1. If, on the other hand, it happens near the beginning, the duration of unpleasant anticipation is reduced below the maximum d_1, but the duration of unpleasant memory remains at the maximum d_2. Since the displeasures of unpleasant anticipation are, *caeteris paribus*, greater than those of unpleasant memory, a reduction in the duration of the former is more desirable than an equal reduction in that of the latter.

The only other comment that I have to make is the following. It is not clear to me that the temporal order of good and evil events in a life derives its importance *only* from the facts about the secondary pleasures and displeasures of memory and anticipation. Of course *mere* difference of temporal order probably has no bearing on the value of a whole which consists of a series of events forming the history of a person or institution. But it may be a condition or a sign of other relational differences which have an important influence on value. Most people, e.g., would think that it is a better total state of affairs when moral evil is followed in the same person by an appropriate amount of pain than when the same amount of pain is followed by the same amount of moral evil.

In §§ 708 and 709 McTaggart raises the following question. So far we have found no explanation for the fact that we are more affected in the present by expectation of future good and evil than by memory of past good and evil. Could we explain this by the assumption that the direction from earlier to later in an ostensible B-series corresponds to the direction from less to more inclusive in a C-series? If we could explain the psychological fact on this assumption, and could not explain it in any other way, this would constitute an independent argument in favour of the assumption.

If the assumption be granted, any state that is prehended as future would include all and more than all the content of any state that is prehended as past. This would seem to account for the greater interest which we take in the ostensible future than in the ostensible past. And, as no other explana-

tion of the fact can be suggested, it might be said that this justifies us in accepting as highly probable the hypothesis that the direction from earlier to later corresponds to the direction from less to more inclusive.

Although, as we know, McTaggart accepts this proposition, he rejects the argument stated above. In the first place, the psychological fact may be ultimate and incapable of any explanation. But there is a much more serious objection. There is a suppressed premise in the argument, viz., that we are more interested in more inclusive terms, as such, than in terms which are included in them without exhausting them. Now, if this be combined with the hypothesis that the direction from earlier to later corresponds to the direction from less to more inclusive, the two propositions together entail, *not* the psychological fact which we want to explain, but a different conclusion which we have shown to be *false*. What would be entailed is that what is prehended as *later* is always, *caeteris paribus*, of more interest to us than what is prehended as *earlier*, regardless of whether both events are prehended as future, or both as past, or one as future and the other as past. We have seen that this is not true. Therefore this argument must be rejected, and we must rely on the other argument, already considered, for correlating the direction from earlier to later with the direction from less to more inclusive.

This is another example of McTaggart's conscientiousness in not turning a blind eye to the weaknesses of plausible arguments in favour of propositions which he holds to be true.

CHAPTER LI

APPARENT TEMPORAL POSITION AND REAL C-POSITION

The subject to be discussed in this chapter is that which McTaggart discusses in Chap. LXI of *The Nature of Existence* under the title of *The Futurity of the Whole*. In that chapter he again talks of "perceptions perceiving themselves". He also talks of "perception from the standpoint of the whole". His doctrine can be stated quite clearly and simply without using those phrases, and I propose to state it in my own way.

1. Statement of the Theory.

All appearance presupposes two terms, viz., a prehension and its prehensum. Each of these terms may be either maximal or pre-maximal, i.e., either an ω-term or an r-term. Thus we have four possibilities, viz., prehension of an ω-term from the ω-standpoint; prehension of an r-term from the ω-standpoint; prehension of an ω-term from an r-standpoint; and prehension of an r-term from an r-standpoint. By the phrase "perception from the standpoint of the whole" McTaggart means simply prehension from the ω-standpoint. His reason for using the phrase is, no doubt, the following. *Every* ω-prehension, and *no* r-prehension, is co-extensive in the C-dimension with the self to which it belongs, though it is less extensive in the determining-correspondence dimension. (See e.g., Diagram 3 on p. 357 of the present volume.)

To make the discussion as concrete as possible let us consider a self P_1, whose differentiating group is P_1 and P_2. And let us suppose that P_2 has the same differentiating group. Consider any first-grade ω-prehension in P_1, e.g., P_{12}. Let us ask how this ω-prehension will appear to P_1 from the ω-standpoint. There is in P_1 one and only one ω-prehension which has P_{12} as its object, viz., P_{112}. Since this is an ω-prehension, it must be perfectly correct. Therefore it cannot

present P_{12} as temporal, for nothing is really temporal. So P_{12} is prehended by P_1 from the ω-standpoint as timeless; and therefore as neither past nor present, nor future; neither instantaneous, nor of finite duration, nor everlasting. The same remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the prehension of any ω-term, of whatever grade it might be, by any self from the ω-standpoint.

Now consider any fragmentary part of P_{12}, e.g., P_{12}^r. How will this appear to P_1 from the ω-standpoint? Here again the question reduces to this: "How will P_{12}^r be presented to P_1 by the ω-prehension P_{112}?" For P_{112} is the only ω-prehension in P_1 which has the members of the *C*-series Π_{12} for its object. Since P_{112} is a perfectly correct prehension, it cannot present P_{12}^r as temporal. From the ω-standpoint, then, P_1 must prehend the pre-maximal terms of the series Π_{12} as non-temporal, just as he prehends the maximal end-term P_{12} as non-temporal.

Again, P_{112} presents both P_{12} and all the pre-maximal terms of Π_{12}, such as P_{12}^r, as *prehensions*, and not as judgments or suppositions or non-prehensive cogitations of any kind. For in fact all cogitations are states of prehension; and therefore a correct prehension of them, such as P_{112}, cannot present them as non-prehensive cogitations. All this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the prehension of any fragmentary part of any ω-prehension by any self from the ω-standpoint. We may sum it up as follows. From the ω-standpoint *every* term in a secondary *C*-series is prehended (*a*) as timeless, and (*b*) as a state of prehension, by any self who prehends it at all. The pre-final terms are prehended as timeless states of prehension which mispresent their objects as temporal; the maximal end-terms are prehended as timeless states of prehension which correctly present their objects as timeless.

So far we have considered prehension of the terms of *secondary* *C*-series from the ω-standpoint. Very similar remarks apply to the prehension of the terms of *primary* *C*-series, such as Π_1, from the ω-standpoint. In P_1 there is one and only one ω-prehension of himself, viz., P_{11}. This has for its total object all the terms of the primary *C*-series Π_1. It will

present all these terms as *non-temporal*, and as states of *prehension* in P_1 of his differentiating group (P_1, P_2) as a single total object. For this is what the terms of Π_1 in fact are, and P_{11} is a perfectly correct prehension of them. It will present the pre-final terms as timeless states of prehension which mispresent this total object as temporal; and it will present the maximal end-term as a timeless state of prehension which correctly presents this total object as timeless. I take it that the latter is what McTaggart means by the phrase "perception of the whole from its own standpoint".

Now McTaggart infers from the facts just mentioned that prehension from the ω-standpoint must be more like our everyday experiences of ostensible prehension than like any other of our everyday experiences. All our experiences, whatever they may appear on introspection to be, are in fact states of prehension. But the only ones that are introspectively prehended as prehensions *from their own stage in the C-series* are our everyday ostensible prehensions and our ω-prehensions. Now, when an r-state of prehension is prehended as such from its own stage in the C-series, its object is prehended as contemporary with it and therefore as *present*. Again, ostensible r-prehensions have an aggressiveness which does not belong to r-prehensions which are introspectively prehended as judgments or suppositions, even though the propositional content of the ostensible judgment or supposition should be that so-and-so is now existing or happening. This probably explains why ostensible r-prehensions are, *caeteris paribus*, specially important in their effects on our happiness or unhappiness. Now prehension from the ω-standpoint is prehended from the ω-standpoint as prehension, and not as judgment or supposition. Therefore it would presumably have this special aggressiveness and this special effect on our hedonic state.

For these two reasons McTaggart holds that we are using an appropriate *metaphor* if we compare prehension of maximal end-terms from the ω-standpoint to ostensible r-prehension of objects as *present*. But we must never forget that it is *only* a metaphor. Prehension from the ω-standpoint is prehension

of an object as timeless. Therefore it is not really prehension of an object as present, even when that object is itself at the ω-stage.

We must now consider prehension of a term at the ω-stage from one of the r-stages. As before, we will take the ω-prehension P_{12} as a typical object at the ω-stage. The question is: "How will P_{12} be presented to P_1 by a pre-maximal term of the series Π_{112}, such as P_{112}^r?" The answer is evidently as follows. P_{12} is the maximal end-term of the series Π_{12}. It is therefore the most inclusive term of that series. In Π_{12} there is a term P_{12}^r which occupies in it a corresponding position to that which P_{112}^r occupies in Π_{112}. Now P_{112}^r presents P_{12}^r to P_1 as *present*. We have seen that the direction from less to more inclusive is prehended as the direction from earlier to later in the ostensible *B*-series. Therefore P_{112}^r must present as *future* any term in Π_{112} which is more inclusive than P_{12}^r. But P_{12} is the most inclusive term in Π_{12}. Therefore P_{12} must be presented as *future* by P_{112}^r. This is evidently a general rule, which may be summed up as follows. Any ω-prehension in P_1 must be presented as future to any self who prehends it from any r-standpoint. From any r-standpoint any ω-prehension is presented as having predecessors and contemporaries but as having no successors. It is therefore presented as beginning to exist at the end of future time. The only prehensions which can present an ω-prehension as other than future are themselves ω-prehensions. And these will present it as timeless, and therefore neither as past nor as present nor as future.

Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to prehension from an r-standpoint of the maximal end-term of a *primary* *C*-series, such as Π_1. Consider, e.g., P_1, which is the maximal end-term of this primary *C*-series. How will it appear to P_1 himself, or to P_2, from an r-standpoint? This is equivalent to asking how P_1 would be presented by P_{11}^r to P_1 and by P_{21}^r to P_2. The answer is that both these r-prehensions must present P_1 as future. They must present P_1 as having predecessors and contemporaries but as having no successors. Therefore they must present him as beginning to exist at the

end of future time. Now P_1 is in fact a certain whole self, fully extended both in the C-dimension and the determining-correspondence dimension, and timeless. Yet from any r-standpoint he must appear to himself, and to any other self in his differentiating group, as something which only begins to exist at the last moment of future time.

I do not think that we could lay down any rule as to whether ω-terms like P_{12} would be prehended *as prehensions* from an r-standpoint. We know that any r-prehension, such as P_{112}^r, must be partly erroneous. We also know that, since it presents P_{12} as future, it must appear on introspection as a judgment or state of expectation (which it is not) and not as a prehension (which it is). But this does not enable us to say whether P_{112}^r will present P_{12} as a prehension or not. All that we can say is that every term of Π_{112} except the last must mispresent P_{12} as future. Some of them may correctly present P_{12} as a prehension; others may present it as a non-prehensive cogitation; whilst others may mispresent it still further as a sensum or a material thing or event.

It is natural to ask at this point whether ω-terms like P_1 would be prehended *as selves* from an r-standpoint. In the next Section I shall show that they cannot be prehended from this standpoint as selves. The least misleading way in which such a term can be prehended is as a *total event* coming at the future end of a self's history.

I will now sum up the position which we have reached about selves and their reflexive cogitations. Any self P_1, which prehends itself, contains one and only one perfectly correct prehension of itself, viz., P_{11}. It also contains a whole series of partly incorrect prehensions of itself, viz., all the terms of Π_{11}, except P_{11}, which is its maximal end-term. P_{11} presents P_1 to himself as a timeless two-dimensional whole, endlessly differentiated in one dimension into a determining-correspondence system of perfectly correct prehensions, each of which is co-extensive with P_1 in the C-dimension. P_{11} presents each of these determining-correspondence prehensions as differentiated in the C-dimension into a series of misprehensions. The misprehensions in any such series are all

co-extensive in the determining-correspondence dimension with the perfectly correct prehension which comes at one end of the series, and they all present incorrectly the object which it presents correctly. Every incorrect prehension P_{11}^r in P_1 of P_1 presents him to himself as something which will begin to exist only at the end of time.

Now each of P_1's prehensions of himself is timelessly the object of a whole series of reflexive prehensions of the next order. One of these is the perfectly correct ω-prehension P_{111}. The rest are the pre-maximal members of the series Π_{111}. P_{111} presents the members of Π_{11} to P_1 as they really are. It presents P_{11} as P_1's correct prehension of himself, and it presents the other members of Π_{11} as P_1's incorrect prehensions of himself. But the other members of Π_{111}, such as P_{111}^r, mispresent the members of Π_{11} to P_1 as a temporal series of successive states of self-cognition. P_{111}^r mispresents one of these terms, viz., P_{11}^r, as a *contemporary* state of self-cognition; it mispresents the rest of them as past or future, according to whether they are less or more inclusive than P_{11}^r. It mispresents P_{11} as a state of self-knowledge which begins only at the last moment of time.

2. Comments on the Theory.

I think that there is no doubt that the theory which I have been explaining is the one which McTaggart held. I think it is plain that this theory is a legitimate deduction from the propositions which McTaggart claims to have established about *C*-series and ostensible *B*-series. All that remains to be done is to make some critical comments on it.

(i) The reader may have noticed that I have constantly used the negative expression "non-temporal" instead of the positive expression "eternal", though McTaggart makes frequent use of the latter. I have done this deliberately. So far as I am concerned, I can attach no positive meaning to the word "eternal"; for me it means non-temporal or it means nothing. Now, McTaggart ought, I think, to have agreed with me on this point. For, as we saw in Section 1 of Chap. XXXVII of the present work, McTaggart denies that, in

what appears *sub specie temporis* as the history of the human race, anyone has ever prehended anything as eternal. Therefore, unless he claimed to have a positive *a priori* concept of eternity, he would have to admit that, when he used the word "eternal", he meant non-temporal or he meant nothing. Now I do not suppose for a moment that McTaggart would have claimed to have a positive *a priori* concept of eternity; so I conclude that, like myself, he can have attached no clear meaning to the word "eternal" except the negative meaning non-temporal. A person, like Spinoza, who had some kind of experience which he thought it appropriate to describe by saying "*Sentimus experimurque nos aeternos esse*", had a right (in his private meditations, at any rate) to use the word "eternal" in addition to the word "timeless". But neither McTaggart nor I have any such right. If this be granted, it is obviously undesirable to use a word which is positive in grammatical form for a concept which is purely negative. Therefore I shall continue to avoid the word "eternal" and to use the word "timeless" or "non-temporal".

I think it is important to insist on this point in order that we may not be taken in by meaningless words which have emotional reverberations. When we say that the self, e.g., is "eternal", we are liable to mistake a kind of solemn and "cathedrally" feeling for a judgment with positive propositional content. Actually all that we are saying is this. Although a self is an existent, it is neither a continuant nor an occurrent. Since it is not a continuant, it is meaningless to talk of it as having a history, either monotonous or variegated. It is meaningless to talk of it as enduring through a long time or a short time or through all time. Since it is not an occurrent or process, it is meaningless to talk of it as beginning or ending or going on for ever or being instantaneous. These purely negative propositions, and any consequences that may follow from them, are *all* that one is really *thinking of* when one says that the self is eternal. If we make this clear to ourselves by resolutely using the negative term "non-temporal", we shall at least avoid one form of emotional dope. And, if this should seem a bleak prospect to the reader, he may

console himself with the thought of all the up-to-date alternative forms of emotional dope which are presented to him in the words "Collective Security", "Dictatorship of the Proletariat", and a hundred others.

(ii) The following points in McTaggart's theory seem highly paradoxical. (*a*) One and the same self P_1 timelessly has both correct and incorrect prehensions of the same objects. E.g., P_{11} presents P_1 to himself correctly as a time-less two-dimensional whole; P_{11}^r presents P_1 to himself incorrectly as something which will begin to exist only at the end of future time; and P_{11} and P_{11}^r both exist timelessly as parts of P_1. The timeless co-existence in P_1 of these two incompatible views about himself does not trouble him. And this is not due to ignorance or inadvertence. For P_1 time-lessly prehends both P_{11} and P_{11}^r *correctly*, by means of his ω-prehension P_{111}; though he *also* timelessly prehends both of them *incorrectly*, by means, e.g., of his *r*-prehension P_{111}^r.

(*b*) Any pre-maximal term, e.g., P_{12}^r, which P_1 prehends, is timelessly prehended by P_1 as past, as present, as future, and as timeless. For consider the *C*-series Π_{112}. This contains a term P_{112}^r, which presents P_{12}^r to P_1 as *present*. It contains less inclusive terms, such as P_{112}^{r-1}, which present P_{12}^r to P_1 as *future*. It contains more inclusive terms, such as P_{112}^{r+1}, which present P_{12}^r as *past*. Lastly, it contains the ω-term P_{112} which presents P_{12}^r as *timeless*. So there timelessly co-exist in P_1 prehensions of the same term P_{12}^r as past, as present, as future, and as timeless.

(iii) Now it is quite possible to conceive a self containing *at different times* incompatible cognitions, some correct and others incorrect, of the same object. It is quite possible to conceive a self containing *at the same time* two or more in-compatible cognitions, provided that it is unaware of one or other of these cognitions or that it fails to notice their in-compatibility. But it is extremely difficult to conceive a self containing timelessly, and with full consciousness of what it is doing, two or more incompatible cognitions.

I can only suggest that McTaggart might say that the apparent difficulty arises from confusing non-temporal with

temporal co-existence, and thinking of these incompatible cognitions as if they were *really* simultaneous occurrents in a certain mental continuant. This may be the right answer. But it is extremely difficult to attach any clear meaning to phrases about timeless states of a timeless self. What does "states of" mean when the "states" are not occurrents, and when that "of" which they are states is not a continuant?

(iv) I am now going to put a *prima facie* objection, which I believe to be mistaken. I put it because it has a certain plausibility, and because the answer to it throws light on certain points in McTaggart's theory of the self and reflexive self-consciousness. The objection may be put as follows. What can be meant by saying that a self *now* prehends itself as *going to* begin existing only at the end of future time? The judgment "I shall not begin to exist until the end of future time" seems to be one that could not be true even *sub specie temporis*. For its truth would be incompatible with its occurrence here and now.

The first point to be made in answer to this objection is that it rests on an ambiguity in the phrase "P_1 prehends himself as so-and-so". This might mean cither (a) that P_1 prehends a particular, which is *in fact* himself, as so-and-so, but that he does not necessarily prehend that particular *as himself*; or (b) that P_1 prehends a certain particular *both* as himself and as so-and-so. Probably the second interpretation is the more usual in ordinary life. Now the objection interprets the phrase "P_1 prehends himself as going to begin to exist at the end of future time" in the second sense. If this were what the theory meant, the present objection would be fatal to it. Obviously it is impossible for a self *here and now* to prehend something *as himself* and as *not going to begin to exist* until the end of future time. So the objection has the merit of showing that the theory must be more carefully stated. The right statement is as follows: "From any *r*-standpoint P_1 prehends that particular which is *in fact* himself as *something* which will not begin to exist until the end of future time."

This enables us to answer a question which I raised in the last Section and deferred to this Section. I asked whether

ω-terms like P_1 are or are not prehended as selves from any r-standpoint. We can now answer that, if McTaggart's theory is true, they certainly cannot be reflexively prehended as selves from any r-standpoint. For any such term is prehended, from any such standpoint, as a particular which will begin to exist only at the end of future time. Now, *sub specie temporis*, the prehension of this term, and therefore the prehending self, exists here and now. If the prehended term were prehended as a self, it would be prehended as identical with the prehending self, since we are supposing the prehension to be reflexive. And so we should have the impossible situation of something which is prehended as only going to begin to exist at the end of future time being prehended as identical with something which is prehended as already existing. We may conclude, then, that no self ever prehends what is *in fact* its self *as itself* from any r-standpoint, if McTaggart's theory is correct.

Can we say anything more positive than this? Can we say positively how P_1 appears to P_1 from the various r-standpoints? Or must we be content with the negative statement that it certainly does not appear to P_1 as himself? I think that we can answer this question.

Consider any primary C-series Π_1. It is certain that the pre-maximal terms of any such series, e.g., P_1^r, are presented by the pre-maximal terms of such secondary C-series as Π_{11} and Π_{21} simply as *successive total states* of the self P_1. They are presented as temporally adjoined to each other to make up P_1's mental history. Now it is reasonable to assume that the maximal end-term P_1^ω of Π_1 would also be presented by the pre-maximal terms of such series as Π_{11} and Π_{21} as a *total state* of P_1. Therefore we ought to express the theory in the following way: "That term which is *in fact* the self P_1, i.e., a timeless two-dimensional whole, is prehended by P_1 from any r-standpoint as a single *total state* of himself which will begin only at the end of future time."

At any r-stage P_1 inevitably thinks of himself as a continuant, and thinks of the terms in Π_1 as successive total states of himself which together make up the history of that

continuant. Really he is not a continuant, and he has no history; and the terms in Π_1 are not really events. But, from any standpoint which is infected with the temporal illusion, he will mistake what is in fact *himself*, i.e., a timeless two-dimensional whole, for *the last total event in the history of himself*, taken as a continuant.

There is one more remark to be made before leaving this topic. In discussing McTaggart's theory of self-knowledge in Chap. xxx of the present work I said that there seemed to be two theories, viz., a cruder doctrine that selves literally *prehend* themselves as such, and a more subtle doctrine that selves literally prehend only certain thin slices of their own mental histories and thereby *perceive* themselves as such. (See Sub-section 2·11 of Chap. xxx of the present work.) We were then considering McTaggart's theories independently of his special metaphysical doctrines of Time, Determining Correspondence, etc. We can now return for a moment to this question, and look at it in the light of the knowledge which we have gained in the twenty intervening chapters.

We can sum up the present position about reflexive self-knowledge as follows. (*a*) Every reflexive self-cognition in P_1 is a term in the *C*-series Π_{11}. (*b*) Every term in Π_{11} is a prehension, not primarily of P_1, but of the whole *C*-series Π_1. (*c*) From the standpoint of any pre-maximal term P_{11}^r in Π_{11} the series Π_1 as a whole is prehended as *the history* of P_1, and each term in it is prehended as a different cross-section of P_1's history. (*d*) From the standpoint of the maximal end-term of Π_{11} the series as a whole is prehended correctly as a timeless inclusion-series whose maximal end-term is the self P_1 as a two-dimensional timeless whole. (*e*) Any term of Π_1 has one factor which is specially correlated with P_1^ω, the maximal end-term of Π_1. In the term P_{11}^r this factor would be $P_{11}^{r\omega}$, and in the term P_{11}^ω this factor would be $P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$. Now P_1^ω is, of course, simply the self P_1 as a timeless two-dimensional whole. Therefore, if there is anything that could be called "prehension by P_1 of P_1", it would be these *factors* $P_{11}^{r\omega}$ and $P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$, and not any total *prehension* in Π_{11} such as P_{11}^r and P_{11}^ω. (*f*) Even such factors as $P_{11}^{r\omega}$ do not present P_1 to himself *as*

himself. They present to him what is *in fact* himself, not as himself, but as that total state of himself which will begin only at the end of future time. (*g*) Thus it is only the factor $P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$ which presents P_1 as a whole to himself as himself. And $P_{11}^{\omega\omega}$, like the rest of P_{11}^{ω}, is 'laid up in Heaven'.

(v) I pass now to another objection which might plausibly be made to McTaggart's theory. Might it not be said that, if the theory were true, we should all be having here and now, *sub specie temporis*, certain experiences which we do not in fact have? Surely, it might be said, no one does in fact ostensibly judge here and now about *anything* that it is going to begin to exist at the end of future time. Probably most people who have not read McTaggart's book have never thought of future time as having an end. Yet, if McTaggart's theory be right, even the least sophisticated of us must have been making ostensible judgments of this kind at every moment of our lives.

I suppose that McTaggart's answer would be as follows. Let P_{11}^{r} be that term of the series Π_{11} which would appear as now present. This is a prehension of the whole series Π_1, and not only of its maximal end-term P_1^{ω}. But it is certainly not a clear and distinct prehension of this series term by term. Plainly the terms nearly adjacent to P_1^{r}, and perhaps a few isolated terms which are slightly more or considerably less inclusive than P_1^{r}, are the only members of Π_1 which are separately and distinctly presented by P_{11}^{r}. All the rest, and especially all the terms which are very much more inclusive than P_1^{r}, are presented confusedly as a vague background. So, when we introspect P_{11}^{r}, we shall not be able as a rule to detect a distinct factor $P_{11}^{r\omega}$ in it which presents P_1^{ω} as a separate term. And so there is no *ostensible* present cogitation of P_1^{ω} as the state of oneself which is going to begin only at the end of future time. The only ostensible present cogitations are of P_1^{r} as the present state of oneself, and of a selection of other neighbouring terms as past or as not very remotely future states of oneself.

(vi) The last point is this. There seems to be one essential factor in temporal appearance which McTaggart's theory

leaves unexplained. This is what I called the "transitory aspect of temporal facts" in Section 1 of Chap. xxxv of the present work, and referred to in more detail in Sub-section 1·22 under the title of "Absolute Becoming". This is the appearance which may be described either as the "motion" of the series of A-characteristics as a rigid whole from earlier to later terms of an ostensible B-series, or as the "motion" of an ostensible B-series over the series of A-characteristics from futurity, through presentness, to pastness.

P_1 timelessly prehends any term such as P_{12}^r as having various degrees of pastness, as having presentness, and as having various degrees of futurity, and also as being timeless. For P_1 timelessly contains all the prehensions in the tertiary C-series Π_{112}. Again, P_1 timelessly prehends each of these tertiary prehensions as having various degrees of pastness, as having presentness, and as having various degrees of futurity, and also as being timeless. For P_1 timelessly contains all the prehensions in the quaternary series Π_{1112}. And so on without end. But where, in all this timeless co-existence of non-temporal series, can the appearance of the *passage* of A-characteristics from one term to another arise? One is reminded of poor Mr Dunne, who, spatialising time at one stage after another, is doomed to chase the transitory factor, which distinguishes time from all other series, to higher and higher dimensions, until he loses breath and postulates an "Observer at Infinity", described as the last term or limit of a series which plainly could not possibly have either.

McTaggart, unlike Mr Dunne, has to deal only with the *delusive appearance* of absolute becoming. I suppose that he would say that some facts about appearance must be taken as ultimate and inexplicable, and that this is one of them. I cannot feel satisfied with this. I cannot help thinking that there could be no *appearance* of becoming *anywhere* unless there were *real* becoming *somewhere*. But I cannot prove this to anyone who does not find it self-evident; and I suppose that McTaggart would just have said that he did not find it self-evident.

3. Temporal Metaphors for the Non-temporal.

It can never be literally correct to speak in temporal terms of what is in fact timeless. But some metaphors may be less misleading than others. McTaggart discusses this point in §§ 732 to 739, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*.

(i) Any ω-term, though really timeless, can be called "future" from any r-standpoint with as much truth as such statements can have about anything. E.g., it is as true to say that all ω-terms are future as it is to say that to-morrow's breakfast is future. It would never be true to call any ω-term present or past, even in the sense in which it is true that this act of writing is present and that to-day's breakfast is past.

(ii) Fragmentary parts, such as P_1^r or P_{12}^r, are timeless, just as P_1^ω and P_{12}^ω are. But any fragmentary part can be called present or past with as much propriety as it can be called future. E.g., P_1^r can be said to be present with respect to P_{11}^r as truly as P_1^ω can be said to be future with respect to P_{11}^r. Similarly P_1^r can be said to be past with respect to P_{11}^{r+1} and future with respect to P_{11}^{r-1} just as truly as P_1^ω can be said to be future with respect to P_{11}^r. So we must beware of saying that "the Eternal" or "the Timeless" is as future as anything can be, and is never in any sense present or past. For the fragmentary parts are just as "eternal" or "timeless" as the maximal end-terms, and this proposition is not true of them. What we must say is that *some* particulars which are eternal, viz., selves and ω-prehensions, appear as future from every other stage, and appear as timeless from their own stage, in a *C*-series. And no terms but selves and ω-prehensions appear as timeless from their own stage in a *C*-series.

(iii) It must further be remarked that the term which comes at the maximal end of a *C*-series does include all the content of all that comes at any other stage in the series. Those timeless particulars which appear in time only as future are not the only timeless particulars, as we have just seen; for their fragmentary parts are also timeless particulars, and they appear in time as past, as present, and as future. But all the timeless particulars which appear as past, and as

present, and as future, are wholly contained in the timeless
particulars which appear only as future. Thus, in a sense, that
which appears in time only as future does *include* (as parts of
itself in the *C*-dimension) *all* the timeless particulars.

(iv) The terms which appear only as future appear to
begin but do not appear to *end*, since they do not appear to
have successors. In this respect it may be said that such
terms appear in time in a less misleading way than those
terms which appear to begin, to continue for a while, and
then to cease. As McTaggart puts it, such terms are not more
really eternal than the others, but they are more obviously so.

In §736 McTaggart insists on the futurity of the terms in
the determining-correspondence system, when viewed *sub
specie temporis*, as against certain other Idealists who have
held that all that is eternal appears *sub specie temporis* as
present at every moment. No doubt he is here thinking of
Bosanquet, one of whose most successful "wise-cracks" was
the oft-quoted remark that "it is the death of Idealism to
place its ideals in the future". McTaggart's comment on this
view is as follows.

Unless there is very strong reason to the contrary, it is
reasonable to hold that what corresponds in reality to the
appearance of a temporal series is serial though not temporal.
Now all the terms of such a series must be timeless, since
everything is so. And the terms appear as events, and the
generating relation as temporal relations between them.
Therefore *some* timeless terms must appear as earlier events
and others as later events. Every one of these timeless terms,
with just two possible exceptions, must appear as past, as
present, and as future; since every term but the two end-
terms, if such there be, has terms on both sides of it in the
series. If the series should have two end-terms, one will
appear from every position but its own as past, and the other
will appear from every position but its own as future. How
each will appear from its own position depends on the details
of one's theory about the real basis of temporal appearances.
On McTaggart's theory, the term which appears from every
position but its own as future is the determining-corres-

pondence system of selves and ω-prehensions. From its own position every member of this appears as timeless, and therefore neither as past nor as present nor as future. And every other term in the series is contained in this last term of the series.

In § 737 McTaggart remarks that the doctrine which connects the eternal whole especially with the ostensible present, as opposed to the past and future, is liable to have unfortunate ethical consequences. Its supporters have to hold that all the good which is in the universe as a whole is such as can be manifested under present conditions, and that in fact it is manifested under present conditions. Now, in view of the actual facts about the world at the present time, this entails that the kind and amount of goodness which there is or can be in the universe is very much below what we could conceive and could wish. So far no ethical fallacy has been committed. The conclusion is depressing, but it might be true for all that. But it is very easy to pass unwittingly from this to the doctrine that ideals which are not and cannot be realised here and now, or at least under conditions closely analogous to those of our present life, are mistaken and false. This is a sheer ethical fallacy, and it has certainly often been committed by such Idealists as McTaggart has in mind.

In §§ 738 and 739 McTaggart throws a bouquet to Christianity, which is all the more welcome from the rarity of such tributes in his works. Lest Christians should be unduly elated, I would express a doubt whether the bouquet would have been thrown to them if it had not contained a brick-bat for Bosanquet. Probably McTaggart's attitude might be summed up in the lines:

> I could not love thee, Christ, so much,
> Loved I not Bernard less!

The point is this. Christians have been laughed at by superior persons for combining the view that Heaven is a timeless state with the view that it is future. The critics have said, according to McTaggart, that, if Heaven be timeless, the least inappropriate temporal metaphor to apply to it is that of "an eternal present". I am not very clear as to the

meaning of this metaphor. The essential point seems to be stated in the sentence at the bottom of p. 370 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*, where McTaggart remarks that Heaven "must be conceived, it is said, as standing in the same relation to all stages in the time process". In that case an "eternal present" would seem to mean a specious present co-extensive with the whole time-process.

Now there are two things to be said on the side of the critics. (i) It is true that, if we want to picture the experiences of spirits in Heaven, we shall do so least inappropriately by likening them to our ostensible prehensions of ostensibly present objects. Really they must be timeless prehensions of timeless objects as timeless. But we have seen that there are certain analogies between these and our ostensible prehensions of objects as present. The analogy appears in our symbolism in the fact that symbols like $P_{12}^{\omega\omega}$ and P_{12}^{rr} agree in having *homogeneous* indices, representing the fact that prehensum and prehension are both at the same *C*-stage. (ii) It is also true that, even here and now, we do not represent Heaven to ourselves as a transitory state.

On the side of the Christians there are also two things to be said. (i) Although the experiences of spirits in Heaven must be more like our ostensible prehensions of objects *as present* than like any of our other experiences, it does not follow that we can most appropriately think of these heavenly experiences *as going on now*. On the contrary, we have shown that it is as correct to think of these experiences as beginning only at the end of future time as it is to think of one's next breakfast as beginning only at nine o'clock to-morrow. (ii) The fact that we do not represent Heaven to ourselves as transitory, even from our present standpoint, does not force us to think of it as somehow co-extensive with the whole time process. We can think of it as non-transitory because it is a state which comes at the end of future time, and therefore begins but does not end. So the Christians are nearer to the truth than their critics, though it must be confessed that, like the murderers of their Master, "they know not what they do".

CHAPTER LII

OSTENSIBLE DURATION

In this chapter I shall take together all that McTaggart has to say about ostensible duration and its real foundations. His statements on this subject will be found in Chap. LI (*Further Considerations on Time*); Chap. XLIII, §501 to the end, and Chap. LXII (*Immortality*); and Chap. LXVII, §§874 to 882, inclusive (*Total Value in the Universe*).

The questions to be discussed may be classified as follows: (1) What is the significance of the ordinary distinction between "the real" and "the apparent" duration of a process? (2) What duration, if any, does an individual term of a *C*-series seem to have when it is prehended *sub specie temporis*? This question divides into two. For it is evident that the answer may be different for intermediate terms and end-terms. (3) What duration does a stretch, composed of a number of terms of a *C*-series in their order, appear to have? This, again, divides into two. For the answer may be different according to whether the stretch consists wholly of intermediate terms or includes one or both end-terms. Of course all these questions are closely interconnected; but it is useful to state them separately at the beginning, so that the reader may enter on this difficult and complicated subject with some idea of the general lie of the land.

1. The Distinction between "real" and "apparent" Duration.

Can we give a meaning to the statement that two processes were "really" of the same duration (e.g., two journeys by a certain train between the same two stations), but "seemed to be" of different durations? We often make such statements, and are understood by our hearers. But they evidently need interpretation, in view of the alleged fact that nothing really is a process or has duration.

The answer is provided by drawing a distinction between two senses of "appearance". These might be called "standard appearance" and "abnormal appearance". The two terms may be compared respectively with what Kant called *Erscheinung* and *Schein*. Different stretches, s_1 and s_2, of the same or of different C-series, would be equal if and only if the following conditions were fulfilled. Suppose that the increment from the lower bound of the series which contains s_1 to the first term of s_1 bears to the increment from the lower bound of this series to its last term the ratio p_1. Suppose that the corresponding ratio for the last term of s_1 is q_1. Let the corresponding ratios for the first and the last term of s_2 be respectively p_2 and q_2. Then the two stretches are equal if and only if $q_1 - p_1 = q_2 - p_2$. Now the *standard* appearances of two equal stretches in any C-series are two equal durations. But, under special conditions of distortion, equal stretches in the same or different C-series may appear as unequal durations. In that case one at least of the appearances must be abnormal, and both may be so.

Both the standard and the abnormal appearances mispresent the facts, since they both present as temporal what is really timeless. But the standard appearances mispresent the facts less than the abnormal appearances. For the former present equal stretches as equal durations, whilst the latter present equal stretches as unequal durations or unequal stretches as equal durations.

McTaggart explains this distinction in §617 of *The Nature of Existence*. In §618 he considers the causes which tend to produce abnormal temporal appearances. (i) Periods of boredom or of intense expectation seem longer than equal stretches normally would because we pay more attention than usual to the ostensible passage of time. In the one case we do this because there is so little of interest to divert our attention from it. In the other case we do it because we are so anxious for the time of waiting to pass. "Since we pay as much attention to time in a short period as we usually pay in a longer period, we judge the period to be longer than it is." On the other hand, in periods during which what is being experi-

enced interests us intensely, we pay little heed to the mere lapse of time, and so we tend to judge that little time has elapsed.

I do not myself see why the mere fact of attending much to time-lapse should make us over-estimate its actual magnitude, or why the mere fact of attending little to it should make us under-estimate its actual magnitude. What does seem characteristic of periods of boredom and expectation is that one attends *more often* in a given period to the question of the passage of time, e.g., that one looks oftener at one's watch. It is not a question of attending steadily to the passage of time throughout the whole period with more than usual intensity.

Then, again, it seems to me quite certain that mere expectation does not invariably lengthen the apparent duration of waiting. If what is being expected is something that is deemed likely to be unpleasant, it is surprising how quickly the interval seems to pass. Plainly, then, the hedonic tone of the expectation is a highly relevant factor.

(ii) Another case in which an interval seems to have been abnormally long is when it has been full of exciting events. It then seems on retrospect to have been as long as a *normal* period containing the same number of noticeable events; and this would, of course, have been much longer. McTaggart is inclined to think that, even in cases of boredom and expectation, what really seems abnormally long is the part of the period which has already passed, viewed in retrospect. The duration of each specious present, he thinks, does not seem abnormally long under these conditions, though longer periods do seem abnormally long.

There would seem to be a conflict between McTaggart's two principles at this point. If the period has been one of boredom, it must be one that is exceptionally deficient in exciting events. Suppose now that the first half of such a period is viewed in retrospect from the middle of it. In accordance with the first principle this half should appear abnormally *long*, as being a period of boredom. In accordance with the second principle this same half should appear abnormally *short*, as having been exceptionally deficient in exciting events.

In all future discussions on duration, we shall understand by "the duration which anything appears to have" the *normal* appearance, i.e., the duration which it would appear to have if special causes of distortion were allowed for.

2. Apparent Duration of intermediate C-terms and C-stretches.

As we have seen, every term in a C-series is simple and indivisible in the C-dimension, in a perfectly definite sense. We had better remind ourselves of this sense before we go any further. Consider any term P_{12}^r, e.g., in a C-series. It is quite true that this will contain other terms of the series Π_{12} as parts, unless it should happen to be the minimal end-term of the series. But the essential point is that it will have no *set of parts* every member of which is a term in the series. In fact no set of parts of P_{12}^r can possibly contain more than one term of the series Π_{12} as a member. The remaining member or members of any set will be of quite a different nature, viz., Residues or parts of Residues. (See clause xiv of Section 8 of Chap. xxxix p. 388, and Sub-section 2·1 of Chap. xlii p. 421, of the present volume.)

Now McTaggart makes the following two important statements. (i) Each term of a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to be of *finite* duration. This is explicitly asserted in § 876, p. 455, Vol. ii, of *The Nature of Existence*. (ii) Anything that is prehended as having a *divisible* duration (e.g., as lasting for one second or for the duration of a single specious present) must be a *stretch* consisting of several terms of a C-series in order. This is stated quite explicitly in § 879, p. 458, and it is evidently implied in § 611.

It seems to me that these two propositions at once plunge us into considerable difficulties; and that still further difficulties arise when we combine them with a third proposition which McTaggart asserts in § 621, viz., that there is no reason why a C-series should not be compact. I will deal with these two points in turn.

(i) It seems quite plain that the two propositions stated in the last paragraph but one, above, together entail that each

term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have a *finite indivisible duration*. Now it is true that this does not commit McTaggart to holding that anything actually has, or is even prehended as having, a finite indivisible duration. If he is right, nothing has duration at all, and so nothing *has* a finite indivisible duration. Again, it might be that no one can prehend an isolated term in a *C*-series; it may be that only stretches of such series can be prehended. If so, nothing is ever *prehended as having* a finite indivisible duration. But McTaggart *is* committed to holding that the phrase "finite indivisible duration" is intelligible; for, unless it is, the sentence "a single term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have a finite indivisible duration" is meaningless.

Now it does seem to me that the phrase "intrinsically minimal duration", i.e., "duration than which none could be shorter", is meaningless. It might, I think, be maintained that the notion of an intrinsically minimal duration is not the same as the notion of an indivisible duration, and that the latter does not involve the former. McTaggart does not distinguish between the two, and I do not know whether he would have accepted the distinction. Unless it be accepted, and unless it be definitely understood that "indivisible" does not imply "intrinsically minimal", the difficulty which I have mentioned remains insuperable.

(ii) We can now pass to the second difficulty. This arises if we suppose, what McTaggart alleges to be quite possible, that *C*-series are compact, i.e., that between any two terms of a *C*-series there is another term of the series. The difficulty is as follows.

Consider any apparent duration which appears to be divisible. This must, according to McTaggart, be the appearance of a stretch of at least two terms of a *C*-series in their order. But, if the *C*-series be compact, there will be an infinite number of terms of it between any two terms of it. Therefore any stretch of a *C*-series, however short, will consist of an infinite number of its terms arranged in their order. Now we are told that *each* term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a *finite*, though indivisible, duration. Does

this not entail that a stretch which contains an infinite number of such terms in order will appear *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite duration? If so, any duration which appears to be divisible should appear to be infinitely long. Since this is not so, it would seem that we must give up either (*a*) the proposition that each term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration, or (*b*) the proposition that a *C*-series may be compact. Presumably, if McTaggart had to give up either, he would abandon the second, since it is of no great importance for the rest of his system.

McTaggart does not notice this difficulty, and therefore does not attempt to deal with it. I am inclined to think that it could be dealt with in the following way. In the argument which I have just submitted there are two suppressed premises, without which the conclusion does not follow. One is that the indivisible durations which successive terms in a stretch of a *C*-series seem to have are all *equal*. The other is that the durations which are the appearances of successive terms in the stretch are *adjoined* end to end, without gaps and without overlapping. I think that the first assumption is reasonable, and I have no doubt that McTaggart would have made it. In fact, if one accepts the second assumption, one will have to modify the first in an extremely queer and unplausible way in order to avoid the unacceptable conclusion which I have indicated. So we may confine our attention to the second assumption.

I think that the second assumption would be the natural one to make if the stretch were assumed to be *discrete*. It could be represented by the diagram below, where P_1, P_2, and P_3 represent three immediately successive terms of a *C*-series, and the equal adjoined lines t_1, t_2, and t_3 represent the equal indivisible durations which P_1, P_2, and P_3, respectively, appear *sub specie temporis* to have:
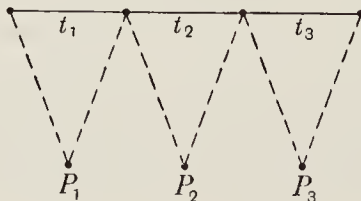
But it is doubtful whether this assumption would have any clear meaning when applied to a *compact* stretch of C-terms and their temporal appearances. I think that, in this case, we must make the following complex assumption. (*a*) The indivisible duration which is the appearance of one term in such a stretch can overlap the indivisible duration which is the appearance of another term in the stretch. (*b*) The two apparent durations *will* overlap to some extent if the two C-terms are near enough together. And (*c*) the amount of overlap converges to the limit of complete coincidence as the nearness of the two C-terms converges to the limit of complete identity. This assumption is illustrated in the diagram below:
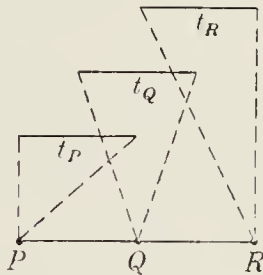
Here PR is a compact C-stretch, and Q is an intermediate C-term in it. The equal lines, t_P, t_Q, and t_R represent the durations which the terms P, Q, and R, respectively, appear to have. I have drawn these lines at different levels, so as to exhibit their overlapping without muddling the figure; but really they must be supposed to fall into a single line.

I think that it would be possible to reconcile McTaggart's statement that each term of a C-series appears *sub specie temporis* as of finite indivisible duration with his statement that a C-series may be compact, if and only if we make the assumption about overlapping stated and illustrated above.

It seems to me, however, that there is a third alternative, which McTaggart has not considered. Why should we not suppose that each term of a *compact* C-series would appear *sub specie temporis*, not as an indivisible duration, but as a literal *instant*, i.e., as having temporal position but no temporal extension? Successive terms of a compact stretch

of a *C*-series would then appear as a compact series of successive instants. Such a stretch as a whole would then appear as a finite, but endlessly divisible, duration. This seems to me to be much the most plausible alternative. If we accepted the view that each term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a literal instant, we should be forced to hold that *C*-series are compact. For, on this assumption, a discrete *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a discrete series of instants; and temporal appearances are not in the least like this.

It is evident that McTaggart had not thought out his doctrine of apparent duration very thoroughly; but it is also evident that it could be put straight in several alternative ways without much difficulty. I will now sum up the results of our discussion.

(i) Either the notion of an indivisible duration is independent of the notion of an intrinsically minimal duration, or it is not. If it is not, the statement that each term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a finite indivisible duration is meaningless.

(ii) We should then be obliged to suppose that each term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as literally instantaneous, i.e., as having temporal position but no temporal extension. This would compel us to hold that all *C*-series are compact; that each different term would appear as a different instant; that the successive terms of a *C*-stretch would appear as a compact series of successive instants; and that a *C*-stretch as a whole would appear as a finite and infinitely divisible duration. There seems to be no *prima facie* objection to this view, but it is certainly not McTaggart's.

(iii) If the notion of an indivisible duration is independent of the notion of an intrinsically minimal duration, it may be intelligible. In that case it will be intelligible to say that each term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a finite indivisible duration.

(iv) This would fit in easily with the view that *C*-series are discrete. We should then merely have to suppose that the durations which two immediately adjacent terms in a *C*-series

appear to have are adjoined to each other without gaps and without overlapping.

(v) In order to combine the doctrine of clause iii, above, with the view that C-series are compact, a different supposition must be made. We must assume that the two indivisible durations which are the appearances of two terms in a C-series will partially overlap if they are near enough together, and that the nearer two such terms are the more nearly will the durations which are their temporal appearances coincide.

2·1. *The Apparent Duration of a Residual C-Series.* We have now said as much as is necessary about the apparent duration of single terms in a C-series, other than the maximal end-term. And, in connexion with this, we have said all that we need about the apparent duration of stretches which fall within a C-series and include neither of its end-terms. We must now consider the apparent duration of what I will call a "Residual C-Series". By this I mean the whole of a C-series with the single exception of its maximal end-term. It may also be called a "Misprehension Series".

Now we saw in Sub-section 4·2 of Chap. xxxix of the present work that a residual series must have both an upper and a lower bound, in the technical sense defined in Sub-section 4·1 of that chapter. This is true whether the C-series is discrete or compact, and whether it has a finite or an infinite number of terms if it is discrete. It follows that the whole of such a residual series is "of finite length", in a perfectly definite sense. McTaggart tries, in § 620 of *The Nature of Existence,* to define what is meant by saying that a stretch is of "finite" or of "infinite" length. I do not find his definition satisfactory as it stands, so I shall ignore it and treat the question in my own way. In order to reach a definition we shall first need to define (*a*) the statement that two stretches, s_1 and s_2, of a C-series are "of equal length", and (*b*) the statement that a set of stretches, $s_1, s_2, \ldots s_n$ are "adjoined end to end". This we will now proceed to do.

(*a*) We can say that two stretches, s_1 and s_2, of the same C-series, are of equal length if and only if the increment from

the lower bound to the upper bound of s_1 is equal to the increment from the lower bound to the upper bound of s_2. If the C-series is *discrete*, and the increment from one term to the next is *the same throughout*, equal stretches will contain the same number of terms and unequal stretches will contain different numbers of terms. But, unless both these conditions are fulfilled, this will not be true. If the series is compact, e.g., all stretches, whether equal or unequal, will contain the same infinite number $\aleph_0$ of terms. Again, if the series were discrete but had an infinite number of terms converging to the maximal end-term of the complete series as an upper limit, the second condition would break down, and equal stretches would not contain equal numbers of terms. This case is illustrated by the series of regular polygons inscribed in a circle of unit radius, which I introduced in clause iii of Subsection 4·1 of Chap. xxxix, p. 363 of the present volume. Here the increment from the nth to the $(n+1)$th polygon is

$$\frac{1}{2}\left[(n+1)\sin\frac{2\pi}{n+1} - n\sin\frac{2\pi}{n} \right].$$

This decreases as n increases; so equal stretches, one of which is near the beginning and the other near the end of the series, will contain very different numbers of terms. To illustrate the definition we might suppose that the C-series is compact; that s_1 consists of all those terms whose content lies between 1/9 and 3/7 of the content of the maximal end-term; and that s_2 consists of all the terms whose content lies between 22/63 and 2/3 of the content of the maximal end-term. Then s_1 and s_2 will be of equal length, since $3/7 - 1/9 = 2/3 - 22/63 = 20/63$.

(b) If a C-series be discrete, the statement that s_1 and s_2 are "adjoined" means that the upper end-term of s_1 and the lower end-term of s_2 are identical. Thus, e.g., in the series of fractions 1/2, 1/3, . . . the stretch (1/2, 1/3, 1/4) and the stretch (1/4, 1/5, 1/6) are adjoined. If the C-series is compact, it means that *either* the upper end-term of s_1 is identical with the lower limit of s_2 *or* the upper limit of s_1 is identical with the lower end-term of s_2. Suppose, e.g., that s_1 were the stretch of proper fractions up to and including 1/4, in order of

magnitude, and that s_2 were the stretch of proper fractions between $1/4$ and $1/2$, in order of magnitude. Then s_1 and s_2 would be adjoined. For $1/4$, which is the upper end-term of s_1, is the lower limit of s_2.

We can now define the statement that the residual series, which remains when the maximal end-term of a C-series is removed, is "of finite length". Suppose we take any intermediate term of this residual series, and consider the stretch which has this for its upper end-term and has the lower bound of the series for its lower bound. Now take a set of stretches all equal to this one, such that the first of them is adjoined to the upper end of this one, the second is adjoined to the upper end of the first, and so on. Then, however little the upper and the lower bounds of the initial arbitrarily chosen stretch may differ in content, there will be a finite integer N such that a set of N adjoined equal stretches of this length would be longer than the whole series.

It is quite evident that a residual C-series, since it has both an upper and a lower bound, is of finite length in the sense just defined. So we can now pass to the next question. Does it follow from this, and from what has been asserted about the temporal appearance of C-terms and C-stretches, that a residual C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration? McTaggart assumes that this does follow, and the conclusion has an important place in his system. We will now consider this question for ourselves.

(i) Suppose that C-series are discrete, that they contain a finite number of terms, and that the duration which each term would appear to have is adjoined to those which its next-door neighbours on either side would appear to have. Then it obviously follows that the apparent duration of the whole residual series is finite. If there are n terms in the total series, there will be $n-1$ terms in the residual series. If each of these would appear to have a finite indivisible duration t, and these apparent durations are adjoined without gaps or overlapping, the apparent duration of the whole residual series will be $(n-1)\,t$.

(ii) Suppose that C-series are discrete, but contain an

infinite number of terms, like the example of the regular polygons inscribed in a circle. Then, if the duration which each term appears to have *sub specie temporis* is the same, and the apparent duration of each term is adjoined to the apparent durations of its two next neighbours, it is plain that the apparent duration of the whole residual series will *not* be finite. In this case the apparent duration of the residual series will be finite only if the apparent duration of each successive term, in one direction or the other, diminishes in such a way that the sum of these apparent durations forms a convergent series. Thus, e.g., suppose that the series had a minimal end-term and that this appeared to have a duration of a second; suppose that the next term appeared to have a duration of half a second; the next a duration of a quarter of a second; and so on. Then the apparent duration of the whole infinite residual series would be finite, and would in fact be two seconds. Plainly, this possibility can be admitted only if it is admitted that *indivisible* durations could be of *different* magnitudes. For my own part, I do not see any conclusive objection to this when one clearly distinguishes being *indivisible* from being *intrinsically minimal*. It would, of course, be a contradiction in terms to suggest that there might be intrinsically minimal durations of different magnitudes. But we have already seen that the notion of intrinsically minimal durations is unintelligible; and that, unless the theory means by "indivisible durations" something different from and independent of intrinsically minimal durations, it has already crashed at the first move.

(iii) Let us next suppose that C-series are compact. Here we have two possibilities to consider. (*a*) We may continue to accept McTaggart's principle that each term in a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have a finite but indivisible duration. Or (*b*) we may adopt the suggestion which I made earlier in this chapter, viz., that each term in a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* as a literal instant, having temporal position but no temporal extension. We will now work out the consequences of these two alternatives in turn.

(a) I have shown that the compactness of C-series can be reconciled with the first supposition and with the temporal appearances on one and only one assumption. We must assume that the apparent durations of C-terms, which are near enough together, overlap to an extent which converges to the limit of complete coincidence as their nearness converges to the limit of identity. Let us make this assumption, then, and see what follows.

Let X be the content of the maximal end-term of the series, and let x be the content of a typical pre-maximal term. Let the temporal position of the *beginning* of the duration which this term appears to have be denoted by t_1^x. Let the temporal position of the end of this duration be denoted by t_2^x. Then $t_2^x - t_1^x = T$, the finite indivisible duration which any individual term in the series would appear to have. Put $\xi = x/X$. Let $t_1^x = f_1(\xi)$, and $t_2^x = f_2(\xi)$, where f_1 and f_2 are as yet undetermined functions.

It is evident that there will be a certain more extensive term in the series, such that the *beginning* of its apparent duration exactly coincides with the *end* of the apparent duration of the term whose content is x. Let the content of this more extensive term be $x + h$. Put $\eta = h/X$. Then it is clear from the definitions that $t_1^{x+h} = t_2^x$. Therefore

$$f_2(\xi) = f_1(\xi + \eta).$$

We can now expand the latter by Taylor's Theorem. We get

$$f_2(\xi) = f_1(\xi) + \eta f_1'(\xi) + \frac{\eta^2}{2!} f_1''(\xi) + \cdots.$$

Therefore

$$f_2(\xi) - f_1(\xi) = \eta f_1'(\xi) + \frac{\eta^2}{2!} f_1''(\xi) + \cdots.$$

But $f_2(\xi) - f_1(\xi) = t_2^x - t_1^x = T$; and T is, by hypothesis, independent of ξ, since we are assuming that each term has the same apparent duration.

Therefore
$$\eta f_1'(\xi) + \frac{\eta^2}{2!} f_1''(\xi) + \cdots$$

is independent of ξ.

Now the necessary and sufficient condition for this is that $f'(\xi)$ is independent of ξ, in which case all the subsequent terms vanish.

Therefore we have $$f_1'(\xi) = K,$$

a constant as yet undetermined.

Therefore $$f_1(\xi) = K\xi + L,$$

where L is another constant as yet undetermined. So, finally, $t_1^x = K\xi + L$.

It remains to determine these two constants. When $x = x_1$, the content of the first term of the C-series, if such there be, $t_1^x = 0$. Therefore $L = -K\xi_0$. (If the series has no first term, $\xi_0 \to 0$ as its limit, and L vanishes.) So we have in general $t_1^x = K(\xi - \xi_0)$, and therefore also $t_2^x = K(\xi - \xi_0) + T$.

We are now in a position to determine K. Let h be the difference in content of two C-terms, such that the *end* of the apparent duration of the former exactly coincides with the *beginning* of the apparent duration of the latter. Then $t_1^{x+h} = t_2^x$. As before, put $\eta = h/X$. Evaluate t_1^{x+h} and t_2^x from the formulae given at the end of the previous paragraph. We get

$$K(\xi + \eta - \xi_0) = K(\xi - \xi_0) + T,$$

i.e., $$K\eta = T.$$

Hence $K = T/\eta$. So we have finally

$$t_1^x = (T/\eta)(\xi - \xi_0).$$

Substituting hX for η, and xX for ξ, and $x_0 X$ for ξ_0, this becomes

$$t_1^x = (T/h)(x - x_0).$$

And similarly

$$t_2^x = (T/h)(x - x_0) + T.$$

Now the apparent duration of the whole residual series is plainly the difference between the value which t_2^x approaches as x approaches indefinitely near to X and the value which t_1^x has when $x = x_0$. The latter is zero. The former approaches indefinitely near to $(T/h)(X - x_0) + T$, as x approaches indefinitely near to X.

So the total apparent duration of a residual C-series cannot exceed $(T/h)(X - x_0) + T$. Now T is, by McTaggart's principles, finite. And $(X - x_0)/h$ is the ratio of the whole length of the series to the length of a stretch of terms within it. We have seen that this must be finite. Therefore the apparent duration of the residual C-series cannot exceed a certain quantity which is finite, and it approaches indefinitely near to this quantity. Therefore it is finite.

(b) It remains to consider the second alternative which is possible with a compact C-series, though McTaggart did not himself envisage it. We will now suppose that each term of a compact C-series appears *sub specie temporis* as an instant, having temporal position but no temporal extension. It is easy to show that, on this hypothesis, the finite length of a residual C-series does not entail that it will appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration.

Let a term in the C-series whose content is x appear as an instantaneous event whose date is t^x. As before, we can write $t^x = f(x)$, where f is some as yet undetermined function. We know that, when $x = x_0$, t^x becomes zero. Now suppose that the function f were such that $t^x = (x - x_0)/(X - x)$. This fulfils all the known conditions. It vanishes when $x = x_0$, and it gives a compact series of values for t^x from $x = x_0$ to $x = X$. But, as x approaches to X, t^x increases without limit. So, on this supposition, the residual C-series, though bounded in both directions and therefore of finite length, would appear as a duration of infinite length.

We must note, however, that McTaggart assumes explicitly in § 619 that, when sources of bias which vary from one person to another or at different periods in the life of a person are eliminated, stretches of a C-series "which have any given proportion to each other will appear as periods of time having the same proportion to each other" (p. 278). He repeats this in § 868, p. 452. If this assumption be granted, it follows that t^x must be a linear function of x, i.e., $t^x = Ax + B$, where A and B are constants independent of x. The whole apparent duration of a residual C-series would then approach indefinitely near to AX as x approaches indefinitely near to X.

We may now sum up the results of this discussion. It is plain that McTaggart has jumped much too hastily to the conclusion that a residual C-series must appear *sub specie temporis* as a finite duration. The correct conclusion is as follows. (i) If the series is discrete and contains a finite number of terms, and the apparent duration of each term is adjoined to the apparent durations of its next-door neighbours, the residual C-series will certainly appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration.

(ii) If the series is discrete, but has an infinite number of members, it cannot appear to be of finite duration unless one or other of the following two conditions is fulfilled. (*a*) The durations which adjacent terms appear to have overlap each other. Or (*b*) the durations which successive terms appear to have diminish, in one direction or the other of the series, rapidly enough for their sum to be convergent.

(iii) If the series is compact, it cannot appear to be of finite duration unless one or other of the following two conditions is fulfilled. (*a*) The durations which adjacent terms appear to have overlap each other, and the degree of overlapping converges to complete coincidence as the nearness of the terms converges to complete identity. Or (*b*) the individual terms appear *sub specie temporis*, not as indivisible durations, but as instants with temporal position and no temporal extension. This second condition is not sufficient to ensure that the residual series shall appear *sub specie temporis* as of finite duration. But, when conjoined with the condition that equal stretches at any position in a C-series must appear *sub specie temporis* to have equal duration, it gives rise to a sufficient condition.

Since McTaggart admits that it is quite uncertain whether C-series are compact or discrete, and whether they contain a finite or an infinite number of terms, it is evident that he has not proved that a residual series *must* appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration. For it is certainly not self-evident, and cannot be proved from the rest of his theory, that the conditions needed to secure this result in cases (ii) and (iii) are in fact fulfilled.

There is one further remark to be made before leaving this topic. Might it not be objected that, if McTaggart's theory of C-series really did lead to the result that residual C-series must appear *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration, this would conclusively refute the theory? Do we in fact ever think of the time-series as having a finite duration? Do we not naturally think of it as having an open order without bounds in either direction, like a Euclidean straight line? I should have supposed that we quite certainly do think of it in this way; and not in the way in which, if McTaggart were right, we should all inevitably think of it.

I should conclude from this that either McTaggart's theory is mistaken or we misprehend C-series more radically than he admits. He has always assumed that ostensible B-series accurately mirror the formal structure of the corresponding C-series, except in the one respect that terms which in fact stand to each other in the relation of containing or being contained are misprehended as completely excluding each other. But, if his theory of C-series be correct, we might have to add that there is a further distortion; since the ostensible B-series is conceived as having no end-term or limit in either direction, whilst the C-series has a lower bound (either minimal end-term or lower limit) and a maximal end-term.

3. Apparent Duration of End-terms and Stretches which include them.

So far we have excluded the end-terms of C-series from consideration, and therefore we have also excluded from consideration stretches which include an end-term. We have done this because an end-term must, from the nature of the case, be singular; since it has neighbours in only one direction. It might, therefore, appear very differently *sub specie temporis* from an intermediate term. And a stretch which included an end-term might appear very differently *sub specie temporis* from one that included only intermediate terms.

We know that every C-series has a maximal end-term, whilst we do not know that any C-series has a minimal end-term. So we will begin by considering what duration the

maximal end-term of a C-series would appear to have *sub specie temporis*.

McTaggart's doctrine is that the maximal end-term of a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have an indivisible but unending duration. Its apparent duration would be indivisible, because, like every other term in the series, an end-term is simple and indivisible in the C-dimension, in the sense which we have explained. Now it is only a *stretch* of terms in a C-series which appears as a divisible duration. And the duration which a stretch appears to have is a function of the indivisible durations which the individual terms of the stretch would appear to have and of the number and arrangement of the terms in the stretch. On the other hand, the indivisible duration which the maximal term of a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have is unending, because such a term has no successors in its series. It would appear *sub specie temporis* as beginning, for there are less inclusive terms than it in the series; but it would not appear as ending, for there are no more inclusive terms than it in the series.

This endless indivisible duration, which a maximal end-term would appear to have, must be most carefully distinguished from the divisible endless duration which a stretch of terms would appear to have under certain conditions which are conceivable though not actual. Suppose that a C-series were discrete and had no maximal end-term. It might then be compared to the series of integers $0, 1, 2, \ldots n, \ldots$. Suppose that each of the terms in this imaginary C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have a certain finite indivisible duration, and suppose that the apparent duration of any term in the series were adjoined to those which its next-door neighbours would appear to have. Then the series as a whole would appear to have an unending divisible duration. Evidently this is something entirely different from the unending indivisible duration which the maximal end-term of an actual C-series would appear to have simply because it was maximal and an end-term.

I think that we must agree with McTaggart up to this point. But at this stage we must be very careful, or we shall

commit a fallacy. One is naturally tempted to say that the duration which a maximal end-term appears to have is "infinite", since it is endless. Certainly it is "not-finite". But it is also "not-infinite", in the sense in which we have used the terms "finite" and "infinite". When this pair of opposites was introduced it referred explicitly to *extensive* divisible quanta, which could be conceived to be produced by the adjunction of other quanta of the same kind but smaller magnitude. A quantum of this kind is "finite" if there is an integer N, such that the adjunction of N equal quanta of the same kind as itself will produce a quantum not less than it. It is "infinite" if, for every integer N, the adjunction of N equal quanta of the same kind as itself produces a quantum less than it. With this interpretation, neither of the terms "finite" or "infinite" applies to the duration which a maximal end-term would appear to have. Plainly there can be no question of adjoining durations to give a duration which is, by hypothesis, indivisible.

In order to avoid all possibility of confusion at this point I propose to introduce the three mutually exclusive terms "wholly enclosed", "half-enclosed", and "wholly unenclosed". Instead of saying that the apparent duration of any intermediate term of a C-series is "finite", as we did in the earlier part of this chapter, we shall now say that it is "wholly enclosed". Instead of saying that the apparent duration of the maximal end-term of any C-series is "infinite", we shall say that it is "half-enclosed".

I must confess that I find it impossible to form any clear positive notion of an indivisible duration, even when this is supposed to be wholly enclosed. And, if anything could add to the difficulties of the impossible, I should suppose that it would be even harder to form a positive notion of a half-enclosed or a wholly unenclosed indivisible duration. Now this fact seems to me to be a very serious objection to McTaggart's theory. We may compare and contrast it with the fact that we have no positive notion of eternity. The latter is not nearly so serious an objection, for McTaggart admits and asserts that no-one has prehended anything as eternal at any

of those stages of C-series which appear *sub specie temporis* as the history of the human race. But here we are concerned, not with appearances which *sub specie temporis* will be presented to us only at the end of future time, but with those which *sub specie temporis* are presented to us every day of our lives. It seems to me that McTaggart's theory entails that here and now we have certain ostensible conceptions and beliefs which in fact we do not and cannot have.

We should avoid a great many difficulties if we assumed, as I suggested earlier in the chapter, that each C-series is compact, and that each term in it would appear *sub specie temporis* as a literal instant, having temporal position but no duration. On that supposition the maximal end-term would appear, like all the rest, to be literally instantaneous. It would appear as the last instant of time. There would then be no question of its apparent duration being half-enclosed, as contrasted with the wholly enclosed apparent durations of the pre-maximal terms; for neither it nor they would appear to have any duration. But, as I have said, McTaggart never considered this alternative view of the temporal appearance of individual C-terms.

3·1. *Apparent Duration of Stretches which include Maximal End-terms.* We will still confine our attention to *maximal* end-terms, and will now raise the following question. Will a stretch of terms in a C-series, which includes the maximal end-term of the series, appear *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite duration?

We know that the stretch without the maximal end-term will, according to McTaggart, appear to be of finite duration. What difference will be made to its apparent duration by including the maximal end-term? McTaggart answers without hesitation that any stretch which includes the maximal end-term must appear *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite duration. His ground is that the maximal end-term by itself appears *sub specie temporis* to have unending duration. And he thinks it obvious that, if a term which appears to have unending duration be added to the end of a stretch which appears to have duration, the whole stretch thus produced must appear to have infinite duration.

I regard this argument as entirely verbal and inconclusive. If one were to adjoin a *stretch* of terms, which appeared to have infinite divisible duration, to a stretch which appeared to have finite divisible duration, the resulting stretch would, no doubt, appear to have infinite divisible duration. For here the added stretch appears to have infinite divisible duration because it consists of an endless series of terms, like the positive integers, each of which would appear to have an equal indivisible duration; and because the apparent indivisible duration of each term is adjoined to those of its next-door neighbours. Obviously in this case the *whole* stretch, thus produced, would appear to have infinite duration for precisely the same reason as that which made the *added* stretch appear to have infinite duration. The two adjoined parts and the resulting whole are here homogeneous with each other.

Now the case under consideration is not in the least like this, and it appears to be so only because of the ambiguous use of words like "endless" and "infinite". What we are doing here may be expressed accurately as follows. We are adding a *single term*, which would appear to have a *half-enclosed indivisible* duration, to the end of a *stretch* of terms which appears to have a *finite divisible duration*. Here there is no such homogeneity between the two parts, or between them and the resulting whole, as there was in the case described in the paragraph above. So far as I can see, we have no means whatever of conjecturing how the resultant of these two heterogeneous parts would appear *sub specie temporis*.

McTaggart probably deceived himself, and may easily deceive his readers, by ambiguous phrases and uncompensated half-truths, such as the following. He tells us that the last phase in the ostensible history of a thing which exists at the last moment of time "begins, but does not end". And he argues that the ostensible history of such a thing, which of course includes this "endless" last phase, must be ostensibly "endless" too. All this is hopelessly misleading. It is true that the last phase of such a thing will ostensibly become present and will not ostensibly become past. You can truly

say, *sub specie temporis*, that it "will begin to exist and will not cease to exist". But this is a half-truth, and a most misleading one, unless you immediately supplement it by its other half. You must at once add that, *sub specie temporis*, it "will begin to exist and will not continue to exist". And, when you have done this, you will at least see that you are using words to which no positive ideas whatever correspond.

Again, to call a phase which would appear to have half-enclosed indivisible duration "endless in duration" is misleading, because it suggests that it has the infinite divisible duration which an endless C-series would seem to have. And to say of a series, which admittedly has a last term, that it is "endless" because its last term is "endless" is simply to darken counsel by words without understanding.

3·2. *Apparent Duration of Stretches which include Lower Bounds.* It will be remembered that McTaggart says that it is uncertain whether C-series have or have not minimal end-terms, but that, on either alternative, it is certain that they are "bounded by non-entity" in the direction from more to less inclusive. In Sub-section 4·2 of Chap. xxxix of the present work I pointed out that this notion of being "bounded by non-entity" cannot mean "having non-entity as lower limit", in the strict sense of the term "limit". For the series cannot have a lower limit, in the strict sense, if it has a minimal end-term. The only interpretation of McTaggart's statement which makes it true is, as we have seen, the following. Every C-series either has a minimal end-term, or, if not, has for its lower limit a term which is of zero extent in the C-dimension and is co-extensive with the other terms of the series in the determining-correspondence dimension. It is important to remind ourselves of these facts, because McTaggart's argument on the present topic depends on the premise that all C-series are "bounded by non-entity" in the direction from more to less inclusive.

The relevant statements are found in §751 of *The Nature of Existence*. McTaggart is concerned to show that a stretch of a C-series which includes its minimal end-term (if it has one) or includes all terms above its lower limit (if it has no minimal

end-term) will appear *sub specie temporis* to have finite
duration, provided that it does not include the maximal end-
term. The argument runs as follows. "A finite time back-
wards brings us to the boundary of the series in that direction,
in the same way that a finite time forwards brings us to the
boundary of the series in the other direction. But the
boundary in the direction of the future is...itself a term in
the series, and...is, *sub specie temporis*, endless, and it
therefore makes the series of which it is a term endless in this
direction. In the other direction, however, the boundary of
the series is non-entity, which is not a term in the series, but a
limit.... Existence, therefore is not endless towards the past,
though it is endless towards the future."

We have already criticised McTaggart's argument about
the endlessness of *B*-series in the future direction. The
question that remains is whether he is justified in drawing the
distinction which he does here between the duration of past
time and the duration of future time.

Let us first suppose that *C*-series have minimal end-terms.
Then we must note the following very important differences
between the minimal and the maximal end-term. (i) It is
necessary that a *C*-series shall have a maximal end-term, and
this is marked out from all the other terms by the *intrinsic*
property of being a perfectly correct prehension of that object
which all the other terms present more or less incorrectly.
Again, there is no sense in saying that the term which is in
fact the maximal end-term of a *C*-series might not have been
so, but might instead have been contained in a more extensive
term of the same series. For there can be only one completely
correct prehension in a given mind of the object which is
presented by every member of the series; and this one com-
pletely correct prehension must *ipso facto* be the one term
which includes all the rest and is included in no other term of
the series. (ii) On the other hand, none of this would be true
of the minimal end-term of a *C*-series. There is nothing in the
nature of a *C*-series to compel it to have a minimal end-term.
In this it may be contrasted with my example of the series of
regular polygons inscribed in a circle of unit radius. Here

there is an intrinsically minimal term, since there can be no closed rectilinear figure with less than three sides. Again, granted that a series has a minimal end-term, the fact that a term of this particular extent in the C-dimension is minimal in this series is quite contingent. There is no difficulty in conceiving that there might have been terms less inclusive than this, which were states of partial misprehension in the same self of the same object.

In view of these differences, how would a minimal term appear *sub specie temporis*? The answer seems to me to be this. It would appear as having no *actual* predecessors, but not as having no *possible* predecessors. The reason why it will appear as having no actual predecessors is that there are actually no terms in its series which are included in it. The reason why it will appear as having possible predecessors is that it is logically possible that there should have been a whole series of less inclusive terms in the series between the actual minimal term and the ideal limiting term of zero C-extension. The maximal end-term, on the other hand, appears *sub specie temporis*, not only as having no *actual* successors, but also as having no possible successors. Again, a minimal end-term will appear to have a duration which is *actually* unenclosed towards the past; but there will be no intrinsic necessity about this lack of enclosure. On the other hand, a maximal end-term will appear to have a duration which is necessarily and intrinsically unenclosed towards the future.

I think that the nett result of this is that a minimal end-term would appear *sub specie temporis* as a *first* event which came into existence at some finite period after the beginning of time. I think that the measure of this apparent period of empty time before the first event would be determined as follows. It would depend on the ratio which the increment from the limiting term of zero C-extent to the minimal end-term bears to the increment from this limiting term to the maximal end-term. I do not think that we have any means of telling what duration a minimal end-term would appear to have. But I have pointed out one important respect in which

its apparent duration would differ from that of a maximal end-term. In view of this difference, I think that McTaggart can consistently deny that a stretch containing a minimal end-term would *ipso facto* appear to have infinite duration, whilst taking the opposite view about a stretch containing a maximal end-term.

Finally, let us suppose that a *C*-series has no minimal end-term. Then obviously it has no term in the less inclusive direction which has anything analogous to the peculiar properties of the maximal end-term. Now it was only in consequence of these peculiar properties that McTaggart concluded that any stretch which contained the maximal end-term would *ipso facto* appear to have infinite duration. Therefore he can consistently hold that a stretch which includes all terms above the lower limit will appear to have finite duration, provided that it does not contain the maximal end-term.

BOOK IX

IMMORTALITY AND GOD

The fact that a man doesn't believe in God is not a sufficient reason for accepting his opinions on more important subjects without question.

<div align="right">HENRY LABOUCHERE</div>

ARGUMENT OF BOOK IX

In the first chapter of this Book we discuss the meaning of such terms as "sempiternity", "immortality", etc., in terms of McTaggart's theory of Time and *C*-series. We explain and criticise his doctrine that every self is *sub specie temporis* immortal, and that every secondary *C*-series appears *sub specie temporis* as the history of an absolutely sempiternal prehension.

In the second chapter we consider the empirical evidence for and against the pre-existence and the post-existence of human selves, as stated in *Some Dogmas of Religion* and in *The Nature of Existence*. We also discuss McTaggart's reasons for thinking that the sempiternal existence, *sub specie temporis*, of human selves is sub-divided into a large number of successive lives, of which all but the first begin with a birth and all but the last end with a death.

In the third chapter, which completes Book IX, we explain and criticise McTaggart's arguments for atheism.

CHAPTER LIII

OSTENSIBLE IMMORTALITY

McTaggart's doctrine of Immortality is an immediate consequence of the theories which we have considered in the last two chapters. The first question to be discussed is the meaning of the term "immortal", in view of the conclusion that the ostensible B-series are all of finite duration and that temporal characteristics are delusive. I propose to approach this question in my own way, though I shall say nothing that conflicts with McTaggart's statements.

The term "immortal" can be applied significantly only to selves; but it falls under a wider notion which is not thus restricted in its application. I will, therefore, begin with the wider notion. For the present we will assume the reality of Time; we can restate our definitions later.

Consider any moment t, which is neither the first nor the last moment of Time. Let us call any particular which exists at t and at every moment before t "Retrospectively Sempiternal". Let us call any particular which exists at t and at every moment after t "Prospectively Sempiternal". Evidently, a particular which is both retrospectively and prospectively sempiternal is one that exists at every moment of time. I propose to call such a particular "Absolutely Sempiternal". I have borrowed the word "sempiternal" from Prof. Hallett's *Aeternitas*.

Now most people who believe in the reality of Time do not believe that there is a first or a last moment of time. On this view, it is obvious that to be prospectively sempiternal entails never ceasing to exist. Similarly, on this view, to be retrospectively sempiternal entails never beginning to exist. But, if there is a first and a last moment of Time, the position is not so simple. Suppose we define the statement "X ceases to exist at t" to mean that there are moments after t and that

X exists at none of these moments though it exists at t. Then, if t is the last moment of Time, it will be false to say that X ceases to exist at t. It will be equally false to say that X continues to exist after t. Suppose, on the other hand, we define the statement "X ceases to exist at t" to mean that X exists at t and does not exist at any moment after t. Then, if t is the last moment of Time, it will be true to say that X ceases to exist at t, provided that X exists at t. Precisely similar remarks, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to retrospective sempiternity and beginning to exist. On one definition of "beginning to exist at t", it will be false to say of anything that exists at the first moment of Time that it began to exist then, and it will be equally false to say that it was existing before then. On another definition, it will be true to say of anything that exists at the first moment of time that it began to exist then.

I propose to call a particular "Prospectively Everlasting" if and only if (*a*) it is prospectively sempiternal, and (*b*) there is no last moment or later limit of Time. Similarly, I shall call a particular "Retrospectively Everlasting" if and only if (*a*) it is retrospectively sempiternal, and (*b*) there is no first moment or earlier limit of Time. I shall call a particular "Absolutely Everlasting" if and only if (*a*) it is absolutely sempiternal, and (*b*) there is neither an earlier nor a later bound of Time.

Now, when a person who believes in the reality of Time calls a particular "mortal", it is fairly clear that he implies that this particular is a self, and that he asserts the following proposition about it. He asserts that there is a moment t, such that (*a*) this self exists at t, (*b*) there are moments after t, and (*c*) this self does not exist at any of these moments. It is reasonable to suppose that, when a person who believes in the reality of Time calls a particular "immortal", he implies that this particular is a self, and asserts the following proposition about it. He asserts that there is a moment t, such that (*a*) this self exists at t, (*b*) there are moments after t, and (*c*) this self exists at every one of these moments. He commits himself to the proposition that this self is prospectively sempiternal, but does not commit himself to the proposition that it

is prospectively everlasting. And he leaves entirely open the question whether it is retrospectively sempiternal.

In order to illustrate these notions it may be worth while to remark that most Christians believe that human souls are prospectively, but not retrospectively, everlasting; that many Oriental philosophers believe that human souls are absolutely sempiternal, whilst some of these would deny that they are absolutely everlasting; and that many materialists have believed that atoms are absolutely everlasting, though they would not, of course, have called atoms "immortal", since they did not believe that atoms are selves. So far as I know, no one has ever asserted that there are particulars which are retrospectively sempiternal but are not prospectively so. But there is plainly no logical impossibility in the notion of such particulars.

Let us call a temporal particular which is not prospectively sempiternal "prospectively truncated", and one which is not retrospectively sempiternal "retrospectively truncated". One which is truncated in both directions will be called "absolutely truncated". Thus the adjective "mortal" is simply the adjective "prospectively truncated" restricted in its application to selves.

We have now to consider the effect on these definitions of denying the reality of Time. It is plain that, if temporal characteristics be delusive, *both* the proposition "X is prospectively sempiternal" and the proposition "X is prospectively truncated" are false. And similar remarks would apply to propositions in which "retrospectively" or "absolutely" was substituted for "prospectively". Therefore it is literally false to say of a self that it is immortal and to say of it that it is mortal. Still it is desirable to have a pair of terms which can be used by people who reject the reality of Time. We therefore proceed to recast the definitions in the following way. The statement that X is prospectively truncated must be interpreted as follows. It means that X's nature is such that, if X is viewed from any standpoint from which it appears to be in time, there appears to be a moment t, such that (a) X appears to exist at t, (b) there appear to be moments after t,

37-2

and (c) X appears not to exist at any of these moments. The statement that X is prospectively sempiternal must be interpreted as follows. It means that X's nature is such that, if X is viewed from any standpoint from which it appears to be in time, there appears to be a moment t, such that (a) X appears to exist at t, (b) there appear to be moments after t, and (c) X appears to exist at every one of these moments. It is obvious that similar amended definitions can be given of "retrospective" and "absolute" sempiternity, and of their contrary opposites.

This completes the problem of definition. It remains now to consider the question of fact. McTaggart's doctrine is that selves, ω-prehensions, and groups whose members are all either selves or ω-prehensions, are absolutely sempiternal in the amended sense. We will now consider the three cases in turn.

(i) *Selves*. On McTaggart's view of C-series, every self appears *sub specie temporis* as having a temporal history which occupies the whole of time. Consider, e.g., P_1. Every part of P_1 in the series Π_1 appears as a total event in P_1's history. The more inclusive terms appear as later total events, and the less inclusive terms appear as earlier total events, in P_1's history. At the maximal end comes P_1 itself, as a complete two-dimensional whole; and this appears as the last total state of P_1, which begins and neither ceases nor continues, because it comes at the last moment of time. It is evident, then, that P_1 would be prospectively sempiternal. And, since it is a self, it would be immortal. Precisely similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to any other self.

McTaggart asserts that every self will appear to have an endless future life. The correct statement is that it will appear to have a life which extends throughout the whole *finite* duration of future time and ends with a state which appears to have half-enclosed indivisible duration. I have tried to show in Sub-section 3·1 of Chap. LII that it is impossible to conjecture how the resultant of these two heterogeneous parts would appear *sub specie temporis*. There is not the least reason to hold that "having an endless future life" is a

correct description of the temporal appearance of such a stretch.

Let us now consider the less inclusive end of a primary C-series. We must consider separately the two possible cases, viz., (a) that the series has no minimal end-term, and (b) that it has a minimal end-term. On either alternative every self would appear to be *co-aeval* with the universe. But in other respects the temporal appearances would be somewhat different on the two hypotheses. We will therefore take them in turn.

(a) If the series has no minimal end-term, every instantaneous cross-section of the history of a self will appear to have a temporal predecessor. So there is nothing that would appear as the first total event in the history of a self. But each instantaneous cross-section of its history would appear to contain a lesser "amount of prehension" than any of its successors, and a greater "amount of prehension" than any of its predecessors. This "amount of prehension" in each cross-section would appear to approach indefinitely nearly to zero as a limit as we trace the history of the self backwards in time. Thus the self would appear as having developed continuously from nothing at the earlier limit of time, like a ripple spreading out from a point-centre. Its total prehensum would be the same throughout, viz., the selves in its differentiating group taken as a collective whole; but the clearness and correctness of its prehension might fluctuate to any extent, and it might appear to have had sometimes a wider and sometimes a narrower total object. Lastly, each self would appear to be co-aeval, not only with the universe, but with time itself. It would be impossible to conceive that there *might* have been (though in fact there *were not*) events before the selves began to be.

(b) Let us now suppose that each primary C-series has a minimal end-term. Then each self will appear to start suddenly into existence with an initial total state which has a finite "amount of prehension". Will they all appear to come into existence at the same time? I think that there is a complication here which needs to be carefully considered.

If the reader will refer back to Section 5 of Chap. xxxix p. 366 of the present volume, he will notice that I defined the position of a term in an inclusion-series as follows. Let P_1^r be the term in question, and let P_1^1 be the minimal end-term of Π_1. Then I said that the position of P_1^r in Π_1 is given by the ratio which the increment from P_1^1 to P_1^r bears to the increment from P_1^1 to P_1^ω. Obviously this ratio is zero for the minimal end-term itself, since the increment from P_1^1 to P_1^1 is plainly zero. So, according to this criterion, every self *will* come into existence at the beginning of time. So far there is no difficulty; but now we have to notice the following complication.

If C-series have minimal end-terms, there is nothing intrinsically necessary in the fact that they do so or in the particular amount of content which such end-terms possess. It is therefore always possible to conceive that there *might* have been events before the actual first event in the history of any self, on the present hypothesis. For it is always possible to conceive that their actual initial states might have been preceded in the inclusion-series by states which had a lesser "amount of prehension" but had the same total object. And such states would have appeared, *sub specie temporis*, as earlier than the actual initial states. So it seems to me that, on the hypothesis of minimal end-terms, it would appear that each self comes into existence at a finite interval after the beginning of *possible time*, though it would appear that all selves come into existence together at the beginning of *actual time*. Now, if this be granted, the following question at once arises. Would the finite interval between the beginning of possible time and the beginning of a self appear to be *the same for all* selves?

It is very easy to see that this interval would differ, from one self to another, unless a certain condition were fulfilled. Let P_1^1 and P_2^1 be the minimal end-terms of the two primary C-series Π_1 and Π_2. The apparent length of this interval for P_1^1 would be directly proportional to the ratio which the increment from zero content to P_1^1 bears to the increment from zero content to P_1^ω. The apparent length of this interval for P_2^1 would be directly proportional to the ratio which the

increment from zero content to P_2^1 bears to the increment from zero content to P_2^ω. Now there is no reason at all why these two ratios should be equal. And, if they are not equal, we shall have the paradox that, although P_1 and P_2 appear to spring into existence *together* at the beginning of *actual* time, yet they appear to have come into existence at *different* intervals after the beginning of *possible* time. If, then, we wish to avoid this paradox, we shall have to make a special postulate. We shall have to *assume* that the ratio which the increment from zero content to the minimal end-term of a primary C-series bears to the increment from zero content to the maximal end-term of that C-series is the *same for all* primary C-series. McTaggart does not go into this question at all; but it is plain that he assumes the consequence which requires this postulate. Henceforth, then, we will make this assumption.

We can now sum up the position. On either hypothesis it is plain that each self has a right to be called "retrospectively sempiternal", though the phrase has a slightly different meaning on the two alternatives. On the first hypothesis, it means co-aeval with *possible* past time; on the second, it means co-aeval with *actual*, though not with possible, past time. On neither hypothesis has a self any right to be called "retrospectively everlasting". As I have pointed out, a self cannot properly be called "prospectively everlasting", because we have no right to treat the half-enclosed indivisible duration which a maximal end-term would appear *sub specie temporis* to have, as if it were the infinite divisible duration which an unbounded stretch of C-terms would appear to have. Nevertheless, there is an important difference between a self's prospective sempiternity and its retrospective sempiternity. For the former ends, after a finite divisible duration, with an event which has half-enclosed indivisible duration; whilst the latter does not begin with any such event. We might express this difference by saying that *sub specie temporis* a self has prospective sempiternity ending in a future *aevum*, whilst retrospectively it has merely a finite sempiternity which does not issue from a past *aevum*.

(ii) ω-*Prehensions.* It is evident that all that we have been saying about selves, such as P_1, applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to ω-prehensions, such as P_{12}. For every ω-prehension is the maximal end-term of a series of its own fragmentary parts. *Sub specie temporis* the C-series Π_{12} must appear as the history of a single persistent prehension in P_1 of P_2, which is co-aeval with the universe, is prospectively sempiternal, and ends at the end of future time in a phase which has half-enclosed indivisible duration. This one persistent world-long prehension will seem to be sometimes clearer and sometimes more confused, sometimes more correct and sometimes more erroneous; and only that phase of it which comes at the end of future time and has half-enclosed indivisible duration is completely clear and correct.

(iii) *Groups of Selves or ω-Prehensions.* It is obvious that, if each self and each ω-prehension is absolutely sempiternal, any group, in McTaggart's sense, whose members are either selves or ω-prehensions, must be absolutely sempiternal. Now this might seem *prima facie* to be contrary to fact. A bridge-four, e.g., is a group consisting of four selves, P_1, P_2, P_3, and P_4; yet it appears to come into being at a certain moment and to cease to exist an hour or so later. How are we to reconcile this with the alleged sempiternity of all groups of selves?

This apparent difficulty is avoided by remembering the difference between a group, in McTaggart's sense, and a complex. Certainly the mere group of selves P_1, P_2, P_3, and P_4 will appear *sub specie temporis* to last throughout the whole of time. But this group is called a "bridge-four" only when, *sub specie temporis*, certain relations appear to hold between its members. And these relations appear to begin to hold at a certain moment, to continue holding for a certain period, and then to hold no longer.

The facts underlying these temporal appearances must be of the following kind. Let P_1^r, P_2^r, P_3^r, and P_4^r be those terms in the C-series of the four selves which appear as their total states at the moment when they start to play. Let P_1^s, P_2^s, P_3^s, and P_4^s be those terms in the C-series of the four selves which

appear as their total states at the moment when they stop playing. Then the r-terms are inter-related by a certain relation B, which also inter-relates the s-terms and inter-relates each tetrad of corresponding terms between the r-tetrad and the s-tetrad. Tetrads of corresponding terms which are less inclusive than the r-terms are not inter-related by the relation B, and tetrads of corresponding terms which are more inclusive than the s-terms are also not inter-related by B. All these terms are timeless, and they are timelessly inter-related. But the situation is misprehended from any r-standpoint as that kind of change in the relations between four persisting selves which we call the meeting, the playing, and the subsequent breaking-up, of a bridge-four.

Similar remarks apply to anything that appears to begin and to cease to exist in time, e.g., a human body or a nation. There is nothing surprising in this situation, for we are all quite familiar with analogies to it. Consider, e.g., a molecule of water. This began to exist at a certain moment, e.g., when a certain pair of pre-existing Hydrogen atoms entered into specially intimate relations with a certain Oxygen atom, owing to the passage of an electric spark. So long as these two Hydrogen atoms remained in these intimate relations there existed this molecule of water. At a certain moment these intimate relations between the two Hydrogen atoms and the one Oxygen atom cease to hold, e.g., owing to electrolysis. The molecule of water then ceases to exist. But the group whose members are the two Hydrogen atoms and the one Oxygen atom existed before, during, and after the existence of this molecule of water. If the atoms are sempiternal, the group of atoms is sempiternal. But this particular group has the property of being a molecule of water only for a limited period. On McTaggart's theory we must substitute for the atoms either selves or ω-prehensions. And, instead of saying that the members of a group are sometimes inter-related in one way and sometimes in another, we must make the following statement. All the corresponding terms within certain limited stretches of the C-series of each member of the group are inter-related in a certain characteristic way.

Corresponding terms which fall outside these stretches are not inter-related in that way. Viewed from any r-standpoint, this non-temporal difference of relations appears as the generation, the persistence, and the dissolution of a compound particular of a characteristic kind.

Before ending this chapter, it seems desirable to raise once more a question which we have already raised at other points in connexion with McTaggart's theory. Does not the theory entail that there must be appearances of a certain kind, which do not in fact occur? Is it in fact true that selves, when viewed *sub specie temporis*, appear to be going to endure through the rest of future time and to reach a state of *aevum* at the last moment of future time? If so, I must presumably now appear to myself in that way. But do I? At present I neither ostensibly believe nor ostensibly disbelieve that my mind will exist after the death of my present body. So, if I do prehend myself as going to endure throughout the rest of future time, this prehension appears to me now neither as a belief nor as a disbelief nor as a prehension. In fact there is not the least *introspective* evidence for the existence in me of any such prehension. Again, there are many people who positively believe that their minds will cease to exist at the death of their present bodies. Yet, if McTaggart is right, all these people must in fact be prehending themselves as both prospectively and retrospectively sempiternal. It looks as if McTaggart might be forced to hold, not only that reality is very different from what it appears to be, but also that many appearances are very different from what they appear to be. And this looks very like nonsense.

Could McTaggart avoid these objections? I think that he would have to proceed as follows. Many of the terms in a primary C-series are not the objects of reflexive *prehensions*, but only of reflexive *prehension-components*. Moreover, a self misprehends many of the terms of its own primary C-series in other respects beside that of misprehending them as temporal. Now we could conceive a kind of idealised r-prehension of the form P_{11}^r, which would present all the terms of Π_1 distinctly and separately, and in which the *only* error was that it

presented these terms as temporal. I think that McTaggart must mean that such an idealised reflexive r-prehension as this would present P_1 to himself as sempiternal. Most of one's reflexive self-prehensions are plainly not of this ideal kind; and these imperfect r-prehensions may appear to their owner as doubts about his immortality or beliefs in his mortality.

CHAPTER LIV

OSTENSIBLE PRE-EXISTENCE AND POST-EXISTENCE

Speaking *sub specie temporis*, McTaggart defines "a particular life" of a self as "the period which elapses between the birth of any one body and the death of that body" (*Nature of Existence* §754). The statement is rather careless, but the meaning is quite plain. The following would be a more accurate statement. A "particular life" of a self S is the period which elapses between the birth and the death of any body which S animates. McTaggart remarks, in a footnote on p. 379 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*, that a particular life of a self may be slightly longer than this definition would imply. For it would begin when S first begins to animate a certain body, and this happens in the womb at some time between conception and birth.

To say that S "pre-existed" a certain particular life is to say that S existed before it began to animate the body which it animates throughout that life. To say that S "post-existed" a certain particular life is to say that S existed after it had ceased to animate the body which it animates throughout that life. Since all selves are absolutely sempiternal, we can be sure that some selves have pre-existed and that some are post-existing. For, during the life-time of each of us, some human bodies have been born and some have died. Since all selves are absolutely sempiternal, the selves which now animate the former must have pre-existed and the selves which used to animate the latter must be post-existing.

In the present chapter we shall discuss certain questions about pre-existence and post-existence. The first question is whether there is any empirical evidence for or against either of them, apart from the special doctrines of McTaggart's philosophy. The second is the probable duration of pre-

existence and post-existence, as compared with the normal duration of a single human life. The third is the question whether the pre-existence and the post-existence of a self are divided into a number of successive particular lives. The fourth is the bearing of loss of memory at death on the doctrine of pre-existence and post-existence. McTaggart discusses these questions in Chap. LXIII of *The Nature of Existence* and in Chaps. III and IV of *Some Dogmas of Religion*. It is desirable to consider both these sources; for the latter is more detailed, whilst the former makes use of the results which McTaggart claims to have established in the course of *The Nature of Existence*.

1. Empirical Evidence.

There are certain empirical facts which are supposed to make for or against pre-existence, certain which are supposed to make for or against post-existence, and certain which affect both possibilities in much the same way. Obviously any facts which suggest that a self is very intimately bound up with a certain particular body make against the possibility that it pre-existed or will post-exist that body. We will therefore begin with such facts as these.

1·1. *Apparent Dependence of a Self on its Organism.* We have overwhelming inductive evidence for the generalisation that all human bodies begin to exist as embryos, and that, after living for a period which ranges from a few minutes to about one hundred years, they die and disintegrate. Apart from some rare and abnormal alleged phenomena, which are investigated by psychical researchers, we have no empirical evidence that the self which has been associated with any human body continues to exist after the death of that body. And, so far as I know, we have no empirical evidence, normal or abnormal, that the self which is now associated with any human body existed before the conception of that body.

According to McTaggart, these empirical facts, positive and negative, have strongly induced many people to take one or other of two alternative views about human selves. Each of these views is incompatible with both pre-existence and post-

existence. He describes the first as the doctrine that a man's mind is "a mere effect of his body—a form of its activity" (*Some Dogmas*, p. 78, § 61). The second is the doctrine that the mind which is now associated with a given human body, though it is not a mere effect or activity of that body, is yet such that it can exist only when thus associated with that particular body. McTaggart discusses the first alternative in §§ 62 to 78, inclusive, of *Some Dogmas*. He discusses the second in §§ 79 to 82, inclusive.

1·11. *Materialism.* It seems to me that the first alternative covers two different theories which McTaggart does not clearly distinguish. They may be called respectively "Behaviourism" and "Epiphenomenalism". The former asserts that all intelligible statements which involve psychological words, like "self", "thinking", "sensation", etc., can be translated, without loss or gain of meaning, into statements which contain no such words but are wholly in terms of bodies, physical processes in bodies, and physical transactions between bodies. This would seem to be what is meant by saying that a man's mind is an "activity of his body".

Epiphenomenalism denies that statements containing psychological words can be translated in this way. But it holds that all mental events and processes are transitory and causally ineffective accompaniments of certain physical processes in brains and nervous systems. They are sometimes compared to the squeaks and rattles which accompany the working of badly oiled machinery. This would seem to be what is meant by saying that a man's mind is a "mere effect of his body". Both these theories may fairly be described as forms of "Materialism", in the popular sense of that word.

Now it is obvious that neither of these doctrines can be *literally* and *finally* true if matter does not exist. If there are no bodies, it cannot be literally and finally true to say that a man's mind is an activity or an effect of his body. And, if there is any reason to doubt the existence of matter, there will be at least as much reason to doubt whether either of these doctrines is literally and finally true. As we know, McTaggart professes to show in *Some Dogmas* that the existence of matter

is extremely doubtful. And he professes to show in *The Nature of Existence* that it is impossible that anything should have the characteristic of materiality. I have discussed his arguments fully in Chaps. XXVII and XXXIII of the present work. I propose now to deal with the following question. Suppose that we accepted McTaggart's arguments against the reality of matter, what logical bearing would this have on Materialism, in the sense in which we are now using that word?

In Sub-section 2·1 of Chap. XXVII of the present work I distinguished two theories about ostensibly material things, which I called an agnostic form of Causal Theory and a Phenomenalist Theory. I said that it is not quite certain which of them McTaggart is upholding in *Some Dogmas*. I revert to this distinction here, because I think that one's attitude towards Materialism might be considerably different according to whether one accepted an agnostic form of Causal Theory or a Phenomenalist Theory about ostensibly material objects.

Let us first suppose that a Phenomenalist Theory is accepted. Consider the Behaviourist doctrine that all intelligible statements which contain psychological words can be translated, without loss or gain of meaning, into statements which contain no such words but are wholly in terms of bodies, physical processes in bodies, and transactions between bodies. If Phenomenalism be accepted, we shall have to add the rider that all statements which contain words like "body" and "physical process" can in turn be translated, without loss or gain of meaning, into statements which contain no such words but are wholly in terms of actual and possible human sensations. So far as I can see, this second proposition might be true without making the first either false or trivial. There would, in fact, be two stages or levels of analysis. At the first level *all* psychological statements would have been analysed in purely physical terms. At the second level *all* physical statements would have been analysed in terms of *certain* psychological notions, viz., in terms of sensations and relations between them. The nett result would be that *all other* psychological notions would finally have been

analysed in terms of *sensations* and certain relations between
sensations. The relations between sensations, which appear in
the final analysis of psychological statements, would be
jointly determined by the relations which appear in the
Behaviouristic analysis of psychological propositions and by
those which appear in the Phenomenalistic analysis of
physical propositions. The Behaviourist (a simple soul, if I
may use that expression without offence) might be shocked;
but he would not be refuted.

Let us now combine Phenomenalism with the Epipheno-
menalist doctrine that a man's mental processes are transitory
and ineffective accompaniments of certain physical processes
in his body. As before, we shall have to apply the Pheno-
menalist analysis to the terms "his body" and "physical
process". The nett result would be that every one of a man's
mental processes is related in a certain way to certain actual
and possible sensations in himself and other people. The
special relation, and the special group of actual and possible
sensations, which would appear in the final statement would
be jointly determined by the details of the Epiphenomenalist
theory and the relations which appear in the Phenomenalist
analysis of physical propositions.

We will now consider what bearing an agnostic form of the
Causal Theory about ostensibly material things and events
has on the two forms of Materialism. The phrase "*A*'s body"
is generally taken to mean a certain material thing. If we
accept this form of the Causal Theory, there is no reason to
believe that there is anything answering to the description
"*A*'s body"; and so there will be no reason to believe that
A's mind is an activity or an effect of his body. Nevertheless,
there will still be overwhelming evidence for the proposition
that *A*'s mind is most intimately associated with a certain
existentially independent object of *some* kind, which is an
essential cause-factor in producing those sensations which
lead *A* and other men to the uncritical belief that *A* has a
body. Let us call this object, of whatever kind it may be,
"*A*'s organism". Acceptance of an agnostic form of the
Causal Theory does not give us any reason to doubt that *A*

has an *organism*; what becomes doubtful is whether an organism, or anything else, is a *body*. So Materialism would merely be transformed into the doctrine that each man's mind is an activity or an effect of his *organism*. This is admitted by McTaggart in §78 of *Some Dogmas*.

At this point there are evidently two questions to be asked. (i) Does the doctrine that each man's mind is an activity or effect of his organism logically depend in any way on the proposition that organisms and other ostensibly material things are really extended, figured, massive, movable, coloured, and so on? Unless it does, McTaggart's argument to show that there is no good reason to ascribe these qualities to the independent remote part-causes of our sensations is almost irrelevant to Materialism. To meet it Materialism would only have to undergo the slight transformation suggested above. (ii) Does the commonly accepted proposition that a man's organism disintegrates at death depend on the proposition that organisms and other ostensibly material objects are really extended, figured, movable, and so on? If it does, McTaggart's argument to show that there is no reason to ascribe these qualities to the independent remote part-causes of our sensations may be highly relevant to *survival*, if not to Materialism. For, unless a man's organism disintegrates at death, his mind may survive death even though it be merely an activity or effect of his organism. All that McTaggart has to say on these two questions will be found in §78 of *Some Dogmas*.

(i) To the first question his answer is as follows. There is a *psychological* connexion between the belief that each man's mind is an activity or effect of his organism and the belief that organisms and other ostensibly material things are extended, figured, movable, etc. If a person holds this common-sense belief, he is faced with a dualism between two fundamentally different kinds of existent, viz., minds, which are unextended, colourless, and so on, and bodies. Now most people have an intellectual preference for what I have called "Monism about Differentiating Attributes" over Pluralism about them. So anyone who holds the common-sense view

about ostensibly material things will have a strong motive for trying to believe *either* that mind is an activity or effect of matter *or* that matter is an activity or effect or appearance of mind. There are various causes, which McTaggart enumerates in § 64 of *Some Dogmas*, that make most people more inclined to adopt a materialistic form of monism than a mentalistic one, if they adopt either. So anyone who holds that ostensibly material things are really extended, figured, coloured, etc., will have a strong *motive* for believing that a man's mind is an activity or effect of his organism (which such a person will, of course, regard as a body).

Suppose, on the other hand, that a person accepts the agnostic form of the Causal Theory. Then, for all that he has any reason to believe, a man's organism may be unextended, colourless, and so on. There is, for such a person, no obvious dualism to make him uncomfortable. And so he will have no *motive* for believing that a man's mind is an activity or an effect of his organism.

It seems to me that the mountain, which has been labouring throughout the previous thirteen §§ of *Some Dogmas*, has here given birth to a rather ridiculous mouse. What we want to know is this. On the assumption that organisms and other ostensibly material objects are really extended, coloured, etc., are there any facts which *logically support* the view that each man's mind is an activity or effect of his organism? And, if so, is the argument *logically dependent* on this assumption, so that it would be *logically weakened* if the assumption were shown to be baseless? So far as I can see, McTaggart says nothing about either of these questions, but confines himself to the *psychological* effects on men's *motives* for accepting Materialism.

My own opinion is that, if there are facts which logically support the view that each man's mind is an activity or effect of his organism, when organisms are assumed to be material things, the rejection of this assumption in favour of an agnostic form of the Causal Theory would not appreciably weaken the argument. No doubt the latter theory leaves open the possibility that organisms are themselves minds or groups of minds or mental processes. And, if this were so, it

would be impossible to hold that *all* minds are activities or effects of organisms, without committing oneself to an endless regress which would very likely be vicious. But, apart from positive metaphysical arguments for Mentalism, such as McTaggart has given in *The Nature of Existence*, there is no better reason to believe that ostensibly material things are really spiritual than to believe that they are really material. It is "a bare possibility, to which it would be foolish to attach the least importance".

(ii) Does the common conviction that a man's organism disintegrates at death *depend logically* on the uncritical belief that organisms and other ostensibly material things are extended, movable, coloured, etc.? And *ought* the former conviction to be seriously weakened if the latter belief were shown to be baseless? McTaggart discusses this question at the end of §78 of *Some Dogmas*.

He holds that, if human organisms really were material, as common-sense uncritically takes them to be, they *certainly would* be complex and transitory things which disintegrate at death. But, if it is admitted that the common-sense belief that organisms are material things is baseless, it becomes *possible* to suppose that the real nature of organisms is such that they are permanent and are not destroyed by death. He admits, however, that an agnostic form of the Causal Theory gives no positive ground for attaching any weight to this supposition.

It seems to me that this, again, is very trivial. On the agnostic form of the Causal Theory the possibility that the organism is not destroyed at death is at best on a level with the possibility that it is extended, movable, coloured, etc. And the latter has been dismissed by McTaggart as "a bare possibility, to which it would be foolish to attach the least importance". But this is not all. Whatever it may be that produces those groups of sensations which make people believe that human beings have bodies *also* eventually produces those changes in such groups of sensations which make people believe that human bodies disintegrate at death. Surely there is a very strong presumption that what is

uncritically taken to be the dissolution of a human body at death is a sign of some profound and probably destructive change in a human organism, whatever that may be. Thus, even on an agnostic form of the Causal Theory, there would be *some* positive ground for thinking that a human organism ceases to exist at death; whilst it is admitted that there would be *no* positive ground for thinking that it continues to exist after death.

1·12. *Other Theories.* We can now pass to the second alternative which McTaggart considers. Suppose we reject both the behaviouristic and the epiphenomenalist forms of Materialism. Is there still reason to think that the mind which is now associated with a certain human organism can exist *only* in association with *that particular* organism? This is discussed in §§ 79 to 82, inclusive, of *Some Dogmas.* I shall have to state the case rather more carefully than he does, in order to allow for the results of the agnostic form of the Causal Theory about ostensibly material things, which he claims to have established.

The facts which seem to favour an affirmative answer to the above question are the following. (i) Apart from the alleged super-normal phenomena which psychical researchers investigate, we have no empirical evidence for the existence of any mind which does not *appear* to be animating what common-sense *takes to be* a living *body*. In all such cases the mind presumably *is* specially *associated with* a certain *organism*.

(ii) All mental processes seem to involve sensations or prehension of images. Now there is good empirical evidence that these experiences happen in a mind only when correlated changes are happening in what common-sense takes to be the brain and nervous system of the body which that mind animates. This is presumably a sign that such experiences happen in a mind only when correlated changes are taking place in the organism with which that mind is specially associated.

(iii) There may well be a sufficient residuum in stories of ghosts, in the alleged phenomena of mediumship, etc., to justify the belief that some super-normal events are due to the

agency of certain human beings who are now dead. But this will not prove that the minds of these men still exist. For a man may have initiated, while still alive, a process of causation which goes on after his death and produces from time to time apparitions, mediumistic messages, and so on, characteristic of him. Again, there may well be good evidence for telepathy among living men, clairvoyance, etc. But it is not evidence for the occurrence of experiences in a mind independently of correlated changes in the ostensible body which it ostensibly animates. Telepathically or clairvoyantly induced experiences may depend on organic changes which are of an unusual kind or are caused in an unusual way. So, even when we give full weight to the super-normal phenomena which psychical researchers investigate, we need not make any serious qualifications in propositions (i) and (ii) above. The only question is about the implications, for our present problem, of the facts stated in these two propositions.

McTaggart's answer is as follows. (*a*) The utmost that these facts imply is that a mind can *function* only when it is intimately associated with *some* organism or other. They are quite compatible with the view that one and the same mind is associated at different times in its history with different organisms, and that, during any intervals in which it is not associated with any organism, it is in a kind of dreamless sleep.

(*b*) They are quite compatible with another alternative, which would make association with an organism still less important to a mind. All that the empirical facts recorded in proposition (ii) above imply is that, *so long as* a mind is intimately associated with an organism, it cannot get sensations or prehend images unless there are correlated changes in this organism. This might, however, be simply a temporary limitation which is imposed on a mind by its temporary association with an organism. There may be other ways, e.g., the direct action of one mind on another, by which it could get sensations if and when it is not thus handicapped; and it may be that nothing but its present entanglement with an organism prevents it from getting sensations in these other

ways now. In general, the fact that, *while* a man's mind is animating a certain organism, injuries to certain parts of the latter will annul or disturb certain of his mental processes, does not prove that, *unless* his mind were animating an organism with similar parts which were intact and working normally, similar mental processes *could not* occur in it. So long as a man is shut up in a room where his only means of communication with the outer world is a certain telephone, any injury to this telephone will annul or disturb his power of receiving and conveying information. But it does not follow, and it is not in fact true, that access to this (or to any other) intact telephone is an absolutely indispensable condition without which no man can ever receive or convey information.

We might call these two alternatives respectively the "Instrumental" and the "Inhibitory" theory of the relation between an organism and the mind which animates it. Each theory is respectable from its antiquity and from the eminence of some of its supporters. It is undoubtedly true that neither of these theories is *logically excluded* by the admitted empirical facts; and it is worth while to point this out, since it is liable to be forgotten nowadays. But it is also important to remember that empirical facts hardly ever logically exclude any theory, if we are willing to make enough supplementary hypotheses. The really interesting question is this. Given all the empirical facts, in all their detail and interconnexion (including the evolution of mind on earth, the existence of animal minds of all degrees of complexity and intelligence, the development of each human mind from infancy to maturity and its degeneration from maturity to second childhood), is either of these theories *reasonably plausible* as compared with the theory that each man's mind is so intimately bound up with his present organism that it could not have existed before the conception, and cannot exist after the death, of the latter? To answer this question it would be necessary to leave generalities and merely logical possibilities and to go into elaborate factual detail. This McTaggart does not attempt to do.

He contents himself with saying (*Some Dogmas*, p. 104,

§ 80) that the apparent improbability of the Instrumental Theory depends simply on an unwitting recurrence to the theory that a man's mind is an activity or an effect of his body. And he says that we have already seen that the latter theory is untenable.

In answer to this I can only repeat that, even if the arguments for an agnostic form of the Causal Theory of ostensibly material things be accepted as conclusive, any empirical grounds which there were for holding that a man's mind is an activity or effect of his *body* will still be grounds for holding that his mind is an activity or effect of his *organism*. And any empirical grounds that there were for holding that a man's *body* breaks up at death will still be grounds for holding that his *organism* undergoes some very profound and probably destructive change at that time. I should admit, however, that it is not easy to formulate any theory of the relation between a mind and the organism which it animates which *would* make a man's mind existentially dependent on his present organism, and yet *would not* make it either an activity or an effect of the latter. I should therefore agree that, if a person thinks he has conclusive reasons for rejecting Materialism, he may find it difficult to come to rest in any position short of the Instrumental Theory.

It remains to comment on McTaggart's remarks about the alleged super-normal phenomena investigated by psychical researchers. Like most of the remarks by philosophers and scientists on this subject, they suffer from lack of adequate detailed knowledge. Obviously it is *logically* possible that these phenomena should *all* be due to causal processes initiated during their lifetime by persons whose minds have not survived the subsequent death of their bodies. But the important question is whether, when the phenomena are carefully studied and classified in detail, this logically possible hypothesis is *reasonably probable* as compared with others which are also logically possible. Anyone who has made a careful study of the phenomena knows that *many* of them seem to need nothing more than McTaggart's hypothesis to explain them. But he also knows that *some few* of them are

very difficult to explain except on the hypothesis that a human mind has survived the death of its body and is now acting deliberately in view of circumstances which had not arisen before that event.

1·13. *Analogical Argument against the Sempiternity of Selves.* In the last three sections of Chap. III of *Some Dogmas* McTaggart considers whether the transitoriness which we recognise in all ostensibly material objects should raise a presumption against the permanence of selves. He points out, quite rightly, that the only objects which science holds to be transitory are held to be complex wholes composed of parts which are capable of existing separately from each other and from such wholes. The only kind of generation which science recognises is the coming together of pre-existing particulars to form a new compound particular; and the only kind of destruction which it recognises is the separation and dissociation of previously associated particulars. If there are no ostensibly material objects which science unhesitatingly asserts to be ingenerable and indestructible, this is because there are no ostensibly material objects which it unhesitatingly denies to be composed of separable parts.

Now a self is certainly complex, in the sense that it owns a plurality of simultaneous and successive experiences. And McTaggart does count the experiences which a self owns as parts of it. But he denies that they are separable parts. It seems self-evident to him that, if e is an experience owned by the self S, then e could not have existed unowned by S. It could not exist unowned by any self or owned by any other self S'. So, if a self did begin to exist in course of time, it would do so by "generation out of nothing" and not by association of pre-existing particulars. And, if a self ceased to exist in course of time, it would do so by "annihilation" and not by disintegration. Thus, the coming to be or the passing away of a self would be events of a kind which science does not contemplate. (Cf. Vol. I, p. 272, of the present work.) This does not prove that a self could not come into existence or cease to exist in the course of time; for the limits of the contemporary scientific outlook do not necessarily coincide with

the limits of possibility. But it does show that analogical arguments against the sempiternity of selves, drawn from what science teaches about the transitoriness of ostensibly material objects, are worthless.

This contention seems to me to be quite sound, so far as it goes. But it assumes that selves are continuants, as scientists have commonly assumed material objects to be. Now science is perfectly familiar with certain persistent rhythmic processes, such as vortices, which go on for long periods either with the same unchanging pattern or with minor variations on a persistent theme. Such processes look very much like continuants, and the minor variations on the persistent theme look like a plurality of occurrents in a single continuant. Now we know that such persistent rhythmic processes may die away in course of time through viscosity, or may annul each other under special conditions by interference. It seems to me by no means impossible to conceive of psychical analogues to such persistent physical processes. Presumably Spinoza thought of "simple ideas" and of "minds" somewhat in this way. Suppose that this conception of minds and mental processes were admitted to be possible. Then analogical arguments against the sempiternity of selves, drawn from the generation and the eventual cessation of such physical quasi-continuants as vortices, would have some weight.

1·14. *Summary.* I propose to end Sub-section 1·1 with a short, and for that reason somewhat dogmatic, statement of my own position on the subjects which we have been discussing.

(i) Suppose we take the common-sense view of ostensibly material objects, that we raise no philosophical problems about the notions of "production" and "causation", and that we exclude all the alleged super-normal phenomena studied by psychical researchers. Then, although the Instrumental Theory and the Inhibitory Theory are not absolutely *excluded* by the empirical facts, there is nothing whatever to suggest them, and there is much to make them highly improbable. Given the suppositions which I have

stated above, some form of Materialism is far and away the most plausible theory.

(ii) It is evident to me on direct inspection that the behaviouristic form of Materialism is false. For it seems quite clear to me that statements which contain psychological terms cannot be translated without loss or gain of meaning into statements which contain no such terms but are wholly about bodies, physical processes in them, and physical transactions between them. I defy anyone to translate his own statement "I am now hearing a squeaky noise" into a set of statements of the latter kind. Therefore, if Materialism is to be accepted, it must be accepted in its epiphenomenalist form.

(iii) Suppose that we now take into account the alleged super-normal phenomena investigated by psychical researchers. (a) I have not the least doubt that there is an important residuum of such phenomena which cannot be explained by fraud, coincidence, or any other of the causes admitted by orthodox psychology, whether normal or abnormal. Of this residuum a great part could be reconciled easily with Epiphenomenalism.

(b) There would, however, remain another part which it is most difficult to explain without assuming that *something*, which carries memory-traces and other dispositions characteristic of a certain person, sometimes persists for a while after his death and interacts occasionally with the brain or the mind of some specially sensitive living person. Most of the phenomena do not require us to suppose that this persistent something is the *mind* of the dead man, still persisting and having experiences and forming plans and trying to carry them out. On the contrary, the defective and trivial character of many of the phenomena in question seems to me hard to reconcile with any such view. If this were all, the most plausible theory would be what I have elsewhere called the "Compound Theory".

According to this, a mind is the product of two factors, neither of which is mental, viz., a brain and nervous system and something which may be called a "Psycho-genic Factor".

The suggestion is that each person has, associated with his brain from birth to death, a psycho-genic factor; and that the two together produce his mind. The experiences which he has modify his psycho-genic factor in characteristic ways. The psycho-genic factor may persist, with these modifications, for some time after the person has died and his brain has disintegrated. While in this separated state, it may occasionally enter into temporary association with the brain of some living person whose psycho-genic factor has been temporarily dissociated or loosened from his brain. At such times this person's body will be animated by a temporary mind which has some of the memories and characteristic traits of the dead man and some of those of the living medium.

This type of theory is, *prima facie*, intermediate between Epiphenomenalism, on the one hand, and the Instrumental and Inhibitory theories, on the other. But we must notice that, unless Epiphenomenalism is on other grounds impossible, it is not impossible that the psycho-genic factor should itself be a *material* substance which has so far escaped ordinary physical observation. So the Compound Theory *could* take a form in which it would be merely an extension of Epiphenomenalism designed to meet certain facts established by psychical research.

(c) There remains a small residuum of well-established super-normal facts which seem to require more than the Compound Theory can offer. They suggest very strongly that the *mind* of a certain dead man is still persisting, having experiences, forming plans, and trying to carry them out. Such cases form a very small proportion of the well established super-normal material, and they may be capable of other super-normal explanations. But they do occur, and it is very hard to think of any other explanation for them which is not extremely complicated and unplausible. Such facts plainly favour the Instrumental or the Inhibitory theory. I do not think that it would be *impossible* to reconcile them with a modified form of Epiphenomenalism. It might be held that every living body contains a certain part, made of a peculiar kind of matter; that mental processes are all *directly* de-

pendent on this, and are only indirectly dependent on the rest of the body; that this part remains intact when the rest of the body disintegrates at death; and that processes continue to go on in it and to generate interconnected experiences. But, if Epiphenomenalism had to be extended in this way, it could no longer claim to be a theory which the empirical facts suggest so strongly that no alternative is worth serious consideration.

(iv) At this stage we might begin to raise difficulties about the notion of purely material processes "causing", "producing", or "generating" experiences. We might complain that, by using these phrases, Epiphenomenalism enjoys the quite unjustified advantage of seeming to be an ordinary scientific theory with no "metaphysical nonsense" about it. In ordinary science we meet with such phrases as "Impact *causes* motion", "Oxygen and Hydrogen, when mixed in certain proportions and exploded, *produce* water", and so on. Now, it might be said, these words are certainly not being used in this sense in such statements as "A certain kind of motion among certain particles of a brain *produces* an experience of thinking of the square-root of 2." So Epiphenomenalism masquerades as a scientific theory by using words, which are familiar and intelligible in scientific statements, in some unfamiliar and unintelligible sense. It is as if one were to put on a level the two statements "God creates souls" and "The King creates peers", and were to pretend that the former is intelligible because the latter is so.

What is certainly true is this. Ordinary scientific propositions assert causal connexions between events which are *homogeneous* in kind. Both the cause and the effect are described wholly in spatio-temporal and kinematic terms (in the case of physics), or wholly in psychological terms (in the case of psychology). Now Epiphenomenalism asserts connexions between events which are heterogeneous in kind, viz., between events which are described wholly in spatio-temporal and kinematic terms and events which are described wholly in psychological terms. It is certain that propositions of the latter kind can never express anything but contingent

brute facts of regular co-existence and sequence. It is alleged that propositions of the former kind can, and often do, express facts which are necessary. And it is contended, further, that it is only because of this that, when they cannot be seen to be necessary, they can at least be rendered probable by induction. If the first of these contentions be admitted, it follows that Epiphenomenalism differs essentially from any scientific theory which uses the ordinary notion of causation. And, if the second be also admitted, it follows that no amount of empirical evidence could ever make any psycho-physical law probable by induction. This is, roughly, the view of Prof. Stout in his *Mind and Matter*.

Now many people would not admit that the causal pro-positions of ordinary science express facts of necessary connexion. They would assert that such propositions express nothing but brute facts of regular sequence and co-existence. And they would say that, if induction cannot be used to make psycho-physical laws probable, then it equally cannot be used to make ordinary scientific laws probable. The difference, which has been indicated, between the homogeneity of the *terms* in scientific propositions and the heterogeneity of the terms in Epiphenomenalism remains on any view. But, on this view, it is of no special importance; for the *relation* which is asserted is the same in both, viz., mere *de facto* regularity of co-existence or sequence.

I cannot enter here into the very large and difficult question of the nature of scientific laws and the presuppositions of problematic induction. Any reader who is interested in what I have to say on the subject may be referred to the sym-posium between Mr Mace, Prof. Stout, Dr Ewing, and myself on *Causation* in Supplementary Volume XIV of the Aristotelian Society's *Proceedings*. It seemed worth while, however, to mention the matter here, because Prof. Stout's argument attacks Epiphenomenalism on quite different lines from those taken by McTaggart's argument.

(v) The essential point of McTaggart's argument is to raise doubts about the common-sense belief in the existence of material things and events. As we have seen, he eventually

accepts an agnostic form of the Causal Theory in *Some Dogmas*. I have tried to show that this line of argument against Materialism is ineffective, because the Materialist can meet it by substituting "organism" for "body", where "*A*'s organism" means "the independent and remote part-cause of those sensations in *A* and other people which lead them to the uncritical belief that *A* has a body". A merely *agnostic* theory of the nature of ostensibly material things is not definite enough to cast any serious doubt on an appropriately re-stated form of Materialism. It may suffice to show that the name "Materialism" is inappropriate to the theory; but, so far as concerns the unlikelihood of one's mind having existed before the birth of one's present organism and the unlikeli-hood of its surviving the death of the latter, the essence of the theory remains untouched by the establishment of an agnostic form of Causal Theory about ostensibly material objects. On these lines the theory can be refuted only by positive argu-ments to show that every organism, and indeed every ostensibly material thing, is really not material but is wholly mental. As we have seen, McTaggart does profess to estab-lish these positive and negative conclusions in *The Nature of Existence*, though not in *Some Dogmas*.

1·2. *The Organism in McTaggart's System*. This brings me to a topic which must be mentioned for the sake of complete-ness, though there is very little to be said about it. Let us suppose that a purely mentalistic theory of ostensibly material things could be established. McTaggart is then faced by a most important question, which he never tackles. On the one hand, each mind, according to him, animates successively, *sub specie temporis*, several *different* organisms. And each of these organisms is itself a mind or an experience or a group whose members are all minds or experiences. On the other hand, each mind *sub specie temporis* is associated throughout the whole of time with a *certain one* group of minds, viz., its differentiating group. We have been told precisely what is the relation between a self and the members of its differentiating group. The former prehends all the latter; and it prehends no other selves, though it has indirect perception of others. Such

prehension, when it is distinct and correct enough, is toned with the erotic emotional quality. And no other cognition is so toned. But we are told absolutely nothing about the relation between a self and that group of selves or other purely mental particulars which, when mistaken for a material thing, is taken to be the body animated by this self. For all that McTaggart has to tell us in *The Nature of Existence* we might all have appeared throughout the whole of history as disembodied spirits communicating by telepathy.

Now presumably the relation between a self and that other group of purely spiritual particulars which constitutes its organism must be of fundamental importance in any mentalistic theory. Students of Leibniz will remember what an important part it plays in his philosophy, which is a form of Mentalism very similar in some respects to McTaggart's. The question which one immediately asks is this. What connexion, if any, is there between the selves which form the *differentiating group* of a given self and the selves or other spiritual particulars which constitute the *various organisms* successively animated by this same self? Anyone who accepted McTaggart's philosophy and wanted to work it out in further detail would have to consider this question very seriously. It is strange that McTaggart never does so.

One would at once be driven back to a prior question which McTaggart also never touches. An organism is a very special kind of ostensibly material thing. We should therefore have to begin by asking what is the nature of those purely spiritual particulars or groups of particulars which human beings mistake for material things. Then we should go on to ask what is the special peculiarity of those purely spiritual particulars or groups of particulars which human beings take for living bodies. We should have to consider what are the purely mentalistic realities which underlie the appearance of conception, of animation, of mental and bodily growth and decay, and of death. The only mentalistic philosopher, with whose works I am acquainted, who has tried to do all this in elaborate detail is Leibniz. It is of some interest to remark that, in Leibniz's system, the relation between a ruling monad

and the monads of its organism is rather like the relation, in McTaggart's system, between a self and the selves in its differentiating group. According to Leibniz, the monad which rules a certain organism perceives the changes in the monads of this organism more clearly than it perceives the changes in other monads. According to McTaggart, a self *prehends* the selves in its differentiating group, and perceives other selves only indirectly, if at all. But the analogy cannot be pressed. And Leibniz's theory of ruling monad and organism is so unsatisfactory that anyone who proposes to develope a McTaggartian theory on the subject would be well advised to regard it rather as a warning than as a model.

I do not propose myself to rush in where McTaggart has feared, or at any rate failed, to tread. I have no wish to rob writers of Ph.D. dissertations, yet unborn, of their legitimate prey.

1·3. *Empirical Facts bearing on Pre-existence.* In §§ 94 to 99, inclusive, of *Some Dogmas* McTaggart considers certain empirical facts about our present life in connexion with the doctrine of pre-existence.

(i) The first is what may be called "love at first sight". Two people who have seen little or nothing of each other in their present lives may, after a few meetings, become attached to each other by a bond which is as strong as that which is knit in other cases only by years of intimacy. Such incidents, McTaggart says, are generally explained by reference to "the capriciousness of sexual desire". McTaggart thinks that they are of great significance, and that this explanation is plainly inadequate. For, he says, "the fact to be explained is found with as great proportional frequency in friendships which have no connexion with sexual desire" (*Some Dogmas*, p. 121, § 94). On the theory that both persons have pre-existed, there is a simple and plausible explanation. Their love at first sight in this life is a consequence of long intimacy between them in some of their earlier lives.

I have two comments to make on this. (*a*) At most we can say that love at first sight is to be found with as great proportional frequency in friendships which do not have any *ostensible* connexion with sexual desire as in those which do.

Even this seems to me very doubtful. But, even if it be granted, it is most unsafe to conclude from the ostensible absence of sexual desire to its real absence. People who are brought up in the tradition that homosexual desires and interests are wrong or "unnatural" or "unmanly" are very liable to ignore their presence in their own friendships and to behave rather ostentatiously as if they were absent. Yet the presence of such desires and interests is often perfectly plain, and a source of considerable entertainment, to observers without these particular prejudices.

(b) Still, even if this be admitted, nothing is explained by appealing to "the capriciousness of sexual desire". As Spinoza would say, this is merely to take refuge in "the asylum of ignorance". A much more serious criticism is the following.

If McTaggart's complete metaphysical theory be true, esteem, trust, and many other emotions which are often associated with love, might *sub specie temporis* be generated by prolonged intimacy and co-operation and in no other way. But, even *sub specie temporis*, love, in the strict sense, could not be so generated. If A ever loves B *sub specie temporis*, it is because B is a member of A's differentiating group *sub specie aeternitatis*. Love cannot be generated. On the contrary, the fact that A loves B *sub specie aeternitatis* is a necessary condition of their meeting *sub specie temporis* and having opportunities for the intimacy and co-operation which may generate esteem, trust, and other emotions, between them. So, if the argument is to be used at all, it should be based on trust or esteem or dislike, or any other emotion but *love*, at first sight.

(ii) The second empirical fact which McTaggart notices is the following. A may be born with an innate tendency which enables him to acquire very quickly and in a very high degree a characteristic which many other people acquire, if at all, only in their later years by prolonged practice. The same is true of defects. A may exhibit early in life an almost uncontrollable weakness which many others acquire only late in life through repeatedly falling into a certain temptation.

In many cases, no doubt, such facts could plausibly be explained by heredity, provided that two conditions, one

general and the other particular, are fulfilled. The general condition which must be assumed is that dispositions which a person has built up in the course of his life can be handed on to his descendants in the form of innate tendencies to acquire similar dispositions early and easily. The special condition, if we are to explain by heredity why A developed a certain quality or defect early in life and with great ease, is that some of his ancestors did in fact acquire a similar quality or defect in later life through repeated practice or repeated indulgence. Now the general principle about inheritance of acquired characteristics would be denied by many competent authorities, even when stated in this attenuated form. And in many cases we can trace A's family history back for several generations without finding an ancestor who fulfils the special condition.

In such cases the supposition that A's mind has existed before the birth of his present body and has animated another body might be used to explain the facts about his present innate dispositions. If at the end of his previous life he had become a drunkard, he might be born again with an innate weakness for alcohol. If during his previous life he had forced himself to face danger without flinching, though he was naturally timid, he might be born again as a person of courageous disposition.

It seems to me that, if inheritance of acquired characteristics were admitted, the explanation by heredity would always be more plausible than the explanation by pre-existence even in the least favourable cases. For there is always a possibility that further research among A's ancestors may disclose one who has had the right kind of experience to explain A's innate dispositions by heredity. But there is not a hope of finding out whether any of A's past lives was such as to account for his present innate dispositions.

1·31. *Heredity and Pre-existence.* McTaggart discusses the general connexion between the fact of heredity and the theory of pre-existence in §§ 97 and 98 of *Some Dogmas.* It is reasonable to suppose that the characteristics of the self which now animates a certain organism are determined jointly by characteristics which this self had when it began to animate

the latter and by the nature of the organism which it now animates. Now the nature of any organism is, no doubt, largely determined by that of its biological ancestors. So the present characteristics of any person will be determined jointly (a) by those which his self had when it became dissociated from its last organism, and (b) by the hereditary influences which moulded its present organism.

Now, on any theory but Materialism, there is the following problem. What causes a certain mind to become associated with a certain organism at the moment when the latter is conceived through purely biological causation? A non-Materialist who does not believe in pre-existence might suppose that God creates a suitable mind whenever an organism is conceived, and attaches it to that organism. Or he might suppose that a new mind is somehow generated from the minds of the male and the female gametes which unite at conception to form the zygote from which the new organism developes. The first alternative assumes that God exists, and that he performs frequent miracles of creation on what seem to us to be often very trivial occasions, to use no harsher expression. The second alternative involves the very difficult notion of two minds fusing to generate a new mind. It may fairly be claimed that the theory of Pre-existence has less difficulty at this point than any other theory except Materialism. For it has only to account for the fact that a certain pre-existing mental substance becomes specially associated with a certain organism at the moment when the latter is conceived. Now we have plenty of analogies to this kind of event in chemical affinity, the selective affinity of spermatozoa for ova of the same species, and so on.

McTaggart suggests that there is a general law governing such transactions. I will state it as follows. When a zygote is formed at conception it attracts only such of the selves which are then available as are specially adapted to the organism into which it will develope.

I will make the following comments on this suggestion. (i) By "selves which are then available" I mean at least selves which are not then firmly attached to organisms. This

might include the minds of persons at the point of death and the minds of dead persons which had not yet become united with new organisms. (ii) I do not suppose that more than a small proportion of such selves would be effectively available to any given zygote. Two chemical substances may have a very strong affinity for each other, yet a sample of one will not combine with a sample of the other unless the two are finely divided and brought into a state of intimate intermixture. Presumably some such special condition would have to be fulfilled, beside the general condition of affinity and detachment from an organism, if a certain zygote is to attract a certain unattached self and unite with it. I can make no suggestion as to what this special condition may be. (iii) When an ovum has united with a spermatozoon it ceases to attract other spermatozoa, so that the same ovum is not as a rule fertilised by more than one spermatozoon. We shall have to assume that, when a zygote has united with one of the available selves, it ceases to attract other selves which are otherwise adapted to unite with it. We might ascribe multiple personality to occasional breaches of this rule, and compare it with the case of twins produced from a single ovum.

McTaggart points out that the assumption of selective affinity between certain kinds of mind and certain kinds of organism would explain likenesses in mental characteristics between parents and children which are often ascribed to the direct influence of heredity. Owing to heredity a man's organism will resemble those of his direct ancestors more closely than those of other people. Now similar organisms will be adapted to similar minds, and so zygotes which will develop into similar organisms are likely to attract similar minds and to unite with them at conception. Therefore it is likely that the mind which was attracted by the zygote which developed into A's organism will have a special degree of likeness to the mind which was attracted by the specially similar zygote which developed into his father's organism. It will therefore look as if A's mind had inherited certain characteristics from his father's mind.

So McTaggart's complete theory of the ostensible inherit-

ance of mental characteristics may be summed up as follows. (i) *A*'s mind is likely to have *from the first* a special similarity to his father's mind, because it will be the sort of mind which is attracted by a zygote which has a special similarity to the zygote which developed into his father's organism. The zygotes resemble each other through biological heredity; the minds resemble each other because similar zygotes attract similar minds. (ii) Quite apart from this, *A*'s mind is likely to *develope* special likenesses to his father's mind. For the development of every mind is partly determined by its organism; and the organisms of *A* and his father have a special likeness through biological heredity.

I think it must be admitted that this theory is ingenious and plausible. It is strange how completely most non-Materialist philosophers, except Leibniz, have neglected the problems which conception and the ostensible inheritance of mental characteristics present to them. It is a great merit of McTaggart to have faced these problems, and to have shown that a much more plausible solution of them is possible on the theory of Pre-existence than on any other form of non-materialistic theory.

McTaggart, of course, admits that the empirical arguments which we have been considering would not suffice to prove that our selves pre-existed our present bodies. Since he claims to have shown in *The Nature of Existence* that every self is, *sub specie temporis*, absolutely sempiternal, he has no need to appeal to the empirical considerations which he puts forward in *Some Dogmas* as evidence for pre-existence or post-existence. But these considerations remain of interest and importance as connecting the philosophical doctrine with certain empirical facts.

2. Probable Duration of Pre-existence and Post-existence.

In §§ 757 to 759, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*, McTaggart tries to show that, if we accept his theory of *C*-series, we have good reason for holding that the total future duration and the total past duration of our selves are very

great as compared with the "three score years and ten" of our present lives. I will state the argument in my own way, and will deal in turn with post-existence and pre-existence.

2·1. *Duration of Post-existence.* Consider any self P_1 as it really is *sub specie aeternitatis*. It is the maximal term of a certain primary inclusion-series Π_1. Let P_1^r be the term of this series which appears *sub specie temporis* as the total state of this self when it begins to animate its present body. Let P_1^s be the term of this series which appears *sub specie temporis* as the total state of this self when it ceases to animate its present body. Then the period which has elapsed from the beginning of the world to the birth of this self's present body is directly proportional to the ratio which the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^r bears to the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^ω. Again, the period which will have elapsed from the beginning of the world to the death of this self's present body is directly proportional to the ratio which the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^s bears to the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^ω. It follows that the duration of this self's present life is directly proportional to the ratio which the increment from P_1^r to P_1^s bears to the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^ω. Lastly, the period which will elapse from the death of this self's present body to the end of time is directly proportional to the ratio which the increment from P_1^s to P_1^ω bears to the increment from the lower bound of Π_1 to P_1^ω.

Now the terms from P_1^r to P_1^s, both inclusive, appear *sub specie temporis* as the history of this self during its present life. The unlikeness between the nature of the self, as revealed in this life-history, and the nature which must be ascribed to P_1 as the maximal end-term of Π_1, is, as we know, enormous. And, although there is an appearance of development in the course of one's present life, it must be admitted that a human self at the optimum stage of its present life does not seem to be much more like one of the primary parts of the universe than it was at birth. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the difference in content between P_1^s and P_1^ω is very great indeed as compared with the difference in content between

P_1^r and P_1^s. This means, *sub specie temporis*, that the duration of a self's post-existence from the death of its present body to the end of time will probably be very great as compared with the period between the birth and the death of its present body.

McTaggart is well aware that this argument is not conclusive. It might be that P_1^s, the term in Π_1 which appears as the end-state of a certain self's present life, is also the end of oscillation and retrogression for that self. It may be that beyond P_1^s *every* increment in the content of a term in Π_1 increases its likeness to P_1^ω. And it might further be the case that, beyond this term, successive *equal* increments of content carry with them *greater and greater* increments of resemblance to the maximal end-term. If both these conditions were fulfilled, a self would appear *sub specie temporis* to develope without relapses and with ever-increasing speed after the death of its present body to its perfect end-state. If that were so, the duration of its post-existence might not be so very great compared with the duration of its present life.

There is, however, no reason to think that these special conditions are fulfilled. In the present life of each of us we notice two facts. In the first place, there are the secular oscillations in clearness, etc., which we describe as "being awake" and "being asleep". Secondly, each of us starts in a very confused state at birth; then developes fairly quickly to maturity; then remains at an optimum state for some years; and finally, if life is prolonged, declines in mental clearness and vigour. McTaggart thinks that the rapid development from birth to maturity in our present life may be a kind of rebound from a state of regression and involution in our immediately previous existence. So the only relevant empirical facts which are available seem to make against the likelihood of continuous and accelerated development after the death of one's present body.

2·2. *Duration of Pre-existence*. Speaking in temporal terms, we must say that all selves are "of the same age". For each is as old as the universe. Now this suggests a difficulty which McTaggart mentions, and tries to remove, in the footnote to p. 382 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence*. How are

we to reconcile the theory with the fact that there are such enormous qualitative disparities between various selves at the same time? As McTaggart says, "There was a moment when one self was planning *Hamlet*, while other existents which are really selves appeared as bacilli in his blood or the salt in his salt-cellar. It can scarcely be doubted that their developments were really unequal. Is this compatible with our theory?"

McTaggart has two explanations. One is the fact of oscillation. The self which we know as Shakespeare may formerly have appeared as a bacillus in the blood of Vergil and may later have appeared as a crystal of salt in the salt-cellar of Goethe. And a self which appeared as a bacillus in Shakespeare's blood may be the self which was formerly known as the Impenitent Thief or the self which was afterwards known as Charles Peace.

The other explanation is this. We know that different selves must have different original natures. Now the original nature of some selves may be such that, *sub specie temporis*, they develope very quickly during the earlier phases of the world's history and then stagnate for long periods. The original nature of other selves may be such that, *sub specie temporis*, they develope very slowly during the earlier stages of the world's history and then wake up and develope very quickly during the later phases. In this way the co-existence of Shakespeare and the bacilli in his blood and the salt in his salt-cellar could be reconciled with McTaggart's theory, even if there were no *oscillations* in the development of any self.

Allowing for these facts and possibilities, what can we say about the probable duration of our pre-existence as compared with the duration of our present lives? I think that the problem needs to be considered on two different hypotheses, viz., (*a*) that *C*-series have no minimal end-terms, and (*b*) that they have minimal end-terms. For McTaggart does not claim to have decided between these alternatives. I shall take the two hypotheses in turn, and conduct the argument in my own way.

(*a*) If *C*-series have no minimal end-terms, the history of

every self goes back to a limiting state of zero content at the lower limit of the ostensible time-series. So we may say with rough correctness that all selves started together with zero content at the beginning of time, and that they have all developed to some extent since then. Let us then consider the disparity between the highest and the most lowly of contemporary minds known to us, at the adult stage in each. This will enable us to give a conservative estimate of the amount of development which has taken place in the highest known contemporary minds since the beginning of time. Now the amount of development needed to bring a mind from the level of that of a contemporary bacillus to that of a contemporary Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, is no doubt considerable. Since the beginning of time the mind of the latter must have developed at least as much as this. And this is a much greater amount of development than any human mind undergoes in the course of his present *adult* life. From this we might tentatively conclude that it is likely that the period during which selves have pre-existed must be very great, in order to allow for the amount of development which certainly has taken place in some selves.

I do not think that this argument is a very strong one. In the first place, as McTaggart admits, there is the objection that those selves which are now most advanced may have developed steadily and very quickly before their present lives, whilst all other selves have developed very slowly or with frequent retrogressions. In view of the known facts about oscillation and retrogression in present human life, this does not, indeed, seem very likely; but it is not impossible. Secondly, the mind of each of us *has* developed enormously during his present life, if the change from embryo to adult be taken into account as well as the much slower development which takes place between the end of our first and the beginning of our second childhood. To this McTaggart answers that the very rapid development at the earliest stages of our present life is probably "a recovery from an oscillation which occurs at or before birth...in which much that has been previously gained was temporarily lost"

(*Nature of Existence*, Vol. II, p. 382). This may be so. But the
possibility that it is not so weakens the argument.

(*b*) Let us now take the hypothesis that *C*-series have mini-
mal end-terms. In Chap. LIII p. 585 of the present volume I
pointed out the postulate which must be made in order to
ensure that, *sub specie temporis*, all selves began to exist at the
same interval after the beginning of possible time. We have
to assume that, for *every* primary *C*-series, the increment
from zero content to that of the minimal end-term bears the
same ratio to the increment from zero content to that of the
maximal end-term. In this respect all selves start alike at the
beginning of actual time. But, whereas they all started with
the same *absolute* content, viz., zero, on the hypothesis that
there are no minimal end-terms, there is no reason why they
should all have started with the same absolute content on the
hypothesis that there are minimal end-terms. Now the
argument which we have been considering, to prove that the
period of pre-existence is very great as compared with that of
a present human life, assumed that all selves started alike at
the beginning of time. It is therefore still further weakened on
the hypothesis that there are minimal end-terms.

It will be worth while to consider these points a little more
fully. For this purpose I will ask the reader to look at
Diagrams 1 and 2 below:
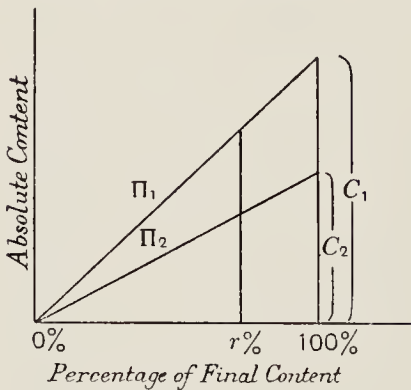
Diagram 1
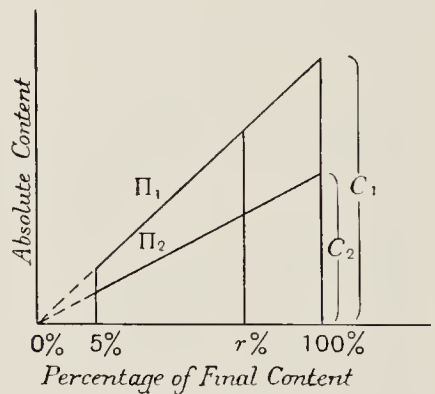
Diagram 2

In each of these diagrams two *C*-series, Π_1 and Π_2, are
represented. In the first of them it is assumed that these

series have no minimal end-terms. In the second it is assumed that both have minimal end-terms, and that the content of the minimal end-term of each is 5 % of the content of its maximal end-term. The ordinates represent the *absolute content* of any term. The abscissae represent the ratio which the increment from zero content to that of any term bears to the increment from zero content to that of the maximal end-term.

Consider any two terms P_1^r and P_2^r, occupying corresponding positions in Π_1 and Π_2 respectively. Let the content of P_1^r be r % of the content of P_1. Then the content of P_2^r must be r % of the content of P_2. Thus the *absolute* content of P_1^r will be $rc_1/100$, if c_1 is the absolute content of P_1. Similarly, the absolute content of P_2^r will be $rc_2/100$, if c_2 is the absolute content of P_2. Therefore the *absolute difference* in content between P_1^r and P_2^r will be $r\,(c_1-c_2)/100$. Plainly, the absolute difference in content between any pair of corresponding terms in Π_1 and Π_2 is proportional to c_1-c_2, the absolute difference in content between the maximal end-terms of the two series. And plainly the absolute difference in content between corresponding terms of Π_1 and Π_2 grows steadily as we pass from the less inclusive to the more inclusive end of the series. In Diagram 1 this difference is zero at the lower end; in Diagram 2 it is $(c_1-c_2)/20$ at the lower end; and in both diagrams it is c_1-c_2 at the upper end.

Now, if there is anything in McTaggart's notion of content, it would seem very likely that the absolute amount of content in the maximal end-term of any primary C-series would have great significance. *Sub specie temporis* it would set an upper limit to the possible development of the self associated with this C-series. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that the absolute difference in content between the maximal end-terms of two C-series would have great significance. It seems plausible to suggest that certain big enough absolute differences of content between two such end-terms would entail that the selves associated with the two series are different *in kind*, e.g., that one is a human mind and the other is an angelic or an animal mind. McTaggart does not discuss this

possibility; but, since there seem to be different kinds of mind, it is worth consideration. I do not think that it would be the only way to account for these apparent differences in kind. Another explanation might be that some selves perceive other selves only indirectly and do not *prehend* any selves. An example would be the self P_3 in the diagram on p. 392 of Vol. I of the present work.

Let us now consider the bearing of our suggestion about differences of absolute content on the question of the probable duration of pre-existence. It will be noticed that, on any hypothesis, the absolute difference of content between two selves begins by being minimal. If there are no minimal end-terms, it begins by being zero. So, on that hypothesis, we should expect that, towards the beginning of time, all selves, even of the most different kinds, would be almost indistinguishable specifically. On either hypothesis we should expect that, the further we went from the beginning of time, the more definite on the whole would the distinction between different kinds of mind become. Now at present there certainly do seem to be several extremely different kinds of mind, e.g., human minds, the minds of mammals, those of oysters, those which (if McTaggart's Mentalism be true) appear as inorganic matter, and so on. This would suggest that, *sub specie temporis*, a considerable time must have elapsed since the beginning of the universe in order for these distinctions to have become so sharp.

The argument is not, however, conclusive, even if its premise be accepted. In the first place, it is considerably weakened by the possibility that C-series have minimal end-terms. Secondly, even if they have no minimal end-terms, the following possibility must be admitted. It might be that some of the lines in our diagrams are very nearly horizontal and others are very nearly vertical; i.e., that the final absolute content of some minds is very small and that of some other minds is very great. In that case the absolute difference in content between corresponding terms will be considerable even when these terms are not far from the lower ends of their respective C-series. *Sub specie temporis* this would mean

that differences in kind among minds would become marked fairly soon after the beginning of time. Therefore the fact that they are now very strongly marked is not a conclusive reason for holding that a considerable period must have elapsed since the beginning of time.

We can now pass from these not very convincing arguments to the simple consideration which McTaggart mentions in §759 of *The Nature of Existence*. Scientists tell us that there are extremely strong reasons for believing that what we take to be matter has existed during a period which is enormously long in comparison with our present lives. Now we have existed at least as long as it, for we have existed since the beginning of time. Therefore, if we accept what science tells us about the past duration of the material world, we can be sure that the period during which we have pre-existed is enormously long in comparison with our present lives.

3. Plurality of Lives.

Granted that each of us is, *sub specie temporis*, absolutely sempiternal, and granted that the duration of one's pre-existence and that of one's post-existence are both probably very great in comparison with one's present life, can we say anything further about our pre-existence and our post-existence? Was our pre-existence sub-divided into a number of successive lives, each beginning with a birth and ending with a death, like our present life? And will our post-existence be sub-divided in this way? In §§760 and 761 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart gives reasons for thinking that these questions must be answered in the affirmative. He calls the affirmative answer to them the doctrine of "Plurality of Lives".

He thinks that, even if we did not pre-exist but shall only post-exist, it is likely that our post-existence will be punctuated by many births and deaths. And he thinks that the likelihood of a plurality of lives is increased if we hold that each self is retrospectively, as well as prospectively, sempiternal.

Let us first suppose that each of us is only prospectively

sempiternal. And let us suppose that the period of post-existence is very great in comparison with the duration of one's present life. Then McTaggart argues as follows. (i) If we deny that there is a plurality of future lives, we shall have to suppose that every self undergoes a certain kind of change, viz., death, once and only once, and that this happens at an extremely early date in its extremely long history. McTaggart thinks it unlikely, though not impossible, that the kind of cause which produces this change *once* in *every* self after it has existed for less than a hundred years, should never recur and reproduce a similar change in *any* self throughout the millions of years of its after-life.

(ii) If, after the death of one's present body, one's self enters on a mode of existence which will continue without interruption until the end of time, there will be an extreme discontinuity between one's present life and the rest of one's life hereafter. Our present life has old age and death on the near horizon; our future life would be bounded only by a state of half-enclosed indivisible duration at the end of time. On this view, death would be an unique event in the history of every self; not only in the sense that it happens but once, but also in the sense that it brings about a sudden, profound, and lasting transformation in the life of the self. This, again, is possible; but McTaggart thinks it unlikely.

I am not very much impressed by either of these arguments. And I am inclined to think that the second, instead of supporting the first, tends to weaken it. (*a*) Nature provides us with plenty of biological instances of changes which are unique in the history of each individual of a species and bring about profound modifications in its mode of life. The change from tadpole into frog, from grub into butterfly, and so on, are cases in point. No doubt, there *is* a cyclic process connected with these biological transformations; but it is in the species and not in the individual. The female frog produces spawn which, if fertilised, produces tadpoles, which, if they survive, become frogs. And so on *ad indefinitum*. But the individual frog never becomes a tadpole again.

(*b*) Just in proportion as the change produced in an in-

dividual by death is *profound*, it is less unlikely that death should be a *unique* event in the history of a self. Death, on McTaggart's view, must be, *sub specie temporis*, the dissociation of a self from a certain organism with which it has been intimately and continuously associated for some time. The total cause of such an event must, presumably, include factors in the self which animates this organism and also certain external conditions. Now suppose that death profoundly modifies the self which was previously the soul of a certain organism. This self might be so modified that it no longer needs to be attached to an organism at all. Or, again, it might be so modified that its attachment to its next organism is so firm that the external conditions which formerly brought about dissociation can no longer do so. On the first alternative a second death is impossible; on the second it is unlikely.

(iii) In our present lives there are many processes which start, continue, and reach a natural end, largely through the activities of the self in which they take place. An obvious example would be planning an examination of McTaggart's philosophy; training oneself for it by suitable reading, discussion, and meditation; and then gradually writing it out. Now, in many cases we can see precisely similar processes cut short by death. Granted that every self survives bodily death and will exist until the end of time, it seems likely that such truncated processes will be continued to their natural end after death by the internal activities of the self, as they would have been if death had not interfered. McTaggart argues that, if the content of our immediately future life is similar in many essential features to that of our present life, it is unlikely that we shall "have changed so far as to have lost the characteristic of periodic death" (*Nature of Existence*, §760, p. 384).

I do not altogether understand this argument. Unless it is known that each of us dies at least *twice*, it is not known that we have "the characteristic of *periodic* death". The question at issue is whether we have this characteristic, and not whether, having it, we might lose it.

I suppose that the essential point of the argument might be stated as follows. We could hardly continue and complete processes which we had started in this life if the conditions of our life after death were profoundly unlike those of our present life. There is a presumption that, if we survive, we do continue and complete such processes. Therefore there is a presumption that the conditions of life soon after death are not profoundly unlike those of our present life. Now, if our future existence were to go on, unbroken by further deaths and births, to the end of time, it would be radically unlike our present life. Therefore it is likely that our future existence will be broken up into a plurality of successive lives.

This argument seems to me to have two weaknesses. (a) The assumption that processes, started in this life and cut short by death, will probably be completed after death if we survive, is doubtful. We have plenty of experience in this life to suggest an opposite view. Internal crises, like puberty, severe illnesses, etc., often change a man's interests so much that processes which were half completed when they happened are never taken up again. Now death would presumably involve a greater upheaval in a self than puberty or severe, but not fatal, illness. Again, processes may be truncated in this life through changes of external circumstances, such as financial disaster, emigration, marriage, etc. Now the separation, by death, of a self from the organism which it has been animating is presumably a greater change in its external circumstances than any which could happen to it while it continues to animate the same organism.

(b) Granted that one's next life must not be too unlike one's present life if processes begun and cut short in the one are to be completed in the other, it is not clear that one's next life must resemble one's present life in the particular characteristic of being broken off at its later end by death. Continuity between the *end* of one's present life and the *beginning* of one's next life would seem to be the essential factor here; and the nature of the *latter end* of one's next life would not seem to be directly relevant.

Perhaps, however, we could restate the argument in such a

way as to meet this second objection. It might be said that, *unless* a self still animates an organism in its next life, its experiences will be too utterly discontinuous with those of its present life for processes started in the one to be completed in the other. And it might be held that, *so long as* a self animates an organism, it is *ipso facto* liable to be dissociated from the latter; and that, sooner or later, conditions will arise which will bring about this dissociation. Both these contentions seem to me highly plausible. If we add them to McTaggart's assumption that processes begun in the present life and cut short by death will probably be continued in the next life, his conclusion that the next life will probably end with a second death is not unreasonable.

This completes the discussion of the argument for a plurality of lives on the assumption that each of us is *prospectively*, but not retrospectively, sempiternal. McTaggart argues in § 761 of *The Nature of Existence* that the probability of a plurality of lives is considerably increased on the assumption (which he claims to have proved) that each of us is *both* retrospectively and prospectively sempiternal. For, on this assumption, each man dies at least *twice*, viz., at the end of his pre-existence and at the end of his present life. Now, if death were not known to happen more than once in the history of each self, it might not be unreasonable to suggest that it is probably an unique event in the history of each self. But, if death is positively known to happen *at least twice*, with a comparatively short interval between the two occurrences, in the history of every self, it is most unreasonable to suggest that it can happen *only twice* in a history which stretches from the beginning to the end of time. It is much more likely that death and birth are frequently recurring events, like going to sleep and waking up again.

There are two criticisms to be made on this argument. (*a*) Assuming that a self existed before its present life, we are not entitled to assume without further argument that it *died* before its present life began. This implies that, during its previous life, this self was associated with an organism; and that it had to become dissociated from the latter before it

could become associated with its present organism at conception. This may be true; but there is nothing in McTaggart's theory to show that every self must always have animated an organism.

(*b*) McTaggart assumes in this argument that a self's last death must have happened almost immediately before the beginning of its present life. For he says that the interval between the last death of a human self and its next death varies "from a minute to about a hundred years"; and it is evident that he identifies this interval with the length of a present human life. He has no right to make this assumption without discussion. Even if a self has already animated an organism and has become dissociated from it at some time during its pre-existence, it may have been existing in a resting stage for centuries before it became associated with its present organism at conception. Thus the interval between the beginning and the end of a man's present life cannot safely be identified with the interval between two immediately successive deaths. The latter might be enormously greater than the former.

4. Loss of Memory at Death.

It is certain that, in our present lives, most, if not all, of us have no memory of anything that happened in our earlier lives. If the present life were a short and unique stretch in a self's whole history, and all the rest of its existence were unbroken by births and deaths, this loss of memory might not be very serious. We might hope to regain after death the memory which we had temporarily lost at birth. Loss of memory of one's pre-existence might be regarded as due to the association of the self with an organism, and we might expect that memory would be permanently restored when this association is broken at death. And, even if death did not restore a self's memory of its pre-natal experiences, at any rate a self need fear no further loss of memory throughout the rest of time if it is to suffer no more deaths and re-births. But if, as McTaggart thinks he has shown to be likely, the future existence of each self is to be punctuated by many deaths and

re-births, it is probable that the loss of memory which certainly accompanied its last birth is a recurrent event associated with each of its past and future births.

It is therefore important to consider the following questions. (i) Supposing that there is no stage at which the lost memories are regained, what will be the effects of this loss of memory on the nature and the value of immortality? (ii) Is it in fact the case that the lost memories will never be regained? McTaggart discusses the first question in §§ 763 to 765 inclusive, and in §§ 770 to 783 inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. He discusses the second question in the intervening sections.

4·1. *Effects of an irrevocable Loss of Memory.* (i) In §§ 763 to 765, inclusive, McTaggart considers whether total and irrevocable loss of memory at each death and re-birth would involve loss of personal identity. He points out that there would still be a most intimate and peculiar unity between all the terms which appear *sub specie temporis* as successive lives of a single self. This fact may be expressed in our notation as follows.

What appears *sub specie temporis* as one life of a certain self must be a certain stretch of terms of a certain primary C-series. It might, e.g., be the stretch of terms from P_1^r to P_1^s of the C-series Π_1. What appears as a later life of the same self must be a certain other stretch of terms in the same C-series, e.g., the stretch from P_1^x to P_1^y, where P_1^x is more inclusive than P_1^s. Now all these terms are most intimately connected with each other and with P_1. For each is contained in, without exhausting, each of its successors. And P_1 contains them all. What appears as a life of another self P_2 must be a certain stretch of terms of a certain other primary C-series Π_2; it might, e.g., be the stretch from P_2^u to P_2^v.

Thus, the realities which appear as two lives of a single self have to each other a peculiar and intimate relation which does not hold between the realities which appear as two lives of different selves. And this is quite independent of memory or lack of memory. So, even if memory were completely and irrevocably lost at each successive death of a self, such a set of successive lives would *in fact* form a unity of a most intimate

and peculiar kind. Whether we choose to call this "personal identity", in the absence of memory, or refuse to do so, is a matter of how we choose to use words.

(ii) Granted that even permanent loss of memory would be compatible with preservation of personal identity in this important sense, what bearing would it have on the value of immortality? McTaggart discusses this point in §§ 770 to 783, inclusive.

(a) In one's present life one certainly has no memory of any of one's past lives. Now, in spite of this, it is generally held that one's present life has *some* positive value. Therefore it can hardly be denied that each of one's future lives might have at least as much positive value as one's present life even if there is no memory in any of them of any of their predecessors. Of course a man might admit this, and yet might say that he would take no more interest in his own future lives than in the lives of complete strangers if in each of them he will have forgotten all his previous lives. McTaggart says that such an assertion cannot be refuted, but he thinks that most people who fairly put the question to themselves would not be prepared to answer it in this way.

The point raised is an important one, and it will be worth while to discuss it a little for ourselves. Suppose I were persuaded by McTaggart's arguments that one and only one of all the people who were alive between 1787 and 1887 was animated by the self which now animates my body. And suppose that I have not the faintest idea as to *which one* of them stood in this special relation to me. Then it is plain that there is no one of them, e.g., Charles Peace, of whom I could say: "I am specially interested in that man, because I believe that he, and he only of his contemporaries, was animated by the self which now animates my body." Similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the people who will be born between 1987 and 2087. It does not follow, however, that I might not contemplate with special interest, and with special feelings of elation or depression, as the case might be, *suppositions* of the form "The person, whoever he may have been, whose body was animated in the early

nineteenth century by the self which now animates my body, was of such and such a character, had such and such experiences, and occupied such and such a position in life." Of course, most people in the West never make such suppositions, because they do not believe in pre-existence. But it is easy to think of parallel cases, such as the following.

I know that some of my ancestors were Huguenots living in France before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, but I know absolutely nothing else specific about them. Yet I certainly contemplate with *special* interest and pleasure the supposition that, whoever they may have been, they were wealthy, respected, and influential. And I certainly contemplate with *special* interest and displeasure the supposition that, whoever they may have been, they were poor, despised, or criminal. Similarly, I should suppose that anyone who expects to have remote descendants at all would contemplate with *special* interest and pleasure the supposition that *his* descendants, whoever they may be, will be happy, intelligent, prosperous, and respected. The desire to found a family has been a very strong one in the past, and it would probably be equally strong now if people felt more confident than they do about the future of civilisation in general and private property in particular.

Now a man's connexion with his own remote ancestors or descendants is extremely tenuous as compared with his connexion with the persons whose bodies have been or will be animated by the self which now animates his body. If McTaggart is right, the latter relationship is like that of successive Chinese boxes in a single Chinese box. But the former is, on any view, like that of knots in a single complicated net-work. It therefore seems reasonable to believe that a person who understood and accepted McTaggart's theory of the connexion between successive lives of a single self *would* contemplate with special interest and emotion suppositions about the nature and circumstances of *his* past and future lives, even if he were convinced that he would have no memory of any of his earlier lives in any of his later ones.

(b) There is no doubt that a man is often made wiser and

morally better at the later stages of his present life through remembering experiences and actions which took place at its earlier stages. Now, if memory of each life is lost completely and permanently when that life is over, no man can be made better or wiser in his later lives by remembering experiences and actions which took place in his earlier ones. A man's wisdom may, I think, be divided into two parts, viz., (α) dispositions to think and act in appropriate and efficient ways in presence of practical or theoretical problems, and (β) detailed knowledge of particular facts and general laws or principles. The latter exists at any moment only in a dispositional form. The subject *would* think of any of these facts or laws or principles *if* an occasion arose for doing so; but at any given moment he *is not* in fact thinking of most of them. We may call these two factors in wisdom respectively "skill and tact" and "detailed knowledge".

Now we know that much of our present bodily and mental skill and tact, and much of our detailed knowledge, is due to actions and experiences which took place in the earlier stages of our present lives and can no longer be remembered. And we know that we started our present lives with no detailed knowledge and hardly any bodily or mental skill or tact. We started with nothing but dispositions to acquire skill and tact in certain directions, and dispositions to acquire detailed knowledge. These may be called "dispositions of a higher order", since they are dispositions to acquire other dispositions.

McTaggart's suggestion is that, although we lose at the end of each life both our acquired tact and skill and our detailed knowledge, yet, in consequence of having possessed these, we may start our next life with more efficient or better organised dispositions of a higher order. E.g., an eminent mathematician dies, and the self which animated his body now animates the body of a newly born baby. All the detailed mathematical knowledge, and all the technical mathematical skill and insight which this self had built up, has gone. But it may be that, in disappearing, it has left the self with a power to acquire a better mathematical technique and a deeper

insight into mathematical principles than it had before, and
a power to acquire them *more* quickly and easily under *equally*
favourable conditions. This kind of influence of past ex-
perience on the present wisdom of a self is quite independent
of memory; and, if it exists, a self may steadily grow in
wisdom in each successive life through its actions and ex-
periences in earlier lives, in spite of periodical losses of
memory which are complete and permanent.

It is obvious that similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*,
to moral improvement or degeneration due to past experiences
or actions. That organisation of conative and emotional dis-
positions which constitutes a morally good character has been
built up by actions, experiences, and influences in the earlier
stages of one's present life, many of which have been forgotten
and some of which were unnoticed at the time. In one's next
life, if one enters it as a newly born child, it will certainly have
ceased to exist and no memory of it will remain. Nevertheless,
it may be represented by innate dispositions to resist certain
temptations and by active tendencies to build up a good
character, so that one's next moral optimum will be higher
and more easily reached than it was in one's immediately
previous life. And, of course, similar remarks will apply,
mutatis mutandis, to a person who has been slack or vicious in
his former life, and has died with a weak and disintegrated
moral character. He might fairly be expected to begin his
next life with innate weaknesses, and his moral optimum
might be expected to be lower and harder to reach than it was
in his former life.

(c) It remains to consider the effect of these periodic losses
of memory (supposing them to be permanent) on the love
which one person feels for certain other persons.

In the latter part of a man's present life his love for a friend
is undoubtedly often increased in strength and richness
through the influence of many forgotten incidents in the
earlier stages of their friendship. Provided, then, that A, who
loves B in this life, will also love him in some of their future
lives, the mere loss of memory need not prevent A's past love
for B from intensifying and enriching his future love for B.

The question then comes to this. What likelihood is there that A, who loves B in their present lives, will love B again in some of their future lives? Now, *sub specie temporis*, a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition of A's loving B is that A should meet B and become personally acquainted with him. How likely is it, then, that A, who has met and loved B in one life, will meet him and become personally acquainted with him again in some of their future lives?

On any view, there must be an enormous number of selves; and there must be an enormously greater number on a panpsychic theory like McTaggart's than there would be if common-sense dualism were true. In view of this, it is most unlikely that A would meet B again in their future lives unless the fact that A loves B in their present lives is a sign that there will be a specially close connexion between them in future. But, if McTaggart's general theory be true, this certainly is the case. I will now explain in my own way why this is so.

What appears as A's history throughout his present life is a certain stretch of terms, e.g., from P_A^r to P_A^s, of the primary C-series Π_A. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of what appears as B's history throughout his present life. Now, if A *ever* loves B *sub specie temporis*, this is an infallible sign that P_B is a member of P_A's differentiating group. It is therefore an infallible sign that P_A contains the ω-prehension P_{AB}, whose prehensum is P_B. But, if P_A contains P_{AB}, *every* term in Π_A must contain a fragmentary part of P_{AB} which is the corresponding term in Π_{AB}. That is to say P_A^x must contain P_{AB}^x, for all values of x. Therefore, *sub specie temporis*, if A ever loves B, it is certain that A's total state at every moment from the beginning to the end of time contains a state of prehension of which B is the object.

It does not follow that A will love B at every moment from the beginning to the end of time. For some values of x the term P_{AB}^x may be a very confused and inaccurate state of prehension. Some such terms may be confused prehensions which present B merely as an undiscriminated item in a wider total object. Some may be distinct prehensions in A

of B as a discriminated object of *some* kind, but not as a *self*. In neither of these cases could P_{AB}^x be an emotion of love in A for B. Lastly, some terms in Π_{AB} which are distinct prehensions in A of B as a self may, nevertheless, be too inaccurate to be toned with the erotic emotional quality.

It is, therefore, quite possible that A, having known and loved B in one life, may fail to know him, or may know him and fail to love him, in many of their later lives. But it is certain that A prehends B as a self and loves him at the end of time; for P_{AB} is the ω-prehension in the primary part P_A of the primary part P_B, and we know that such prehensions correctly present their objects as selves and are toned erotically. Now, if this be granted, it is very unlikely that there should be no recurrence of love in A for B between their present lives and the end of time. We have, indeed, no means of telling how many selves beside P_B there are in P_A's differentiating group. And we do not know how many lives A and B will have between now and the end of time. It is therefore impossible to estimate the frequency of the future lives in which A will know and love B. But, whenever such recurrences do take place, A's love for B will be strengthened and deepened by the forgotten love which he bore towards B in some of their earlier lives.

When death breaks the emotional bond which links us to our friends the breach involves a real loss. But the loss is neither permanent nor wholly uncompensated even if each death destroys for ever all memory of all our earlier lives. It is otherwise with the emotional bond which links us to societies, such as our country, our college, or our school. There is no reason, on McTaggart's theory, to suppose that I shall ever again in the course of world-history be an Englishman or a Fellow of Trinity; and it is certain that, when the coloured glass of time ceases to "stain the white radiance of eternity", there will be neither nations nor colleges for me to belong to.

4·2. *Recovery of Memory at the End of Time.* In §§ 767 to 769, inclusive, McTaggart tries to show that, in a certain important sense, all the lost memories will be regained by each

self at the end of time. I will now explain his argument in my own way.

In order to account for the ostensible distinction between perception of what is contemporary, memories and judgments about what is past, and expectations of what is future, we had to make the following assumption about the pre-maximal terms of any secondary C-series such as Π_{12}. We had to assume that *each* pre-maximal term, such as P_{12}^r, in Π_{12} is a state of prehension in P_1 whose total object is the *whole series* Π_2. We assumed that P_{12}^r presents P_2^r, and no other term of Π_2, to P_1 as *present*; that it presents all terms in Π_2 which are less inclusive than P_2^r as *past*; and that it presents all terms in Π_2 which are more inclusive than P_2^r as *future*. We pointed out that P_{12}^r is not, as a rule, a completely distinct prehension of Π_2, in which all the terms of Π_2 are discriminated and presented to P_1 as distinct items. In general P_{12}^r presents distinctly a few of the terms in Π_2, and presents the rest of them confusedly as an undifferentiated background.

Now McTaggart argues that it is probable that the maximal term P_{12}^ω resembles the pre-maximal terms of Π_{12} in being a state of prehension whose total object is the *whole series* Π_2. But there will certainly be the following differences between P_{12}^ω and any pre-maximal term such as P_{12}^r. P_{12}^ω must be completely correct, so far as it goes, though it may not give exhaustive information about its object. But P_{12}^r will be a partly erroneous prehension of the same object. Now the object Π_2 is in fact a series of distinct terms; it is not an undifferentiated background with a few outstanding items. Therefore, if P_{12}^ω is a prehension in P_1 of Π_2 as a whole, it cannot present this whole as an undifferentiated background with a few outstanding items. P_{12}^ω must present Π_2 to P_1 *as a series of distinct terms*. Moreover, since P_{12}^ω is perfectly correct so far as it goes, it cannot present Π_2 as a *temporal* series. It must present Π_2 to P_1 as a series of non-temporal terms ordered by a non-temporal relation.

Again, suppose that P_1 contains the reflexive ω-prehension P_{11}^ω as well as the non-reflexive ω-prehension P_{12}^ω. Let us assume, i.e., that P_1 is self-conscious. Then, on similar

grounds, we can argue that P_{11}^{ω} must present Π_1 to P_1 as a series of non-temporal terms ordered by a non-temporal relation. On the other hand, any pre-maximal term of Π_{11} will be partly confused and incorrect. It will present Π_1 to P_1 as a vague temporally extended background with certain outstanding temporal terms in it.

If we assume that P_1 is self-conscious and that P_2 is a member of its differentiating group, we can now state in temporal terms the consequences of the last two paragraphs. At the end of time P_1 will *correctly* prehend, as a *timeless* series of terms, that C-series Π_1 which he prehended at every earlier moment *confusedly and incorrectly* as his whole *history* from the beginning to the end of time. Similarly, at the end of time P_1 will correctly prehend, as a timeless series of terms, that C-series Π_2 which he prehended at every earlier moment confusedly and incorrectly as the history throughout all time of something other than himself.

Now the correct prehension in P_1 of Π_1 as a timeless series of terms cannot, strictly speaking, be called "memory" in P_1 of his whole past history. For it is not a prehension of the terms of this series as *events* or as *past*. But it differs from memory only in being free from those standing defects which make memory as such a partly delusive form of cognition, viz., its ostensible reference to events and to pastness. Subject to this qualification, it is not misleading to say that, at the end of time, every self-conscious self will "remember" its whole past history. And, subject to the same qualification, it is not misleading to say that, at the end of time, every self will prehend the whole history of each self which belongs to its differentiating group.

This completes my account of McTaggart's argument on this topic. We must now consider whether it is a valid inference from his premises. It seems to me to be open to two criticisms, one general and the other more special.

(i) Suppose that c_1 and c_2 are two characteristics, of which one or other *must* belong to a certain object O, and both *cannot* belong to O. Suppose that $P(O)$ is a prehension of O which is known to be perfectly correct, so far as it goes, but is

not known to be completely exhaustive or determinate. Lastly, suppose we know by argument that O in fact has c_1. Then we are entitled to infer that $P(O)$ *cannot* present O as having c_2. For, if it did, it would not be a perfectly correct prehension of O. But it would be a fallacy to infer from this that $P(O)$ *must* present O as having c_1. For it remains possible that $P(O)$ presents O neither as having c_1 nor as having c_2, but presents it only as having a certain determinable C, of which c_1 and c_2 are determinates.

Let us now apply this general contention to McTaggart's argument. If we accept his premises, it is certain that Π_1 is in fact a series of distinct terms, each of which is related to its successors by the relation of being included without exhausting. It is also certain that P_{11}^{ω} is, so far as it goes, a perfectly correct prehension of Π_1. But we have no reason to believe that P_{11}^{ω} is a completely exhaustive and determinate prehension of Π_1. We are entitled to infer that P_{11}^{ω} *cannot* present Π_1 as an undifferentiated non-serial unit. But it is not obvious that we are entitled to infer that P_{11}^{ω} *must* present Π_1 as a series of distinct terms. It seems possible that P_{11}^{ω} should be a relatively vague prehension which presents Π_1 neither as an undifferentiated unit nor as a series of distinct terms, but presents Π_1 only as a more or less differentiated total object of some kind or other. Still less can we infer that P_{11}^{ω} must present Π_1 as a *one-dimensional* manifold whose terms form an *inclusion-series*. P_{11}^{ω} might present Π_1 as a set of distinct terms, and yet leave the percipient quite uncertain as to whether they do or do not form a series. It seems to me, then, that McTaggart has drawn a more definite conclusion than his premises will warrant.

(ii) The more specific criticism is this. Let us grant that, at the end of time, P_1 will prehend Π_1 as a non-temporal series of distinct terms. It does not follow that he will prehend Π_1 as that timeless series which appeared to him *sub specie temporis* at earlier moments as his own history through time. He *may* prehend it as having this property; for it does in fact have it. But, equally, he may *not* prehend it as having this property; for P_{11}^{ω}, though perfectly correct so far as it goes, is not known

to be completely exhaustive or determinate. But, unless P_{11}^{ω} does present Π_1 to P_1 as having this property, it is doubtful whether there is enough resemblance between P_{11}^{ω} and cognitions which can properly be called "memories" to justify us in saying that P_1 "regains all his memories" at the end of time.

5. Concluding Remarks.

I have entered rather fully into McTaggart's theory of pre-existence and plurality of lives for several reasons. In the first place, although this doctrine is a commonplace in the Far East, it has not, so far as I know, been taken seriously by any Western philosopher or theologian of eminence except McTaggart. Secondly, it seems to me to be a doctrine which ought to be taken very seriously, both on philosophical grounds and as furnishing a reasonable motive for right action. We have to conduct our present lives on *some* postulate or other, positive or negative, about what happens to our minds at the death of our bodies. We shall behave all the better if we act on the assumption that we may survive; that actions which tend to strengthen and enrich our characters in this life will probably have a favourable influence on the dispositions with which we begin our next lives; and that actions which tend to disintegrate our characters in this life will probably cause us to enter on our next life "halt and maimed". If we suppose that our future lives will be of the same general nature as our present lives, this postulate, which is in itself intelligible and not unreasonable, gains enormously in concreteness and therefore in practical effect on our conduct.

It remains to say a few words about the connexion between the doctrine of reincarnation and the theory of a Psychogenic Factor which I suggested in clause iii of Sub-section 1·14 p. 604 of this chapter. On this theory there could be something closely analogous to reincarnation; but it would be psycho-genic factors, and not selves, which transmigrate from organisms which have died to organisms which are just conceived. Instead of saying that one and the same *self S* has

successively animated a series B_1, B_2, ... B_n of bodies, we shall have to put the case as follows. One and the same psycho-genic factor Ψ has successively been connected with the series B_1, B_2, ... B_n of bodies, thus giving rise to the series S_1, S_2, ... S_n of selves. Selves belonging to this series have a specially intimate connexion with each other, because of the single psycho-genic factor Ψ which is common to all of them. And, since Ψ carries traces due to the experiences of the selves S_1, S_2, etc., the later selves of such a series will start their careers with dispositions which are partly determined by the actual experiences of earlier selves in the series. Lastly, during intervals when Ψ has become dissociated from one organism and has not yet become associated with another, it is liable to form temporary and unstable compounds with the organisms of mediumistic persons, and thus to give rise to those super-normal phenomena which have suggested that *selves* survive the death of their bodies and continue to exist in a disembodied state.

CHAPTER LV

GOD

I have already remarked that McTaggart is almost unique among Western thinkers in respect of the special form of the doctrine of immortality which he holds. We have now to notice two other peculiarities in his attitude towards those problems which are on the borderline of philosophy and theology. (i) He combines belief in human immortality with disbelief in the existence of God. Most Europeans who have believed in immortality have been theists, and most European atheists have disbelieved in immortality. There is nothing in the least illogical in McTaggart's combination of views, nor is it particularly uncommon when we take a wider survey. Buddhists, e.g., are atheistic believers in human immortality; and I suppose that the early Israelites combined a strong belief in God with a disbelief in human immortality.

(ii) Most of McTaggart's English contemporaries who rejected theism fall into one or other of two classes. They tended to be either wistful agnostics or indignant atheists. The wistful agnostics made up for their rejection of the metaphysical and historical dogmas of Christianity by expressing a rather hysterical admiration for its ethical doctrines and for the character of its founder, considered as a human being. The indignant atheists, many of whom had suffered in youth from tiresomely religious parents or guardians, celebrated their emancipation by exciting themselves over the deplorable effects of religious intolerance and repression throughout the ages.

McTaggart falls into neither of these classes. There was nothing "wistful" about his atheism. He claimed to prove, without assuming the existence of God, conclusions about our nature and destiny which are at least as cheerful as those which theists derive from that premise. No one will remain

inconsolable over the loss of his cow if he thinks that there is a
well-appointed dairy next door to his house. To those who
held up the moral teachings of primitive Christianity as a
model for us to follow here and now McTaggart was wont to
retort that "happily Christianity has been much improved
since the time of Christ and the apostles". Of Christ himself
McTaggart characteristically remarked: "I don't much like
him, though I admire the pluck that he displayed on the
cross." Again, a sense of humour and the study of Hegel
preserved him from the absurdities of indignant atheism.
No one who enjoys these two blessings is likely to make
himself ridiculous by adopting towards an immensely complex
psychological and social phenomenon, such as Christianity,
the tone of an angry governess who suspects Christ or one of
the apostles of having stolen her umbrella.

McTaggart treats of theism both in *Some Dogmas of Religion*
and in *The Nature of Existence*. In the former work he is
concerned with the traditional arguments for the existence of
God. This is a hackneyed subject; and, if there be anything
new and true to be added to Kant's and Hume's discussion,
McTaggart has not supplied it. I shall therefore confine my-
self to what he says in *The Nature of Existence*, where he
considers the existence of God in the light of the principles of
his own philosophical system.

In § 488 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart defines a
"god" as a particular which has the following three pro-
perties: It is a self; it is supreme, in the sense that it is much
more powerful than any other self, and is powerful enough to
exercise a profound influence by its volition on all that
exists; and it is good, in the sense of being at least more good
than bad. No doubt most theists would in fact hold that God
is *omnipotent*, that he is the *creator* of all other existents, and
that he is morally *perfect*. But they would hardly make these
extreme characteristics part of the definition of "deity". It
may be remarked that the second property in McTaggart's
definition entails that there cannot be more than one god.
There could not be several selves each of which is much more
powerful than any other self. On the other hand, there might

be several selves each of which is powerful enough to exercise a profound influence on all that exists. I should have thought that it would be advantageous to drop the first clause in the description of the second property and to keep the second clause in it. In this way we should avoid ruling out polytheism by definition.

A much more serious criticism on the definition is that, if it is taken strictly, we shall have to say that all Christians are atheists. For the God of Christianity is most certainly not a self. The Christian God is the Trinity. This may be called "personal", in the sense that it is a society of three intimately related persons. But it is not personal, in the sense of being a self. The only sense in which it can be called "personal" is that it has a set of parts each of which is a "person". But it is very doubtful whether, in calling each of the members of the Trinity a "person", theologians mean to assert that each of them is a self. I suppose that the Son *is* held to be a self, in a quite literal sense. I suspect that the Father would be described analogically as a "self", just as a sphere might be described analogically by a two-dimensional being as a "circle". But I should very much doubt whether the Holy Ghost would be described either literally or analogically as a self.

We could go some way towards meeting this objection if we modified McTaggart's definition as follows. We might say that a god is a particular which either (a) has the three properties mentioned by McTaggart, or (b) has a set of very intimately inter-connected parts each of which has these three properties. For the reasons stated above, it is rather doubtful whether the Christian Trinity would count as a god even on this extended definition. It is quite certain that it would not do so on McTaggart's own narrower definition.

McTaggart remarks in § 489 that the word "God" has been used by certain philosophers, such as Spinoza and Hegel, in a much wider sense than that in which it is used by popular religion or theology. It has been used by these philosophers as a name for the universe, taken as a collective whole, on the

assumption that it is not a mere aggregate or a mere chaos. He rightly rejects this usage as inconvenient and misleading. We have the name "Universe" or "Absolute" for this, and we want a name for the other conception which interests religion and theology. The name "God" should therefore be reserved for the latter. The question of fact that then remains is this: "Has the Universe, or the Absolute, such properties that it is God in the strict sense? Or, again, does it contain a part which has such properties?"

If there were a particular answering to the definition of a god, it would stand in one or other of the following three relations to the universe. (i) It might be identical with the universe; i.e., the universe might have the properties stated in the definition of "god". (ii) It might be part of the universe, and it might stand to all the rest of the universe in the relation of creator to created thing. (iii) It might be part of the universe, and it might guide and control the rest of the universe without having created it. We must now consider each of these alternatives in turn in the light of McTaggart's general principles.

(i) If the universe were a god, on McTaggart's definition, it would be a self. But it certainly contains selves. So this would entail that one self contains other selves as parts. This, according to McTaggart, is impossible. Therefore the universe cannot be a god; or, what is equivalent, God could not be identical with the universe.

There are two remarks to be made about this. (a) I have pointed out in this chapter that McTaggart's definition of "deity" is too narrow, and I have suggested how it might be widened. If we take the wider definition, the mere fact that the universe contains selves does not suffice to prove that it is not a god. If McTaggart's philosophy is sound, the universe *does* have a set of very intimately inter-connected parts each of which is a self. If each of these selves were more good than bad and were so powerful as to affect appreciably by its volition all the rest of the universe, the universe *would* be a god on that extended definition which is needed if the Christian Trinity is to count as a god. Now I think that there is no

doubt that McTaggart would hold that all selves are probably more good than bad. But, although selves must be very different in many respects from what they now appear to themselves and to others to be, there is no reason to think that they all have enormously greater power and influence than they now seem to have. Therefore there is no reason to believe that all selves are gods, in McTaggart's sense of the word. It follows that there is no reason to believe that the universe is a god, in the extended sense of the word.

(b) In clause vi of Sub-section 2·1 of Chap. xxx p. 153 of the present volume I discussed the question whether one self could be part of another self. I tried to show that it is not inconceivable that all selves should be parts of a single self of higher order, as a number of *great circles* are all parts of the surface of a single *sphere*, where a sphere is the three-dimensional figure which is analogous to a circle in two dimensions. Therefore it is not obvious to me that the universe might not be a super-self, in spite of its having a set of parts each of which is a self. So it is not obvious that the universe might not be a god even in McTaggart's narrow sense of that term.

(ii) The second question divides into three. (a) Could there be a particular, answering to McTaggart's definition of a god, which stands to the rest of the universe in the creative relation? (b) If not, could there be one whose relation to the rest of the universe resembles the creative relation so nearly that we might, without serious error, call it the creator of the rest of the universe? (c) Failing this, could there be one which would, *sub specie temporis*, present the delusive appearance of standing to the rest of the universe in the creative relation or something closely analogous thereto? We will take these three questions in turn.

(a) McTaggart answers the first question in the negative on three grounds. (α) Every self is a primary part of the universe, and every primary part of the universe is a self. This makes all of them absolutely and equally fundamental and ultimate elements. If there were one self which stood to all the rest in the creative relation, the rest would not be fundamental, but would derive their nature and their existence from this

creative self. Therefore no self can stand in this unique position.

(β) The notion of creation involves that of time. For, even if it be held that the creator and his creative act are non-temporal, it is part of the notion of creation that the created thing began to exist at a certain moment and continued to exist for a period starting from that date. But temporal characteristics are chimerical; and so creation, which involves such characteristics, must also be chimerical.

(γ) The creative relation is a specific form of the causal relation. Also it is essentially asymmetrical; if A creates B, it is impossible that B should also create A. Now McTaggart claims to have shown that asymmetry is introduced into the notion of causation *only* by reference to earlier and later. Apart from this, we can say only that A and B stand to each other in the causal relation. When we distinguish A as *cause* and B as *effect* of it we are simply adding to the statement that A and B are inter-related by the causal relation the further information that A is earlier than B. If A and B be simultaneous or timeless, no such distinction can be drawn. (See Vol. I, pp. 218 to 221, of the present work.) So, for this reason too, the notion of creation involves that of time, and must be rejected with the latter as delusive.

In the footnote on p. 179 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart rejects, without much discussion, the Cosmological Argument. He says that there is no objection either to a retrospectively unterminated causal series or to a causal series with an uncaused first term.

I propose to comment only on the third of these arguments. Creation may be a specific form of causation in *some* sense of the latter term, but it most certainly is not a specific form of causation in the sense defined by McTaggart in Chap. xxv of *The Nature of Existence*. According to this definition the causal relation relates *facts* of a certain kind, and it does so in respect of the predicate of one fact *conveying* that of another. (See Vol. I, p. 214 of the present work.) Now I cannot profess to have any clear positive notion of creation. But this at least is certain. We should say that A creates B only if we believed

that *A* and *B* were both *continuants*. And we should say it only if we believed that *A* had brought *B* into existence *en bloc* and completely *de novo*, and not by re-arranging pre-existing continuants so as to construct a new complex substance. Therefore there is no reason to suppose that any general principles which McTaggart has enunciated about causation, in *his* sense, will apply to creation. This consideration wrecks McTaggart's third argument, quoted above.

McTaggart always thinks of causation in terms of laws of necessary connexion between the manifestation of one characteristic and that of another at contiguous times and places in the history of the universe. In this sense of "causation" there *is* no objection either to a retrospectively unterminated causal series or to a causal series with an uncaused first term. But it is surely quite clear that this was not the sense of "causation" in which persons who accepted the Cosmological Argument used that term. They were thinking, not of general laws, but about the generation of one particular by another. It may be that causation, in their sense of the word, is a radically incoherent notion which cannot be satisfactorily formulated. But, in any case, a criticism of the Cosmological Argument which is based on an entirely different notion of causation from that which is used in the argument must be irrelevant.

(*b*) A relation of one-sided dependence of created things on their creator is of the very essence of the notion of creation. Now the fact that all selves are primary parts of the universe makes it impossible that there should be any such relation of one-sided dependence between some selves and others. Therefore no self can stand to the rest of the universe in any relation which is at all closely analogous to that of creation.

(*c*) Suppose that there were one self which appeared *sub specie temporis* to exist before all other selves began to exist. And suppose that its existence was really related causally to their existence. Then, on McTaggart's view of causation, this self could be called the cause of these other selves with as much truth as anything can be said to be the cause of anything else. Is it not, then, possible that there should be a

particular, answering to McTaggart's definition of a god, which would appear *sub specie temporis* as the creator of the rest of the universe, although in fact it is not so?

McTaggart's answer in § 494 is that the supposition could not possibly be fulfilled, because *sub specie temporis* every self appears to begin at the same moment.

In criticism of this answer I would ask the reader to refer to Sub-section 5·1 p. 370 of Chap. XXXIX and to Chap. LIII, p. 584 of the present volume. In the former passage I tried to show that McTaggart merely assumed, and never proved, that every pair of inclusion-series must consist of terms which are correlated in pairs which would appear to be simultaneous. In the latter passage I argued that, if all *C*-series have minimal end-terms, each self will appear to come into existence at some finite interval after the beginning of *possible* time, though all will appear to come into existence together at the beginning of *actual* time. I pointed out that this apparent interval would be of different lengths for different selves unless a certain special condition were fulfilled. I said that McTaggart evidently assumed that this condition is fulfilled, but that there is, so far as one can see, no reason why it *must* be so.

In the light of these remarks we can make the following criticism. McTaggart has given no conclusive reason why the following conditions should not be capable of fulfilment. (α) That all primary *C*-series but one have minimal end-terms. (β) That for all these series the ratio which the increment from zero content to the minimal end-term bears to the increment from zero content to the maximal end-term is the same. (γ) That there is one outstanding primary *C*-series which *either* has no minimal end-term *or* for which the ratio of the two increments has a smaller value than it has for the other series.

The consequence of the first two conditions would be that all selves but one would appear to spring into existence at the same finite interval after the beginning of possible time. The consequence of the third condition would be that one outstanding self would appear *either* to have existed throughout

all possible past time *or* to have sprung into existence at a finite interval after the beginning of possible time, and at a finite interval before the date at which all the rest of the selves began to exist.

I doubt, however, whether this outstanding self would appear as a creative god. If the C-series which corresponds to it has a minimal end-term, this self will appear to have sprung into existence in the course of possible time; and this is, to say the least, very unusual behaviour on the part of a creator of the universe. If, on the other hand, the C-series which corresponds to it has no minimal end-term, this self will appear retrospectively to approach the limit of zero content as it approaches the earlier limit of possible time. At the earlier stages of its existence, then, it can hardly have been a sufficiently developed self to be an *actual* god. At most we could say that it was always *potentially* divine. These are, however, merely questions about how certain words should be used under circumstances which were not contemplated by the persons who habitually use them. The possibilities which are left open by McTaggart's principles are as I have stated them; the names to be applied to them are a matter of convenience and verbal consistency.

(iii) This question, like the second, divides into three. (*a*) Could there be a particular, answering to McTaggart's definition of a god, which controls and governs the rest of the universe, though he does not create it? (*b*) If not, could there be one whose relation to the rest of the universe resembles governance and control so nearly that we might, without serious error, call it the governor and controller of the rest of the universe? (*c*) Failing this, could there be one which would appear, *sub specie temporis*, to stand in some such relation to the rest of the universe? We will take these questions in turn.

(*a*) and (*b*) McTaggart answers the first two questions in the negative on the following grounds. Control and governance of the rest of the world by God would involve an asymmetrical causal relation between him and it. But, according to McTaggart's doctrine of causation, it is only by reference

to temporal relations that two causally connected terms can
be distinguished into one which is a cause and not an effect of
the other and one which is an effect and not a cause of the
other. Since there are no temporal relations, it follows that
no self can stand to the rest of the universe either in the
relation of governance and control or in any relation suffi-
ciently like this to be called by that name without serious
risk of misunderstanding.

What are we to say about this argument? In the first
place, it is not open to the criticism which I made on the
similar argument about creation. Governance and control
are instances of causation in the sense which McTaggart had
in mind in his discussion in Chap. xxv of *The Nature of
Existence*. Nevertheless, I think that the argument is quite
inconclusive, even if we accept McTaggart's analysis of
causal propositions. According to this, the causal relation
involves a relation of conveyance between certain character-
istics. Now it is quite true that instances can be produced in
which the relation of conveyance between two character-
istics is reciprocal. E.g., being an equilateral triangle conveys
and is conveyed by being an equiangular triangle. But it is
also easy to produce instances in which the relation is not
reciprocal. E.g., to take an example of McTaggart's, being
now drunk conveys having drunk alcohol, but having drunk
alcohol does not convey being now drunk. Or, to take a non-
temporal example, being coloured conveys being spatial, but
being spatial does not convey being coloured. Therefore there
is no impossibility in there being a non-reciprocal relation of
conveyance between certain timeless states of a certain self
and certain other timeless states of all the rest of the selves in
the universe.

(c) However this may be, McTaggart answers the third
question in the affirmative. He sees no impossibility in there
being a self which appears *sub specie temporis* to control and
govern the universe by its volitions, as Napoleon, e.g.,
appeared *sub specie temporis* to influence profoundly the
history of Europe.

The question that remains is this. Granted that there

might be a self of whom it was as true to say that he exercises a profound influence over all the rest of the universe as it would be to say that Hitler exercises a profound influence over the rest of Germany, is there any positive reason to believe that there is such a self? This brings us to McTaggart's treatment of the Argument from Design.

We are not concerned here with any general criticisms of the argument from design. These, and the attempted answers to them, may be taken as read. We are concerned only with the bearing on this argument of the special principles of McTaggart's philosophy. His discussion will be found in §§ 498 to 500, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*.

According to McTaggart, the argument has two stages. (*a*) It contends that the universe is probably controlled by a self of some kind because it "might have been a chaos, and that it should have been some sort of chaos is antecedently more probable than that there should have been order and system without a controlling person". (*b*) It further contends that the controlling self must be good, on the ground that "the order and system of the universe form appropriate means to a good end".

To the first contention McTaggart answers as follows. It is not *intuitively a priori* that the universe could not have been a chaos, as it is that $2 + 2$ is not equal to 5. But it is *demonstrably a priori*, like the proposition that the square root of 2 is not a rational number. It follows from certain premises which are intuitively *a priori* that every particular is connected by general laws with certain other particulars. (See Vol. I, Chap. XXII, of the present work.) We do not need a controlling person to guarantee what is intrinsically necessary.

Again, as we shall see in Book X, McTaggart claims to prove from self-evident premises that the universe must be more good than bad, and that *sub specie temporis* it must inevitably, though not uniformly or continuously, improve as time goes on. We do not need a good controlling person to guarantee goods which will inevitably be realised whether he exists or not.

The only comment which it seems necessary to make is the following. The argument from design does not, I think, postulate a controlling person in order to account for the fact that there are *general laws* in the universe. It assumes that there are such laws; and, indeed, it is very difficult to see what control or governance could mean except on the assumption that the controller is faced with persons and things which have fairly definite properties of their own. The argument bases itself on certain very special empirical features in the universe; e.g., the existence and development of life and mind. It argues that these features would follow only from the combination of the actual laws and properties with very special *collocations of particulars*. What it holds to be antecedently improbable in the absence of a controlling self is these very special collocations of particulars. In so far as it concerns itself with general laws and properties at all, the question that interests it is, not that there are laws and properties of some kind or other, but that they are of certain very peculiar kinds.

I am not, of course, defending the argument from design. This is not the place to do so, even if I wished to. But I do contend that McTaggart's attempt to show that, on his own principles, the argument errs by postulating a contingent cause for intrinsically necessary features in the universe, is simply an *ignoratio elenchi*.

We may now sum up the discussion. Although we have seen that there are certain loopholes in McTaggart's system into which a very insistent theist might insert a very tenuous God, we must admit that atheism is the natural and proper outcome of his philosophy. Since ordinary everyday selves, like you and me and the salt in our salt-cellars and the bacilli in our blood, are primary parts of the universe, they are too much like gods to leave much room for any unique self which might be called God. On the other hand, they are too little like gods to make it reasonable to call the universe as a whole God merely on the ground that it is a complex composed of such selves intimately inter-related. And, if there is little room for a god, there is, as we shall see in the

next Book, very little need for one. Most theists want a god in order to conserve and increase the amount of positive value in the universe. If McTaggart is right, this desirable consummation is guaranteed automatically without our needing to take out a theistic insurance-policy.

BOOK X

VALUE IN THE UNIVERSE

Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame—
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
<div align="right">Paradise Lost, Book II</div>

ARGUMENT OF BOOK X

In the first chapter of this Book we begin by considering the
nature of value-predicates, according to McTaggart; the
question whether they are or are not indefinable; and so on.
We then distinguish valifying characteristics from value-
predicates, and consider what characteristics may plausibly
be held to be good-making or bad-making. Next we discuss
McTaggart's views about value as a magnitude which de-
pends jointly on the intensity of a valifying characteristic and
the apparent duration for which it is manifested.

In the second chapter we consider what kinds of particulars
are capable of having value. First we discuss McTaggart's
doctrine that value cannot belong to any group of selves.
Next we consider his arguments on the question whether
value belongs to selves only or to total phases of the histories
of selves or to single experiences less extensive than such total
phases. Finally we discuss his arguments as to whether
there are unconscious mental states, and, if so, what effect
they would have on the value associated with a self.

In the third chapter we are concerned with the amount and kind of value associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series. We begin by pointing out ambiguities in this notion, and trying to clear them up. Then we consider McTaggart's arguments to prove that the value associated with such a term is infinite in amount and infinitely more good than bad.

In the fourth chapter, which brings this Book to an end, we discuss McTaggart's doctrine that very little can be said about the value pertaining to those stages of C-series which ostensibly come between now and the end of time; and we see that, although his theory must be called "optimistic" in the very long run, yet it is by no means a cheap and easy optimism.

CHAPTER LVI

GENERAL THEORY OF VALUE

McTaggart introduces the subject of Value in Chap. LXIV of *The Nature of Existence*, and applies his results in the subsequent chapters. In this chapter I shall consider his views about the nature of value, about the characteristics which give value to those things which have them, and about value as a kind of magnitude.

1. Nature of Value-predicates.

A thing can be said to "have value" or "to be valuable" (the two phrases are equivalent) if and only if it would be intelligible to say of it that it is *better* or *worse* than something else or that it is *as good as* something else. McTaggart points out in Note 1 on p. 411 of Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence* that we must distinguish between not having value and having zero value. If a thing has zero value, it is better than anything that is bad and worse than anything that is good. If it has not value, all statements to the effect that it is better or worse than anything are meaningless.

I think it should be added that a thing might have zero value in two different ways. (*a*) It might have some qualities which would make it good in the absence of the rest, and some which would make it bad in the absence of the rest; and the compresence of the two sets of qualities might give it zero value. (*b*) It might have no qualities which would make it good in the absence of the rest, and none which would make it bad in the absence of the rest. In the first case it might be said to have zero "nett value"; in the second it might be said to have zero "homogeneous value". Exactly similar remarks would apply to any finite degree of goodness or badness. One thing might have nett goodness or nett badness of a certain degree, and another thing might have the same

degree of homogeneous goodness or homogeneous badness, respectively.

1·1. *The Predicates "Good" and "Evil".* Since "having value" has been defined in terms of being better than or being worse than or being as good as, we must now consider these relations and the qualities of goodness and badness with which they are connected.

In the first place, there are certain ambiguities to be avoided. McTaggart points out that he uses the terms "good" and "evil" (and therefore the term "valuable") exclusively in a *non-instrumental* sense. If a thing tends to produce consequences which are good, in this sense, it will be said to have "utility" in respect of this property, but it will not be called "good" in respect of it. If a thing tends to produce consequences which are evil, in the non-instrumental sense, it will be said to have "disutility" in respect of this property, but it will not be called "evil" in respect of it.

McTaggart does not discuss the many ambiguities which still remain in the terms "good" and "evil", even when the instrumental usage has been excluded. He assumes that there is a certain non-instrumental sense of "good" and "evil" which we all recognise under the names of "*intrinsically* good" and "*intrinsically* evil". It is in this sense that he claims to use the words "good" and "evil". Of course many philosophers, of whom Spinoza is perhaps the most important, would deny that there are any characteristics of which "intrinsically good" and "intrinsically evil" are names. McTaggart does not mention, or attempt to refute, this view. He just assumes that there is a pair of opposed characteristics which are quite familiar to everyone under the names "intrinsically good" and "intrinsically evil".

1·11. *Indefinability of "Good" and "Evil".* In § 787 McTaggart says that it is generally admitted that "good" and "evil" cannot be defined in terms of anything else, and in § 812 he says that neither can be defined in terms of the other. We will take these two statements in turn.

(i) In considering whether "good" and "evil" can be defined in terms of anything else we must distinguish two

questions which McTaggart does not separate. (a) Can "good" and "evil" be defined wholly in non-ethical terms? (b) Supposing that they cannot, can they be defined partly in non-ethical terms and partly in terms of other ethical notions, such as "right" or "ought" or "fitting"?

McTaggart considers only the first question. He answers that those who are inclined to think that such a definition is possible are almost certainly mistaking a necessary and reciprocal *synthetic* connexion between goodness or badness, on the one hand, and some set of non-ethical characteristics, on the other, for an *analysis* of the former in terms of the latter. I think it must be admitted that, when this confusion is avoided, no proposed definition of "intrinsically good" or "intrinsically bad" in wholly non-ethical terms seems to be at all plausible.

An example of the second kind of definition would be the following. "X is intrinsically good" might mean "X is an object which it is fitting for a human being to desire as an end." Such definitions have been elaborately discussed by Mr Osborne in Chap. XI of his book *The Philosophy of Value*. It seems to me that, *if* there is a pair of characteristics of which "intrinsically good" and "intrinsically evil" are names, it is quite plausible to suppose that they can be analysed in this way. Any reader who is interested to know what I have to say on the whole subject may consult my paper "Is 'Goodness' a Name of a Simple Non-natural Quality?" in the *Proceedings* of the Aristotelian Society for 1934.

(ii) We pass now to the question whether "good" or "evil" could be defined in terms of the other. McTaggart approaches this by raising the following question, which he discusses in §§ 809 to 811, inclusive. It may be put as follows.

It is commonly assumed that good and evil are two polar-opposite forms of value-quality, each capable of occurring in any degree from zero upwards, just as sensible hotness and sensible coldness are two polar-opposite forms of the quality of sensible temperature. Is it really necessary to assume this? Might it not suffice to suppose that there is a single value-quality, capable of variation in degree in one direction

only from zero; and a single value-relation, viz., more-valuable-than, with its converse less-valuable-than? The value-quality might then be compared to sensible extensity; and the value-relation might be compared to more-extensive-than, with its converse less-extensive-than.

On this view to say that X is good would be comparable to saying that X is large, and to say that X is evil would be comparable to saying that X is small. "X is good" would mean that X is more valuable than a certain term Y, which is taken as a standard of reference. "X is bad" would mean that X is less valuable than a certain term Y, which is taken as a standard of reference. The term which is in fact being taken as the standard for comparison need not be explicitly mentioned, and the person who makes the valuation might even fail to notice that any such standard of reference is involved. When I call a certain house "large" or "small", I mean that it is more, or less, extensive than the average house. And, when I call a man "good" or "bad", I might mean only that he is more, or less, valuable than the average man or than most of his contemporaries. Obviously this is an important suggestion, and worth serious consideration.

McTaggart's objection to the proposed analysis may be put as follows. I can contemplate a possible person or state of affairs, and judge that it would be better that such a person should not exist or that such a state of affairs should not occur. I can, e.g., contemplate the possibility of there being a man who suffered continual pain and believed with intense satisfaction that everyone else was in the same condition. I have no hesitation in judging that it would be better that such a man should not exist. And, if there actually were such a man, I should have no hesitation in judging that it would have been better if he had not existed. We certainly make such judgments as these, about possible and actual particulars; and there is no reason to doubt that some of them are true.

Now, if a person with these characteristics would be *positively bad*, it is easy to see how such judgments can be justified. If such a person does not exist, there is *pro tanto*

less evil in the universe than there would be if he did. If such a person does exist, there is *pro tanto* more evil in the universe than there would be if he did not. Of course this might be counterbalanced by the possibility that a bad man in a bad state may be an essential cause-factor in producing certain good consequences, that he may be an object of good desires and emotions, and so on. Still, there is a strong *prima facie* case for believing that there would be a greater nett balance of good in the universe if he did not exist than if he did, on the supposition that such a person would be positively bad.

But suppose we take the view that there is just a single value-quality ranging in degree from zero upwards in only one direction, and that sentences like "X is good" and "X is bad" are to be interpreted by analogy with sentences like "X is large" and "X is small", respectively. Consider in the light of this the possibility of a man who suffered continual pain and believed with intense satisfaction that everyone else was in the same condition.

Such a man, if he existed, would at the very worst have zero value. He might have some small positive value, and he could no more have negative value than a coloured sensum could have negative extensity. All that is meant by saying that he would be bad is that he would have considerably less value than some explicit or implicit standard term, such as Nero or the average man. Suppose that such a man does exist. If he had not existed, the aggregate nett value in the universe could not possibly have been thereby increased, and it might have been slightly diminished. Suppose, again, that such a man does not exist. If he had existed, the aggregate nett value in the universe could not possibly have been thereby diminished, and it might have been slightly increased. Therefore there is a *prima facie* case for believing that it would be somewhat better that such a man should exist than that he should not. Of course this might be counterbalanced by the possibility that a man of much below average value may be an essential cause-factor in reducing the values of other persons or of their states. Still, I think it is evident that

such judgments as we are considering would be *unreasonable* on the view that there is a single value-quality, ranging in degree from zero upwards in one direction only. And we have seen that they would be *reasonable* on the view that badness is a form of value opposed to goodness as sensible coldness is to sensible hotness.

On the whole, then, we may reject the view that there is just a single value-quality, ranging in degree from zero upwards in one direction only. We may accept the common view that the series of values stretches out in two polarly-opposed directions from a neutral point, like the series of sensible temperatures.

McTaggart concludes from this that "good" cannot be defined in terms of evil, and that "evil" cannot be defined in terms of good, any more than "sensibly hot" can be defined in terms of sensibly cold, or *vice versa*. Even if the theory which he has rejected had been true, I do not think that it could properly be stated in the form that "good" or "evil" could be defined in terms of the *other*. The position would have been that *both* of them could have been defined in terms of the single quality of value and the single relation of more-valuable-than and its converse. Probably what McTaggart means is that, on the theory which he has rejected, "to be good" would be defined as having some degree of value greater than zero, and "to be bad" would be defined as being less good than something which is taken as a standard of reference. In this sense it might be said that "evil" was defined in terms of good.

Before leaving this topic we may remark that McTaggart rejects the common epistemological theory that a man could have no idea of good unless he had had experience of evil. He says, quite rightly, that it would be enough to have had experience of good states which had various degrees of goodness and were not all alike in their other qualities (*Nature of Existence*, Vol. II, p. 411, Note 2).

1·2. *Value pertaining to Wholes.* In § 788 McTaggart introduces an important distinction which is needed in discussing complex wholes from the standpoint of value.

Suppose that W is a whole. Then it is one thing to say that W has value, and it is another thing to say that W has one or more parts which have value. It is obviously possible that the second might be true, whilst the first was false. And it seems to me to be quite possible for the first to be true and the second false. Now McTaggart defines the statement "There is value *in* X" to mean that *either* X has value, *or* X has at least one part which has value. The alternatives are not, of course, meant to be exclusive. He defines the statement "There is value *of* X" to mean that X has value.

I propose to introduce two phrases which will be useful in this connection. I shall use the phrase "Value *pertains to* X" as equivalent to McTaggart's phrase "There is value *in* X". I shall use the phrase "X *contains* value" as equivalent to "X has at least one part which has value". With these conventions the phrase "Value pertains to X" is equivalent to "Either X *has* value or X *contains* value", where the two alternatives are not meant to be exclusive.

2. Valifying Characteristics.

McTaggart makes a very important point in § 801. We often talk of characteristics as "good" or "bad", and we often talk of a particular as being "partly good" and "partly bad" in so far as it has both "good qualities" and "bad qualities". But a moment's reflexion shows that it is only particulars which can be literally good or bad. What are called "good" and "bad" characteristics are characteristics which *give* goodness or badness *to* the particulars which they qualify. I propose to talk of such characteristics as "good-making" and "bad-making", respectively. And, in general, I shall call a characteristic a "valifying characteristic" if it is either good-making or bad-making.

Now, in the case of a whole which has value, there is a special application of this notion. Suppose that W has the relational property of containing a part P of a certain kind. Then, whether P has value or not, the property of containing P as a part may be a valifying characteristic of W. Let us suppose that it is. Suppose, further, that P also has value.

Then, of course, W both *has* value and *contains* value. In that case we can say that W both *gets* value from P and *contains* value in respect of P. Suppose that the property of containing P as a part is not a valifying characteristic of W; but suppose, as before, that P has value. Then we can say that W gets no value from P, but contains value in respect of P. Lastly, suppose that the property of containing P as a part is a valifying characteristic of W; but suppose now that P has no value. Then we can say that W gets value from P, but contains no value in respect of P. These distinctions are not drawn by McTaggart; but I see no reason to doubt that he would have accepted them. We shall find them useful in the course of the discussion.

2·1. *Enumeration of Valifying Characteristics.* In § 813 McTaggart enumerates certain characteristics, each of which has been held by many people to affect the value pertaining to any self which possesses it. The goodness pertaining to a self has been held to depend on the following properties. (i) On having knowledge or true belief. (ii) On having virtuous volitions. (iii) On having certain kinds of emotion, such as love. (iv) On having pleasant experiences. (v) On having a rich, variegated, and intense mental life. And (vi) on having an internally coherent and harmonious mental life. The badness pertaining to any self has been held to depend on having misprehensions and false beliefs; on having vicious volitions; on having certain kinds of emotion, such as hatred and jealousy; on having unpleasant experiences; and on having an internally incoherent and discordant mental life. There does not seem to be any contrary opposite to the fifth good-making characteristic.

Some people have fastened on some one of the characteristics in this list, and have held that the rest can be dispensed with. Hedonists, e.g., would hold that having pleasant experiences and having unpleasant experiences are ultimately the only characteristics which need to be considered in estimating value. McTaggart thinks that the first five, at any rate, are independent and irreducible valifying characteristics, though they are of very different degrees of importance. He

thinks that the sixth can probably be reduced to various combinations of the other five.

2·2. *Existence is not a Valifying Characteristic.* In the last six sections of Chap. LXIV of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart considers whether there is any necessary or uniform connexion between merely existing, on the one hand, and being good or being bad, on the other. He concludes that there is no such connexion, analytic or synthetic, direct or indirect.

I think that there is no doubt that what McTaggart means to assert is correct. But, as we know, he holds that existence is a quality, just as goodness or redness is; and we have had to reject this simple-minded view. It is, therefore, desirable to restate the problem and the argument for ourselves.

If the reader will refer to Section 2 of Chap. II of the present work, p. 21 of Vol. I, he will find that I distinguished two *categories* which I denoted by the names "existend" and "subsistend". Further, there is the *property* of having instances, which belongs to some and not to all sets of characteristics. Now, with regard to any characteristic or set of characteristics, two quite different kinds of question can be raised. (i) Does it have at least one instance? And, if so, does it have more than one? (ii) If it had an instance, would this be existend? The second question can be answered even if we do not know the answer to the first, or if we do know that the answer to the first is in the negative. For it is equivalent to asking whether, if there were an instance of this set of characteristics, it would be a *particular*, as opposed, e.g., to a universal, a fact, a characteristic, a class, a proposition, and so on. Thus, we know that, if there were an instance of phoenixhood, it would be existend; though we are fairly certain that phoenixhood never has had or will have an instance. Again, we know that there is a rational fraction whose square is equal to the ratio of 4 to 1, and we know that it is not existend but is subsistend. With these preliminary notions clear in our minds, we can tackle the present question.

(i) It is, I suppose, admitted by everyone that a mere set of characteristics can have no value.

(ii) It is also admitted that, if a set of characteristics had

an instance, the latter would have no value unless it were existend. A phoenix might have value; a rational fraction could have none. Therefore we can confine our attention to those sets of characteristics whose instances, if they had any, would be existend. Let us call any such set an "Existential Essence".

(iii) If it is admitted that good, bad, and existend are all simple terms, it follows that neither good nor bad can be part of the analysis of existend, and that existend cannot be part of the analysis of good or of bad. It also seems perfectly clear that neither "good" nor "bad" is just another name for the unanalysable characteristic of which "existend" is a name. So there can be no *analytic* connexion between being existend and being good, or between being existend and being bad.

(iv) Some existential essences have instances; some never have had and probably never will have any. Of those which have instances some have more and some fewer, and some have ceased to have any. The existential essences humanity, phoenixhood, and dodohood, illustrate these alternatives.

Now some people have talked as if they held the following view. They have implied that any increase in the number of instances of *any* existential essence would *ipso facto* have increased the amount of good in the universe. If this is so, it follows that the universe would *ipso facto* have contained more good if there had been more tapeworms than there in fact are and have been. It would *ipso facto* have contained more good if there were still dodos and moas and mastodons. And it would *ipso facto* have contained more good if there had been phoenixes and dragons and ghouls and vampires. On this view, then, any existend is, as such, more good than bad, no matter what other characteristics it may have. This seems so patently false that it is hard to believe that anyone has really held it, and still harder to believe that anyone has found it self-evident.

(v) Probably most people who have held this view have not found it *self*-evident. They have deduced it from the premise that the series of values goes in one direction only from zero upwards; that to call a thing "bad" means simply

that it is less valuable than something else, real or ideal, which is taken as a standard; and that anything that has *any* degree of value can be called "good". We have rejected this theory of the nature of value-predicates; but we may ask whether, if it were true, it would justify the conclusion that any increase in the number of instances of any existential essence would *ipso facto* have increased the amount of good in the universe.

As we saw in clause ii of Sub-section 1·11 of the present chapter, it does follow from this theory of the nature of value-predicates that the addition of a vampire or a ghoul or of more tapeworms to the contents of the universe would *pro tanto* either slightly increase the aggregate nett value contained in it or would at worst leave this unaltered. But we have to remember that any such additions would involve changes in the universe as a whole and in some of its already existing parts. In the first place, the universe would be more variegated and richer in content if it contained instances of species, such as phoenixes, vampires, and ghouls, which are not and never have been represented. It might be held that this increase in variety and richness of content would, as such, make an addition to the value contained in the universe. Secondly, any such added items would necessarily stand in various relations, causal and non-causal, to some of the already existing parts of the universe. Therefore these parts would, *ipso facto*, get additional relational properties, which might either increase or diminish their value. If there were vampires, e.g., some people would certainly be bitten by them, and the value of a person who is drained of blood is likely to be diminished. On the other hand, some people might fall in love with some vampires or strive disinterestedly to convert them to vegetarianism. These emotions and activities would add to the goodness contained in the universe.

It seems clear then that, even on the theory of the nature of value-predicates which we discussed and rejected in clause ii of Sub-section 1·11 of this chapter, it does not necessarily follow that any increase in the number of instances of *any*

existential essence would *ipso facto* have increased the amount of good in the universe. No doubt it would, *at the moment*, increase this aggregate by the amount of value (which cannot be less than zero) possessed by the new instance. It would also, at the moment, increase this aggregate by the added richness and variety of content introduced into the universe. But, when relations had been established and the situation had settled down again, the value pertaining to pre-existing parts of the universe might have been so much diminished that there would be a nett loss of value on the whole.

The upshot of the discussion is that there is no discernible uniform connexion between being existend and being good or between being existend and being bad. To be either good or bad or indifferent entails being existend; but, if we want to estimate the relative amounts of good and evil pertaining to anything, we must not confine ourselves to the property of being existend, which is common to the universe as a whole and to every part of it and has no variation in degree and no polar opposite. We must take into account more specific characteristics, such as those which we enumerated in Sub-section 2·1 above.

3. Value as a Kind of Magnitude.

It is obvious that we often compare persons or experiences or societies in respect of value, and say that one is *more* or *less* good or bad than another. This makes value a kind of magnitude, as defined by McTaggart. I propose to discuss this topic in my own way, but I shall cover all the ground which McTaggart covers.

3·1. *Resultant Value and Nett Aggregate Value.* The fact that value has two polarly-opposed forms, stretching out in opposite directions from zero, introduces certain complications which would not be present if it had only one form, like extension. A thing may be "partly good" and "partly bad", and we must, in some sense, balance these two opposed aspects against each other in order to reach an estimate of its "value".

Now, it seems to me that a distinction must be drawn here,

corresponding to the distinction between the value *of* a thing and the value *contained in* a thing, which we mentioned in Sub-section 1·2 above. Let us begin by considering a term X which *has* value but does not *contain* value. Such a term might have certain characteristics which are good-making and certain others which are bad-making. The determinate kind and degree of value which it has would be a resultant of these two sets of characteristics, just as the determinate direction and speed with which a body moves is a resultant of the various forces which act on it. If all its valifying characteristics are good-making, its resultant value can be described as "Pure Goodness". If they are all bad-making, its resultant value can be described as "Pure Badness". If some are of one kind and some of the other, its resultant value may be described as "Blended Value". Now a thing which has blended value may have either a "good Shade of Blended Value" or a "bad Shade of Blended Value" or the "neutral Shade of Blended Value". The series of shades of blended value may be compared to the series of greys, passing from pure black as one limit to pure white as the other through a just neutral shade of grey.

Now let us pass to the other extreme, and consider a whole W which *contains* value but *has* no value. (As we shall see later, McTaggart holds that any whole composed of selves answers to these conditions.) To say that W contains value means that it has parts which have value. Now it is obvious that the following alternatives are possible. (*a*) It might be that every part of W which is valuable at all is good. (*b*) It might be that every part of W which is valuable at all is bad. Or (*c*) it might be that W has some good parts and some bad parts. In the first case we can say that it contains an "unmixed aggregate of goodness" of a certain amount. In the second case we can say that it contains an "unmixed aggregate of badness" of a certain amount. In the third case we can say that it contains a "mixed aggregate of value". This may be either a certain "nett aggregate of goodness" or a certain "nett aggregate of badness" or a "nett neutral aggregate of value".

Now any part of W which has value might be purely good or purely bad or have a good or a bad shade of blended value. So both the notions of resultant value and nett aggregate value are, in general, needed in dealing with the value contained in a whole.

3·11. *McTaggart's Doctrine of Nett Aggregate Value.* Suppose that a whole W has several parts which have value. Then McTaggart definitely asserts in § 790 of *The Nature of Existence* that there is, associated with W, a certain "total or aggregate" which is the value contained in W in respect of these valuable parts. This, he says, is quite independent of whether W *has* value or not.

This seems to be very doubtful. No argument is given for it except a singularly futile analogy in § 790. We are told there that "we can speak of the total, or average, drunkenness in a town by adding together the drunkenness of the drunken inhabitants to get the first, and by comparing this with the total number of inhabitants of the town to get the second".

Surely this is stuff and nonsense! How can I "add together" Smith's drunkenness and Jones's drunkenness? If everyone in the town who gets drunk is arrested every time that he does so, and everyone who is arrested is fined proportionally to the degree of his drunkenness, I can, no doubt, add together the fines for the year and can call the total sum "a measure of the aggregate annual drunkenness". I can divide this sum by the number of inhabitants and get a quotient which I can call "a measure of the average annual drunkenness". These arithmetical operations might be quite useful if I wanted to compare one town with another in a given year, or one town with itself in different years, in respect of drunkenness. Even in this very simple case there might be difficulties in the requirement that the fines should always be *proportional to* the degree of drunkenness, and that the proportion should be *the same* for different towns and different years.

Now, if the values of the valuable parts of W can all be compared, and if numbers can be correlated with them on

some consistent system (positive for goodness, and negative for badness, I suppose), I can take the algebraical sum of these numbers and can call it "a measure of the nett aggregate value contained in W". But I cannot add the values themselves, in any case; I can add only the numbers which are correlated with them. And there is no reason *a priori* for assuming that the values of the valuable parts of W always could be correlated with numbers, positive or negative, on a single consistent system. Lastly, if some of the valuable parts of W have a resultant value which is blended, the difficulty of assigning a numerical measure to the values of the parts will be greatly increased.

I think that it is important, in this connexion, to distinguish between two cases which can arise over magnitudes and measurement. (*a*) Sometimes certain arithmetical operations with numbers merely provide us with a convenient way of measuring a certain kind of magnitude which is obviously independent of these operations. It is obvious, e.g., that volume is a special kind of magnitude, which is conveniently measured by multiplying together three numbers which represent lengths measured in three directions at right angles to each other. No one in his senses would *identify* volume with a product of three numbers representing lengths. (*b*) In other cases, where we equally profess to be measuring a certain kind of magnitude by performing certain operations with numbers, it is very doubtful whether there is any kind of magnitude to be measured. What is called the measured magnitude simply *is* the result of the numerical operation, viewed in the light of our knowledge of the various kinds of magnitude which the various numbers in the operand measure. We might, perhaps, distinguish between "intrinsic magnitudes" and "constructed magnitudes", and take volume as an example of the former. Now I am pretty certain that the aggregate or the average annual drunkenness of a town is a constructed, and not an intrinsic magnitude. But it can be constructed and it is useful for many purposes. If the aggregate value contained in a whole is a magnitude at all, I think that it is certainly a constructed one, like the aggregate

drunkenness of a town, and not an intrinsic one, like the volume of a lump of gold. But I am very doubtful whether it has even this status, for I am very doubtful whether the conditions are fulfilled without which no such magnitude can be constructed.

McTaggart gives some attention to these fundamental questions about magnitude and measurement in the latter part of Chap. LXVI of *The Nature of Existence*. He remarks in § 864 that many people will be inclined to object to his view of value and its determinants as "too quantitative". He devotes the rest of the chapter to answering this objection. We will now consider what he has to say.

He thinks that such critics are making two contentions, which may be stated as follows. (i) That his view entails that the aggregate value contained in a collection of m good things T_1, T_2, ... T_m, and of n bad things T_{m+1}, T_{m+2}, ... T_{m+n}, is $(g_1 + g_2 + ... + g_m) - (b_{m+1} + b_{m+2} + ... + b_{m+n})$, where g_r is the amount of goodness of the good thing T_r and b_{m+r} is the amount of badness of the bad thing T_{m+r}. This may be written for shortness as $\sum_1^m g_r - \sum_1^n b_{m+r}$. (ii) That his view entails the following proposition. Suppose that a thing T has a valifying characteristic Γ (such as hedonic tone) in a mixed form which involves both a good-making determinable C (such as pleasantness) and a bad-making determinable C' 'such as unpleasantness). Suppose that C is present in the determinate form c, and that C' is present in the determinate form c'. Then the value v_Γ, which T derives from the presence in it of Γ, is determined by $c - c'$.

McTaggart admits that his view does involve these two propositions. I think that it also involves a third, which he does not explicitly mention. I will therefore formulate it here. (iii) Suppose that a thing T has several different determinable characteristics Γ_1, Γ_2, ... Γ_μ, of the kind mentioned in (ii) above. Then McTaggart assumes, I think, that the resultant value v, which T derives from their compresence in it, is the sum $v_{\Gamma_1} + v_{\Gamma_2} ... + v_{\Gamma_\mu}$, of the values which it would derive from each of these determinables separately, each item being calculated in the way mentioned in (ii) above.

Now the first proposition presupposes that the amounts of goodness in various good things can, in theory, be measured in common units, and that the amount of badness in various bad things can, in theory, be measured in common units. Unless this be assumed $\sum_{1}^{m} g_r$ and $\sum_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ are both meaningless. Further, it presupposes that the units in which goodness is measured and the units in which badness is measured are the same, and that they differ only as an inch length measured from an origin to the right differs from an inch length measured from the same origin along the same line in the opposite direction. Unless this be assumed the difference $\sum_{1}^{m} g_r - \sum_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ is meaningless, even if $\sum_{1}^{m} g_r$ and $\sum_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ separately are significant. Lastly, let us suppose that these two assumptions are granted. Then the operation symbolised by $\sum_{1}^{m} g_r - \sum_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ is *arithmetically* intelligible and possible. Therefore it will at least define a *constructed* magnitude, which can be called the "aggregate nett value contained in" this collection of m good and n bad things. The question will still remain whether there is an *intrinsic* magnitude, distinct from this numerical construct, and such that the latter can be called a *measure of* the former. Now both the presuppositions which I have mentioned seem very doubtful. McTaggart does not discuss or attempt to defend either of them. I think that he may be discussing, *inter alia*, the question whether the aggregate nett value contained in a whole is an intrinsic magnitude or only a constructed one, in the very obscure and confused § 866.

Let us now consider the presuppositions of Proposition ii, above. This has four presuppositions. (*a*) That any valifying characteristic, such as hedonic tone, which is present in a blended form in a thing, can be resolved into two pure components of opposite kinds, such as pleasantness and unpleasantness, in a certain proportion to each other. (*b*) That the amount of each of these components can be measured. (*c*) That the units in which each can be measured are the

same, and that the opposition can be expressed by a mere difference of plus or minus sign. And (*d*) that the algebraical sum of these two measures is the measure of the amount of the blended characteristic. McTaggart mentions and defends two of these presuppositions, viz., (*b*) and (*c*). We will now consider what he has to say on these points.

In § 864 he says that the only plausible objection to the view that the amount of pleasantness, e.g., in an experience can be measured is that its magnitude is intensive. (It would be more accurate to say that the magnitude of one of its dimensions is intensive. For another dimension which enters into the amount of pleasantness in an experience is its duration; and the magnitude of this is extensive.) McTaggart professes to answer this objection by referring to his doctrine in Chap. XLVIII of *The Nature of Existence* that any two intensive quanta of the same kind have a "difference" which is an extensive quantum. I have tried to show, in Chap. XLII pp. 426–435 of the present volume, that this doctrine and the consequences which McTaggart draws from it are a mass of error and confusion. Therefore, in my opinion, no satisfactory answer can be provided along these lines.

Nevertheless, this particular objection can be answered. There are just distinguishable differences of degree between intensive quanta of the same kind. There is a degree of hotness which we can just distinguish as hot. Suppose we give to this the ordinal number 1. There is a degree of hotness which we can just distinguish as hotter than this. Suppose we give to it the ordinal number 2. And so on. Consider a temperature-sensation which goes on unchanged for t seconds and has the ordinal number n on this scale of intensity. It seems reasonable to say that anyone who had had a temperature-sensation of the *same* intensity which had lasted *longer* would have "experienced more sensible heat". It also seems reasonable to say that anyone who had had a temperature-sensation of the *same* duration which had been *more intense* would have "experienced more sensible heat". Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, with "less" substituted for "more".

We can, therefore, conceive a function F of the two numbers

n and t, having the following properties. (a) $F(0, t) = 0$.
(b) $F(n, 0) = 0$. (c) According as n' is greater or less than
n, $F(n', t)$ is greater or less than $F(n, t)$. (d) According as t'
is greater or less than t, $F(n, t')$ is greater or less than $F(n, t)$.
The simplest function answering to these conditions is, of
course, the product $(n \cdot t)$. But, if we assume that this is the
function, we shall have to say that the amount of sensible
heat experienced by a person is the same, whether he has a
sensation of ordinal number 10 lasting for 5 seconds, or a
sensation of ordinal number 2 lasting for 25 seconds. It seems
doubtful whether we always should be prepared to say such
things, and therefore it is doubtful whether the simple product
is the right function to adopt as our measure.

However this may be, the general procedure which I have
indicated can be adopted in regard to any characteristic
which has intensive magnitude and may be manifested con-
tinuously for various periods. And I think that there is no
doubt that we do in fact proceed in this way. Therefore, if the
only objection to McTaggart's view on nett aggregate value
as a magnitude were that it involves measuring intensive
quanta, his theory might stand. But, as we have seen, it
involves a great deal more than this, and some of its other
presuppositions are much more questionable.

In § 866 McTaggart is undoubtedly discussing an objection
based on the alleged impossibility of *summing* certain quanta,
even if these can be individually *measured*. Really there are,
as we can now see, three questions about summation.
(i) Granted that a thing has a number of valifying character-
istics, and that the value which it would derive from each of
them separately can be measured, is the arithmetical sum of
these measures the measure of the value which it derives
from them all together? The answer is certainly in the negative.
At the most we can say that the value which it derives from
them all together is a function of the values which it would
derive from each of them separately. I think that we might
be able to conjecture some of the mathematical properties of
this function. Let us put $v = F(v_1, v_2, \ldots v_n)$, where v is the
actual value derived from all the characteristics together, and

$v_1, v_2, \ldots v_n$ are the measures of the value which would be derived from $C_1, C_2, \ldots C_n$, respectively, if each had been present by itself. Then I think it would be plausible to hold that the partial derivatives $\dfrac{\partial F}{\partial v_1}, \dfrac{\partial F}{\partial v_2}, \ldots \dfrac{\partial F}{\partial v_n}$ are always of the same sign as $v_1, v_2, \ldots v_n$, respectively. The *simplest* function of which this is true is the sum $v_1 + v_2 + \ldots + v_n$. But we cannot argue from this that $F(v_1, v_2, \ldots v_n)$ is simply $v_1 + v_2 + \ldots + v_n$.

(ii) Granted that a thing has the good-making form of Γ in amount c and the bad-making form of Γ in amount c', and that these quanta can be measured in common units, is the resultant blended value which the thing derives from the compresence of c and c' directly proportional to $c - c'$? The answer is that there is no reason to think so. At most we can say that $v = f(c, c')$, where f is a function such that $\dfrac{\partial f}{\partial c}$ is positive and $\dfrac{\partial f}{\partial c'}$ is negative.

(iii) Granted that the resultant value of each thing in a collection of m resultantly good things and n resultantly bad things can be measured in common units, and that the difference between resultant goodness and resultant badness can be adequately represented by difference of algebraical sign attached to the number concerned, is there an *intrinsic* kind of magnitude connected with this collection, such that the number $\sum\limits_{1}^{m} g_r - \sum\limits_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ is a measure of it? This seems to me very doubtful. McTaggart, on the other hand, seems to assume without any question that, if the *arithmetical operation* represented by the formula $\sum\limits_{1}^{m} g_r - \sum\limits_{1}^{n} b_{m+r}$ can be performed, there must be an *intrinsic magnitude* of which the number that results from this operation is a measure.

In § 866 McTaggart seems to be discussing in an extremely muddled way a mixture of all these questions, and, perhaps, of others beside. The upshot of the discussion is this. The objection to McTaggart's theory is, not that it is "too quantitative", but that it takes far too simple-minded a view

of quantity and measurement and of the ways in which one quantum may be a function of others.

There is one more point which I must raise before leaving the subject of the nett aggregate value contained in a whole. Suppose that a whole W has a set of primary parts P_1, P_2, and P_3. It might have another set of primary parts Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, and Q_4, which cut across these. (It is true that this cannot happen if primary parts are always selves. But we are concerned now with general principles about value, and not with simplifications which may be introduced through contingent peculiarities of the actual world.) Now there is no reason why the nett aggregate value which W contains in respect of its set of parts P_1, P_2, and P_3 should be the same as the nett aggregate value which it contains in respect of its set of parts Q_1, Q_2, Q_3, and Q_4.

Suppose, again, that P_1 has a set of parts P_{12} and P_{13}, that P_2 has a set of parts P_{23} and P_{21}, and that P_3 has a set of parts P_{31} and P_{32}. Then P_{12}, P_{13}, P_{23}, P_{21}, P_{31}, and P_{32} will be a set of secondary parts of W. Now there is no reason why the nett aggregate value which W contains in respect of this set of six secondary parts should be the same as the nett aggregate value which it contains in respect of the set of three primary parts P_1, P_2, and P_3.

Lastly, consider the parts P_1, P_2, P_{31}, and P_{32}. These will also be a set of parts of W. There is no reason why the nett aggregate value which W contains in respect of this set of two primary and two secondary parts should be the same as the nett aggregate value which it contains in respect of the other sets of its parts which we have already considered.

It seems clear to me, then, that we ought not to talk of "*the* aggregate nett value contained in a given whole". We must always specify a certain set of parts of this whole, and must confine ourselves to talking of the nett aggregate value contained in the whole in respect of such and such a set of parts. It is evident that a whole W might contain considerable aggregate nett value in respect of a certain set of parts and yet might contain no aggregate nett value in respect of a certain other set of parts.

3·2. *Value as a dependent Variable*. We have seen that the
value of anything depends on the presence of certain valifying
characteristics, such as pleasantness or unpleasantness,
coherence or incoherence, and so on. These characteristics are
capable of various degrees of intensity, and the value of
anything which is characterised by them will depend, *inter
alia*, on the intensity of the valifying characteristics. But it
will always depend on another factor also. *Sub specie
temporis* a thing may be characterised for a longer or a shorter
period by a given valifying characteristic; and, during such a
period, the intensity of the latter may either remain constant
or may vary. The resultant value which anything that appears
to be temporal has at any moment depends partly on the
length of time for which it has been characterised by its
various valifying characteristics at that moment. So the
value at any moment of anything that appears to be temporal
is a function of at least two kinds of independently variable
factors, viz., the intensive magnitudes from moment to
moment of its various valifying characteristics, and the
apparent duration throughout which it has had these
characteristics. We will now consider what McTaggart has to
say about these two factors.

3·21. *Dependence on Valifying Characteristics*. Every one
of the five valifying characteristics, enumerated in Sub-section
2·1 p. 664 above, is capable of quantitative variation, and
none of them has any *intrinsic* maximum or upper limit. It is
logically possible, e.g., that there should have been more
particulars to prehend, more facts to know, and more
propositions (true or false) to entertain. Therefore there is no
intrinsic maximum or upper limit to the extent of prehension,
knowledge, or belief. Again, there is no *intrinsic* maximum or
upper limit to the possible intensity of emotional or hedonic
tone. In the actual world, no doubt, all these factors have
actual maxima or upper limits which are *causally* necessitated
by the *de facto* constitution of the world. But there is nothing
in the nature of these factors, as such, to necessitate their
having maxima or upper limits. They may be compared, in
this respect, to Euclidean straight lines; and may be con-

trasted, in this respect, with Euclidean angles. McTaggart thinks that the only valifying characteristic which might plausibly be held to have an intrinsic maximum or upper limit is that of being virtuous. We will defer for the present what he has to say on this topic.

Now McTaggart holds it to be self-evident that every increase in the degree of any valifying characteristic involves, *caeteris paribus*, some increase, though not necessarily a proportionate one, in the amount of goodness or of badness (as the case may be) of anything which it eharacterises. The details of his view on this point emerge rather incidentally in a discussion which occurs in §§ 850 to 853, inclusive. He there asserts that love is, in some sense, "supremely and uniquely good"; and he raises the following question. In what sense is this true, and what bearing has it on the dependence of value on the intensity of valifying characteristics? We will consider his argument at this point.

(*a*) According to McTaggart, love is not supremely or uniquely good in the sense that all other goods depend one-sidedly upon it. There could be veridical cognition, e.g., even if there were no love; and it would still either *be* good or *give* goodness to the self in which it occurred.

(*b*) Love is not supremely or uniquely good in the sense that it really is eternal whilst all other goods are temporal, or in the sense that it appears to be eternal whilst all other goods appear to be temporal. For everything is in fact eternal; everything appears as eternal when viewed from the ω-standpoint; and love, like everything else, appears as temporal when viewed from any other standpoint.

(*c*) Love is not supremely and uniquely good in the sense that it is "incommensurably better than any other good". This would imply that any increase in the intensity of love, or in its duration, or in the number of its objects, however small, would increase the goodness pertaining to a self more than any increase, however great, in the amount of its happiness or its virtue or its veridical cognition would do. McTaggart rightly rejects this as ridiculous.

In what sense, then, can this proposition about love be

true? McTaggart's suggestion is as follows. Every increment
in any good-making characteristic carries with it, *caeteris
paribus*, *some* increase in the degree of goodness pertaining to
the subject which it characterises. But, for every good-
making characteristic except erotic tone, there is a certain
degree of intensity above which the *rate* at which goodness
increases with respect to further increments of intensity
begins to *diminish*. Thus, although there is no intrinsic
maximum or upper limit to the degree which any good-
making characteristic might conceivably reach, there is an
upper limit to the amount of goodness which a thing could
derive in a finite time from the possession of any good-making
characteristic except erotic tone. In the one case of erotic
tone the rate at which the amount of goodness due to this
characteristic increases with respect to successive increments
of intensity *never* begins to diminish, no matter how great the
intensity may be. Therefore there is no intrinsic limit to the
amount of goodness which a thing might conceivably derive
in a finite time from the possession of erotic tone.

In § 853 McTaggart makes the following important point.
Even if the amount of goodness which could arise in a given
time from the good-making form of a certain valifying
characteristic has an upper limit, we must not assume that
the amount of evil which could arise in a finite time from the
bad-making form of that characteristic is also limited.
Suppose, e.g., that there is a certain intensity of love which
would give more goodness in five minutes to its possessor
than any intensity of pleasure, however great, could give him
in five minutes. It does not follow that the goodness which he
would derive from five minutes of love of this intensity would
outweigh the evil which he might derive from five minutes of
sufficiently intense pain. McTaggart is inclined to think that
there is no intrinsic limit to the amount of evil which might be
derived in a finite time from sufficiently intense pain, just as
there is no intrinsic limit to the amount of good which might
be derived in a finite time from sufficiently intense love. On
the other hand, as we have seen, he would hold that there is
an intrinsic limit to the amount of good which could be

derived in a finite time from pleasure of no matter how great intensity.

Lastly, it is worth while to note McTaggart's opinion that hatred, which is the polar opposite of love, does not occupy that unique position among bad-making characteristics which love does among good-making ones. It is painfulness which corresponds, among bad-making characteristics, in this respect to erotic tone among good-making characteristics.

3·211. *The Special Case of Virtue.* I remarked above that McTaggart thinks that the one good-making characteristic which might plausibly be held to have an intrinsic maximum or upper limit is that of being virtuous. I deferred his discussion of this case, in order not to interrupt the general account of his views on the dependence of value on the intensity of valifying characteristics. We will now fill up this gap.

McTaggart's discussion will be found in §§ 815 and 816 of *The Nature of Existence.* I will put the argument in my own way, because McTaggart's form of it seems to presuppose a particular theory about what makes right acts right, which is not essential to his purpose and would not be accepted by everyone.

Let us say that a man "acted conscientiously" on a certain occasion if he did what he believed to be right on that occasion because he believed it to be right and because he desired to do what is right. If, further, his belief was correct, we can say that his act was, not only conscientious, but also "objectively right". Now we might define a "virtuous man" as one who, more often than not, when called upon to act, acts conscientiously. Or, instead, we might define a "virtuous man" as one who, more often than not, when called upon to act, conscientiously does an act which is objectively right. On either of these definitions it is obvious that a man may, in a perfectly definite sense, be more or less virtuous. Smith, e.g., may conscientiously do an objectively right act on 90 per cent. of the occasions when he is called upon to act; whilst Brown may do so only on 75 per cent. of such occasions. Both will be virtuous, on our definitions; but Smith will be more

virtuous than Brown. Now suppose that, in either of these definitions, we substitute "on all occasions" for "more often than not". Then we should get a definition of a "*completely virtuous man*". The mere fact that A had more occasions for morally significant action than B would not make A more virtuous than B, provided that each of them acted conscientiously (or, alternatively, that each of them conscientiously did an objectively right act) on *all* occasions on which he was called upon to act. It therefore looks as if there were an intrinsic maximum or upper limit to the characteristic of being virtuous.

There is, however, a defect in these definitions. In order to estimate how virtuous A is we need not only to know how he *did* act in the situations in which he *was* placed, but also to conjecture how he *would have* acted in situations of greater difficulty and temptation, e.g., in which he *was not* in fact placed. A "completely virtuous man" would have to be defined as one who always *would* act conscientiously (or always *would* conscientiously do an objectively right action), no matter how great the difficulty or the temptation to act otherwise *might* be. Now there is no intrinsic maximum or upper limit to the greatness of the difficulty or the strength of the temptations to which a man might conceivably be exposed. It is, therefore, very doubtful whether any positive concept can be attached to this verbal definition of maximal or complete virtue.

I think that the above is a substantially correct account of the argument which leads McTaggart to conclude that the characteristic of being virtuous, like the other valifying characteristics, has no intrinsic maximum or upper limit. Suppose that this argument were not accepted, and that one were to hold that being virtuous *is* a characteristic which has an intrinsic maximum. Suppose, further, that one were to hold that selves *have* value and do not merely *contain* value, and that the *only* good-making characteristic of a self is that of being virtuous. Even so, McTaggart asserts, the amount of good which might conceivably pertain to a self would have no intrinsic maximum. For the good pertaining to a self con-

sists of the good which it contains as well as the goodness which it has. Of two perfectly virtuous selves, one of whom was happy and the other of whom was less happy or was in positive pain, the former would *contain* more positive value than the latter, though, on the present hypothesis, the two selves would *be* equally valuable. And there is no intrinsic maximum to the amount of good or evil which a self may contain, even if there be an intrinsic maximum to the amount of value which it can have. Therefore, even on the present very restrictive hypothesis, there is no intrinsic maximum to the amount of good or evil which might conceivably pertain to a self.

3·22. *Dependence on Ostensible Duration.* We must now consider the other independent variable, viz., ostensible duration, on which the value of a thing depends. It will save trouble for the present if we talk as if duration were real; we can make the corrections, which are necessary on McTaggart's view of time, at a later stage of the discussion. McTaggart's general principles on this subject will be found in the earlier part of Chap. LXVII of *The Nature of Existence*.

He begins by explaining that, when he talks of the duration which a particular appears to have, he means, as usual, that which it *would* appear to have if all sources of bias, which vary from one observer to another or from time to time in a single observer, were eliminated. He is concerned, in fact, only with apparent duration as measured by an accurately adjusted clock or some other such instrument.

Actually McTaggart uses two complementary principles in his argument in Chap. LXVII. They may be stated as follows, though this is not exactly the way in which he does state them. (i) If a particular appears to last for a finite time, and if at every instant within that period all its valifying characteristics have finite intensity, then its total value is finite. (ii) If a particular appears to last for an infinite time, then, even though at every instant within that period all its valifying characteristics have finite intensity, its total value is infinite. (The first principle is plainly assumed in §§ 871 and 872, and the second principle in § 873.)

McTaggart does not profess to find these two principles self-evident. He asserts that they are consequences of a more fundamental principle, which he enunciates in § 868 and does find self-evident. His statement is as follows. "When two states which have value appear as being in time, their values, *caeteris paribus*, vary with the length of time which they appear to occupy" (*Nature of Existence*, Vol. ii, p. 451). I do not think that it is at all easy to see the precise meaning of the sentence which I have just quoted. What precisely is the force of the all-important qualifying phrase *caeteris paribus*?

The most plausible interpretation that I can suggest is the following. Suppose that S_1 and S_2 are two states, such that S_1 appears to last for a time t_1 and S_2 appears to last for a longer time t_2. Suppose that in S_1 and S_2 exactly the same determinable characteristics are manifested in exactly the same determinate forms without variation throughout the whole period for which the state appears to last. Then it might fairly be said that the only intrinsic unlikeness between S_1 and S_2 is that the latter appears to last longer than the former. Suppose that S_1 derives goodness or badness from the characteristics which it manifests. Then it is, I think, self-evident that S_2 will have *more* goodness or *more* badness, as the case may be.

I think that McTaggart would go further and would assert that the ratio of S_2's value to S_1's value is equal to the ratio of S_2's duration to S_1's duration. This may be true, but I do not find it self-evident. It seems plausible to hold that, whilst the value of such a state as we have been considering, always increases with each increase in its duration, yet it increases less for each successive increment of duration and approaches an upper limit as the duration increases indefinitely. Let v_t be the value of such a state when it has lasted for a time t. Then, if the law connecting value with duration were of the form $v_t = V(1 - e^{-bt})$, where V and b are constants, these conditions would be fulfilled. The value would be zero when the duration was zero, and it would approach V as its upper limit as the duration was indefinitely increased. Another simple law which would fulfil the conditions is $v_t = Vt/(t+b)$.

Here b would be the time which the state must endure in order to reach a half of its limiting value V.

However this may be, it is certain that the conclusions which McTaggart draws do not follow from the principle just enunciated. The first conclusion is drawn in § 869. He says that "it follows that any value which has only a finite intensity and which only lasts a finite time may be surpassed by a value of much less intensity which lasts for a longer time". (I think it is evident that he means that any value which is due to the manifestation of any valifying characteristic with finite intensity for a finite time may be surpassed by the value due to the manifestation of this characteristic in a lower degree of intensity for a longer time.) Now this principle involves a comparison between states which are unlike in *two* respects, viz., the intensity of the valifying characteristic and the duration of the state. The original principle explicitly confined itself to comparing states which are unlike *only in one* respect, viz., duration. Surely it is obvious that a principle which involves two independent variables cannot be derived from a principle which assumes one of these variables to have been fixed.

Though the second principle is not a consequence of the first, it may yet be true. And it may be self-evident. In order to see whether it is so we must try to state it carefully. I shall approach the question in two stages.

(i) Let S be a state which appears to go on for a time t. Suppose, for simplicity, that all the valifying characteristics which it manifests are good-making. Call them $C_1, C_2, \ldots C_n$. Let each of these be manifested with *constant* intensity, $i_1, i_2, \ldots i_n$, respectively, throughout the whole period t. Now imagine another state S', which appears to go on for a time and manifests exactly the same determinable characteristics $C_1, C_2, \ldots C_n$ throughout the whole period for which it appears to last. Let each of these be manifested with *constant* intensity $i'_1, i'_2, \ldots i'_n$, respectively. Let the intensity with which each determinable is manifested by S' be *less than* that with which the same determinable is manifested by S. Then, provided that there is a number M (however great) which is

greater than i_1, i_2, ... and i_n, and provided that there is a number m (however small) which is less than i'_1, i'_2, ... and i'_n, there will be a time t' such that, if S' apparently goes on for t', the goodness of S' will exceed that of S. Similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, if all the determinables C_1, C_2, ... C_n were bad-making. I think that this principle has good claims to be self-evident. But it is highly restricted; for it assumes *constancy* in the intensities of all the valifying characteristics throughout the whole duration of the states under consideration.

(ii) Let us now try to remove this restriction. We will suppose, as before, that S and S' manifest exactly the same valifying determinables C_1, C_2, ... C_n throughout the whole period for which each of them apparently lasts. And we will suppose, as before, that all these characteristics are good-making. But we will now suppose that each of them may *vary* in intensity throughout the period for which it is manifested. Let i_1, i_2, ... i_n now represent the *minimal intensity* with which C_1, C_2, ... C_n, respectively, are manifested by S during the period for which it apparently lasts. Let i'_1, i'_2, ... i'_n now represent the *maximal intensity* with which C_1, C_2, ... C_n, respectively, are manifested by S' during the period for which it apparently lasts. Let the maximal intensity with which each determinable is manifested by S' be less than the minimal intensity with which the same determinable is manifested by S. Then, provided that there is a number M (however great) which the intensities never *exceed* in the case of S, and provided that there is a number m (however small) which the intensities never *fall below* in the case of S', there will be a time t', such that, if S' apparently lasts for t', the goodness of S' will exceed the goodness of S. Similar remarks would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, if all the determinables C_1, C_2, ... C_n were bad-making.

I do not feel confident that this generalised principle is necessarily true. When the valifying characteristics manifested in a process are varying in intensity the process has a "temporal pattern". It is like an harmonious or a discordant sound-process, and not like a single prolonged unvarying

noise. Such pattern-qualities may be highly good-making or highly bad-making. Now there is much more room for elaborate temporal patterns when the intensities of the valifying characteristics can vary between widely separated bounds than when they are always confined within a narrow range in the neighbourhood of zero. It seems to me likely that a state which appears to last for a finite time may derive so much value from its pattern-quality that no state, however prolonged, which lacked such a pattern-quality owing to the low intensity of all its valifying characteristics, could equal the former in value.

McTaggart admits, in § 870, that "many people, if offered a million years of brilliant life, followed by annihilation,... would prefer it to any length of an oyster-like life which had a slight excess of good". On his view, they would be mistaken. He suggests that their mistake would spring from two sources. In the first place, it is much easier to envisage the qualitative unlikeness between the two lives than to compare in imagination one enormously long time with another which is enormously longer. Secondly, we are liable to discount to an unreasonable extent the goodness or the badness of any event, e.g., annihilation, which is in the very remote future.

There is no doubt that both these sources of error exist, and that they would affect one's estimate of the relative value of the two lives. Nevertheless, I am doubtful whether it would be a mistake to choose even fifty years of brilliant life, followed by annihilation, in preference to (say) a billion years of life as a moderately happy oyster. (i) In the first place, to make the comparison fair, we must assume that each life is to be followed by annihilation, one after fifty years and the other after a billion. Otherwise we are comparing something of finite duration with something of infinite duration. (ii) The condition *caeteris paribus* has now dropped completely out of sight. The life-history of a man manifests many valifying determinable characteristics, e.g., rational cognition, reflexive cognition, reflexive emotion, and reflexive conation, which are presumably not manifested at all in the life-history of an oyster. (iii) Partly on account of this, and partly

because the valifying characteristics which are manifested in *both* life-histories vary in intensity between much wider extremes in the case of the man than in that of the oyster, there is a further profound difference. The man's life has an elaborate temporal pattern. It is, or it may be, like the performance of an opera. The oyster's life can have no such pattern. It is like a single note played with hardly any variation on a single very simple instrument such as a tin-whistle. Now it is certainly not obvious to me that *any* excess in duration of the oyster's life over the man's can compensate in value for these qualitative defects in the former as compared with the latter.

3·23. *Concluding Remarks on Value as a Dependent Variable.* I have now stated and criticised, to the best of my ability, what I take to be McTaggart's views on value as a quantum whose magnitude is a function of two different kinds of variable, viz., the intensity of valifying characteristics and the ostensible duration for which they are manifested in a given instance. I must confess that I find the whole subject very puzzling, and I shall therefore end this chapter with a few remarks of my own about it.

So far as I can see, McTaggart and most other people tacitly or explicitly assume the following view about the value of any particular which apparently lasts for a finite time. They hold a view which may not unfairly be compared with the old "two-fluid" theory of electricity. Goodness is conceived as a kind of "substance" which continually accrues to a particular from its various good-making characteristics, as time goes on. It may be compared to positive electric charge. Badness is conceived as an opposed kind of "substance" which continually accrues to a particular from its various bad-making characteristics, as time goes on. The two neutralise each other, and at any moment the particular contains a certain store or "charge" of resultant nett value which has accrued to it from the conjoint presence of its good-making and its bad-making characteristics from its beginning up to that moment.

I think that these assumptions may be stated formally as

follows. Suppose that a certain particular manifests, throughout the whole period for which it lasts, the n good-making characteristics C_1, C_2, ... C_n with varying intensities, and the m bad-making characteristics C_{n+1}, C_{n+2}, ... C_{n+m} with varying intensities. At any period t after the beginning of this particular let the intensities of the good-making characteristics be i_1, i_2, ... i_n, respectively, and let the intensities of the bad-making characteristics be i_{n+1}, i_{n+2}, ... i_{n+m}, respectively. Then v_T, the resultant value which has accrued to this particular and with which it is "charged" after it has lasted for a period T, is expressible by an equation of the form

$$v_T = \int_0^T \phi\,(i_1, i_2, \ldots i_n)\,dt - \int_0^T \psi\,(i_{n+1}, i_{n+2}, \ldots i_{n+m})\,dt.$$

The functions ϕ and ψ are assumed to have the following properties: (i) They retain their *form* unchanged with lapse of time; though their *arguments*, the instantaneous intensities i_1, i_2, ... i_n, and i_{n+1}, i_{n+2}, ... i_{n+m} will in general change from moment to moment. (ii) The *first* partial derivatives

$$\frac{\partial \phi}{\partial i_1}, \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial i_2}, \ldots \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial i_n}, \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial i_{n+1}}, \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial i_{n+2}}, \ldots \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial i_{n+m}}$$

are all *positive* for all values of i_1, i_2, ... i_n and i_{n+1}, i_{n+2}, ... i_{n+m}, respectively. (iii) In general there are certain limiting values for these variables above which the corresponding *second* partial derivatives

$$\frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial i_1^2}, \frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial i_2^2}, \ldots \frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial i_n^2}, \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial i_{n+1}^2}, \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial i_{n+2}^2}, \ldots \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial i_{n+m}^2}$$

become *negative*. (iv) According to McTaggart there are two exceptions to the rule just stated. There is no such reversal in the sign of the second partial derivatives in the case of the good-making characteristic of erotic tone and in the case of the bad-making characteristic of painfulness.

I believe this to be an accurate statement of the assumptions about value as a dependent variable which McTaggart, and many other writers on ethics and economics, do in fact tacitly make. I am bound to say that, the more carefully and explicitly they are stated, the less plausible do they seem to me. I find great difficulty in conceiving the resultant value of

a persistent particular as something which has been steadily accruing to it during the period of its existence and is present in it at any moment as a kind of "charge" of a certain amount. In the case of a continuant it is, perhaps, possible to make sense of this notion. For a continuant has dispositions; and it might be held that the resultant value which has accrued to it up to a given moment in its history resides in the dispositions which it then possesses and in their organisation at that moment. But no such interpretation of this notion could be given in the case of a process, such as an experience. Yet many people would ascribe intrinsic value to experiences, and would hold that the value of an experience depends, *inter alia*, on its duration.

It remains to be mentioned that many people, if not McTaggart himself, tacitly make the following further assumption. They assume that the function ϕ, of n variables, can be expressed as the sum of n functions, each of one variable. And they make a similar assumption, *mutatis mutandis*, about the function ψ. That is, they tacitly assume that

$$\phi\,(i_1,\ i_2,\ \ldots\ i_n) = \phi_1\,(i_1) + \phi_2\,(i_2) + \ \ldots\ \phi_n\,(i_n)$$

and

$$\psi\,(i_{n+1},\ i_{n+2},\ \ldots\ i_{n+m}) = \psi_1\,(i_{n+1}) + \psi_2\,(i_{n+2}) + \ \ldots\ \psi_m\,(i_{n+m}).$$

Now an essential part of the meaning of Moore's "Principle of Organic Unities" is that such an assumption as this is not, in general, justifiable.

CHAPTER LVII

THE BEARERS OF VALUE

In this chapter we are going to discuss the following question. To what kinds of subject can the predicates "intrinsically good" or "intrinsically bad" be significantly applied? McTaggart discusses this question in §§ 788 to 808, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*.

He opens the subject in § 788 by saying that it is generally admitted that nothing has value unless it is spiritual. This can hardly be accepted without a certain amount of explanation. I think that it would generally be admitted that minds or experiences or both would have value even if there were no material particulars, and that material things and events have no *intrinsic* value. But it is commonly held that some material things would have considerable *contributory* value, i.e., that wholes composed of minds and certain material things in certain relations to each other would have intrinsic value, and that this would be greater than that of the minds alone. It seems to me obvious, e.g., that, if there are material things, the whole composed of a beautiful body animated by a mind has intrinsic value; and that this is greater than the value which the same mind would have if it were disembodied, though the body has no intrinsic value and the mind has some. Of course, this qualification is not of much direct importance for McTaggart, because he thinks he has proved that all particulars are mental and that none are material.

Now, according to McTaggart, any spiritual particular is either a mind, or a group of minds, or a state of mind, or a group whose members are states of mind, or a heterogeneous group whose members are taken from two or more of the classes already mentioned. So the question is whether all these kinds of spiritual particular are capable of having value, or whether only some of them can do so. There are

three important questions which McTaggart discusses in this connexion. (i) Have groups of selves value? (ii) Have individual selves value? (iii) Have experiences value? We will take the first question by itself, but we shall find it convenient to take the second and third together.

1. Have Groups of Selves any Value?

In § 789 of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart reiterates the conviction, which he had already expressed in his essay of 1908 on *The Individuality of Value*, that no group of selves can significantly be called intrinsically good or intrinsically bad. (This essay is now reprinted in Dr Keeling's edition of McTaggart's *Philosophical Studies*.) According to McTaggart, such a group may *contain* value, but it is self-evident that it *is* not valuable.

I do not find this proposition in the least self-evident. We must remember that any group, whether of selves or of anything else, is always something more than a group, in McTaggart's technical sense. Its members are always interrelated in various ways, and so any *group* is also a *complex*. Now I see nothing self-evidently absurd in the suggestion that certain communities of intimately inter-related selves have intrinsic value, positive or negative. Plainly many people have talked and felt and acted as if they believed this with regard to certain clans, civic communities, churches, or nations. And they have not confined this belief to communities of which they happened to be members. No doubt such people have often made the mistake of talking as if such a community were a kind of superior *person*. But this does not show that they were wrong in thinking of it as a *spiritual individual* which quite literally has intrinsic goodness or badness. Their mistake may have consisted only in failing to recognise that it is a spiritual individual of a *unique kind*, utterly unlike a person.

Of course I should admit that all those who have talked and felt and acted as if they believed that certain communities of selves literally have value may merely have been expressing themselves in a misleading way. But it is no more

obvious to me that all true statements which contain words like "France" and "England" can be translated without loss of meaning into statements which contain instead the names of certain Frenchmen and certain Englishmen, than that all true statements which contain names like "Smith" and "Jones" can be translated without loss of meaning into statements which contain instead such phrases as "this experience", "that sense-datum", and so on. It is most desirable that philosophers should try their utmost to make such analyses; but, so far as I can see, there is no guarantee that they are not embarking on a wild-goose chase.

McTaggart rightly points out in § 791 that his doctrine in no way involves the absurdity of denying that the value pertaining to each self depends to an enormous extent on the other selves to which it is related and on the nature of its relations to them. The value pertaining to a self will depend on its characteristics, and many of these are relational properties of the form "having the relation R to the self S". Again, on *any* view, many of a self's qualities and dispositions will be *causally* determined by his relational properties; and the value pertaining to him will depend *inter alia* on such qualities and dispositions. But, further, on McTaggart's view, quite apart from causation any particular has a different pure quality correlated with and conveyed by each of its various relational properties. And these correlated qualities will affect the value pertaining to any self which possesses them.

1·1. *Can Value be significantly predicated of the Universe?* According to McTaggart it follows from the principle which he has enunciated about groups of selves and the fact that the universe is such a group that the universe *has* no value, though it *contains* value.

It is not at all clear to me that this conclusion does follow from McTaggart's premises, as stated, in view of his theory of groups. Certainly, if McTaggart is right, the universe is a particular which is a group of selves. But then, according to McTaggart, *one and the same* particular can be at once *many different* groups. The universe is not only a group of selves. If

McTaggart is right, it is equally a group of prehensions; for each of the selves which is a primary part of the universe has itself a set of first-grade secondary parts which are prehensions. And these first-grade secondary parts of the selves together constitute a set of parts of the universe. Now, if this is true, the fact that the universe has no value in respect of being a group of selves cannot suffice to prove that it has no value. For it might still have value in respect of being a group of prehensions.

The principle which McTaggart needs as a premise would seem to be the following. If a particular is a group of selves, no matter how intimately inter-related, then, *no matter what other group it may also be*, it has no value. The milder principle may be stated as follows. If a particular is a group of inter-related selves, then it derives no value from being such a group, no matter how intimately the selves are inter-related. The milder principle, as I have shown, is not enough to guarantee McTaggart's conclusion about the universe. Yet even the milder principle seems to me to be quite doubtful, for the reasons which I have given above. So I think that McTaggart's conclusion that the universe cannot be significantly said to be intrinsically good or intrinsically bad is unproven, though it may very well be true.

2. Have both Selves and Experiences Value?

There is no doubt that value pertains to selves, and there is no doubt that *either* selves *or* experiences have value. It is possible that *both* selves and experiences have value; but, according to McTaggart, this is not certain. It is true that we talk of good and bad selves and of good and bad experiences and actions. But we know that the words "good" and "bad" are highly ambiguous, so that we cannot safely conclude from this that both selves and experiences can be significantly called "good" and "bad" in the sense of "intrinsically good" or "intrinsically bad". *Prima facie* there are at least the following three alternative possibilities.

(i) We may be using the words "good" and "bad" in exactly the same indefinable sense in both applications. No

doubt the valifying characteristics of selves will be very different from those of experiences or actions. E.g., it might plausibly be held that pleasantness is a good-making characteristic of a sensation, that being done from respect for the moral law is a good-making characteristic of an action, and that having a disposition to help people in distress is a good-making characteristic of a self. Neither of the first two characteristics could belong to a self, and the third could not belong to an experience or an action. But, it might be said, the sense in which a self who tends to help people in distress is good is precisely the same as the sense in which a pleasant sensation or a conscientious action is good.

(ii) We may be using the words "good" and "bad" in the primary indefinable sense when we apply them to experiences, but not when we apply them to selves. The sense in which they are used when applied to selves may be definable in terms of the sense in which they are used when applied to experiences. It might be suggested, e.g., that such a sentence as "This self is good" means that this self is one which tends on the whole to have good experiences and to do good actions.

(iii) We may be using the words "good" and "bad" in the primary indefinable sense when we apply them to selves, but not when we apply them to experiences. The sense in which they are used when applied to experiences may be definable in terms of the sense in which they are used when applied to selves. It might be suggested, e.g., that such a sentence as "This experience is good" means that any self which tended to have experiences of this kind under certain assignable conditions would *pro tanto* and *eo ipso* be an intrinsically good self.

I think that these three alternatives, stated in my own terms, constitute a fairly adequate preliminary division of the ground which McTaggart covers in §§ 792 to 801, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence*. But there are certain complications, connected with McTaggart's theory of time, which I must point out before going further.

The alternatives are stated *sub specie temporis*. Now, *sub specie temporis*, a self appears to be a continuant which endures

through time and has a history. This history appears to be a long and complex temporal process. It appears to be divisible into successive adjoined total phases of short duration. Each of these phases is itself complex, and it may consist of several ostensibly simultaneous experiences. Now, *sub specie temporis*, we should say that these simultaneous experiences are literally parts of this total phase, and that these total phases are literally parts of the *history* of this self. But we should not be inclined to say that the experiences or the total phases are, in any ordinary sense, parts of the *self*. Whatever McTaggart may say, what appears *sub specie temporis* as an occurrent in, or state of, a certain continuant does not appear *sub specie temporis* to be a part of that continuant, in any ordinary sense of "part". On the other hand, a self, in appearing to be a continuant, appears to have dispositional properties, i.e., persistent tendencies to have certain kinds of experience and to do certain kinds of action in certain kinds of circumstances. Its history is the particular series of occurrents in which these dispositions have manifested themselves in the particular circumstances in which this self has been placed.

Now at this level of thought everyone distinguishes between being a good or a bad self, on the one hand, and being a self whose history has contained an aggregate nett balance of goodness or of badness, as the case may be, in respect of its experiences and actions. If the aggregate nett value of a self's experiences and actions up to a certain date is a balance of goodness, we can say that its *life* or its *history* has so far contained a balance of good; if this aggregate nett value is a balance of badness, we can say that its *life* or its *history* has so far contained a balance of evil. But we should never say, simply on these grounds, that it was a good or a bad *self*. I think it is quite certain that, *sub specie temporis*, a self is called "good" or "bad", in whatever sense these words may be applied to it, only in respect of its relatively permanent dispositions to have experiences and to do actions of certain kinds, and never directly in respect of its having had certain kinds of experiences and having done certain kinds of actions. The experiences which it has had and the actions which it has

done are relevant only indirectly, viz., as more or less trustworthy signs of its dispositions.

Take, e.g., the extreme case of an ethical hedonist. He holds that pleasantness and unpleasantness are the only good-making and bad-making characteristics of experiences, and that being productive of pleasant or of unpleasant experiences is the only good-making or bad-making characteristic of actions. Yet even he would not call a self "good" merely because it had had a balance of pleasant experiences, or "bad" merely because it had had a balance of unpleasant experiences. He would call it "good" only in so far as it has permanent dispositions to have and to produce pleasant experiences; and he would call it "bad" only in so far as it has permanent dispositions to have and to produce unpleasant experiences. The fact that it had had a balance of pleasant, or of unpleasant, experiences would be relevant only as evidence for its having felicific or infelicific dispositions. Apart from this the ethical hedonist, like anyone else, would confine himself to saying that this man's *life* had so far been "on the whole fortunate" or "on the whole unfortunate".

Now one complaint that I have against this part of McTaggart's work is that, when he is discussing these questions of value *sub specie temporis*, he seems not to recognise these obvious facts. He seems, *sub specie temporis*, to identify a self, considered as a persistent continuant, with its own total history; and to take the phases and the occurrents, which are literally parts of its history, as if they were literally parts of itself. And so he seems to identify the question whether a self has value or only contains it with the question whether the total history of a self has value or only contains it. I think that this makes his arguments in certain places very obscure. I would mention § 798, e.g., as a case in point.

Before going further it will be well to look at the same situation from another point of view, viz., *sub specie aeternitatis*. We must remember that, if McTaggart's destructive theory of time be true, no particular can really be either a continuant or an occurrent, since both these correlated

notions involve an essential reference to time. If, further, we assume the truth of his constructive theory of the realities which appear as continuants and as occurrents, we find that there are the following eight kinds of timeless entities to be considered in connexion with any particular which appears *sub specie temporis* as a certain persistent person A.

(1·1) A certain primary part P_A of the universe. This really is a timeless self. *Sub specie temporis*, however, it appears as that total phase of A's history which comes at the end of time and has half-enclosed indivisible duration.

(1·2) The primary C-series Π_A whose maximal end-term is P_A. *Sub specie temporis* this appears as the history of the person A throughout the whole of time.

(1·3) A certain stretch of terms of the primary C-series Π_A, e.g., the terms from P_A^r to P_A^s, both inclusive. *Sub specie temporis* this appears as all of A's history which falls between a certain two dates. It might, e.g., appear as one of A's lives, or as the content of the thirtieth year of his sixtieth life.

(1·4) A single pre-maximal term of the primary C-series Π_A, e.g., the term P_A^r. *Sub specie temporis* this appears as a single temporally indivisible wholly enclosed total phase in A's history, occurring at a certain date. It would therefore have to appear as a total phase of less duration than a specious present.

(2·1) A certain secondary part of P_A; either of the first grade, such as P_{AB}, or of some higher grade, such as P_{ABA}. This is really an ω-prehension in P_A of a primary part, such as P_B, or of a secondary part, such as P_{BA}. *Sub specie temporis* it appears as the last temporal phase of a certain experience of A's which has been going on continuously throughout the whole of A's history. It therefore appears as coming at the end of time and as having half-enclosed indivisible duration.

(2·2) The secondary C-series whose maximal end-term is P_{AB} or P_{ABA} or whatever else the secondary part of P_A mentioned in the last paragraph may be, i.e., the series Π_{AB} or Π_{ABA} or so on. *Sub specie temporis* this would appear as a certain single cognitive process which goes on continuously

throughout the whole of A's history and has one and the same total object throughout.

(2·3) A certain stretch of terms of such a secondary C-series, e.g., the terms from P^r_{AB} to P^s_{AB}, both inclusive. *Sub specie temporis* this would appear as that temporal segment of a certain single cognitive process which falls between a certain two dates in A's history. It would appear as temporally co-terminous with that stretch of A's history which is the appearance of the stretch from P^r_A to P^s_A of the primary C-series Π_A. It would appear to be accompanied by other cognitive processes which, together with it, would make up the whole content of this stretch of A's history.

(2·4) A single pre-maximal term of such a secondary C-series, e.g., the term P^r_{AB}. *Sub specie temporis* this would appear as a single temporally indivisible wholly-enclosed cross-section of a certain cognitive process, occurring at a certain date in A's history. It would appear as simultaneous with and a part of that total phase of A's history which is the appearance of the single term P^r_A of the primary C-series Π_A.

Now it is plain that these eight timeless entities, which are connected with what appears *sub specie temporis* as the self A, give rise to $2^8 - 1$, i.e., to 255, possible alternative theories about the value pertaining to such a self. These may be classified into eight groups, as follows. (i) It might be that every one of these eight kinds of timeless entity can be intrinsically good or intrinsically bad. This gives one possible alternative. (ii) It might be that all but one of them can be intrinsically good or bad. This gives rise to eight alternatives, according to which one of them is held to be *incapable* of having intrinsic value. (iii) It might be that all but two of them can have intrinsic value. This gives rise to $^8C_2$ alternatives, i.e., to 28. The general method of classification will now be clear. The eighth possibility is that only one of them can have intrinsic value. Obviously this gives rise to eight alternatives.

Of course McTaggart attempts no such classification as I have just given, and no one in the world is likely to discuss all the 255 alternatives. What he, actually does is to confine his

attention to the eighth possibility. And he discusses this very unsystematically, since he does not distinguish the eight alternatives which fall under it if his theory of time and the self is correct.

We might call the eight alternative forms of the eighth possibility "monistic" theories about the possible bearers of value. For, according to each of them, only one of the eight inter-connected entities which we have enumerated can have intrinsic value. We can now classify monistic theories as follows. (1) Those which hold that only *individual terms* of C-series can have value. (2) Those which hold that only *stretches* of terms in C-series can have value. (3) Those which hold that only *complete* C-series can have value. Each of these three types of theory can then be dichotomised according to whether the C-series referred to in it is to be only *primary* or only *secondary*. This gives six forms of monistic theory. Finally we can dichotomise each of the two forms of type 1 according to whether only *maximal* or only *pre-maximal* terms of C-series are held to have intrinsic value. Thus we get eight alternative forms of monistic theory. In practice, however, it is more convenient to dichotomise the two forms of type 1 in a different way, viz., according to whether *only maximal* or *both maximal and pre-maximal* terms of C-series are held to have intrinsic value. It is true that the second members of this sub-division are not, strictly speaking, monistic theories, in the sense defined. But they are both theories which might reasonably be held; whilst it seems very unlikely that anyone who held that individual terms of C-series have intrinsic value would seriously entertain the alternative that *only pre-maximal* terms have it.

We can now enunciate and classify the eight theories as follows:

(1·11) Only *maximal end-terms* of *primary* C-series have value.

(1·12) Both *maximal and pre-maximal* terms of *primary* C-series have value, but nothing else has.

(1·21) Only *maximal end-terms* of *secondary* C-series have value.

(1·22) Both *maximal and pre-maximal* terms of *secondary* C-series have value, but nothing else has.

(2·1) Only *stretches* of *primary* C-series have value.

(2·2) Only *stretches* of *secondary* C-series have value.

(3·1) Only *complete primary* C-series have value.

(3·2) Only *complete secondary* C-series have value.

Now of these eight theories about the possible bearers of value some may be described as "highly atomistic" and others as "highly organic". It is easy to see that the most atomistic and least organic of them is 1·22. For *sub specie temporis* this asserts that nothing can properly be called good or bad except temporally indivisible dated slices of this or that particular strand of experience. Other things may contain value, but only these "beggarly elements" can have value.

It is not so easy to see which is the most organic and least atomistic of the theories. It is, indeed, plain that the only possible candidates for this position are 1·11 and 3·1; but it is difficult to decide between them for the following reasons. *Sub specie temporis* 3·1 asserts that nothing less than the complete history of a self throughout the whole of time, taken as a single unit, has value. *Sub specie temporis* 1·11 asserts that nothing has value except that state of a self which comes at the end of time. From this point of view, then, 3·1 seems more organic and less atomistic than 1·11. But we must remember that what appears *sub specie temporis* as the state of the person A which comes at the end of time is really that timeless two-dimensional whole P_A which includes all the terms that appear as successive total phases in A's history. Thus to say that nothing but primary parts, such as P_A, taken as units, have value is to take an extremely organic view about the possible bearers of value.

2·1. *McTaggart's Arguments.* Now that we have got all the alternatives dissected out and systematically arranged, it only remains to consider each of McTaggart's arguments which have any relevance to the topic, and to state which alternative is affected by each argument. It is important to notice that, whilst the eight alternatives are mutually

exclusive, they are not collectively exhaustive. Therefore, whilst an argument which proved one of them would automatically disprove all the rest, an argument which refuted all but one of them would not automatically prove that one.

(i) In § 794 McTaggart mentions an argument which would, if valid, support either 1·11 or 3·1. It is this. According to his metaphysical principles primary parts, such as P_A, occupy an unique position in the universe. They are, in a definite sense, the natural units of the world. Now it might be suggested that this ontological uniqueness is likely to be accompanied by uniqueness in respect of value. If so, it might be plausible to hold that primary parts, and nothing else, have value. This would be equivalent to accepting 1·11. *Sub specie temporis* this would be equivalent to holding that nothing has value except that total state of a self which comes at the end of time and has half-enclosed indivisible duration. In theological terms, nothing would have value except a man's state in Heaven or Hell after the Last Judgment.

But the same line of argument might lead almost equally well to the acceptance of 3·1. For it might fairly be said that a complete primary *C*-series is also an unique natural unit; since its maximal end-term is so, and all its other terms are included in this. *Sub specie temporis* this would be equivalent to holding that nothing has value except a self's complete history throughout the whole of time, taken as a single unit.

McTaggart draws no clear distinction between these alternatives. But, in any case, he is unwilling to attach much weight to this kind of argument.

(ii) To accept 1·11 is equivalent to denying that there is any good or any evil pertaining to the pre-maximal part of any *C*-series. Now McTaggart discusses this suggestion in Chap. LXVI, §§ 855 to 859, inclusive; and this would seem to be the proper place for treating his argument.

In the pre-maximal stages there is ostensibly veridical cognition, ostensibly pleasant feeling, ostensibly loving emotion, and ostensible desire for what is believed to be good. If the experiences which ostensibly have these characteristics

really do have them, there is undoubtedly good pertaining to the pre-maximal stages. Again, in the pre-maximal stages there is ostensibly delusive cognition, ostensibly unpleasant feeling, ostensibly jealous emotion, and ostensible desire for what is believed to be bad. If the experiences which ostensibly have these characteristics really do have them, there is undoubtedly evil pertaining to the pre-maximal stages. But our only ground for holding that we have experiences of these kinds is introspection and memory. On any view, these forms of cognition are fallible; and, if McTaggart's general theory is accepted, they are much more extensively and radically delusive than they are commonly believed to be. Granted that introspection and memory are our only sources of information about the nature of pre-maximal experiences, and granted that they are highly untrustworthy, can we be sure that either good or evil pertains in fact to the pre-maximal stages? We will consider the case of evil and of good in turn.·

Presumably no one would deny that, if there really are delusive cognitions or unpleasant feelings or jealous emotions or desires for what is believed to be bad, in the pre-maximal stages, there is evil pertaining to those stages. Therefore anyone who denies that there is evil pertaining to the pre-maximal stages must hold that in fact they contain no such cognitions, feelings, emotions, or desires, although they seem to do so. Can this suggestion be refuted?

(a) The theory plainly assumes that there are delusive cognitions. So, if being delusive is a bad-making characteristic of a cognition, or if containing a delusive cognition is a bad-making characteristic of a more extensive tract of a self's history, it must be admitted that there really is cognitively determined evil pertaining to the pre-maximal stages.

(b) It seems obvious that a belief that one is having an unpleasant experience of the first order is *ipso facto* an unpleasant experience of the second order, whether it be true or false. And so it seems practically certain that there really are unpleasant experiences of higher order, even if there are none of the first order. Even if this be denied, it is certain that a person who had no unpleasant experiences and did not

believe that he had any would be better off than one who had
no unpleasant experiences but was under the delusion that he
had. In fact to contain *ostensibly* unpleasant experiences is
enough to ensure that some evil pertains to the pre-maximal
stages.

(c) To be under the delusion that one is jealous of some-
one is not itself a state of jealousy, and to be under the
delusion that one is desiring what one believes to be evil is not
itself a desire for what one believes to be evil. But it seems
plain that a person who was not jealous of anyone and did not
believe himself to be so would be in a better state than one
who was not jealous of anyone but was under the delusion
that he had this emotion. Similar remarks would apply,
mutatis mutandis, to the delusion that one desires what one
believes to be evil. Anyone who considers the state of a
religious maniac who is under the delusion that he has com-
mitted "the sin against the Holy Ghost" (whatever that may
be) can convince himself of this. It is certain, then, that there
is evil pertaining to the pre-maximal stages of C-series,
however untrustworthy introspection and memory may be.

I think that McTaggart's conclusion about ostensibly
jealous emotion and ostensibly contra-conscientious volition
may profitably be analysed further. Why would it be better
that A should not believe himself to be jealous of B than that
he should believe this, if in fact he is not jealous of B? The
answer seems to me to be as follows. The false introspective
belief would be either pleasant or unpleasant or hedonically
neutral. And it would be accepted by A either with welcome
or with aversion or with indifference. Now, if it were un-
pleasant or were accepted by A with aversion, it would
introduce hedonically determined evil, though this would be
a sign of good moral dispositions in A. If it were pleasant or
were accepted by A with welcome, it would introduce
hedonically determined good, but this would be a sign of
moral depravity in A's dispositions. Lastly, if it were hedonic-
ally neutral or were accepted by A with indifference, this
would be a sign of moral callousness in A. So, on every
possible alternative, this false belief either *introduces* hedonic-

ally determined evil into A's life or is part of a total state which is a *sign* of morally bad dispositions in A. Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to a man's mistaken belief that he is desiring what he believes to be evil.

So much for the contention that there is really no *evil* pertaining to the pre-maximal stages. Suppose it were alleged that there is really no *good* pertaining to those stages, could we refute the suggestion on the same lines?

(*a*) No one can consistently deny that there is some veridical cognition. So, if it is admitted that goodness pertains to anything that contains veridical cognition, it must be granted that there is at least cognitively determined good pertaining to the pre-maximal stages.

(*b*) Pleasure can be dealt with by an argument precisely like that which we have already used about unpleasant experiences.

(*c*) On any view there is *some* amount and intensity of consciousness at all the pre-maximal stages. So, if this be an independent good-making characteristic (which McTaggart doubts), any pre-maximal stage in a C-series must derive some degree of goodness from this characteristic, no matter how full of error and delusion it may be.

(*d*) McTaggart is doubtful whether A's *false* belief that the emotion which he is feeling towards B is *love* would *ipso facto* be good, though he is sure that A's *false* belief that the emotion which he is feeling towards B is *hatred* would *ipso facto* be bad. He is also doubtful whether a false belief that one was desiring what one believed to be good would *ipso facto* be good, though he is sure that a false belief that one was desiring what one believed to be bad would *ipso facto* be bad. Here again it seems to me that further analysis is both possible and desirable.

Suppose that A mistakenly believes that he loves B when in fact he either dislikes B or is indifferent to him. This mistaken belief may be either pleasant or unpleasant or hedonically neutral. And A may accept it either with welcome or with aversion or with indifference. Now, if it were pleasant or were accepted with welcome, this would introduce hedonic-

ally determined good into A's life and it would also be a sign of a good moral disposition in A. If it were unpleasant or were accepted with aversion, this would certainly introduce hedonically determined evil into A's life and it *might* be a sign of moral depravity in A's dispositions. Lastly, if it were hedonically neutral or were accepted with indifference, this *might* be a sign of moral callousness in A. Thus there is no uniform connexion between having a false belief that one loves a person and being in a good state or having good dispositions. Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to a man's false belief that he is desiring what he believes to be good.

There is one other point worth mentioning before we leave this topic. The false beliefs which we have just been considering are self-flattering beliefs. They tend to make us think that we are better than we in fact are. The false beliefs which we considered before were self-depreciatory beliefs. They tend to make us think that we are worse than we really are. Now, in respect of cognitively determined value, there is nothing to choose between the two kinds of false belief. But self-flattering false beliefs are a sign of certain cognitive and emotional dispositions which are disagreeable to contemplate, which have great moral disutility, and which are only too common. Self-depreciatory false beliefs are a sign of cognitive and emotional dispositions which are much less disagreeable to contemplate, which have sometimes a certain amount of moral utility, and which are far from common.

We can now sum up the results of this argument. On any view of valifying characteristics that has ever been held it is certain that there is *evil* pertaining to the pre-maximal stages of C-series. Since evil is a form of value, this suffices to refute Theory 1·11 which asserts that value belongs *only* to the maximal end-terms of primary C-series. It would also, I think, suffice to refute Theory 1·21 which asserts that value belongs *only* to the maximal end-terms of secondary C-series. The position as regards goodness depends on what particular view one takes about valifying characteristics. If it be held that the only good-making characteristics are those of being

or containing emotions or volitions of certain kinds, it is
abstractly possible that there might be no goodness pertaining
to the pre-maximal stages of any C-series. For it is abstractly
possible that we are all under an illusion in thinking that we
have emotions and volitions of these particular kinds.
Except on this restrictive view of good-making characteristics
it is as certain that there is goodness pertaining to the pre-
maximal stages as that there is evil. And, even if this re-
strictive view of good-making characteristics be accepted, the
abstract possibility that there may be no good pertaining to
pre-maximal stages is in practice ruled out by McTaggart's
general postulate that cognition is to be treated as veridical
except when there is some known specific ground for thinking
it delusive.

(iii) In § 798 there is a rather obscure argument which,
according to McTaggart, tends to refute the doctrine that
only selves have value. As I have pointed out, this doctrine
is somewhat ambiguous in view of McTaggart's theory of
time and determining correspondence. It might mean that
only primary parts, such as P_A, have value; i.e., our Theory
1·11, or it might mean that only complete primary C-series
have value, i.e., our Theory 3·1. The best plan seems to be
to state the argument, as I understand it, and then to see
which, if either, of these two theories it tends to refute.

The premise of the argument is this. "When I consider a
virtuous volition in the past I say that the past, and the past
alone, is good in respect of that volition. Or when I anticipate
a pleasure in the future, I say that the future, and the future
alone, is good in respect of that pleasure." (*Nature of
Existence*, Vol. II, p. 403). Now, McTaggart says, "my self is
not only in the past, or only in the future". It appears, *sub
specie temporis*, "as present, past, and future". He then
continues as follows. "If, therefore, the good were ascribed to
the self, it would appear as present, past, and future; and not
only as past or only as future" (p. 404).

Let us now see what we can make of this argument. Let us
suppose that Theory 3·1 were true, i.e., that nothing can have
value except a primary C-series, taken as a single complex

whole. *Sub specie temporis* this would be equivalent to saying that nothing less than the complete history of a self throughout the whole of time, taken as a single complex whole, can have value. Now plainly a complete history which extends throughout the whole course of time has no date *sub specie temporis*. At any moment you could speak of the part of it which is now past, the cross-section which is now present, and the part of it which is now future. But you could never apply the adjectives "past", "present", or "future" to it, as a single complex whole. Nor could you predicate any adjective of it with either of the temporal copulas "was", "is now", or "will be".

Now there is no doubt that we often make statements of the form "Yesterday's experiences were on the whole good, but to-morrow's experiences (which will include a visit to the dentist) will be on the whole bad". If nothing can be intrinsically good or bad except one's complete history, taken as a single complex whole, these statements will have to be interpreted as follows. "Yesterday's experiences were of such a kind that the property of containing them tends to make my complete history an intrinsically good complex whole, whilst to-morrow's experiences will be of such a kind that the property of containing them tends to make my complete history an intrinsically bad complex whole". Now this interpretation is extremely unplausible. Therefore the theory that nothing has value except a primary *C*-series, taken as a single complex whole, is extremely unplausible.

On this theory we might compare "being valuable" to "being true or false", we might compare the total history of a self to a complete spoken sentence, and we might compare the successive phases in the history of a self to the successively uttered words and phrases which together make up a complete sentence. Nothing short of a complete sentence can be literally true or false. To call any word or phrase in a sentence "true" or "false" can mean only that its being spoken at a certain stage in the utterance of the whole sentence tends to make the sentence as a whole true or to make it false, as the case may be. I think that this is a fair analogy to Theory 3·1.

Now there is no doubt that this suggestion is highly para-doxical. We should all admit that an experience or an action must have a certain amount of internal complexity and unity, both through time and among its simultaneous parts, if it is to be either good or bad. But we should say that it need not be so long or so complex as a complete life-history; and we should submit that the internal unity of a complete life-history is generally very much less than that of some of its component phases and strands of experience. A life-history, as a rule, is not like a single sentence or a single intelligible discourse. It is more like a number of sentences, some belonging to one discourse, some to another, and some mere *obiter dicta*. Some of these are uttered simultaneously, and some successively; and they are interspersed with a good deal of mere interjection and gibberish. It seems as unlikely that goodness or badness would belong to a life-history as a collective whole and to none of its parts as that truth or falsity would belong to such a confused babel as a whole and to none of its parts.

Let us now take the Theory 1·1, viz., that nothing has value except primary parts, such as P_A, and see how the argument applies to it. *Sub specie temporis* this is equivalent to saying that all predications of intrinsic goodness or in-trinsic badness, no matter when they are made, must be in the *future* tense. For P_A appears, *sub specie temporis*, as that total state of the person A which comes at the end of time. Take now the statement that yesterday's experiences were on the whole good and that to-morrow's experiences will be on the whole bad. This would have to be interpreted as follows. "The property of coming at the end of a life-history which contains such experiences as I had yesterday among its earlier phases is a good-making characteristic of the end-term; and the property of coming at the end of a life-history which contains such experiences as I shall have to-morrow is a bad-making characteristic of the end-term". This interpretation is highly unplausible, and therefore the Theory 1·1 is highly unplausible.

This is the best that I can do with the argument in § 798.

I think that it probably represents what McTaggart had in mind, but I may well be mistaken.

(iv) In §§ 795 to 797, inclusive, McTaggart uses an argument which may, I think, be fairly stated as follows. Suppose that at a certain date in the history of a person A, *sub specie temporis*, there occurs a pleasant sensation, or a benevolent desire, or an emotion of love. Suppose that the *only* sense in which we can say that value pertains to A in respect of such an experience is that the experience has value and is a part of A. The experience is not a part of any other *person* beside A. But it is a part of any whole of which A is a part. Now A is a part of any group, however fantastic, of which it is a member. Therefore this experience is just as much a part of any such group as it is a part of A. Therefore, in the only sense in which value pertains to A in respect of this experience, value will equally pertain in respect of this experience to any group, however fantastic, of which A is a member. Consider what this implies in a concrete example. If I have a benevolent desire at a certain date, value pertains to the group of Fellows of Trinity, to the group of Englishmen, to the human race, and so on, in respect of this volition, in precisely the same sense and to precisely the same extent as it pertains to me in respect of it. This seems ridiculous.

Suppose, on the other hand, that selves and nothing else can *have* value, and that the property of containing such an experience as a part is a good-making characteristic of a self. Then value will pertain to A in respect of this experience, in a sense in which value does not pertain to anything else in respect of it. For anything else which contains this experience will be, not a self, but either a part of A or a group which contains A or a part of A as one of its members. And, by hypothesis, nothing but a self can *have* value, though a group of selves may *contain* value. Now it seems highly plausible to hold that value pertains to a *self*, in respect of its own experiences, in a sense in which it does not pertain to anything else which may contain those experiences as parts.

Since, then, the first supposition leads to a conclusion which seems ridiculous, whilst the second leads to a con-

clusion which seems to accord with common-sense, there appears to be good ground for rejecting the first supposition and accepting the second. I think that this is a fair account of McTaggart's argument.

Does the first supposition really lead to the conclusion which McTaggart draws from it? It does so only if the following premises are added to it. (*a*) That the experiences which a self has are parts of that self. (*b*) That every group of selves, however fantastic it may be and however slight may be its internal unity, is a compound particular of which each is a part. (*c*) That if X is a part of Y and Y is a part of Z, then X is a part of Z. Can these premises be accepted?

Sub specie temporis a self is a continuant which persists through time and has dispositional properties; its experiences are occurrents which are states of it. The latter are parts of the history of the self, considered as a continuant, but are not parts of the self. To this objection McTaggart could make the following answer. Those particulars which appear *sub specie temporis* as experiences or total phases in the history of a persistent person A are really certain timeless parts of a certain timeless whole P_A which is a self. This answer is correct, if we accept McTaggart's theory of time and the self. But it makes the argument very difficult to appraise. For the argument is conducted and the paradoxical conclusion is stated in temporal terms. But the premise that the experiences which a self has are parts of it can be accepted only if we assume McTaggart's theory of time and the self and translate everything into the non-temporal language of C-series and primary parts. I may sum up my difficulty at this point as follows. If we keep the argument in temporal terms throughout, the conclusion really is paradoxical but one of the premises is extremely doubtful. If, on the other hand, we keep it in non-temporal terms throughout, this premise becomes certain (provided we accept McTaggart's theory of time and the self); but now it is difficult to be sure that the conclusion is paradoxical.

Suppose that we waive this objection. Then I still find difficulties over the premises which I have labelled (*b*) and (*c*).

Let us grant that every experience or total phase in the history of a self is, in *some* sense, a "part" of that self. Let us further grant that a self is, in *some* sense, a "part" of every group, however fantastic and loosely inter-connected, of which it is a member. Is it at all obvious that these two senses of "part" are the same? And, unless they are precisely the same, is it at all obvious that we can safely use the premise that, if X is a part of Y and Y is a part of Z, then X is a part of Z?

Let us waive this objection too. Then I have a final and fundamental objection to make. It is admitted that we talk of "good" and "bad" selves. McTaggart assumes that, if selves do not literally *have* intrinsic goodness and badness, then there is one and only one sense in which they can be called "good" or "bad". To call a self "good" *must* then, he assumes, mean that the goodness of its good experiences overbalances the badness of its bad experiences, so that its total history contains a nett aggregate of goodness. To call a self "bad" *must* then, he assumes, mean that the badness of its bad experiences overbalances the goodness of its good experiences, so that its total history contains a nett aggregate of badness.

Now, as I have pointed out earlier in this chapter, no one ever means this by calling a *self* "good" or "bad". These terms are always applied to a self in respect of its *dispositional* properties, and never directly in respect of its having good or bad experiences. If a person holds that only experiences can have value, what he will mean by calling a self "good" is that its dispositions are such that it would have a balance of good experiences under most conceivable sets of conditions. If, on the other hand, he holds that only selves can have value, he will hold that the dispositions to have certain kinds of experiences, e.g., pleasant feelings, loving emotions, etc., are good-making characteristics of selves, and that the dispositions to have certain other kinds of experiences, e.g., unpleasant feelings, jealous emotions, etc., are bad-making characteristics of selves. Lastly, if a person holds that both experiences and selves can have value, he will hold that

certain non-dispositional qualities, like pleasantness, are good-making characteristics of experiences, and that certain dispositional properties, like cheerfulness, are good-making characteristics of selves.

Thus, even if all the premises of McTaggart's argument were valid, the conclusion would have very little tendency to refute the view that only experiences have value or to support the view that only selves have value. A person might hold that only experiences have value. He might admit that the occurrence of a valuable experience in a self affects the aggregate nett value contained in any group of which that self is a member in the same sense and to the same extent as it affects the value contained in the self. But he would not call a self good or bad, in respect of the occurrence of a good or bad experience, except in so far as he thought that this occurrence was a sign of a disposition to have good or bad experiences. And by calling a self good or bad he would mean that it has such dispositions. Now the occurrence of such an experience in a self would give him no ground for ascribing such dispositions to anything but that self; it would plainly give him no ground for ascribing them to any group of which the self is a member. Therefore his opinion that only experiences have value would remain wholly unaffected by McTaggart's argument, even if he accepted the latter.

2·2. *Summary.* The reader who compares the length and prolixity of this Section with the few paragraphs which McTaggart allots to the subject may complain that I have made a great song and dance over nothing. My answer is that in these sections of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart is skating on the thinnest of ice over a perfect morass of muddle and confusion, and that the subject under discussion is of great interest quite independently of McTaggart's system. I will just reiterate the sources of difficulty and confusion.

(i) If the negative part of McTaggart's theory of time be accepted, no particular can really be either a continuant or an occurrent. Yet, when we are thinking *sub specie temporis*, we think of a self as a continuant which has dispositional

properties and persists through time, and we think of its experiences and the successive total phases in its history as events or occurrents in this continuant.

(ii) If the positive part of McTaggart's theory of time and the self be accepted, those particulars which appear *sub specie temporis* as events or total phases in the history of a persistent self are really certain timeless parts of a certain timeless two-dimensional whole, which is a self.

(iii) This timeless two-dimensional whole which is a self does not, however, appear *sub specie temporis* as a continuant *self*. On the contrary, it appears as that *total phase* which comes at the end of the history of a continuant self.

(iv) When a timeless self is misconceived as a persistent continuant and when certain timeless parts of it are misprehended as events or total phases in its history, the latter are *not* conceived as parts of the former.

(v) McTaggart conducts his arguments about value and gives his illustrative examples in temporal terms. Yet in these arguments and illustrations he tacitly identifies a self with its own history, and assumes that the experiences of a self are parts of that self. And he fails to notice that, whatever view one may take about the meaning and the application of the words "good" and "bad", these adjectives are applied to selves only in respect of their dispositional properties and never directly in respect of their actual experiences.

The effect of the facts which I have just enumerated is two-fold. In the first place, if we consider McTaggart's arguments simply *sub specie temporis* and without reference to his special theories of time and the self, we are inclined to reject his premises and to find his reasoning quite inconclusive. Secondly, if we accept his conclusions as proved *sub specie temporis*, it is extremely difficult to see what they amount to in terms of the non-temporal realities which, according to him, are misprehended when viewed *sub specie temporis*. The total impression produced is as if one were trying to read a page of print with glasses of different focus before one's two eyes. One's head begins to swim, and a feeling of intellectual sickness arises.

3. Unconscious Mental States and Value.

In §§ 802 to 808, inclusive, of *The Nature of Existence* McTaggart discusses the following questions. (i) Do human selves have "unconscious mental states", and, if so, in what sense? (ii) If so, does such a state ever *have* value? (iii) Even if no such state ever has value, does it ever *give* value either to the self whose state it is or to some phase in the history of that self?

3·1. *In what Sense are there Unconscious Mental States?* One definition of an "unconscious mental state of the self *S*" would be that it is a state of *S* which he *never could* introspectively prehend. McTaggart has no objection to the possibility of such states. As we know, he has no objection to the possibility of selves which are not reflexively self-conscious. Now every state of such a self would be an unconscious state, in the sense defined. This, however, is not relevant to the question whether *human* selves have unconscious mental states; for all human selves are reflexively self-conscious.

If we admit McTaggart's theory of determining correspondence, of the self, and of *C*-series, there can be no unconscious states, in the sense defined above, in any self which is reflexively self-conscious. *Sub specie temporis* any self which ever prehends itself always does so; and at every moment in prehending itself it prehends all its own prehensions, past, present, and future. Now all its mental states, whatever else they may appear to be, are in fact prehensions. Therefore no reflexively self-conscious self can have any unconscious mental states, in the sense defined above.

Suppose, however, that we define an "unconscious mental state of *S*" as a state which *S* does not discriminate and recognise as a distinct prehension, but prehends only as an undiscriminated item in a vague background. Then it is certain that even reflexively self-conscious selves have a great many unconscious states. For we cannot otherwise explain, consistently with McTaggart's theory, the apparent fluctuations in the extent and the distinctness of the field of consciousness in the course of a self's history. In this sense,

and in no other, it is certain that human selves have unconscious mental states.

3·2. *Undiscriminated States and Value.* The question that remains is this. Does a state of S, which is in fact a prehension and is in fact prehended by S but is not discriminated and recognised as such by S, either have value or contribute value to S or to S's history? McTaggart does not profess to answer this question. But he claims to show that, even if such states have value or give value, it is unlikely that this will make our ordinary judgments of value much more uncertain than they admittedly would be on the opposite supposition. The argument may be put as follows in our notation.

Suppose that the self P_1 is reflexively self-conscious. Then it contains an ω-prehension P_{11} whose object is the whole primary C-series Π_1. Similarly, any pre-maximal term P_1^r in the primary C-series Π_1 will contain an r-state of prehension P_{11}^r whose object is the whole C-series Π_1. P_{11} will be a correct prehension of Π_1 as an inclusion-series of timeless terms. P_{11}^r will be a misprehension of Π_1 as a B-series of successive total phases in the history of a self. P_{11}^r will present the term P_1^r as the present phase of this history; it will present every term of the form P_1^{r+x} as a future phase; and it will present every term of the form P_1^{r-x} as a past phase.

Now let us suppose that P_1 contains the ω-prehension P_{12}. Since P_1 is reflexively self-conscious, it will also contain an ω-prehension P_{112} whose object is the whole secondary C-series Π_{12}. Similarly, any term P_1^r in Π_1 will contain an r-state of prehension P_{112}^r whose object is the whole series Π_{12}. Finally, let us suppose that P_{112}^r presents a certain term P_{12}^s in Π_{12}, not as a discriminated distinct item, but only as an undiscriminated part of a vague background of mental content. We have to explain why this particular term P_{12}^s in Π_{12} is presented in this undiscriminated way by this particular term P_{112}^r of the series Π_{112}.

There are two cases to be considered. (a) When $r = s$, i.e., when the state of reflexive prehension and its object occupy corresponding positions in their respective C-series. (b) When

$r \neq s$, i.e., when the two occupy non-corresponding positions in their respective C-series. McTaggart thinks that, in the first case, the only possible explanation of the object not being presented as a discriminated item is that the object is itself a very faint and confused state of prehension. In the second case two explanations are possible, which do not necessarily exclude each other. The first is the same as before. The second is that r and s are very different, i.e., that the reflexive state of prehension and the prehension which is its object occupy very dissimilar positions in their respective C-series.

We have now to consider what this would mean *sub specie temporis*. The alternative $r = s$ means *sub specie temporis* that the reflexive state of prehension and its object are simultaneous. The alternative that r is very different from s means *sub specie temporis* that the reflexive state of prehension occurs very much earlier or very much later than the prehension which is its object. Thus, *sub specie temporis*, any state of himself which a reflexively self-conscious self fails to discriminate at a certain moment is either a very faint and confused state of consciousness or is one that happened a very long time ago or one which will happen a very long time hereafter.

Now consider the application of this to the subject under discussion. Any state of himself which S cannot at present discriminate is either present or in the very remote past or in the very remote future, *sub specie temporis*. (*a*) If it is present, it must be very faint and confused. And a very faint and confused state of consciousness is not likely to have or to give very much value. Therefore an estimate of the value pertaining to S which is made by ignoring such states is not likely to be very much vitiated by this omission, even if they have or give value. (*b*) States of himself which S cannot now discriminate because they are *sub specie temporis* in the very remote past or the very remote future may not be either very faint or very confused. It is therefore possible that they may have or give considerable value. But, on any view, estimates made now of the value pertaining to S are

very likely to be vitiated by our inadequate knowledge of what happened to him in the remote past or what will happen to him in the remote future.

The only point which I should be inclined to question in this very ingenious argument is the following. Granted that no single state which is very faint and confused is likely to have or to give much value, can it be assumed that a very large number of such states together will not do so? And is it not likely on any view, and particularly so on McTaggart's view, that much the greatest part of the total content of a human self consists of these confused and undiscriminated mental states?

CHAPTER LVIII

THE VALUE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAXIMAL END-TERM OF A PRIMARY C-SERIES

We have now to consider the applications which McTaggart makes of his general theory of the nature and the possible bearers of value. In Chaps. LXV and LXVII of *The Nature of Existence* he tries to estimate the amounts of good and of evil associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series. In Chap. LXVI he tries to estimate the amounts of good and of evil associated with the pre-maximal terms of such a series. And in Chap. LXVII he uses these results in order to estimate the amounts of good and of evil contained in the universe as a whole. In the present chapter I am concerned primarily with his answer to the first question. But some preliminary discussion is needed, and this will involve a reference to McTaggart's answer to the second question. The reader will have noticed that I have suddenly introduced a new phrase, viz., "the value *associated with*" a given term of a primary C-series. I must first explain why I have done this and what I mean by it.

1. The general Notion of Value associated with a Term of a primary C-series.

In order to see that there is a certain ambiguity in McTaggart's language at this point we may begin by considering a difficulty which he raises in § 860 and discusses in § 861. It may be put as follows. In Chap. LXV McTaggart claims to show that the only evil which can exist in the maximal end-term of a primary C-series is sympathetic pain felt for evils which exist in the pre-maximal terms of this or any other such series. In Chap. LXVI he claims to show that there are many other evils beside such sympathetic pain in the pre-

maximal terms of any primary C-series. Lastly, according to his general theory, the maximal term of any C-series includes all the pre-maximal terms. The question at once arises whether these three propositions can possibly form a consistent set. Do not any two of them entail the contradictory of the other one?

I will quote the answer which McTaggart gives in § 861. It is as follows. "There is nothing surprising in the fact that each of the stages in the C-series which are parts of a self should have qualities which are absent from that stage in the C-series which is the whole self—the qualities in respect of which the pre-final stages have in them evil other than sympathetic pain" (*Nature of Existence*, Vol. II, p. 446). In the next paragraph McTaggart gives an analogy which, he thinks, "may make the matter clearer". Put in the simplest possible way, the analogy is as follows. We are to consider a community of persons, e.g., A, B, C, D, and E. We are to suppose that there are the following *three* business-partnerships among these people, viz., (A, B), (A, B, C), and (A, B, C, D). These are to be compared with the pre-maximal terms of a primary C-series, taken in ascending order of inclusiveness. The community as a whole, viz., (A, B, C, D, E), which is not a business-partnership, is to be compared with the maximal end-term of this series. We are to suppose that a balance-sheet is drawn up on a particular day, both for the community as a whole and for each of the three firms within it. Then, McTaggart tells us, the former might have nothing but assets, whilst each of the latter has both assets and liabilities. Thus the wealth *in* the community would be mixed, if we count assets as positive wealth and liabilities as negative wealth. But the community as a whole might, nevertheless, have assets without liabilities, although "nothing was contributed except by partnerships, each of which was a part of the community".

I think it is fair to give this analogy, although I cannot myself understand the financial and social situation which McTaggart asks us to envisage, and although the three highly intelligent financial experts to whom I submitted the passage

confessed their inability to make head or tail of it. Perhaps some of my readers who are either chartered accountants or directors of holding-companies with numerous subsidiary companies may be able to understand it and may be enlightened by it. In the subsequent discussion I shall ignore the analogy and contemplate the problem directly.

We may grant at once to McTaggart that there is nothing surprising in the fact that pre-maximal terms of a primary C-series may have characteristics which do not belong to the maximal end-term of the same series, in spite of the fact that the former are all contained in the latter. And we may grant that certain characteristics which belong to pre-maximal terms and do not belong to the maximal end-term may be bad-making. But do these admissions remove the original difficulty? I cannot see that they do.

Consider any pre-maximal term P_A^r in the primary C-series Π_A. Either it *has* value, or it contains parts which have value, or both, or neither. Now P_A^r is contained in P_A^ω, the maximal end-term of Π_A. Therefore anything which is a part of P_A^r is also a part of P_A^ω. Now McTaggart says quite explicitly, in § 788, p. 399, "the value *of* a part is value *in* each of the wholes of which it is a part, as well as in itself" (my italics). In our terminology this is equivalent to saying that the value of a part is value pertaining to each of the wholes of which it is a part, as well as being value pertaining to itself. It follows that, if P_A^r either has value or contains value or both, the value which pertains to it will be value *contained in* P_A^ω. Therefore it will be value *pertaining to P_A^ω*, since this was defined as any value which P_A^ω either has or contains. It seems to me then that there is not the least doubt that it follows from McTaggart's definitions and his theory of C-series that any value which pertains to any pre-maximal term of a C-series *ipso facto* pertains to the maximal end-term of that series.

Of course P_A^ω has a part which is neither identical with nor contained in any other term of Π_A. For every other term is included in P_A^ω without exhausting it. Suppose, e.g., that Π_A is a discrete series. Then the increment from the most

extensive term but one to the maximal end-term answers
these conditions. And any part of that increment also
answers them. Now such parts of P_A^ω may have value. If
they have, P_A^ω will contain, in addition to the aggregate nett
value pertaining to all the pre-maximal terms of Π_A, the
values of these parts. And, even if these parts *have* no value,
still, provided that P_A^ω *has* value and does not only contain it,
the property of containing these parts may be a valifying
characteristic of P_A^ω. So, whether P_A^ω has value or only
contains value, there is no reason why the value pertaining to
it should not be different from that which pertains to any or
to all of the pre-maximal terms of Π_A. All that I am con-
cerned to maintain is that the maximal end-term P_A^ω must, on
McTaggart's definitions and principles, contain every value,
good or bad, which pertains to any other term of Π_A.
I cannot see that the argument in § 861 or the unintelligible
parable about the business-partnerships in a community has
the faintest tendency to affect this.

At this point it will be useful to note a perfectly explicit
statement, relevant to the present topic, which McTaggart
makes in § 888. He there says definitely that, although the
maximal end-term of a C-series contains all that is contained
in any of the other terms of the same series, yet the value of
the pre-maximal terms is not a part of the value of the
maximal term. "Each stage has its separate value, which is
not part of the value of the final stage."

Now the argument in § 861 seems to imply that the in-
dividual terms of a primary C-series *have* value, and the
remark which I have just quoted from § 888 obviously
assumes that they do. But, so far from having shown that the
terms of C-series *have* value, as distinct from *containing* value
or merely *contributing* to the value of selves, McTaggart, after
an elaborate discussion in §§ 791 to 799, inclusive, says
explicitly that he can come to no decision on the question,
and that it is immaterial to the rest of his argument. I will
quote what he says in § 799. "I am unable to come to any
definite opinion on this point. Nor is it important for our
present purpose. It is important to know whether it is true

that every value...is a value either of a self or of a part of a self. But, as we have seen, there seems no doubt that this question must be answered in the affirmative. And it will not make any difference to the conclusions which we shall reach in the rest of this work whether the values are values of selves or values of their parts." Now it is plain that, if we accept McTaggart's theory of *C*-series, the alternative that "values are values of selves" must mean either that only the maximal end-terms of primary *C*-series have value, or that only primary *C*-series as collective wholes have value. On either interpretation it is simply false to say, as McTaggart does in § 888, that "each stage has its separate value, which is not a part of the value of the final stage". On the first interpretation no stage has value except the maximal one. On the second interpretation no *stage* has value, for value belongs only to the complete primary *C*-series as a whole.

We have, then, to face the following interconnected difficulties in interpreting McTaggart's statements. (i) He professes to leave it an open question whether only selves or only certain parts of them or both *have* value. Yet, at later stages of his argument, he makes statements which imply directly or indirectly that certain parts of selves, viz., the terms of primary *C*-series, *have* value and do not merely *contain* it or *contribute* to the value which belongs only to selves. (ii) He gives a definition of "value in" a particular from which, in conjunction with his theory of *C*-series, it undoubtedly follows that any value in any pre-maximal term of a *C*-series must *ipso facto* be value in the maximal end-term of that series. Yet, when he discusses "the value in the maximal end-term of a primary *C*-series", he explicitly ignores as irrelevant the values in the pre-maximal terms of the series.

I think it is plain that there is at least a *verbal* inconsistency in McTaggart's statements. But it may be possible to see for ourselves what he has in mind, and to discover that the inconsistency is only in certain things which he says and not in what he means. Let us try to do this.

In the first place, I assume that McTaggart holds that any

term in a primary *C*-series either *contains* value, or *has* value, or *contributes* value to the self of which it is a part. The last alternative means that, even though such a term neither has nor contains value, the property of having a part which has the characteristics of this term is a valifying characteristic of a self. These alternatives are not mutually exclusive. I take it that McTaggart is unable to decide whether any of them is to be rejected. And I take it that what he says about the value in a term of a primary *C*-series is supposed to be compatible with any selection of them. Secondly, it is evident that what he calls "the value in a given term of a primary *C*-series" is meant to be something uniquely associated with that particular term and to be independent of the values connected with any of the less inclusive terms of the same series, in spite of the fact that each of the latter is a part of the former. Can we suggest an interpretation of his statements which is consistent with these two conditions?

There is no difficulty if either the second or the third alternative is fulfilled. If a term of a primary *C*-series *has* value, its value will depend directly only on *its* characteristics. It is true that among these there will be the characteristics of containing such and such parts, and this may be a valifying characteristic of the whole. But, even if these parts have or contain value, this value will be no part of the value which the term as a whole has in respect of its property of containing these parts. Again, suppose that the property of containing such and such a term of a primary *C*-series is a valifying property of the self associated with that series. Then we are not concerned with the values (if any) which may pertain to parts of this term. We are concerned only with the nature of this term as a whole. This includes, of course, the internal structure of this term, and therefore an indirect reference to its parts; but it does not involve the values (if any) which pertain to the parts. A difficulty arises only if the first of the three alternatives should be fulfilled to the exclusion of the others, i.e., if the individual terms of a *C*-series only *contain* value. Can we make McTaggart's doctrine self-consistent on this alternative?

The only way that I can think of in which this might be done is the following. At the end of Sub-section 3·1 of Chap. LVI p. 677 of the present volume I argued that we ought not to talk of "*the* aggregate nett value contained in a given whole". We ought first to specify a certain set of parts of the whole, and then to talk of the nett aggregate value which it contains in respect of that set of parts. Now we know that the various less inclusive terms of a C-series which are all contained in a given more-inclusive term of it do *not* constitute a set of parts of the latter, in McTaggart's technical sense of the phrase. On the other hand, there are certain parts of any term P_A^r of a primary C-series Π_A which *are* uniquely associated with it and *do* form a set of parts of it. These are such parts as P_{AA}^r, P_{AB}^r, etc. They are co-extensive with P_A^r in the C-dimension and less extensive than P_A^r in the determining-correspondence dimension. It is true that they are also parts of all the terms of Π_A which are more inclusive than P_A^r. But they do not form a set of parts of any such term. In order to make up any more inclusive term than P_A^r, a *residue*, which is not a state of prehension, must be adjoined to such parts as P_{AA}^r and P_{AB}^r. I suggest, then, that for the present purpose McTaggart must have confined his attention to those parts of P_A^r which are co-extensive with it in the C-dimension and less extensive than it in the determining-correspondence dimension. And similar remarks must apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to P_A^ω. For the present purpose we must assume that "the value contained in a certain term of a primary C-series" means the value which it contains in respect of those parts of it which occupy *corresponding* positions in the *secondary C-series* which are associated with this primary C-series.

If we consider the situation *sub specie temporis*, we see that this restriction is completely in accordance with common-sense. Any term of the primary series Π_A appears *sub specie temporis* as a certain total phase in the history of a certain person A. Now it is only such parts of this term as we have been describing which will appear as parts of this total phase of A's history. For it is only such parts that will appear to be simultaneous with this phase. Terms like P_A^{r-x}

or P_{AB}^{r-x}, though they are really parts of P_A^r, will appear *sub specie temporis* as earlier total phases or as parts of such phases, and therefore as falling wholly outside of that total phase which is the temporal appearance of P_A^r. Now *sub specie temporis* it would be absurd to include in the value contained in a certain total phase of a person's history the values pertaining to earlier total phases or to experiences which are parts of them. Therefore the restriction which I suggest that McTaggart is making is a perfectly reasonable one.

But, if we are to make this restriction, which was not contemplated in McTaggart's original definition of "value in" a term, we ought to have a special phrase to indicate that we are doing so. I propose to talk, in this connexion, of "the value *associated with* a given term of a primary C-series". In the light of the previous discussion we can define this phrase as follows. Let P_A^r be any pre-maximal term of a primary C-series Π_A. Then "the value associated with P_A^r" means (i) the value (if any) which P_A^r *has*; and (ii) the value (if any) which the self P_A derives from the valifying characteristic of having a part with the qualities and internal structure of P_A^r; and (iii) the value (if any) which P_A^r *contains* in consequence of the values of parts like P_{AA}^r, P_{ABA}^r, etc., which are terms of secondary C-series and which occupy positions in the latter corresponding to the position which P_A^r occupies in Π_A.

If, instead of a pre-maximal term P_A^r, we consider the maximal end-term P_A^ω, the only change needed in the definition is that the second clause becomes superfluous. For the maximal end-term P_A^ω just *is* the self P_A as a timeless two-dimensional whole. The other two clauses remain unchanged except that the index ω must be substituted throughout for the index r.

This is the best that I can do towards making McTaggart's doctrine consistent on this point. I may not have succeeded in grasping his precise meaning, but I am fairly certain that my suggestion is not very different from what he had in mind. In the rest of my treatment of the subject I shall assume that my interpretation is correct.

2. Value associated with the Maximal Term of a primary C-series.

We can now turn to the main business of this chapter, viz., the amounts of good and of evil associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series. As we have seen in Chap. LVI, McTaggart holds that the value associated with anything depends on the presence and the intensity of certain valifying characteristics which we have enumerated in Sub-section 2·1 of that chapter. Moreover, as we saw in Sub-section 3·22 of Chap. LVI, McTaggart holds that the amount of value pertaining to anything depends *sub specie temporis* on the duration of that particular. Therefore we have two points to consider, viz., the nature and the intensity of the valifying characteristics which are manifested in the maximal term of a primary C-series, and the dependence of the value associated with such a term on the real characteristic which appears as the duration of the term. McTaggart discusses the first of these points in Chap. LXV of *The Nature of Existence*. He discusses the second of them in Chap. LXVII. I propose to take the two together.

2·1. *The valifying Characteristics.* The method which McTaggart uses is to take the various valifying characteristics which he has enumerated, and to consider how such a term as P_A^ω stands with respect to them.

2·11. *Cognition.* Let us suppose that to have correct cognitions is a good-making characteristic and that to have erroneous cognitions is a bad-making characteristic. It has been shown that all cognitions are really prehensions, and that all ω-prehensions are completely correct so far as they go. Since we are confining ourselves to those parts of P_A^ω which occupy corresponding positions in their respective secondary C-series to that which P_A^ω occupies in Π_A, we have to consider only ω-prehensions in estimating the value associated with P_A^ω. Since these are all perfectly correct, though not necessarily exhaustive of their objects, the value which is associated with P_A^ω in respect of its cognitive characteristics is *unmixed* goodness. Any other term of Π_A, e.g., P_A^r, will consist of r-states of prehension corresponding to the ω-prehensions which together make up P_A^ω. Now some of

these will be correct, but many of them will be more or less delusive. So the cognitively determined value associated with any pre-maximal term, such as P_A^r, will always be a *mixture* of good and evil.

Again, in the pre-maximal stages of a C-series the object which is presented by a *single* state of prehension may be a confused jumble of *several* undiscriminated particulars. In the maximal term of the same series *each* state of prehension is an actual prehension of a discriminated object. The confused background of the pre-maximal stages is here resolved into its constituents, viz., the selves in P_A's differentiating group and their secondary parts in the determining-correspondence hierarchy. So, if the properties of clearness and distinctness confer positive value on cognitive states, the maximal end-term has this positive value associated with it in an unmixed form.

Lastly, though there is cognitive limitation at the ω-stage, in the sense that P_A may not prehend all the particulars that there are and may not be aware of all the characteristics which in fact belong to those particulars which he does prehend, this limitation cannot be accompanied by any sense of frustration. Since there neither is nor appears to be any form of cogitation save prehension at this stage, there can be no question of comparing one's state of partial ignorance with an imagined state of more extensive knowledge and wishing for the latter.

2·12. *Emotion.* McTaggart's argument on this point runs as follows. (*a*) All those emotions which certainly must exist at the ω-stage, viz., love, self-reverence, affection, and complacency, are admittedly either intrinsically or contributively good. (*b*) All those which are admitted to be either intrinsically or contributively evil, such as jealousy, envy, etc., are such that they cannot exist at the ω-stage. (*c*) Those about which we cannot be certain whether they exist at the ω-stage or not, e.g., sympathy, humility, etc., are either indifferent or mildly good in respect of their emotional quality, though they may have disutility in so far as they give rise to pain. He concludes that the emotionally determined value associated with the final stage of a primary C-series is *unmixed* goodness.

If the reader will refer back to Chap. XLIX, he will see what objections I should make to this argument. In clause ii of Section 1 p. 497 of that chapter I tried to show that McTaggart has not produced any good reason for holding that love, and the emotions dependent on it, could or would exist at the ω-stage.

However, the only objection which McTaggart himself considers is the following. It is certain that there can be love at the ω-stage which is not returned. Suppose, e.g., that P_B and P_C form a reciprocating group and that P_A's differentiating group consists of himself and P_B. Then P_A prehends P_B and therefore loves him; he has an indirect perception of P_C but does not prehend him, and therefore he feels affection, but not love, for P_C. But P_B prehends only himself and P_C. He neither prehends P_A nor indirectly perceives him. Therefore P_B, whom P_A loves, neither loves P_A nor feels affection for him. Now the temporal analogue of this eternal triangle would be as follows. It would consist in A loving B; whilst B is completely wrapped up in himself and C, who in turn is completely wrapped up in himself and B. This would generally be regarded as an emotionally unsatisfactory state for A. Since this situation could exist at the ω-stage consistently with McTaggart's principles, has he not proved too much when he claims to have shown that the emotionally determined value associated with the ω-stage must be *unmixedly* good?

McTaggart's answer is as follows. At the ω-stage P_B can fail to love P_A *only* if he does not prehend P_A. And P_B can fail to feel affection for P_A *only* if he does not perceive P_A indirectly. Thus the only selves whom P_A could love at the ω-stage without their loving him or feeling affection for him in return would be selves who neither prehend him nor indirectly perceive him. Now P_A would know this fact about P_B. There is no humiliation in not being loved or regarded with affection by a self whom one knows to be completely unaware of one's own existence. Moreover, since in the ω-stage there can be no question of conceiving possible alternatives to the actually prehended facts, there can be no frustrated desire in P_A that P_B should prehend him and love

him or indirectly perceive him and feel affection for him. Now the evil of unrequited love in the pre-maximal stages seems to consist largely in the wounded self-esteem of the unsuccessful lover and in his frustrated desire to be noticed and loved by those whom he loves. When these factors are eliminated, as they must be according to McTaggart at the ω-stage, unrequited love is not evil and it has no disutility, though it is certainly less good and less useful than requited love. So the possibility of such love at the ω-stage is compatible with the conclusion that the emotionally determined value associated with such a stage is unmixedly good.

We must next consider the question: How intense in degree and how extensive in range is emotion at the ω-stage as compared with emotion in the pre-maximal stages of the same primary C-series?

(a) McTaggart claims to have shown that ω-love, at any rate, must be more intense than r-love. And, on his definition of "self-reverence", that emotion must increase in intensity with any increase in the intensity of the love on which it depends. In Section 2 of Chap. XLIX p. 503 of the present volume I have explained and criticised McTaggart's grounds for holding that ω-love must be more intense than r-love. I gave reasons for doubting the validity of some of his arguments, and I also gave some arguments of my own against the truth of his conclusion.

(b) The question about the range of love in the maximal stage of a primary C-series, as compared with its range in the pre-maximal stages of the same series, comes to this. In every stage of Π_A the same set of selves is cognised by P_A. Some of them may be prehended, and the rest only perceived indirectly. If so, the same selves are prehended in every stage and the same selves are perceived indirectly in every stage. But there is this difference between the maximal stage of Π_A and the pre-maximal stages. In the former each self which is prehended is prehended distinctly and correctly *as a self* and as *different from* all the others. And each self which is indirectly perceived is indirectly perceived as a self and as distinct from all the others. But, in the latter, both P_A's

prehension and his indirect perception of the selves which he cognises are very confused and much tainted with error. It is therefore impossible to tell which part of P_A's ostensibly present total state is really *prehension* of selves and which part of it is only *indirect perception* of selves. And, even if the former could be distinguished with certainty from the latter, it would still be impossible to say how many selves P_A does in fact prehend. For a whole group of such selves might be prehended by P_A in his ostensibly present state, not as *selves* or even as so many distinct particulars of some kind or other, but simply as a vague undifferentiated background. It is therefore impossible to say with certainty whether the selves which P_A distinguishes and recognises to be such in his ostensibly present state are a large or a small proportion of the selves which he prehends. And the selves which he loves in the ω-stage are all those and only those which he prehends. Nevertheless, there are certain empirical facts which favour the view that the proportion is small rather than large.

We must consider how small a proportion of any man's ostensibly present cognitive field is composed of selves which he distinguishes and recognises as such. And we must remember that even this small residuum is, *sub specie temporis*, constantly losing and gaining members, as a man loses touch with old acquaintances and makes new ones. Finally, we must remember that the group of selves which a self prehends is in fact precisely the same in every stage of the *C*-series which appears *sub specie temporis* as his history. When all this is taken into account it seems most unlikely that the selves which a man distinguishes and recognises as such in what appears as the present total phase of his history can be more than a small fraction of the group of selves which he in fact prehends. Now all the latter are prehended as distinct selves and are loved by him in the ω-stage of the *C*-series which appears as his history. Hence it seems almost certain that his love in the ω-stage is much more extensive in range than it is in any of the stages which appear *sub specie temporis* as the successive phases of his history up to the present time. Similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to

affection, which is connected with indirect perception as love is with prehension of selves.

2·13. *Hedonic Tone.* The emotions which are certainly present in the ω-stage of a primary C-series, e.g., love, affection, etc., are in themselves pleasant experiences. And they are liable to cause unpleasant experiences only when they are associated with frustrated desire, which, according to McTaggart, cannot exist in the ω-stage. The question that remains is whether there is any unpleasant experience in the ω-stage.

It might, perhaps, be thought that, if there can be no frustrated desire in the ω-stage, there can be no unpleasant experiences there. For, it might be said, if there were any unpleasant experiences, they would *ipso facto* be objects of a desire for their absence. Since this would necessarily be ineffective in a state which is and is known to be timeless, it would be a frustrated desire. Therefore, the argument would run, there can be no unpleasant experiences in the ω-stage. McTaggart does not accept this argument. In the ω-stage all cogitation is correctly prehended by the self as prehension. Under these conditions, McTaggart holds, there could be no question of ostensibly imagining an alternative to what is prehended as actual. Now there is nothing impossible in the suggestion that a self might have an unpleasant experience and yet not wish that it were absent, if we assume that the self cannot contemplate any alternative to what it actually prehends.

The only unpleasant first-order experiences that we know of are painful sensations, or frustrated desires, or emotions of certain kinds. Now a sensation is a prehension of a particular as characterised by sensible qualities. But no particulars have sensible qualities. Therefore all sensations are partly delusive prehensions. But all ω-prehensions are completely correct. Therefore there can be no ω-sensations. Therefore there can be no painful sensations at the ω-stage. Again, according to McTaggart, there can be no frustrated ω-desires. Lastly, all the most obviously unpleasant emotions, such as jealousy, fear, etc., can be ruled out in the ω-stage. (See

Chap. XLIX, Section 3, p. 506 of the present volume.) In fact the only kind of unpleasant experience which would seem to be possible at the ω-stage is sorrowfully toned prehension of certain particulars as evil. This is an evil of the second order, which McTaggart calls "sympathetic pain".

Now at the ω-stage nothing can be prehended as evil unless it really is so. Therefore sympathetic ω-pain can exist only if there are ω-prehensions of particulars which *really are* evil. Moreover, some at least of these real evils would have to be of the *first order*. They could not all be themselves just experiences of sympathetic pain, or we should be involved in an endless regress which is obviously of the vicious kind. Now we have so far found no reason to believe that there are any first-order evils in the ω-stage. This, however, does not entail that there are no ω-prehensions of real first-order evils. For any ω-prehension, such as P^{ω}_{AB}, has for its total object, not merely the term P^{ω}_B, but the whole C-series Π_B, of which P^{ω}_B is the maximal end-term. Now some of the pre-maximal terms of Π_B contain real first-order evils, e.g., the experiences which appear *sub specie temporis* as twinges of toothache or pangs of jealousy. Therefore it is quite possible that the ω-stage of a primary C-series may contain sorrowfully toned ω-prehensions of primary evils in the r-stages of the same or different C-series.

It may be worth while to make this quite clear by an example. Let A be a reflexively self-conscious person. Suppose that the term P^r_A of Π_A contains a part which appears *sub specie temporis* as a twinge of toothache occurring at a certain date in A's history. This will be a confused prehension in P^r_A of some other particular. We can therefore denote it by $P^r_{A\ldots x}$. In the maximal term P^{ω}_A of Π_A there is a corresponding perfectly correct ω-prehension $P^{\omega}_{A\ldots x}$. This, being correct, is not a sensation at all, and is therefore not a painful sensation. But, since the person A is reflexively self-conscious, the maximal term P^{ω}_A must contain a reflexive ω-prehension $P_{AA\ldots x}$. The total object of this is the whole C-series $\Pi_{A\ldots x}$. It therefore contains a factor $P^{\omega r}_{AA\ldots x}$ which presents the term $P^r_{A\ldots x}$ of this C-series from the

ω-standpoint. (See Chap. xxxix, Section 7, p. 378 of the present volume.) Now there is no reason why $P^{\omega r}_{AA\ldots x}$ should not present $P^r_{A\ldots x}$ as a painful experience. For $P^r_{A\ldots x}$ *is* an experience and *is* painful, however much it may distort the object which it presents.

The upshot of the discussion is this. There is no reason to think that there can be any *first-order* unpleasantness in the ω-stage. So far as hedonic tone is concerned it is a state of unmixed first-order pleasure. But it is possible that this may be mixed with unpleasantness of the second order, arising from sorrowful contemplation in the maximal stage of real first-order evils in the pre-maximal stages.

McTaggart argues that the degree of first-order pleasantness in the ω-stage must be much greater than any which is experienced in the stages that appear as one's present life. His argument is as follows. The pleasure in the ω-stage depends on the emotions of love, self-reverence, affection, etc. It is known that, in the stages which appear as one's present life, love can be at least as pleasant as any experience that we enjoy. It has been shown, he claims, that love and the other emotions which depend on it are much more intense in degree and probably much more extensive in range in the maximal stage. Therefore the primary pleasure in that stage must be much greater in amount.

Apart from the doubts which I have tried to cast on the premises of this argument in Chap. xlix of the present work, I have the following additional criticisms to make at this point. In the pre-maximal stages there are sensations, and there is the experience of being ostensibly active in striving for ends and overcoming obstacles. In the maximal stage there can be no such experiences; for they are all highly delusive on their cognitive side, if McTaggart's theory is true. Now there is no doubt that some of the most intensely pleasant experiences which we enjoy in the pre-maximal stages are certain sensations and certain experiences of ostensible bodily and mental activity. None of these pleasures can exist at the maximal stage. It seems to me that this makes it doubtful whether the hedonically determined good-

ness associated with the final stage would be very much greater than that associated with some of the pre-maximal stages, in respect of *intensity* at any rate. (We are deferring the question of ostensible *duration*, for the present.)

McTaggart discusses a more general form of the same objection in §§ 845 and 846. He rightly says that it does not prove that the amount of good associated with the maximal stage is not very much greater than that which is associated with any of the pre-maximal stages. But he adds the remark: " ...we have found reason to believe that the pleasure, virtue, and love which are found in the final stage do greatly outweigh any that can be found in present experience" (*Nature of Existence*, Vol. ii, pp. 433–434). This seems to me to be unjustified, as regards pleasure at any rate. For he reached this conclusion about pleasure in § 839 before he had considered the facts mentioned in § 845; and these facts are peculiarly relevant to hedonically determined value. Plainly it is unfair to insist on the absence of sensation and unfulfilled desire in the ω-stage, when arguing that it is a state of *unmixed* first-order pleasure; and then, when arguing that it is a state of *very great* first-order pleasure as compared with any of the pre-maximal stages, to ignore the fact that some of the most intense pleasures known to men are bound up with certain sensations and certain conative experiences which can exist only at the pre-maximal stages.

2·14. *Extent and Intensity of Consciousness*. Plainly this is a characteristic which has degrees from zero upwards, but has no polar opposite. Therefore, if any value is derived from it, this must be unmixed goodness or unmixed badness. Since it certainly does not make any state of consciousness unmixedly bad, we may assume that, if it gives value at all, it gives unmixed goodness. This will hold equally of any stage in a *C*-series, whether it be maximal or pre-maximal.

Now in the ω-stage of a *C*-series everything that is prehended confusedly in any of the *r*-stages is prehended clearly and distinctly. So the extent of clear consciousness is greater in the ω-stage than in any of the *r*-stages of the same *C*-series.

Again, cogitation in the ω-stage not only *is* prehension but

also *appears* to the self as prehension. In the *r*-stages much of it appears as judgment, supposition, and other ostensibly non-prehensive forms of cogitation. Now ostensible prehensions are much more vivid experiences than other ostensible forms of cogitation, and their emotional tone tends to be much more intense.

For these reasons the extent and intensity of ω-consciousness are likely to be much greater than they are in the stages which appear as one's present life. Therefore the goodness, if any, which the maximal stage of a primary C-series derives from this characteristic is likely to be very much greater than that which any pre-maximal stage derives from it.

2·15. *Harmony and Coherence.* If these characteristics be independent of those already mentioned (which McTaggart is inclined to doubt), it would seem that a maximal end-term would have a very high degree of harmony and coherence and no disharmony or incoherence. It would contain no conflicting desires or inconsistent beliefs, no contrast between perceived realities and conceived alternative possibilities, and so on. So, if internal coherence be a good-making characteristic, the value associated with the maximal term of a C-series in respect of it must be greatly and unmixedly good.

2·16. *Virtue.* McTaggart's discussion on this point is somewhat complicated. It begins in §§ 828 and 829; it is continued in § 843; and it is ended in §§ 894 to 897, inclusive, in Chap. LXVII. Putting together what he says in these separated passages, and introducing certain fairly obvious amendments and qualifications, we may state his theory as follows.

(i) A self is called "virtuous" or "vicious" only in respect of its volitions. It is virtuous only in so far as it has morally good volitions, and it is vicious only in so far as it has morally bad ones.

(ii) We will call an object O "desirable" in given circumstances if and only if *either* (a) it is or would be intrinsically good, and its existence in the actual circumstances is not necessary and sufficient to produce evils so great as to outweigh its own goodness; *or* (b) it is or would be intrinsically

bad or indifferent, but its existence in the actual circum-
stances is necessary and sufficient to produce goods so great
as to outweigh its own badness or indifference.

(iii) A person's desire for the existence of O is "morally
good" if and only if the two following conditions are fulfilled.
(a) He knows or believes (correctly or incorrectly) that O has
certain characteristics C, and he desires the existence of O in
respect of them. (b) *Either* (α) the presence of C does in fact
make O desirable, and this person does not disbelieve this;
or (β) the presence of C does not in fact make O desirable, but
this person mistakenly believes that it does.

(iv) If, in the last paragraph, we substitute throughout
"undesirable" for "desirable", we get the conditions which
are severally necessary and jointly sufficient to make this
person's desire for the existence of O "morally bad".

(v) It would now be easy to state the conditions under
which a person's desire for the *non-existence* of O would be
morally good, and the conditions under which it would be
morally bad. But this may be left as an exercise for the
reader.

Now, if these definitions be accepted, it follows that
morally good and morally bad volitions cannot exist in a self
unless he knows or believes that there are *other* goods and
evils beside morally good and morally bad volitions. Suppose,
if possible, that there were in fact no other goods and evils.
Then a person could not *know* that there were other goods
and evils (for anything that is known must be a fact). And he
could *believe* that there were other goods and evils only in so
far as he had *false* beliefs. Now all ω-cognition is *correct*
prehension. Therefore, unless there are other goods and evils
beside morally good and morally bad volitions, there cannot
be morally good or morally bad volitions in the maximal
term of a C-series. There might, however, still be such voli-
tions in the pre-maximal stages of a C-series, because in these
stages there might be false ostensible beliefs that there are
other goods and evils.

It is, however, quite certain that there are non-moral goods
in all stages of a primary C-series, and that there are non-

moral evils, such as first-order pains, in the pre-maximal terms. And it is quite possible that the maximal term of such a series contains the non-moral evil of sympathetic pain, as explained in Sub-section 2·13 above. Therefore it is not impossible that there should be morally good and morally bad volitions in the ω-stage. Are there *actually* any morally bad volitions at this stage?

According to McTaggart, at the ω-stage a self acquiesces in the existence of everything that it prehends. We have just seen that some of these prehended objects are undoubtedly evil. So there is no doubt that a self, in the maximal stage, prehends certain particulars which are evil and regards their existence with acquiescence. Moreover, this acquiescence in the existence of evil particulars cannot at this stage be due to a mistaken belief that they are good or indifferent; for all ω-cognition is perfectly correct. Is not this acquiescence in the existence of evils, which are recognised as such, an instance of a morally bad ω-volition?

This does not necessarily follow, as the reader will see if he refers to the second of the five propositions laid down at the beginning of this sub-section. Acquiescence in the existence of an evil is morally *good*, provided that this evil is known or believed by the acquiescent self to have characteristics which make it, in the actual circumstances, a necessary and sufficient condition of the existence of a greater good, and provided that this is why the self acquiesces in its existence.

Now, if McTaggart is right, every ω-prehension presents its object correctly either as a self or as a part of a self, as the case may be. If the prehended object is presented as a self, the ω-prehension of it is necessarily an emotion of love or of self-reverence. If the prehended object is presented as a part of a self, the ω-prehension of it is necessarily an emotion of "complacency", in McTaggart's technical sense of that word. Now all these emotions are good, and none of them could exist unless the selves and the parts of selves towards which they are felt existed. Therefore, even if some of these selves or some of these parts of selves be intrinsically bad, their existence is a necessary and sufficient condition for the

existence of those intrinsically good emotions which are felt towards them at the ω-stage. If the goodness of these emotions outweighs the badness of the objects at which they are directed, and if the existence of the bad objects is acquiesced in because they are necessary conditions for the existence of the good emotions, this acquiescence in the existence of evil is a morally good volition.

It will be worth while to work out an example in order to make McTaggart's doctrine quite clear. Let A and B be two persons. Let us suppose that A loves B. And let us suppose that, *sub specie temporis*, it is true to say that B had toothache at a certain date in his history, and that A knew about this at the time. In the ω-stage A acquiesces in the existence of this ostensible sensation of toothache in one of the r-stages of Π_B, although he knows that it is painful. He acquiesces in its existence, *not* in respect of its painfulness, but in respect of its being an indispensable condition of B's existence, and therefore of the existence of his own love for B. At the ω-stage A sees that without B's toothache there would not have been B; that without B there would not have been his own love for B; and that without his love for B a great good would have been missing.

In the r-stages, on the other hand, it is quite possible that A should not acquiesce in the existence of B's toothache, and it is quite possible that he would be morally blameworthy if he did so. For at these stages A has confused and incorrect prehensions, many of which he mistakes for states of believing or supposing. Therefore, at these stages, A may have an ostensible belief or supposition that B might have existed without this toothache which B in fact had. If McTaggart's Principle of Extrinsic Determination is true, all such ostensible beliefs or suppositions must be false. Still, they can and do exist at the pre-maximal stages; and they may be, and often are, toned with the quality of acquiescence. Now such an ostensible belief or supposition, toned with the quality of acquiescence, would be a desire in A that B should not have the toothache which he in fact does have. This would be a morally good desire. At this stage acquiescence in the

existence of B's toothache would be a morally bad desire. But, at the ω-stage, the former desire *cannot exist*, since it involves a false ostensible belief or supposition. And, at the ω-stage, the latter desire *ceases to be morally bad*. As Mc-Taggart says in § 895, "we are not indifferent to better possibilities—we just do not contemplate them, or anything else except the existent" at the ω-stage.

It is conceivable that a particular which is prehended at the ω-stage might be seen to be so evil that the acquiescence which is felt towards it in respect of its utility should be redueed to zero. But, as we have seen, McTaggart does not admit the existence of a polar opposite to acquiescence which I have called "disquiescence". So there is no possibility of acquiescence passing beyond its zero value and changing into disquiescence, if he is right. And there is no possibility that the admitted greatness of the evil should produee a desire for its non-existence at the ω-stage. For, according to McTaggart's analysis, this would be an acquiescent supposition of its non-existence. And, at the ω-stage, there can be no question of even seeming to contemplate an alternative to what is prehended as actual.

We may sum up this discussion as follows. At the ω-stage all desire consists in prehending with acquiescence actual particulars which occupy various positions in C-series. And all particulars which are prehended at the ω-stage are prehended with acquiescence. In so far as these particulars are desirable, and are acquiesced in for the characteristics which make them desirable, the desires for their existence are morally good. But some of these particulars are bad, and there can be no delusion at the ω-stage about their badness. Nevertheless, their existence is acquiesced in at the ω-stage. All these evils are necessary conditions for the existence of certain goods, and their existence is acquiesced in at the ω-stage in respect of their utility and not in respect of the characteristics which make them intrinsically bad. So, unless the goods for which these evils are necessary conditions are too small to outweigh them, the ω-desires for the existence of these evils are not morally bad. It is therefore *possible* that

there are no morally bad volitions in the ω-stage of a *C*-series, and that the value associated with it in respect of virtue-or-vice is *unmixedly good*. This will *certainly* be so if and only if the goods, for which the desired evils are necessary conditions, are great enough to outweigh these evils. Whether this condition is or is not fulfilled is a question which must be set aside for the present. In the meanwhile we can safely say that the value associated with the ω-stage of a primary *C*-series in respect of virtue-or-vice is certainly very good, and, subject to one condition, unmixedly good.

2·161. *Criticisms of McTaggart's Account of ω-Virtue.* It seems to me that McTaggart's account of virtue at the ω-stage is open to criticism on several counts. I will now state my main objections.

(i) In so far as his doctrine depends on his analysis of "feeling aversion to *S* being *P*" into "supposing or believing with acquiescence that *S* is not *P*", I have discussed it thoroughly and given my reasons for rejecting it in Chap. xxviii, Section 3, and in Chap. xlix, Section 1, of the present work. The conclusion at which I arrived was that there could be no *unfulfilled* wishes at the ω-stage, because there could be no *wishes* at that stage; but that there could be *fulfilled aversions*. I said that we have not the means of imagining what this experience would be like; for it would consist in prehending certain particulars with aversion in respect of certain characteristics and yet being incapable of supposing that they might not have existed or that they might not have had these objectionable characteristics.

Since it seems to me obvious that acquiescence, in the sense in which McTaggart uses the word, has a polar opposite, viz., "disquiescence" or aversion, I should suppose that evils in the *r*-stages would be prehended from the ω-stage with a mixed feeling of disquiescence in respect of their intrinsic badness and of acquiescence in respect of their positive utility. And I see no reason why the resultant feeling-tone of such an ω-prehension should not be that of disquiescence. On McTaggart's view, however greatly the intrinsic evil of a contemplated particular might outweigh the

good that it subserves, the ω-prehension of it could not become a state of positive aversion. It could, at most, only be reduced to being a state of zero acquiescence. If positive aversion to an evil which outweighs the good that it subserves be literally *impossible,* we must admit that a state of zero acquiescence would not be blameworthy and would be the best volitional state attainable in the circumstances. But, if positive aversion to an evil which outweighs the good that it subserves *is* possible, then a state of zero acquiescence in such circumstances would be morally bad.

(ii) McTaggart alleges that ω-acquiescence in r-evils may be morally good because the latter are seen to be *necessary conditions* for the existence of certain greater goods and are acquiesced in for that reason. Now it seems to me very doubtful whether the notion of "necessary condition" could exist at a stage at which there can be no conception of any alternative to the prehended actuality. To say that x is a "necessary condition" of the existence of y would seem to mean that, *if* x (which does in fact exist) *had not* existed, then y (which does in fact exist) *would not* have existed. If at the ω-stage there can be no question of supposing or entertaining as a hypothesis the non-existence of anything which exists and is prehended, how can anything be seen to be a necessary condition of anything else?

(iii) Even if these two objections can be answered, there remains another which is similar to that which I made in Sub-section 2·13 above in criticising McTaggart's conclusions about the hedonically determined value associated with the ω-stage of a C-series.

In those stages of a C-series which appear as a person's earthly life the most heroic virtue is found in ostensible action against obstacles, internal and external, in enduring pain and hardship, in overcoming fear and resisting sloth, and in sacrificing one's own means of happiness in order to help other people. It is therefore bound up with the delusive appearances of action and change and matter, and with the real or apparent existence of certain primary evils. In the ω-stage there is not even the appearance of action or change

or matter, there are no primary evils and no appearance of such, and there is no possibility of conceiving any alternative to the prehended actuality. Virtue is reduced to greeting the eternal *fait accompli* with a timeless cheer proportioned to its nett desirability. It seems permissible to doubt whether, in respect of the value contributed by virtue, the ω-stage compares very favourably with the ostensibly present and past stages of the same primary *C*-series. We have, it seems to me, once more an almost perfect example of the "kite-string" fallacy.

McTaggart is quite alive to this objection and others of the same kind. He discusses them in §§ 845 to 849, inclusive. The most important point which he makes is that we are liable to fall into three confusions, all of which tend to make us unfair to the ω-stage as compared with the r-stages of a *C*-series. They are as follows.

(*a*) We are liable unwittingly to substitute for the *mere* absence of a certain good the absence of it together with the presence of a desire for it. The latter combination does involve a positive evil, viz., frustrated desire. But this combination cannot exist at the ω-stage, since that can contain no unfulfilled desires. (*b*) At a stage at which *everything* that we prehend is ostensibly temporal, virtue, if it is to belong to anything, must belong to ostensibly temporal terms. We are liable to pass from this *invariable association* in our present experience between virtue and ostensible temporality to the assumption that the former *necessarily involves* the latter. This is unjustifiable. Where prehension and its objects are not ostensibly temporal, virtue, if it still exists, will have to belong to terms of a different kind. But we must not assume that there are no terms for it to belong to. (*c*) We are very liable to confuse the changelessness of eternity, either with an unending duration in which nothing ever alters, or with an instantaneous cross-section of a process. It is plain that there could be little, if any, value associated with either of these objects; and so we are liable to think that there could be little, if any, value associated with an eternal existent.

All these three suggested sources of bias against the maximal stage of a primary C-series are, I think, genuine. But the following remarks seem to be relevant on the other side. (*a*) The first source of bias affects almost exclusively our estimate of the *hedonic* value associated with the ω-stage. It has hardly any bearing on the question whether there could be any very great *virtue* at a stage in which there is no primary evil and not even the delusive appearance of it or of matter or action or change. Only the second and third sources of bias are directly relevant to this question. They may be taken together.

(*b*) Certainly it is unsafe to assume that a characteristic, such as ostensible temporality, which has been present in all our experiences, is an indispensable condition of any other characteristic, such as virtue or vice, merely because the latter has never been found without the former. But it would be at least as rash to assume that the former characteristic is just an accidental accompaniment of the latter. If we had any *positive* conception of timeless experience, we might be able to see by direct inspection that the conditions of ostensible temporality, under which virtue and vice always have been manifested in our experience, are not essential. But the difficulty is that we have no such positive conception, and, *sub specie temporis*, we never shall be in a position to have one until the end of time.

McTaggart is quite right in insisting that the changelessness of eternity must not be taxed either with the monotony of sempiternal stagnation or with the triviality of an instantaneous cross-section. But, unless and until we have some positive notion of eternal existence and timeless experience, we cannot be sure that there is any sense in applying the terms "morally good" and "morally bad" to it. All that we can say with confidence is that it would *lack* certain features which *seem* to be necessary conditions of all the highest forms of virtue which we know. We must not deny that it may *have* other features, inconceivable to us in the ostensibly present stages of our lives, which are sufficient conditions of other and higher forms of virtue. But this

admission will not help us to any positive conclusion about the amount of morally determined goodness associated with the ω-stage as compared with the *r*-stages of the same *C*-series.

(*c*) If we are to consider sources of bias *for* the temporal and *against* the eternal, we ought in fairness to mention a very important source of bias in the opposite direction. Owing to our early experiences at our mother's knee, in the nursery, and in the school chapel, the word "eternal" has acquired for most of us very strong emotional associations of a certain kind. It tends to act on us emotionally in much the same way as the sound of certain notes on the organ, the smell of incense, or the sight of the dim vastness of a gothic cathedral or of St Pancras station at midnight. It is plain that the word neither has nor can have any *positive cognitive* meaning for anyone except certain mystics, and that it can have such a meaning for them only if certain hypotheses about the nature and validity of mystical experience are true. For the rest of us it has the negative cognitive meaning of "non-temporal", together with an emotional halo of awe and reverence. Now the inherent and irremediable defects of all temporal goods are obvious enough to anyone who can escape for a while from the "red mist of doing" and sit down and reflect. Since the eternal would be, by definition, non-temporal, it would be free at least from *these* defects. Since we have no positive notion of eternal existence, we have no positive ground for ascribing any *other* defects to it. And, since the word "eternal" evokes an emotional state in which carping criticism seems like brawling in a church during the celebration of the mass, we are inclined to endow the eternal with all the goods of the temporal, and to resent the suggestion that the latter are essentially bound up with its characteristic and inherent defects.

2·17. *Summary of McTaggart's Conclusions.* We have now considered in turn each of the six characteristics which may plausibly be regarded as valifying. McTaggart has argued that the ω-stage of a primary *C*-series contains *veridical* cognition, unmixed with error or confusion; *good* emotions,

unmixed with bad ones; and *primary pleasure*, unmixed with primary pain; that it is *harmonious*, being free from inconsistent beliefs and conflicting desires; and that, provided a certain condition is fulfilled, all the desires in it are *morally good*. Further, he claims to have shown that, in the ω-stage, all forms of consciousness are more intense than in the r-stages, and that the number of distinct prehensions (as contrasted with mere confused states of prehension) is incomparably greater. The only bad-making feature in the ω-stage is the secondary sympathetic pain which "stains the white radiance" of those ω-prehensions whose objects are evils in the r-stages.

We are omitting for the present the factor of ostensible duration, which we know to be highly relevant to the total amount of value associated with any particular. Let us assume, for the moment, that in this respect the ω-stage is at least no worse off than the r-stages. Then, subject to this assumption, which will have to be examined in the next Subsection, we may summarise McTaggart's conclusion as follows. Whether you take any one of the six characteristics, or any selection from them, or all of them together as your criterion for estimating quantity of good and evil, you will have to admit that the *gross* amount of goodness associated with the ω-stage of any primary C-series is *very great* as compared with that which is associated with any of its r-stages. You will also have to admit that the value associated with the ω-stage consists of almost *unmixed* goodness, whilst the value associated with any r-stage contains much evil mixed with goodness. Therefore the *nett* amount of goodness associated with the ω-stage differs but little from the gross amount, and is *a fortiori* enormously greater than the nett amount of goodness associated with any r-stage.

2·2. *Influence of Ostensible Duration on Value at the ω-Stage.* The maximal end-term P_A^ω of a primary C-series Π_A has several peculiarities which mark it out from all other terms in the same series. It will be worth while to recapitulate them at this point. (i) It includes all the r-terms, such as P_A^r, and is not included in any of them. (ii) Suppose that A is a self-

conscious person. Then there will be the reflexive secondary series Π_{AA}. The ω-prehension P^{ω}_{AA} will present the ω-term P^{ω}_A veridically as *timeless*. Contrast this with any pre-maximal term P^r_{AA} of Π_{AA} and the corresponding pre-maximal term P^r_A of Π_A. The former will present the latter *sub specie temporis* as *contemporary*. (iii) The maximal end-term P^{ω}_A will be presented *sub specie temporis* as *future* by *every* pre-maximal term, such as P^r_{AA}, in Π_{AA}. But any pre-maximal term P^r_A of Π_A will be presented as *present* in one and only one pre-maximal term of Π_{AA}, viz., P^r_{AA}; it will be presented as *future* by all the pre-maximal terms of Π_{AA} which are less inclusive than P^r_{AA}; and it will be presented as *past* by all the pre-maximal terms of Π_{AA} which are more inclusive than P^r_{AA}. (iv) According to McTaggart, the maximal end-term P^{ω}_A of Π_A will be presented as having *infinite indivisible duration* by any prehension which presents it as temporal.

Of these four peculiarities which distinguish the ω-term of a primary C-series from all the r-terms, the first two may be called "intrinsic" and the last two "extrinsic". The first is a purely ontological property, which has nothing to do with the appearance which a term presents when prehended. The second, though it is concerned with this, is concerned only with the appearance which it presents when it and the pre-hension of it occupy *corresponding* positions in their respective C-series. The third and fourth are concerned with the appearance which a term presents when it and the prehension of it occupy *non-corresponding* positions in their respective C-series.

Now the question which we have to consider may be put as follows. McTaggart claims to have shown that a series of valuable terms which appeared *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite divisible duration would contain infinite value, and that a series of valuable terms which appeared *sub specie temporis* to be of finite divisible duration would contain finite value. What is the real property which determines that the former would contain infinite value and the latter finite value? Plainly this property cannot be *duration*, infinite in

the one case and finite in the other. For nothing really has duration, and a property which does not belong to anything cannot determine the actual occurrence of a certain other property in something. Could the property be that of *appearing* to have infinite duration, in the one case, and that of *appearing* to have finite duration, in the other? These are properties which, by hypothesis, really would belong to the two series respectively. And so it is not absurd to suggest that the former might determine the presence of infinite value in any series to which it belonged, and that the latter might determine the presence of finite value in any series to which it belonged.

I imagine that McTaggart would have admitted this, and would then have proceeded to argue as follows. These properties, though they really do belong respectively to the two series, are not *intrinsic* properties of them. They involve in their analysis a reference to a mind which contemplates the two series and misprehends them both as temporal. Now the infinity or the finitude of the value contained in a series is an intrinsic property of the series, and it cannot be determined by a property of the series which is extrinsic. We must therefore go beyond the extrinsic properties of appearing to have infinite duration and appearing to have finite duration to those intrinsic properties of the series which are the foundations of these appearances.

If this be granted, the next stage of the argument will be as follows. A series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have finite duration if and only if it were bounded in both directions. A series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite duration if and only if it were unbounded in at least one direction. Now being unbounded in at least one direction entails, in the case of a series, having an infinite number of terms. But the converse does not hold; for certain compact series, such as the fractions between 0/1 and 1/1, have an infinite number of terms but are bounded in both directions. We see then that any series which would appear *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite duration would have the two properties (*a*) of being unbounded in at least one direction,

and (*b*) of having an infinite number of terms. We must, therefore, ask whether the property of containing infinite value, which belongs to such a series if the terms have value, is determined by the former or by the latter property.

This question can be answered at once. We have seen that there is nothing to prevent a *C*-series from being compact. If it is compact, any stretch of it, though bounded in both directions, will contain an infinite number of terms. Yet such a stretch would appear *sub specie temporis* to have finite duration, and therefore it would contain only finite value. It follows that the property of having an infinite number of terms does not *suffice* to make a series of valuable terms contain an infinite amount of value. We can conclude then that, although any series which appeared *sub specie temporis* to be of infinite duration would have an infinite number of terms, it would owe its infinite value, not directly to this property, but to the property of being unbounded in at least one direction.

Now at length we can face the question whether the value associated with the maximal term of a primary *C*-series is finite or infinite. McTaggart's argument may be put as follows. (i) The fact that such a term appears to be of infinite duration from any standpoint from which it appears to be temporal at all is not by itself a conclusive proof that the value associated with it is infinite. For the infinite duration here is an *indivisible* duration which appears to belong to *a single term* prehended as temporal, whilst the infinite duration which we have been considering hitherto is the *divisible* duration which appears to belong to an *unbounded series* of terms each of which appears to have finite indivisible duration.

(ii) Suppose that the infinite value contained in a series of valuable terms which appears *sub specie temporis* to have infinite duration had depended directly on the fact that the number of terms in such a series is infinite. In that case the fact that the maximal end-term of a *C*-series appears *sub specie temporis* to have infinite duration would have been no reason for holding that the value associated with such a term

is infinite. For the maximal end-term of a C-series is a *single term*.

(iii) We have, however, rejected this supposition. We have seen that any series which would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite duration contains infinite value, not because it has an infinite number of terms, but because it is unbounded in at least one direction.

(iv) Now the maximal end-term of a C-series *is* unbounded in one direction, because no other term of the series contains it, whilst it contains all the other terms of the series. This is why the *indivisible* duration, which it appears *sub specie temporis* to have, is infinite.

(v) So the *maximal end-term* of a C-series has that property (viz., being unbounded in at least one direction) which admittedly causes there to be infinite value in any *series* that would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite duration. We may therefore conclude that the value associated with the maximal end-term of a C-series is infinite.

I think that the above is a fair and accurate account of McTaggart's very complicated argument on this subject in §§ 872 to 878 of *The Nature of Existence*. I believe the argument to be fallacious, and I will now explain why I think so.

It seems to me that steps (iv) and (v) of the argument depend on a gross confusion between two different senses of "unbounded". In the first place, it is evident that this adjective is predicated of two very different subjects in the course of the argument, viz., of a *series* or stretch of terms, and of a *single* term. It is also clear that it has different meanings in these two applications. To say that a *series* is unbounded in a certain direction is to say that in this direction it has neither an end-term nor a limit with respect to the relation which generates it. This would be meaningless as applied to an individual term. To say that a *single term* of a series is unbounded in a certain direction is to say that it is the end-term or limit of that series in that direction. This would be meaningless as applied to a series. The difference between the two senses of "unbounded" is further illustrated by the following difference in their implications. A *series* which is unbounded

in at least one direction must, as McTaggart admits and asserts, have an infinite number of terms. Plainly nothing of the kind is or could be entailed by a *single term* being unbounded in at least one direction.

Now the utmost that McTaggart has shown by his argument is this. (i) That the infinite value contained in any series of valuable terms which appears *sub specie temporis* to have infinite *divisible* duration is due to the series being "unbounded", in that sense which applies *only to series* and entails having an infinite number of terms. (ii) That the maximal term of a *C*-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite *indivisible* duration because it is "unbounded" in one direction, in that sense of "unbounded" which applies *only to single terms* and does not entail anything about an infinite number of terms. Plainly it is quite unjustifiable to argue that, because "being unbounded in at least one direction" (in the sense appropriate only to *series*) confers infinite value on any *series* of valuable terms which has this property, therefore "being unbounded in at least one direction" (in the sense appropriate only to *single terms*) must confer infinite value on any valuable *term* which has this property. So McTaggart's argument to show that the value associated with a maximal end-term must be infinite collapses.

In §§ 878 to 882, inclusive, McTaggart approaches the same conclusion in two other ways, one direct and the other indirect. In § 878 he says that he thinks he can to some extent realise what, e.g., a state of love would be like, which, when prehended from its own stage in a *C*-series, would be prehended as eternal. And he thinks he can see that the value of such a state would not be limited in the way in which the value of a state of love would be if it appeared *sub specie temporis* to occupy a finite time.

He admits, however, that it would be unwise to attach much weight to this conviction. In the first place, it is difficult to be sure that one is not merely envisaging this state as sempiternal when one claims to be envisaging it as eternal. Secondly, he admits that he may be biassed by the fact that certain very desirable propositions can be proved if

and only if the value associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series is infinite.

McTaggart is inclined to lay much more stress on his indirect argument, which begins in § 879 and ends in § 882. It may be put as follows.

(i) In the r-stages of a C-series the values pertaining to states which appear to last for various periods are proportional, *caeteris paribus*, to the periods for which they respectively appear to last. (ii) In the r-stages the periods for which various states appear to last are proportional, after allowing for subjective sources of error in estimating lapse of time, to the lengths of the various stretches of C-series which appear as these various states. (iii) Any state which we prehend as temporal appears to us to last for a period which, however short it may be, is divisible into an earlier phase adjoined to a later phase. Any such state must therefore be in reality a *stretch* comprising several terms of a C-series. For a single term of such a series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have an *indivisible* duration. (iv) It is obvious that a single term of a series occupies less of that series than is occupied by a stretch of several terms. This will be true even if the series be discrete, since a stretch will comprise at least two terms. *A fortiori* it will be true if the series is compact; for then any stretch, however short, will comprise an infinite number of terms. (v) Therefore, if the value associated with any pre-maximal *term* of a C-series be determined (as the value pertaining to any pre-maximal *stretch* is determined) by the proportion of the series which it occupies, the value associated with any such term will be less, *caeteris paribus*, (and it may be infinitely less) than that which pertains to the most transient state which any human being has ever prehended. (vi) Now the maximal term of a C-series occupies neither more nor less of the series than any other term does. Therefore, if the value associated with it be determined by the proportion of the series which it occupies, we must conclude that the value associated with the maximal term is less, *caeteris paribus* (and it may be infinitely less), than that which pertains to the most transient state which any human being

has ever prehended. (vii) But it seems absurd to hold that the value associated with a state of pleasure, e.g., which not only *is* eternal but also appears as such from its own stage in the *C*-series, is enormously less than the value pertaining to a state of equally intense pleasure which appears from *its* own stage in the *C*-series to last for a tenth of a second. (viii) We must therefore reject the hypothesis that the value associated with an individual term of a *C*-series is determined by the proportion of the series which it occupies. (ix) Now the only other intrinsic property of terms which seems likely to be relevant is that of being bounded in both directions or un-bounded in at least one direction. The pre-maximal terms all have the former property, and the maximal term has the latter property. It is this latter property which makes the maximal term appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite indivisible duration. (x) McTaggart concludes that this property of being unbounded in one direction gives infinite value to the maximal term; whilst the property of being bounded in both directions restricts the value associated with each pre-maximal term to a negligible amount, although the maximal term occupies no greater proportion of the series than is occupied by any pre-maximal term.

Let us now consider this argument critically. It is not open to the objection which we made to the other argument, viz., that it uses the word "unbounded" in different senses at different stages. In this argument the word is used only in the sense in which it applies to individual terms of a series. But it seems to me that the present argument turns on another ambiguous word, viz., "occupies". I will now try to justify this statement.

The sense in which a *stretch* "occupies" a certain propor-tion of a series is quite different from that in which a *term* does so. When I discussed endless divisibility in Vol. I, Chap. XIX, of the present work I pointed out, on p. 331, that a distinction must be drawn between the relation of an individual term to a series and the relation of a stretch of terms to a series. I expressed this by saying that a series "*comprises* its terms as *members*" and "*contains* its stretches as *parts*". To say that a

stretch of a C-series "occupies a certain proportion of the series" means that the difference in content between the upper and the lower bounds of the stretch bears a certain ratio to the difference in content between the upper and the lower bounds of the series as a whole. It is not at all clear what meaning could be attached to the phrase "occupying a certain proportion of the series" when this is predicated of an individual *term*. It is evident that the meaning, if any, could not be that which the phrase has when it is predicated of a *stretch*.

I am inclined to think that it is significant to say that a certain term "occupies a certain proportion of a certain series" if and only if it is assumed that the series is both discrete and finite. On this assumption there will be some finite integer N which is the number of terms in the series. It would then be intelligible to say of any one term that it "occupies one Nth of the series". If and only if C-series were discrete and finite, there would be a simple relation between the number of terms in a stretch of a C-series and the proportion of the series occupied by that stretch. For suppose that c is the content of the maximal end-term. Then the content of the first would be c/N, that of the second $2c/N$, that of the mth mc/N, and that of the last Nc/N. Consider now the stretch which begins with the mth and ends with the nth term. The difference in content between its two end-terms would be $(n-m)\,c/N$. The difference in content between the first and the last term of the whole series would be $(N-1)\,c/N$. Therefore the proportion of the series occupied by this stretch would be, by definition, $(n-m)/(N-1)$. Now the number of terms in the stretch is $n-m+1$. Call this ν. Then the proportion of the series which is occupied by this *stretch* of ν terms is $(\nu-1)/(N-1)$. And the proportion of the series occupied by *a single term* is, by definition, $1/N$.

So far as I can see, no meaning can be attached to the statement that a certain term occupies a certain proportion of a certain C-series, if the series is *compact*, or if it is discrete but *endless* in either direction. If it is compact, there will be the same transfinite number of terms in any stretch of it,

long or short, as there is in the whole series. (Cf., e.g., the fact that the stretch of rational fractions between 0/1 and 1/4 and the stretch of rational fractions between 0/1 and 1/2 both contain the same number of terms, viz., $\aleph_0$, as the series of all the rational proper fractions.)

Having cleared up this ambiguity, we can return to the details of McTaggart's argument. We must at once reject clause iv, viz., the premise that a single term of a series obviously occupies less of that series than is occupied by any stretch of it. If the series has an infinite number of terms, the statement is meaningless, since no meaning can then be attached to the phrase "proportion of the series occupied by a single term". If the series is discrete and double-ended, it is possible, as we have seen, to give a meaning to this phrase. We can *define* it as the ratio of the integer 1 to the integer N, where N is the total number of terms in the series. Now we have also seen that the proportion of such a series occupied by a stretch of ν terms is measured by the fraction $(\nu - 1)/(N - 1)$. The shortest possible stretch in such a series consists of two adjacent terms; and this fraction reduces to $1/(N - 1)$ when $\nu = 2$. Now there is no doubt that the fraction $1/N$ is less than the fraction $1/(N - 1)$. Must we not, then, admit that, in the case of a finite discrete *C*-series, McTaggart is right in saying that the proportion of the series occupied by a single term is less than the proportion occupied by any stretch?

I am not prepared to admit even this much. What is called "the proportion of a discrete finite *C*-series occupied by a single *term*" is just a pure arithmetical ratio of one integer to another. Neither of these integers is the measure of any magnitude, and so their ratio is not the measure of the ratio of any two magnitudes. But what is called "the proportion of a discrete finite *C*-series occupied by a minimal *stretch*" is the ratio which the difference in content between the two end-terms of such a stretch bears to the difference in content between the two end-terms of the series. So the fraction $1/(N - 1)$ in the present case is a measure of the ratio of two differences of content; whilst the fraction $1/N$ in this case is not a measure of anything. Now it is not significant to talk of

one term as "greater" or "less" than another unless both
have the same kind of magnitude. And the fact that one
number, such as $1/N$, is less than another *number*, such as
$1/(N-1)$, does not justify us in going a step further unless
they both measure different terms in respect of the same kind
of magnitude. Since this condition is not fulfilled, we must
reject clause iv of McTaggart's argument as meaningless on
any hypothesis. If C-series have an infinite number of terms,
it is meaningless at the first move. If they have a finite
number of terms, it is meaningless at the second move.

Although McTaggart's argument breaks down at clause
iv, I think it is possible to reach by valid reasoning a con-
clusion very similar to that which he reaches illegitimately in
clause viii. His conclusion there is that we must reject the
suggestion that the value associated with an individual term
of a C-series is proportional, *caeteris paribus*, to the amount of
the C-series which it occupies. Now we can say that, unless
C-series be discrete and finite, this suggestion must be rejected
as meaningless. If C-series be discrete and finite, we must
allow that the suggestion is significant; but we can then
argue as follows. The only plausible ground that could be
alleged for holding that the value associated with an indi-
vidual term of a C-series is proportional, *caeteris paribus*, to
the amount of the series which it occupies would be an
analogy with the value pertaining to stretches. It might be
argued that the value pertaining to a *stretch* is proportional,
caeteris paribus, to the amount of the C-series which it
occupies, and that it is therefore reasonable to suppose that
the value associated with an individual *term* is proportional,
caeteris paribus, to the amount of the C-series which *it*
occupies. Now we can reject this argument from analogy at
once. For we have seen that the sense in which a term of a
series occupies a certain proportion of it cannot be the same
as the sense in which a stretch of a series occupies a certain
proportion of it. So we reach the following conclusion. The
suggestion that the value associated with an individual term
of a C-series is proportional, *caeteris paribus*, to the amount of
the series which it occupies is either meaningless or ground-

less. If *C*-series were finite and discrete, it would be significant and it might be true, but there would be no positive reason to believe it. If *C*-series had an infinite number of terms, it would be meaningless.

Clause ix of McTaggart's argument asserts that, if the value associated with an individual term does not depend on the amount of the series which it occupies, then it must depend on the property of being enclosed on both sides by other terms or being unenclosed on at least one side, as the case may be. No reason is given for this, and I do not see why we should accept it.

Clause x asserts that, if the value associated with an individual term depends on the property of being wholly enclosed or being enclosed only on one side, as the case may be, then the value associated with a term which has the former property will be finite, whilst that associated with a term which has the latter property will be infinite. No reason is given for this, and it certainly does not seem to be self-evident.

It seems to me that we have no means of estimating, either directly or indirectly, the amount of value associated with any *single term* of a *C*-series, whether it be pre-maximal or maximal. We cannot make a direct estimate; for, according to McTaggart, we never prehend individual terms as such, but only stretches comprising many terms. Can we, then, make an indirect estimate by arguing from the value pertaining to stretches to the value associated with individual terms? If we try to do so, we are faced with the following difficulty. The value pertaining to a stretch is proportional, *caeteris paribus*, to the amount of the *C*-series which it occupies. But an individual term cannot properly be said to occupy much or little of a *C*-series; it simply does not have the determinable property of which these are determinate forms. The amount of value pertaining to a stretch is a function of two independent variables, viz., the intensity of the valifying characteristics and the length of the stretch. But an individual term can have no property analogous to the length of a stretch; and we are at a loss to conjecture how any

property of an individual term can do for *it* what length does in determining the value pertaining to a stretch.

It might, perhaps, be argued that the value associated with any individual r-term must be very small, on the ground that there must be a great many such terms in the shortest stretch which we prehend as temporally extended and that the value pertaining to such stretches is obviously small. But what McTaggart wants to show is, not that the value associated with each r-term is very small, but that the value associated with the ω-term of a C-series is infinitely great. Now it is true that the ω-term differs intrinsically from all the r-terms by being enclosed only on one side whilst each of them is enclosed on both sides. And, according to McTaggart, this entails the extrinsic difference that the ω-term would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite indivisible duration, whilst each r-term would appear *sub specie temporis* to have finite indivisible duration. But it seems to me quite uncertain whether this intrinsic difference would determine any difference in the amount of value associated with an ω-term and an r-term. And, if it did determine *some* difference, it seems to me quite uncertain whether it would make the former value infinite as compared with the latter. I conclude then that this very important part of McTaggart's system is unjustified by his premises, whether it be in fact true or not.

3. Certain Peculiarities in ω–Value.

In §§ 884 to 891, inclusive, McTaggart makes a number of remarks which throw considerable light on the peculiar nature of the infinite value which he holds to be associated with any ω-term.

(i) The value associated with an ω-term must be a purely intensive magnitude. The same would, of course, be true of the value associated with any r-term, though McTaggart does not explicitly say so. Now the only things with which we can compare an ω-term in respect of value are *stretches*, not single terms; for everything that we prehend *sub specie temporis* appears to have divisible duration. Hence the value of anything that we can use as a standard of comparison is an

extensive magnitude. So, in saying that the value associated with an ω-term is infinite, we are assuming that a purely intensive magnitude can be compared quantitatively with one that is extensive. Is this legitimate?

McTaggart declares that such comparisons are legitimate, and supports this contention by one of his queer economic analogies. The "wealth of a rich man", we are told, is an intensive magnitude. The "wealth contained in a collection of sovereigns", we are told, is an extensive magnitude. Yet we can say of the wealth of a rich man that it is less than, equal to, or greater than the wealth contained in a certain collection of sovereigns. It seems to me that the terms in this analogy are so hopelessly ambiguous that it is quite worthless as a support for McTaggart's contention. We must therefore face the question directly for ourselves.

I think that the question is wrongly put. If "value", as applied to stretches, is the name of an extensive magnitude, and "value", as applied to individual terms, is the name of an intensive magnitude, it is plain that the word is ambiguous. We should have two different kinds of magnitude masquerading under a single name, and quantitative comparison would be impossible. It is as if we were to try to make a quantitative comparison in respect of "fastness" between a racing car and the undergraduate who owned it. So, unless "value" is the name of an extensive magnitude in both applications, or is the name of an intensive magnitude in both applications, no comparison is possible between the "value" of a stretch and the "value" of an individual term.

If this be granted, the real question is the following. In the case of stretches the measure of value is a function of two variables of different kinds, viz., the intensity of the valifying characteristics and the length of the stretch. The former are intensive magnitudes, and the latter is an extensive magnitude. In the case of individual terms the measure of value is a function of variables which are all intensive. Now can a magnitude whose measure is a function of variables one of which is extensive and the other intensive be of the same kind as a magnitude whose measure is a function of variables

which are all extensive? And, even if it can, so that quanti-
tative comparison is not ruled out *in limine* as meaningless, is
it possible to compare the measures of the common magnitude
when they are determined so differently?

I have not been able to reach any definite conclusion on
this point; but I incline to the view that quantitative com-
parison would be either meaningless or impossible in the case
under consideration. I am therefore quite uncertain whether
any clear meaning can be given to the statement that the
value associated with the maximal term of a C-series is
infinite as compared with the value pertaining to any pre-
maximal stretch of the series. If my suspicions are justified,
we can compare stretches with stretches and we can compare
single terms with single terms, in respect of value; but we
cannot compare single terms with stretches in this respect. If
this is so, we cannot in practice compare the value associated
with an ω-term with any value that we can estimate. For we
may not compare it with the value pertaining to a *stretch*; and,
as I have argued, we have no means of estimating the value
associated with any pre-maximal *term*.

(ii) In § 885 McTaggart makes the following point. The
maximal term of a C-series is the only term in it whose
associated value is infinite. It is also the only term in it
which would *appear as* eternal when prehended from its own
stage in the C-series, though all the others are *in fact* eternal
too. Therefore we can say that the value associated with a
term in a C-series is infinite if and only if this term would
appear as eternal when viewed from its own stage in the
series. But we must remember that what makes the value
associated with such a term infinite is its property of being
unenclosed in one direction and not its property of appearing
eternal when viewed from its own stage in the series. The
latter property is co-extensive with the former simply because
(*a*) all terms in the series are in fact eternal, and (*b*) it is only
from the ω-stage of a C-series that any term appears to be
(as all terms really are) eternal.

(iii) In § 886 McTaggart remarks that, if the maximal
term of a C-series had appeared *sub specie temporis* to come

at the beginning of time instead of appearing (as it actually does) to come at the end, all that has been said about the infinite value associated with it would still have been true. But the fact that the value associated with it is infinite would then have been of much less practical interest to us. We are so constituted that we should not excite ourselves very much over a heaven or hell of infinite indivisible duration which *had* existed at the beginning of time. We should feel very differently if we believed that there *will* be a heaven or hell of infinite indivisible duration at the latter end of time. The thought of a good (or bad) time coming ever nearer excites us very much more than the thought of an equally good (or bad) time going ever further.

(iv) In § 887 McTaggart reminds us that the value associated with the maximal term of a *C*-series is not made infinite by its valifying characteristics having infinite intensity. As we have seen, there is reason to believe that the valifying characteristics are manifested in the ω-stage with *much greater* intensity and purity than they are in those *r*-stages which appear *sub specie temporis* as the history of humanity up to the present date. But it is certain that they are not manifested with *infinite* intensity in the ω-stage; and it is possible that they are manifested with very little more intensity in the ω-stage of a *C*-series than in those *r*-stages which are near to the ω-end of that series. It is the property of being *unenclosed* in one direction which makes the value associated with an ω-term infinite; no other property of an ω-term is responsible for this result.

(v) In Section 1 of this chapter p. 722 I quoted a passage from § 888 of *The Nature of Existence* in which McTaggart points out that, although the maximal term of a *C*-series contains all the pre-maximal terms of that series, yet the values associated with the latter are not parts of the value associated with the former.

At the end of this section McTaggart remarks that, if the value associated with the ω-term of a *C*-series were the sum of the values associated with the *r*-terms of that series, it would be *finite*, whereas he claims to have shown that it is

infinite. For the series which consists of all the *r*-terms of a
C-series without its *ω*-term appears *sub specie temporis* to
have finite duration. Moreover, the valifying characteristics
which are manifested in these terms are always of finite
intensity. So the value pertaining to such a residual series
is finite.

(vi) In §§ 889 to 891, inclusive, McTaggart raises an inter-
esting point. In § 889 he remarks that there may be selves
which are reflexively self-conscious but have no inclusion-
series of *r*-prehensions. Such a self would have only the
single stage which corresponds to the maximal end-term of a
C-series. It would have none but correct prehensions of itself
and of everything else that it prehends, and therefore nothing
would be presented to it as temporal by any of its prehensions.
On the other hand, it would appear to any ordinary self
which prehended it to come into existence at the end of time
and to have infinite indivisible duration. Let us call such a
self an "angel".

Now it seems evident to McTaggart that, if the *ω*-term of a
primary *C*-series has infinite value associated with it, the
value associated with the corresponding unique stage of an
angelic self would also be infinite. His argument consists in
presenting us with the old dilemma which we considered in
Sub-section 2·2 p. 746 of the present chapter. Either the other
factor, beside its valifying characteristics, which determines
the value associated with such a term is the property of being
simple and indivisible in the *C*-dimension, or it is that of *not
being enclosed on both sides* in that dimension. On the first
alternative the value associated with such a term will be no
greater, *caeteris paribus*, than that associated with any
r-term in any primary *C*-series. Now the value associated
with any *r*-term in any primary *C*-series is negligible. But it
is absurd to suppose that the value associated with the
unique stage of one of these angelic selves would be negligible.
Therefore we must reject the suggestion that its property of
being simple and indivisible is a factor in determining the
amount of value associated with it. We must therefore
accept the alternative that its property of not being enclosed

on both sides is a factor in determining the amount of value associated with it. And, in that case, the associated value will be infinite.

To this argument I can only make the same answer as before. (*a*) There is no reason to believe that McTaggart's two alternatives are collectively exhaustive. Therefore rejection of one does not entail acceptance of the other. We know something about the values pertaining to *r-stretches* of primary *C*-series; and we know that the length of such a stretch is a factor in determining the amount of value pertaining to it. We know nothing about the value associated with even a pre-maximal *term* of a primary *C*-series, except that it must be very small; and we have no means of telling what property of a term functions as length does in the case of a stretch in determining value. (*b*) Even if the property of being wholly enclosed or not wholly enclosed (as the case may be) is a factor in determining the amount of value associated with a term, it is not in the least evident that any term which has the latter property must *ipso facto* have infinite value associated with it. (*c*) Since we have to be so agnostic even about *r*-terms of primary *C*-series, we ought to hesitate all the more in making assertions about such utterly unfamiliar terms as McTaggart's angelic selves.

Let us now consider the question independently. It seems to me by no means plausible to hold that the value associated with the unique stage of one of these angelic selves would be as great, *caeteris paribus*, as that of the all-inclusive ω-stage of a primary *C*-series. The fact is that *caeteris* could not be anything like *paribus*. The unique stage of one of the angelic selves would be undifferentiated in the *C*-dimension. The ω-stage of a primary *C*-series has the property of being a kind of Chinese box containing all the *r*-stages one inside the other. These *r*-stages have their various characteristic qualities. Therefore the ω-stage of a primary *C*-series has a complicated "pattern-quality" to which nothing can correspond in the unique stage of an angelic self. Now, granted that the value associated with the ω-stage of a primary *C*-series is not the *sum or aggregate* of the values of the *r*-terms which it contains,

there is every reason to think that it would be determined *inter alia* by the pattern formed by its parts in the *C*-dimension.

When we leave metaphysics and consider the appearances *sub specie temporis* this conclusion is confirmed. Most people would consider that a state of unending blessedness, reached at the end of time as the result of a process of temptation, struggle, and self-mastery throughout the whole course of world-history, would *ipso facto* have a very different value from an otherwise similar state which "started with a bang" at the end of time. The former would have the property of being a state of triumphant achievement; the latter would be like a laurel crown bought at a hat-shop. Presumably the Christian hymnologist who twitted the angels with the fact that "They know not Christ as Saviour, but worship him as King" had something of this sort in mind.

(vii) In § 891 McTaggart draws an important general conclusion from his discussion of the hypothetical case of an angelic self. He concludes that, if a particular has value at all, no special positive explanation is needed to account for its having *infinite* value. A special explanation is needed only for its value being *finite*, if it should be so. The value of a particular which has valifying characteristics is finite if and only if (*a*) the particular is a term or a stretch in an inclusion-series, and (*b*) is enclosed on both sides by terms of the same series. Its value is infinite if either (*a*) it is a self which is not a term in an inclusion-series (as in the case of an angelic self), or (*b*) it is a term or a stretch of such a series but is enclosed only on one side by a term or a limit of the series. This case can arise only with the ω-term of a *C*-series or with a stretch which includes such a term. For reasons which I have given above I do not accept either McTaggart's arguments for this conclusion or the conclusion itself.

4. Is ω–Value predominantly Good or predominantly Bad?

McTaggart claims now to have shown that the value associated with the ω-term of a primary *C*-series is infinite in amount and is unmixedly good in respect of all non-hedonic

valifying characteristics. But it is not unmixedly good in respect of hedonic characteristics, since it contains sympathetic pain. Therefore the question still remains whether the resultant value is good or evil.

McTaggart asserts in § 900 that there are no general principles which enable us to compare quantitatively the value which is derived from hedonic characteristics with that which is derived from cognitive, conative, emotional, and other valifying characteristics. In particular cases we can sometimes judge with complete certainty that *this* value, derived (say) from pleasantness, is greater (or is less) than *that* value, derived (say) from virtuous volition. But we cannot get beyond such singular judgments made in specially favourable conditions. If, then, we are to show that the value associated with the ω-stage of a primary C-series is predominantly good, we must show that the hedonically determined evil is more than balanced by *hedonically* determined good.

By "sympathetic pleasure" McTaggart means the kind of pleasure which a self derives from contemplating a self enjoying any kind of good state. The contemplating self and the contemplated self may be different or they may be the same. In the latter case the sympathetic pleasure might be called "reflexive". Exactly similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to sympathetic pain.

Now it is true that we do not always feel sympathetic pain in contemplating the evils suffered by others. But we always do feel it to some extent if the sufferers are persons whom we love or for whom we feel affection. Now all the other selves that one cognises at the ω-stage are either prehended with love or indirectly perceived with affection. And the r-stages of all these selves contain much evil. It is true that none of us, in the ω-stage, will wish that any evil which we contemplate should not have existed. This ensures that the ω-stage does not contain the evil of frustrated desire. But sympathetic pain is not dependent on frustrated desire. Therefore the presence of sympathetic pain at the ω-stage is not a mere abstract possibility; there is every reason to

believe that the ω-stage of each primary C-series does actually contain sympathetic pain. The question is whether this is counterbalanced by pleasure, sympathetic or non-sympathetic.

In §§ 901 and 902 McTaggart claims to prove that it is more than counterbalanced. His argument may be put as follows. (i) The goods and evils in any self may be divided into those which do and those which do not consist of sympathetic pleasure and pain. Let us call the latter "original" goods and evils. (ii) Non-original goods and evils can be arranged in a hierarchy. At the bottom come *primary* sympathetic pleasures and pains, i.e., those which arise from contemplating original goods and original evils. Next come *secondary* sympathetic pleasures and pains, i.e., those which arise from contemplating *primary* sympathetic pleasure and *primary* sympathetic pain. The hierarchy can be extended indefinitely in the same way. (iii) The amount of primary sympathetic pleasure which a person A feels in contemplating a person B is proportional to the amount of original good which he prehends B as enjoying. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of primary sympathetic pain. (iv) In the ω-stage of the primary C-series Π_A, which appears *sub specie temporis* as A's history, there is no error. Therefore the amount of original good and original evil which A at the ω-stage *prehends* B as enjoying or suffering is the amount which B *actually does* enjoy or suffer. Therefore in the ω-stage A's sympathetic pleasure in contemplating B is proportional to the amount of original good which B actually enjoys; and A's sympathetic pain in contemplating B is proportional to the amount of original evil which B actually suffers. (v) Now the original good which B enjoys is infinitely greater than the original evil which he suffers. For the *original* evil is all in the pre-maximal stages of Π_B. This residual series appears *sub specie temporis* as of finite duration, and therefore the evil in it is of finite amount. But the original good consists both of that which pertains to the pre-maximal stretch of Π_B and of that which is associated with the maximal term P_B^ω. The latter is infinite in amount. (vi) Therefore the *primary*

sympathetic pleasure which A enjoys at the ω-stage, in contemplating the original good enjoyed by B, infinitely exceeds the *primary* sympathetic pain which A suffers at the ω-stage in contemplating the original evil suffered by B. This completes the first part of the argument.

(vii) Now exactly the same argument applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to B, C, D, and all the other persons whom A cognises. Each of them, in the ω-stage of his primary C-series, must have an infinite balance of primary sympathetic pleasure over primary sympathetic pain in respect of each of the persons whom he cognises. (viii) Therefore A, in contemplating B, C, D, etc., from his ω-stage, must enjoy a balance of *secondary* sympathetic pleasure over *secondary* sympathetic pain because of the balance of primary sympathetic pleasure over primary sympathetic pain which he prehends B, C, D, etc., as enjoying. (ix) Exactly the same argument can now be used, *mutatis mutandis*, about sympathetic pleasures and pains of the third and any higher order.

We may now sum up the results which McTaggart claims to have proved. The non-hedonically determined value associated with the ω-term of a primary C-series is infinitely and unmixedly good. The hedonically determined *original value* associated with such a term is also infinitely and unmixedly good; for there is original ω-pleasure and no original ω-pain. The hedonically determined *non-original* value associated with such a term is infinite in quantity and mixed in quality; but the infinite goodness which it derives from sympathetic pleasure infinitely outweighs the infinite badness which it derives from sympathetic pain. For the badness which it derives from sympathetic pain is infinite *only* because the ω-stage is unenclosed on one side; whilst the goodness which it derives from sympathetic pleasure is infinite *both* from this cause and from the fact that the amount of good which calls forth the sympathetic pleasure is infinite. This is why, though both are infinite, the latter infinitely exceeds the former.

The only comment that I need make on this is the following. Even if the intensity of sympathetic pleasure or pain

increases with every increment in the contemplated good or evil towards which it is felt, there may be a point above which it begins to increase at a diminishing rate. Therefore there may well be a finite limit which the intensity of sympathetic pleasure or pain can never exactly reach even though the quantity of contemplated good or evil should increase without limit.

There is one further point, which McTaggart raises in § 902. He remarks that we tend to feel less intense sympathetic pleasure or pain in contemplating goods or evils which are ostensibly past than in contemplating equally intense goods or evils which are ostensibly present. Now this difference in intensity might be directly determined by the characteristic of "seeming to be present" or "seeming to be past". If so, it cannot exist in the ω-stage, since in that stage nothing is prehended as temporal. On the other hand, this difference in intensity might be determined by the real characteristics which are the foundations of ostensible presentness and ostensible pastness. These are, of course, the properties of "belonging to the corresponding stage" and "belonging to a less inclusive stage" of a C-series as compared with the stage to which the sympathetic pleasure or pain belongs. Now all the original evil pertaining to any C-series belongs to the pre-maximal part of it, whilst an infinitely great amount of the original good pertaining to it is associated with its maximal end-term. Therefore, if the second alternative were true, the primary sympathetic pain in the ω-stage would be diminished still further as compared with the primary sympathetic pleasure in that stage.

McTaggart does not profess to be able to decide between these two alternatives. It seems to me that the truth is that we tend to feel more intense sympathetic pleasure or pain at goods or evils which we ostensibly *prehend* than at those which we ostensibly know about only by memory or inference or testimony. Ostensible presentness is relevant only in so far as it is a condition of being ostensibly prehensible. If this be so, the distinction would vanish at the ω-stage; for in that stage *all* cognition is ostensibly, as well as really, prehension.

CHAPTER LIX

CONCLUDING REMARKS ON VALUE

We have now considered the amount and kind of value associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series, i.e., the value pertaining to any primary part in a determining-correspondence hierarchy in respect of those parts of it which are secondary parts in the same hierarchy. In doing so we have incidentally considered the amount and kind of value pertaining to the residue which consists of a primary C-series without its maximal end-term. We have seen that this value is certainly mixed, since it is certain that there are both goods and evils in the pre-maximal stages of a primary C-series. We have also seen that it is certainly finite, since the various valifying characteristics are of finite intensity at every stage and the residual series appears *sub specie temporis* to be of finite duration. Since the value associated with the maximal end-term of a primary C-series is infinite and is infinitely more good than bad, if McTaggart's arguments be accepted, whilst the value pertaining to the pre-maximal residue of such a series is finite, we may conclude that the value pertaining to any primary C-series as a whole is infinite and is infinitely more good than bad.

McTaggart points out in § 854 that we have much less information about the value pertaining to the pre-maximal stretch of a primary C-series, i.e., the stretch which appears *sub specie temporis* as the total history of a self from the beginning to the end of time, than we have about the maximal end-term, i.e., the term which appears *sub specie temporis* as that total phase of a self's history which begins at the end of time and has infinite indivisible duration. This seems at first sight paradoxical, but it is not really so if we grant McTaggart's premises. The reason is this. If McTaggart is right, we can show by deductive reasoning from completely certain premises

what the nature of the cogitations, volitions, emotions, and feelings of a self *must be* at the ω-stage. And we can say with confidence how they *must appear to* that self at the ω-stage, since at that stage there is no possibility of confused or delusive cognition. Now we are not in a position to do this about the cogitations, volitions, emotions, and feelings of a self at the r-stages. Our only source of information is intro-spection, generalised by problematic induction. Now we know that introspection is far from trustworthy, on any view, and we have strong reason to believe that many of our own states are not introspectible by us. Moreover, if McTaggart's general theory is true, introspection must be much more radically delusive than we should otherwise have any ground to suspect. Finally, problematic induction at best can give only more or less probable conclusions. In the present case the basis for the generalisation is the observed and recorded experiences of mankind, whilst the generalisation which we want to base on it extends to the history throughout all time of all the selves which together make up the universe. It is obvious that any induction from so narrow a premise to so extensive a conclusion must be of the flimsiest nature.

The consequence is, as McTaggart points out, that we have hardly any information, either empirical or *a priori*, on a question which must be of the greatest practical interest to us all, viz., the goodness or badness pertaining to what I will call the "probationary stages" of a primary C-series. I give this name to those stages of any primary C-series which come between the stage which appears *sub specie temporis* as present now and the ω-stage. Thus the probationary stages of a primary C-series will appear to the person whose C-series it is as the whole of his future history from now onward to the end of time. McTaggart discusses the value pertaining to the probationary stretch of a primary C-series in Chap. LXVIII of *The Nature of Existence*. Most of his conclusions are negative.

(i) We cannot count on an increase in goodness, which may be now faster and now slower, but will never be *reversed*. All the valifying characteristics can oscillate in intensity, and the relative amounts of goodness or badness in successive stages

of the world-history of a self will oscillate with them. We must, therefore, allow for the possibility of future periods during which the state of a self, *sub specie temporis*, will be getting worse instead of better.

(ii) Since the world-history of any self, *sub specie temporis*, is of finite duration, it cannot contain more than a finite number of oscillations each of finite duration. Now we know from observation that a man may go on deteriorating, with minor fluctuations, from the age of puberty to his death at an advanced age. Therefore we know that the down-grade of a single oscillation may last for at least a considerable fraction of a normal human life, and may be, to all appearance, still uncompleted at the end of the life in which it began. Beyond this we have no certain information. We cannot be sure that a process of deterioration which was in full swing at the moment of death may not be checked by so important a change as the separation of a self from the organism which it has been animating since its last birth. On the other hand, we have not the least reason to deny that a process of deterioration, begun in one life and continued up to the end of it, may be carried further in the next life.

It is true that a race or a nation can be observed over a period which is very long as compared with a single life of any human being. And it may be observed to be deteriorating throughout the whole of such a long period. But this throws no light on the question whether the down-grade of a single oscillation in the history of an individual can last longer than one of his lives. When we say that a nation has been deteriorating throughout the whole of a certain long period we mean that, if the individuals who compose it at a series of successive dates within this period are compared, the average balance of goodness over badness in these individuals is less at each successive census. Now we have no reason to think that the persons who compose a certain nation at one date are reincarnations of the persons who composed the same nation at an earlier date. And, unless we assume this, we cannot validly argue from the degeneration of a nation throughout a certain period to the degeneration throughout the same

period of the individuals who from time to time compose it. A nation might be steadily degenerating, and yet every individual who was ever a member of it might be steadily improving in each of his successive lives. This could happen provided that (*a*) few, if any, individuals are members of this nation for more than one life, and (*b*) the different selves who are incarnated in this territory at successive dates are at lower and lower stages of development.

McTaggart ends his book by emphasising the extreme limitations of our empirical knowledge, and the qualifications which this imposes on the optimism which his metaphysical conclusions might seem to warrant.

We get our knowledge and our rational beliefs about the universe partly by deductive arguments from self-evident premises and partly by inductive generalisation from what we have observed. Now the field of human observation is extremely narrow as compared with the whole universe, and any attempt to argue inductively from what has happened in the former to what happens in the whole extent and throughout the whole history of the latter is worthless. On the other hand, nothing can be proved *a priori* except very abstract propositions which leave us completely in the dark about many matters of detail which are of great practical importance and theoretical interest to us. This extreme limitation in the range of our possible cognition is somewhat depressing to us as rational beings with a thirst for knowledge. And, apart from this, the vastness of the universe, in comparison with ourselves and the persons and institutions in which we are interested, tends to depress us as active and emotional beings with practical ideals, loyalties, and affections.

We must recognise that any hopes which we may legitimately entertain for ourselves or our species cannot possibly be justified by any unique value or importance attaching to the human individual or the human race as compared with the rest of the universe. If they can be justified at all, this can be done only by general metaphysical arguments which show that selves, as such, are the ultimate and indestructible units

of reality. Even if these arguments, and the further arguments which profess to show that the final state of any self is infinitely more good than bad, be accepted, only a very chastened optimism is warranted. For *sub specie temporis* the period which must elapse before time is swallowed up in eternity may be of any finite length and is probably enormously long. And during that probationary period there is no degree of suffering and no depth of moral degradation which history has recorded or imagination can depict that may not be surpassed in our own experience.

McTaggart thinks that most idealists, even if they have in theory recognised the vastness of the universe, the relative insignificance of the human race, and the ephemeral duration of man's recorded past history as compared with the period which will appear to intervene before the end of the ostensibly temporal order, have tended to ignore these facts and to overlook their more depressing implications. He remarks that Hegel, in particular, displayed a parochialism in the range of his practical interests and emotions which derives no support from his metaphysical theories. The considerations which McTaggart has been emphasising "seem to have aroused in him" (Hegel) "that special irritation which is caused by anything that is felt to be unpleasant and which cannot be proved to be impossible". (Just that kind of irritation, we may remark in passing, which the phenomena investigated by psychical research are wont to produce in so many scientists, ecclesiastics, and ecclesiastically-minded laymen whether Christian or Communist.)

It seems to me that many theories of the universe may be dismissed at once, not as too *good*, but as too *cosy*, to be true. One feels sure that they could have arisen only among people living a peculiarly sheltered life at a peculiarly favourable period of the world's history. No theory need be seriously considered unless it recognises that the world has always been for most men and all animals other than domestic pets a scene of desperate struggle in which great evils are suffered and inflicted. No theory need be seriously considered unless it recognises how utterly alien most of the non-human life

even on this small planet is to man and his ideals; how slight a proportion ostensibly living matter bears to the matter which is ostensibly inanimate; and that man himself can live and thrive only by killing and eating other living beings, animal or vegetable. Any optimism which is not merely silly and childish must maintain itself, if it can, in spite of and in conscious recognition of these facts.

Now McTaggart's theory is, in the very long run, an optimistic theory. And I think that it may fairly be accused of making the universe too cosy and homely. But, in spite of this, it cannot be dismissed as a childish and silly optimism. For the "long run" is as long as the whole ostensible duration of the future history of the universe. And the evils to be encountered by a self in the probationary stages may be so great that only the boundlessness of the ω-stage can guarantee that they are more than balanced by good.

RETROSPECT

In either hand the hastening angel caught
Our lingering parents; and to th' eastern gate
Led them direct; and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappeared.
They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat!
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.
                              Paradise Lost, Book XII

RETROSPECT

It would be tedious and unnecessary to recapitulate step by step the whole of McTaggart's argument in Vol. II of *The Nature of Existence* and all my criticisms on it. It will be enough if I single out the most essential points in the argument, and remind the reader of my conclusions about them.

(i) Anything which is deduced from the Principle of Determining Correspondence must be regarded as unproven, because, as I tried to show in Vol. I of the present work, that principle is itself an illegitimate conclusion from uncertain premises.

(ii) At certain stages in McTaggart's argument trouble arises from his failure to recognise that there is a kind of ostensibly non-discursive cognition (of which seeing, hearing, touching, etc., are instances) which is commonly called "perception" but differs from what he calls "perception". We have given the technical name of "prehension" to that kind of cognition which McTaggart calls "perception".

(iii) Another standing source of difficulty is that *sub specie temporis*, where it is legitimate to talk of "continuants" and "occurrents" or "things" and "events", McTaggart always tacitly assumes that what is called a "thing" or "person" is identical with that set of simultaneous and successive events which we call "the history of" that thing or person. It is true that, on his own theory of the unreality of time and of the nature of the real existents which underlie temporal phenomena, what appears *sub specie temporis* as a continuant is a certain kind of timeless whole, and what appear as events in its history are certain kinds of timeless parts of it. This, however, does not justify McTaggart's practice. In any context in which it is legitimate to talk of things and events it is illegitimate to identify a thing with its own history.

(iv) McTaggart's attempt to show that every human self reflexively prehends itself as such and uses "I" as a logically

proper name for itself is a failure. And there seem to be traces of a different theory, which he never worked out, viz., that a human self *perceives* itself (in our sense of the word) but does not *prehend* itself (i.e., does not perceive itself in McTaggart's sense of the word.)

(v) It is doubtful whether McTaggart succeeds in showing that the relation of prehension to prehended object *could* generate a determining-correspondence hierarchy in which the primary parts are selves and the secondary parts are prehensions in each self of itself, of other selves, and of its own and their prehensions. For, if it is doubtful whether any self can prehend itself, it is *a fortiori* doubtful whether any self can prehend another self. And, again, McTaggart has not succeeded in showing that the right analysis of "The self S prehends the object O" is "There is a particular P (O), which is (a) a part of S, and is (b) a prehension of O."

(vi) McTaggart's account of sense-perception suffers, on its epistemological and psychological side, from his failure to distinguish between perception and prehension and to consider the relations between the two.

Again, his argument to show that there can be no material or sensal particulars rests on three premises, viz., (a) the Principle of Determining Correspondence; (b) that the relation of a prehension to its object is a determining-correspondence relation, and is the only one that we can think of; and (c) that nothing which is spiritual can also have material or sensal characteristics. Of these premises there is not the least reason to believe the first; the second is highly doubtful; and the third is by no means certain. Moreover, I have tried to show in detail that extended particulars *could* fulfil the condition of being endlessly divisible in space into parts which are all capable of being sufficiently described on a uniform plan. So the argument against the possibility of material or sensal particulars breaks down completely.

(vii) McTaggart's attempt to disprove the reality of time, and with it the reality of both change and unchanging persistence, is absolutely fundamental in his system. I have tried to show that the very ingenious argument which he

invented for this purpose involves the fallacy of treating absolute becoming as if it were a species of qualitative change, and of trying to replace temporal copulas by non-temporal copulas and temporal adjectives. There are diffi-culties enough about time; but the one which McTaggart thought he had discovered is a mare's nest.

(viii) McTaggart's theory involves, as he recognises, the existence of misprehension. He admits and asserts that the notion of misprehension is very difficult to grasp, and that it is quite plausible to deny the very possibility of such an experience. Nevertheless, he claims to show that his theory of C-series is compatible with the existence of so much, and only so much, misprehension as can be admitted to be possible. I must confess that this is the one part of Mc-Taggart's writings which I have found unintelligible. I cannot reconcile his various statements with each other, and I cannot imagine why he thinks that his theory of C-series removes the *prima facie* impossibility of misprehension. I can only quote my own remark in Chap. XLIII (p. 450) of the present volume. "So unsatisfactory and incoherent do his statements seem to me that I cannot but suspect that I have failed to understand his doctrine on this point."

(ix) McTaggart's constructive theory of C-series consists of a number of independent propositions. The theory as a whole stands or falls by its ability to reconcile the appearances with what must be the facts if McTaggart's denial of the reality of time, his Principles of Endless Divisibility, and so on, are true. Since there is no reason to believe that these are facts, the theory can derive no support from reconciling the appearances with them, no matter how successfully it may do this nor how difficult it may be to think of any alternative theory which would do it.

(x) McTaggart attempts to give direct proofs of several of the propositions which together make up his theory of C-series. He claims to prove, e.g., that the relation which is misprehended as later-than must be that of inclusion. And he claims to prove that the all-inclusive end-term of a C-series must be a perfectly correct prehension, whilst all the

other terms of the series must be partially incorrect states of prehension in the same self of the same object. His attempted proof of the first of these propositions is fallacious; and all his arguments about inclusion-series which depend on premises about intensive and extensive magnitudes are full of mistakes and confusions. It must be confessed with regret that McTaggart was very fond of talking about quantity and was very liable to talk nonsense about it. Again, his argument to show that every ω-prehension must be completely correct seems to me to be fallacious at certain points, though I am loth to say this of so ingenious and so elaborate an intellectual construction.

(xi) McTaggart holds that prehensions are the only cogitations which could answer the conditions of endless divisibility and determining correspondence. He tacitly assumes that no prehension, and no complex whole composed of inter-related prehensions, could possibly have the property of being a discursive cogitation, such as a judgment, supposition, inference, etc. He is therefore obliged to conclude that there are no discursive cogitations. Consequently he is committed to the appalling task of trying to show how prehensions come to be misprehended as discursive cogitations, and how the information which is ostensibly supplied by judgments and suppositions is really an extract from what is presented in prehension. McTaggart performs this self-imposed labour with infinite virtuosity, but it is fairly plain that he is attempting the impossible. And it is not clear to me that he really had any need to undertake it. For it is not obvious that a prehension, or a complex whole composed of inter-related prehensions, could not have the property of being a judgment, a supposition, or some other kind of discursive cogitation.

(xii) It is by no means certain that McTaggart's statement that each term of a C-series would appear *sub specie temporis* to have a "finite indivisible duration" is intelligible. And it is far from clear how he supposes that the finite divisible duration which a stretch of r-terms in a C-series appears to have is connected with the finite indivisible durations which

each of them singly would appear to have. He admits the possibility that a C-series may have an *infinite* number of terms, either through being compact or through the maximal term being a limit of the series of r-terms. And he asserts that the duration which any stretch of a C-series which excludes the ω-term would appear to have is *finite*. How can these two propositions be reconciled with the assertion that each r-term would appear to have a *finite* indivisible duration? I have suggested a way in which this difficulty might be got over, assuming that the notion of finite indivisible duration is intelligible. But it is plain that McTaggart had never thought out the implications of this part of his theory.

(xiii) It is certain that McTaggart's conclusion, that the whole residual series, consisting of all the r-terms of a C-series without its ω-term, must appear *sub specie temporis* to have finite duration, does not follow from his premises, if it be granted that a C-series may have an infinite number of terms.

(xiv) We may agree with McTaggart that it is reasonable to think that the ω-term of a C-series would present a characteristically different appearance *sub specie temporis* from any of the r-terms. For each r-term is enclosed on both sides by other terms of the series, whilst the ω-term is unenclosed on one side. But, when he passes from this to the conclusion that an ω-term would appear *sub specie temporis* to have infinite indivisible duration, I join issue with him on two grounds. In the first place, difficult as it is to attach a meaning to the notion of *indivisible* duration in general, the difficulty approaches to impossibility when we are asked to think of an indivisible duration which is *infinite*. A definition of "infinity", as applied to the duration of a stretch of terms, has been given. But such duration is divisible. And I do not see how the definition can be applied to the indivisible duration of an individual term. Secondly, even if the notion of infinite indivisible duration be intelligible, I cannot see why the property of being enclosed on one side only should appear *sub specie temporis* as the property of having infinite indivisible duration. Of course it might do so. But, unless we knew much more than McTaggart has told us about the way

in which the apparent durations of individual terms in a stretch combine to produce the apparent duration of the stretch, we could not tell how the property of being enclosed on one side only would appear *sub specie temporis*.

(xv) However this may be, McTaggart's notion that one could combine the finite *divisible* duration, which the pre-maximal residue of a *C*-series appears to have, with the infinite *indivisible* duration, which its maximal end-term appears to have, and could talk of the whole series as appearing to have "infinite duration", is fantastic. We have no means of conjecturing what such a chimaera would look like *sub specie temporis*.

(xvi) However successful McTaggart's theory may be in accounting for all other temporal appearances, I do not see how it can account for what I have called the appearance of "absolute becoming" or "the transitory aspect of ostensibly temporal facts". This is not a special objection to McTaggart's theory, but is a general objection to all attempts to get rid of time. It rests on the principle (or the prejudice) that there could be no appearance of becoming anywhere unless there really were becoming somewhere.

(xvii) It is unfortunate that McTaggart has not attempted to give any positive account of the spiritual particulars which are misprehended as sensa, or of those which are misperceived as material things and events. It is even more unfortunate that he has not attempted to deal in terms of his theory with what is surely one of the most striking of all the facts about minds, viz., that every known mind is connected in a most intimate and peculiar way with a certain ostensibly material thing, which we call "*its* body". Any theory of human pre-existence and post-existence which has nothing to say about the real significance of this ostensible "animation" of organisms by minds is merely bombinating in a vacuum.

(xviii) I suspect that what McTaggart calls the "aggregate nett value contained in a whole" is an arithmetical myth. He was always liable to assume, in a singularly naive way, that any number constructed by *arithmetical* operations from

numbers which severally measure certain magnitudes must *ipso facto* measure a certain other magnitude which is a function of the former. He makes no attempt to state or to examine the numerous assumptions which underlie the notion of "aggregate nett value contained in a whole"; and his example about the average drunkenness in a town, so far from illuminating the subject, serves only to show up the extreme confusion of his own mind on all these questions of quantity and measurement.

(xix) In Sub-section 3·23 of Chap. LVI p. 688 of the present volume I have tried to state accurately and formally what I believe to be the essential points in McTaggart's doctrine of value as a function of two kinds of variable, viz., the intensities of the various valifying characteristics, on the one hand, and the ostensible duration for which they are manifested by a particular, on the other. I believe that this theory is not peculiar to McTaggart, but is tacitly or explicitly assumed by most utilitarian moralists and by economists. I am profoundly dissatisfied with it, but I have nothing better to offer as an alternative.

(xx) Unlike McTaggart I do not find it self-evidently impossible that any whole composed of selves, no matter how intimately inter-related, should *have* value as distinct from *containing* value.

(xxi) McTaggart's discussion of the question whether value belongs to selves, or to total phases in the history of a self, or to experiences which are less extensive than total phases, seems to me to be confused and unsystematic. I think that the difficulties spring from a source which I have already mentioned in clause iii of this synopsis. *Sub specie temporis* selves are continuants; their experiences and the total phases in their histories are occurrents; and it is meaningless to identify a self with its own history or to say that the parts of its history are parts of *it*. And, *sub specie temporis*, if selves have value, their valifying characteristics are their dispositional properties and not the property of actually having such and such experiences or doing such and such actions. On the other hand, if McTaggart is right, what appears as a

continuant-self is really a timeless two-dimensional whole, and what appear as phases or experiences in its history are really certain timeless parts of it. Now the experiential basis of all our judgments about value and the bearers of value consists of observations on selves and their experiences viewed *sub specie temporis*. It is extremely difficult to know what significance should be attached, in terms of timeless reality, to general principles about value based on observations which are confined to temporal appearances. McTaggart, in this part of his argument, seems to be continually dodging about between the ostensibly temporal and the really eternal. These difficulties are still further increased by a certain peculiarity in McTaggart's theory of C-series. Those timeless two-dimensional wholes which are selves do not appear *sub specie temporis* as continuant-selves. On the contrary, each of them appears *sub specie temporis* as the last total phase in the history of a continuant-self.

(xxii) McTaggart is unable to decide whether the individual terms of a primary C-series *have* value, or only *contain* value, or only *contribute* by their presence as parts to the value of selves. Nevertheless he assumes that there is a sense in which we can talk of the value specially associated with an individual term of a primary C-series. It is not at all clear what he means by this, but I have suggested an interpretation of this notion which seems reasonable in itself and consistent with most of his statements.

(xxiii) McTaggart tries to show that the value associated with an individual term of a primary C-series will be finite or infinite according as this term is or is not enclosed on both sides by other terms of the series. One of his arguments is vitiated by his failure to notice that the sense in which a stretch of terms is "bounded" or "unbounded" must be different from the sense in which an individual term is "bounded" or "unbounded". Another of his arguments is vitiated by his failure to notice that the sense, if any, in which an individual term can be said to "occupy" so much of a series must be different from the sense in which a stretch of terms can be said to "occupy" so much of a series. And both

arguments are open to the objection that all the experiences from which we derive our ideas of value are concerned with *stretches*, and not with individual terms, of C-series, and that none of these stretches include the maximal end-term of a C-series. On this basis it is surely impossible to say anything with confidence about the amount of value associated with *any* individual term. *A fortiori* it is impossible to say anything with confidence about the amount of value associated with a maximal end-term.

(xxiv) In his argument to show that the infinite value associated with the ω-term of a primary C-series is infinitely more good than bad McTaggart has to show that the only evil at the ω-stage is sympathetic pain felt in contemplating evils which belong to the r-stages. Now, in order to show this, he has to prove that there can be no frustrated ω-desires. For this purpose he has to use two premises which, in my opinion, he has failed to prove. One is that there can be no erroneous cognition at the ω-stage. The other is that it is impossible at the ω-stage even ostensibly to suppose any alternative to what is actually prehended. (I have dealt with the first of these premises in clause x, and with the second in clause xi, of this synopsis.) But, even if both these premises are true, it remains possible that there should be *fulfilled aversion*, as distinct from unfulfilled desire, at the ω-stage, unless we accept a third premise. This third premise is McTaggart's analysis of "I feel aversion to the fact that S is P" into "I cogitate with desire the proposition that S is not P". Now I have very little hesitation in rejecting this analysis of aversion. It is most unplausible, and McTaggart has given no positive reason in its favour.

(xxv) McTaggart's attempt to show that love, and the other emotions which depend on it, would necessarily exist at the ω-stage seems to me fallacious. And I feel very little doubt that the conclusion is not only unproven but false. The only love that we know of is love for *persons*, i.e., wholes consisting of minds animating organisms which are perceived as human bodies by their lovers. We have no experience of loving *selves*. And all our relevant information points to the

conclusion that love is a very complex emotion in which some of the most important constituents are bound up with sex, parenthood, lactation and other functions of animal life. If love is an emotion which could exist between disembodied minds telepathically prehending each other, I should expect it to be so attenuated and impoverished as to be barely recognisable.

(xxvi) Very similar remarks apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the alleged existence of morally determined goodness at the ω-stage. It seems to me obvious that all the higher and more heroic virtues and all the homelier virtues of ordinary men are rooted in the existence, or at least the ever-present possibility, of great primary evils. I feel no doubt that there is a certain optimum amount of moral and physical evil which is a necessary condition for a maximum of moral goodness. Therefore I think it impossible that the ω-stage should have any great degree of morally determined goodness if Mc-Taggart's account of it is in other respects correct.

I hope that I have now made it quite clear that none of McTaggart's more characteristic conclusions have been established by his arguments, and that some of them are most unlikely to be true. This, after all, is only what our experience of more than two thousand years of deductive metaphysics might have led us to suspect. Philosophers who embark on the construction of a deductive system stand in even greater need than most men of the consolation which the ship-owner offered to the insurance company: "To travel hopefully is better than to arrive."

If this be granted, two questions remain. How high should McTaggart be placed in the class of constructive meta-physicians? And is constructive metaphysics an activity which deserves respect on any other ground than the virtuosity displayed by its exponents in handling *difficiles nugae*?

In respect of virtuosity I should place McTaggart far above any other metaphysician with whose works I am acquainted. He is scarcely ever obscure. We know, as a rule, exactly what his premises are and exactly how he claimed to prove his

conclusions. And some of his flights of argument are so sustained and so ingenious and comparatively so free from formal fallacies that they must excite the greatest admiration. In this respect Leibniz is the only philosopher that I know of who can be compared with McTaggart. His defect in this department is that he occasionally indulges in what I should call purely "forensic" arguments. These are generally directed against opposing theories which he thinks false on other grounds; and it is difficult to believe that they can have deceived himself or have been anything more than the awful after-effects of eminence as a debater at the Union.

Again, if we compare McTaggart with the rest of that very numerous band of philosophers who have denied the existence of time and asserted that reality is eternal, we surely find that he stands head and shoulders above the others. Plainly the business of all such philosophers is to try to give some positive account, in outline at least, of the nature of those timeless realities which present themselves as temporal things and events. We want them to take the main features of the ostensibly temporal and to tell us what feature of the timelessly real corresponds to each of these. But how completely most of them have'shirked this job, and how well has McTaggart done it! Think of Bradley's and Hegel's constant practice of evading the issue under a smoke-screen of "wise-cracks" and epigrams, such as Bradley's "What may be and must be certainly is" and Hegel's "*Die Vollführung des unendlichen Zwecks ist so nur die Täuschung aufzuheben als ob er noch nicht vollführt sei.*" And then contrast this with the infinitely ingenious and beautifully interlocking mechanism which McTaggart constructed in his theory of *C*-series. Spinoza, who was not addicted to substituting rhetorical fireworks for hard thinking, plainly struggled with this problem and thought that he had found a solution in outline. But, unfortunately, his solution was unintelligible even before Prof. Hallett had tried to explain it to us.

Now I suspect that McTaggart may be quite unfairly depreciated in comparison with other constructive philosophers on account of the very merits which I have been

indicating. A writer who states his premises and his arguments clearly and tells us exactly what he does and does not claim to prove can be definitely refuted if his premises are doubtful or his arguments are fallacious or his conclusions are too sweeping. He is thus liable to cut a very poor figure in the hands of a competent critic, as compared with a writer like Hegel or Bradley or (to take a very much greater thinker, in my opinion) Kant. In reading and commentating upon such writers as these one's energies are almost exhausted in conjecturing what they may have meant and what reasons they can have had for holding the opinions which one has tentatively ascribed to them. Where there is no agreement about the premises, the arguments, and the conclusions of a writer, there can be no definite refutation of his doctrine. Sheer woolliness renders such systems invulnerable to logical weapons. Again, any writer who is not content to confine himself to high-sounding generalities but tries to "save the appearances" in detail, as McTaggart and Leibniz did, exposes himself to attacks which more timid philosophers avoid. But surely, if speculative philosophy is worth doing at all, such risks ought to be taken.

This brings us to the question: Is it worth doing at all? Here I would distinguish between speculative philosophy, as such, and the attempt to make it into a deductive system in which important synthetic propositions are inferred from self-evident premises. I have no doubt that it is desirable from time to time to take a synoptic view and to try to bring into a single coherent system all that is then known or rationally conjectured about the world. And I have no doubt whatever that the attempts of such men as Aristotle, St Thomas, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Hegel are among the greatest intellectual achievements of the human mind. I am inclined to think that it is only at certain special points in the world's history that such syntheses can profitably be attempted, and I am sure that success can then be achieved only by a man of genius who combines extremely wide detailed knowledge with an unusual breadth of sympathy and depth of insight and power of synoptic vision. Now certain historical causes

have tended to make speculative philosophers throw their speculations into the form of deductive systems. I suspect that, in Europe at any rate, a very important cause has been the impression produced by the early and spectacular success of Euclidean geometry, combined with a very excusable failure to understand its nature. Here, at any rate, we do seem to start with self-evident premises and to deduce more and more complicated and quite unsuspected conclusions which are synthetic, categorical, and about the existent. It was very natural to think that what had apparently been done so successfully in geometry could be done by the same method in speculative philosophy. Yet this belief is almost certainly mistaken.

Now, if we compare McTaggart's philosophy with any of the great systems which I have mentioned, I think we are struck by a defect which I can best describe as "thinness". Leibniz and Spinoza, e.g., do bring into their systems all the great permanent features of the world, such as the existence and laws of ostensibly organic and inorganic matter, the ostensible connection of each mind with a certain animated body, and so on. Hegel further brings in human history and social organisation, morality, art, religion, and philosophy itself.

I believe that the comparative "thinness" of McTaggart's system is a joint product of his characteristic merits and defects. A deductive system is fruitful only when the philosopher who constructs it surreptitiously introduces his empirical knowledge or his synthesising hypotheses into his axioms. McTaggart was much too clear-headed to deceive himself in this way. On the other hand, all the great speculative philosophers whom I have mentioned were men of extremely wide interests and culture, steeped in all the science and history of their day and thoroughly acquainted with the work of their predecessors. Moreover, Descartes and Leibniz, at any rate, were innovators of the greatest importance in mathematics and physics at a time when those two sciences were being revolutionised. The impressive range and mass of these men's explicit speculations depended on

the immense store of detailed knowledge which they had actively assimilated and worked into the structure of their minds. Now McTaggart had no such intellectual background. He knew little of science and he cared nothing for history. And so, except for certain valuable materials provided by his emotional life, there was little but straw to be cut by the exquisitely fashioned dialectical machinery of his mind.

I have now completed my task of building a mausoleum and composing an epitaph for McTaggart's philosophy. It is somewhat depressing to stand by the grave of such high hopes and such eager intellectual effort. Successive generations of philosophers are like "the Priest who slew the slayer and shall himself be slain". It is a sobering thought that inevitably this *Examination* must soon follow *McTaggart's Philosophy* into the common grave of all human activities, and that the two will thenceforth rest together under the lines

Hi motus animorum, atque haec certamina tanta,
Pulveris exigui iactu compressa quiescunt.

INDEX OF PROPER NAMES
AND TITLES

INDEX OF TECHNICAL TERMS

NOTE. *The number attached to any term in this index is that of the page on which that term is defined, described, or explained*

Date Due