COSMOGRAPHICS

A NEW DIAGRAM OF MAN IN THE UNIVERSE

Alternatives:—
The SCIENCE of MAN

MAN IN THE UNIVERSE
A New Diagram

D. E. Harding

or

MAN IN THE UNIVERSE
A new Cosmography

by

DOUGLAS HARDING.

P R E F A C E

This book arose out of a personal need — a need to take stock while there was still time, a need to find out just how much & how little I really knew about myself and the world in which I had occurred. It seemed a pity to die before I had had time to be surprised at being alive, or to be actively curious about what man amounted to — if, indeed, he amounted to anything. Though the present book has grown far beyond my first attempts to meet such a situation, it remains what it began as: an effort to answer the question: what am I?

What is man? This is a problem which everyone, sooner or later, must face up to for himself. My solution, such as it is, will not do for anybody else, & it is offered here rather as an incentive than as a guide. I want to suggest, not dogmatise; to stimulate, not provide a finished system. It will be true for everyone; all of it can be true for no one. Not even for myself, because, for one thing, this is not a finished, self-consistent, well-rounded, system, but only the sketches of a philosophy. Moreover, the subject matter is so baffling & interpenetrable & full of paradox, that dogmatism would be ridiculous. While I can say with Thoreau, "I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else I knew as well," I have to admit that I am increasingly a mystery to myself. There are two kinds of madness — those who will not take the advice 'know thyself' & those who think they have done so. Knowledge that is not precisely counterbalanced with knowledge of ignorance is no knowledge.

It is in asking myself what I am, rather than in arriving at any definitive answers, that I have arrived at a philosophy. The expert will find in this philosophy affinities with many doctrines old & new. My indebtedness to writers, philosophical and otherwise, is too extensive to be acknowledged here in detail; the index will give some indication of it.

This is a philosophical book, but I must explain without further delay that the word philosophy, as I use it here, does not include an effort to integrate the main results of the separate sciences into a Science, nor does it advocate a way of life. The philosophy of this book is speculative, empirical, synthetic, with an emphasis on the concrete. It is founded on the belief that we are in desperate need of a world-picture to which our own lives may make a clear contribution — a picture with richness of colours & detail, fit for the imagination, with that acceptance of science which the intellect demands, and with that clear discernment of civic unity & purpose which alone will satisfy the heart. Such a picture no one man can paint & no one book can compass.

Next as to the presentation. I know of no reason why serious books on philosophical themes should not be as easy to read as the subject allows, and pleasant to look at. Accordingly I have tried to write in terms which the educated non-specialist will follow, and I have helped out the text with diagrams, using these in what I believe amounts to a new way. Actually, no doubt, the degree to which the book will turn out to be intelligible will depend more upon the reader's sympathies & antipathies than upon any other factor. Whether he is or is not a 'visualiser' will make a difference also. To some the diagrams may be no use — for the sake of such readers the text has been written so that it can be read without reference to the illustrations; to many I think they will be as helpful in the reading of the book as they were to me in the writing of it; to a few they will perhaps suggest a new field of interest & research. For this third group there is an Appendix on the subject. The reason for the dialogues (between C. or my 'common-sense self', & P. or my 'philosophical self') that I adopt throughout these pages, is that my thinking seems to fall naturally into such a shape. "For man — to quote Pascal — holds an inward talk with his self alone, which it behoves him to regulate well." * And in this talk C. though generally worsted, is never worsted for good, but moves again & again to play an indispensible part. Let me say here, once & for all, that no man — & least of all one who claims to be a philosopher — can without loss disown this part of himself. Common sense, like money, exists to be spent, not hoarded. Philosophy must have a sparing partner. Like money, it is immortal so long as it circulates. It must circulate.

Thinking, according to Plato, is a "dialogue of the soul with herself."

* Pensées, 535

Phaedo, 73, where Cebes says that when led to diagrams, men's innate knowledge is worked.

c.f. Collingwood's "Logic of question & answer" (An Autobiography, Ch. V)

Philosophy, & amongst the Greeks, have been the thinking about the important things; it indeed demands also a proper ways of behaving. Hence philosophers have been accused of madness.

"In most books, the I, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that in respect to egotism, is the main difference. We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking." (Walden: 'Economy.')

While it is true that (as Kierkegaard says in his Journals) 'in relation to their systems most systematisers are like a man who builds an enormous castle & lives in a shack close by' our real need is neither castle nor shack, but a home in the Universe — something between a slum & an equally uninhabitable Dutch parlour, between the sceptic's foggy chaos & the elaborate but little lived-in mansion of the armchair metaphysician.

"Space, Time & Deity", I, p.204.

"If philosophy is the art of understanding, it is evident that it must begin by saturating itself with facts & realities, & that premature abstraction kills it."
Amiel's Journal, 7th April, 1866.

"For philosophy," says Arthur Ussher, "has now to give us back, by an act of transcendental imagination, the shape & design of the external world — the world of which, through an era of analysis, she has progressively robbed & impoverished our souls; & this task demands a combination of realism & religious feeling..."
(Radio Talk recorded in the Listener, Sept 11, 1947.)

We must go forward to new ideas, and back to old ones; we must get down to ~~scientific facts, and up to the~~ the facts of science, and up to those of religion. Real progress is ~~expansion in all four directions~~ not lineal or limited to the here-now, but ~~expansion in all four directions~~ its four-directional expansion. So it seems to me: but nothing I put forward in this book pretends to finality. I desire to stimulate rather than instruct, to consider certain possibilities* rather than to dogmatise.

* Whitehead (Adv of I) p.142.

A hint about reading the book: I warn against dipping in here & there. This can only mislead, because the plan of the work is roughly dialectical. The findings of earlier chapters are modified later on, and later chapters need the backing of earlier ones if they are to be understood. Taken by itself, no part is valid. ~~The whole must be read — or at least those sections which are not marked with an asterisk.~~ There will be many things which will bring my readers to a standstill, but, like Spinoza, "I pray them to proceed gently with me & form no judgment concerning these things until they have read all."° ~~I know it is a tall order, but~~

° Ethics II, xi.

Finally, ~~then~~ let me say that I carry no stock of patent medicines or labour-saving devices. I can offer no easy way out or in, no short cut to bliss, no philosophy without tears, no brand-new gospel, no cult. ~~All~~ What I can promise are some ancient ~~ideas~~ teachings in modern dress — ~~ideas~~ teachings that are difficult because they are simple — and some old recipes for living even more precariously and uncomfortably than we live at present. ~~"All things excellent," said Spinoza, "are as difficult as they are rare."~~ It was Keats who described himself as "writing at random, straining at particles of light in the midst of a great darkness, without knowing the bearing of any one assertion, of any one opinion;"+ ~~—~~ it would be a rash author who put his claim ~~any~~ very much higher.

\+ Letter to his brother & sister, Feb 14, 1819.

Even so, there is a certain highly cultivated type of mind to whom much of what I have to say will ~~seem nonsense~~ remain meaningless. + I know the value of ~~that~~ the type ~~of mind~~ of mind that has no use for speculation: to the intellectual ascetic, with his patient attention to detail & his refusal to go beyond the evidence, I owe many of the facts on which ~~I~~ we base the constructions that he condemns as, at best, premature. All I can suggest to him is that our attitudes are complementary — there is at least as deep & as practical a need for speculative structures as for their building materials: let him therefore allow me my function, or, where I have failed in it, show the alternative.* And there is another type of mind to whom much of what I say will be all too acceptable. I refer to the lazy-minded & intellectually undisciplined follower of cults, who is not prepared for the long grind of thinking his way, through the facts, to the goal of his desire. Of these two attitudes, give me the first: at least it has industry, patience, & humility. By all means, I say, let there be speculation — without it man is less than human — but let it be informed speculation.° I know how far ~~I~~ this work falls short of ~~this~~ such an ideal. ~~the sayings of Heraclitus that~~ "men that love wisdom must be acquainted with very ~~many~~ things indeed,"° said Heraclitus, & as the things multiply so does the need for ignoring inessentials. ~~At least~~ All I can claim is that I have ~~tried~~ gone after the solid ~~food~~ fare of empirical things rather than ~~[illegible]~~ the ~~natural~~ ~~meringues & soufflés of abstract metaphysics~~ more artificial diet of abstract metaphysics. ~~not to philosophise in a vacuum.~~ In particular, I have worked & written in the belief that, in the abundant produce of modern science, philosophy can find ~~the vitamins & calories essential~~ the food needful ~~has material of incalculable value~~ for her ~~full development~~, ~~further~~ health growth, & religion ~~has~~ can find a much-needed tonic & a purgative. While ~~it is true that~~ (as Dr Inge has said*) the task of this century is to 'spiritualise science', it is ~~also~~ just as necessary to attempt a science of the spiritual: in both philosophy is the agent, & her work of unity is as gigantic as it is inspiring.

* "The man who criticizes others must have something as an alternative. To criticize ~~others~~ without an alternative is like using fire to put out fire. The (idea) the man expresses is logically indefensible." Mo Tzu Book XVI. p.56.

° Burnet: Early Greek Philosophers, p 137.

° Dr F. Sherwood Taylor sums up the whole matter when he writes: 'The only hope for the world is the incorporation of the religious, philosophical, & scientific outlooks in a single comprehensive view, & I would say emphatically that this incorporation has not been accomplished & that its accomplishment is the most ~~urgent~~ immediate & urgent of tasks for those who wish man well.' (Philosophy, Nov, 1947, p.207) ~~the following~~ My aim is to further this task.

※ Christian Mysticism (1899) p.322.

\+ 'The book,' such a critic may say, 'passes not only Alice's test, ~~not only~~ in that it has pictures and conversations, but her author's too, in that it has a great deal of nonsense. ~~too~~.' Philosophy, I reply, ~~has been called the ability to contemplate~~ is the making sense out of nonsense, & nonsense out of sense, & man cannot help philosophising. Nevertheless

⊙ There are two ~~sorts~~ temperamental types of philosophers — the hair-splitters or logic-choppers, ~~& ...~~ & those who bite off more than they can chew ~~—~~ & I am of the latter ~~sort~~. ~~If I must confess, all philosophers are either hair-splitting or biting off more than can personally chew, & I am in the latter sort; more & comes into the latter category.~~ Fortunately, in philosophy we are all members — some to honour & some to dishonour — of one another. We are lucky if the ~~former~~ others allow that we philosophise at all. ~~The~~ Our task is not to bite off less but ... But our fault is not that we bite off too much, ~~but that~~ or that we cannot digest it ~~all~~ (who blames the mouth because it is not also the stomach?) so much as ignorance of what the body needs. & ~~if~~ the organic wholeness (if it could be real) would ~~completeness of the organ may~~ be the disease of the whole. The ~~thorough~~ digestion & assimilation of thought is the continual work of diverse minds & generations. The contribution ~~that thought~~ of this book will not be itself till the criticism it provokes has ~~made it unrecognisable~~ changed it beyond recognition. For the present,

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Suggestions and corrections ~~sent~~ addressed to me (care of the Publishers) will be gratefully welcomed & used to improve any further editions.

This book was begun several years ago. It arose out of a ~~personal need~~ public crisis & a private need — a need to take stock while there was still time, a need to find out just how much & how little I really knew about myself & the universe in which I had somehow occurred. It seemed a pity to die before I had had time to be surprised at being alive, or ~~to be~~ actually curious about what man amounted to — if, indeed, he amounted to anything. Though the present book has grown far beyond my first attempts to meet such a situation, still it remains an effort to answer the question: What am I?

What is man? This is the puzzle which everyone, while accepting all the outside help he can get, must in the end solve after his own fashion. My solution (if it can be called that) will not in its entirety do for anybody else, & it is offered here more as an incentive than as a guide. ~~This~~ I have no complete, self-consistent, well-rounded system, but only the sketch-plan of a philosophy. ~~Human nature~~ The nature of man is a baffling & inexhaustible topic, & dogmatism is ~~absurd~~ out of place here. While I can say with Thoreau, "I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else I knew as well", I have to admit that I am increasingly a stranger to myself. Of the two kinds of men — those who refuse to take the advice 'know thyself' & those who imagine they have done so — the second is the sillier. Knowledge that is not counterbalanced with knowledge of ignorance is more dead weight.

This is a philosophical book, but to ~~make sure there is no~~ prevent misunderstanding I must explain at once that the term ~~word~~ philosophy as I use it bears a meaning which is not always accepted nowadays. Firstly, I avoid as far as possible the metaphysics which, remote from the concrete details of nature, loses itself in words. Paulsen defined philosophy as the sum of scientific knowledge, or an attempt to unify the sciences. My intention is not so ambitious, but I do wish to suggest lines along which the results of the separate sciences may one day coalesce into a Science. Philosophy is apt to go on, William James remarked, as if the actual peculiarities of the world were irrelevant. "But they cannot be irrelevant; and the philosophy of the future must imitate the sciences in taking them more & more elaborately into account." Secondly, this book is a practical enterprise. Many philosophers, & amongst them the greatest, have held that philosophy is much more than thinking about the important things: it includes & demands appropriate ways of behaving. Thirdly, this book is boldly — not to say rashly — speculative. While I agree in the main with Samuel Alexander that ~~"the~~ "true or concrete thought is tied down to nature", I dare not claim ~~as he does~~ that all my balloons are captive ones. Some of them sail off into the blue. ~~But the [illegible] possible, just what we realize if we are to find [illegible]~~ But is not we need the view from above, the widest perspective possible, just what we realize if we are to find [illegible] ~~The answer~~ There is a trenchant passage in ~~[illegible]~~ Journals ~~that~~ where he says that "in relation to their systems most systematizers are like a man who builds an enormous castle & lives in a shack close by." ~~But~~ Our real need is neither castle nor shack, but a home in the universe — something between a ~~[illegible]~~ house & an equally uninhabitable ~~[illegible]~~ front parlour, something ~~between~~ that is neither the sceptic's ~~lazy chaos & the elaborate but brittle [illegible]~~ comic claim that the universe is only that incoherent exhibits & draughty constructions of the armchair metaphysician. I believe we are desperate for lack of a world-picture in which our own lives find a well-marked place — a picture with enough richness of colour & generous detail to fire the imagination, with that ~~unyielding acceptance of~~ conformity to Science which any robust intellect demands, & with that clear portrayal of comic unity & purpose which alone will satisfy the heart. This book is the rough cartoon of such a picture.

Mixed metaphor

Next as to the presentation. I know of no reason why serious books on philosophical themes should not be as easy to read as the subject allows. Accordingly I have tried to write in terms that the educated non-specialist will follow, & I have helped out the text with many diagrams, using these in what I believe amounts to a new way. Actually, no doubt, the intelligibility of the book will depend ~~will depend~~ more upon the reader's sympathies & antipathies than upon any other factor. Whether he is or is not a visualizer will also make a difference. To some the ~~diagrams may be meaningless~~ graphic method is more hindrance than help — for the sake of such readers the text has been written so that it can be read without reference to the diagrams; to others ~~many~~ they may perhaps prove as helpful in the reading of the book as they were to me in the writing of it; to a few they will possibly suggest a new field of research. For this third group I have written an appendix on the subject. The name for the dialogues ~~I~~ between my unreflecting or 'common-sense self' (C) & my 'philosophical self' (P) — which are scattered throughout these pages, is that thinking naturally falls into such a shape ~~seeing that it~~ Thought, as Plato said, is a dialogue of the soul with herself. "For man" — to quote Pascal — "holds an inward talk with his self alone, which it behoves him to regulate well." And in this inward talk C, though often worsted by P, is never worsted for good, but revives again & again to play an indispensable part. Let me say here, (once & for all, that no man, ~~nor~~ & least of all a philosopher, can afford to disown this hopelessly unphilosophical side of himself.

A hint about reading the book: I must warn readers against dipping in here & there. ~~This~~ Sampling can only mislead, because the plan of the work is roughly dialectical. The findings of earlier chapters are modified later on, & later chapters need the backing of earlier ones if they are to be understood. The whole must be read. There will be many things to bring my readers to a [illegible] halt, but, like Spinoza, "I pray them to proceed gently with me & form no judgement concerning these things until they read . . ."

Even so, there is a certain highly cultivated type of mind to whom much of what I have to say will remain meaningless. I know the value of the mentality that has no use for speculation, for it is to the intellectual ascetic, with his patient attention to detail & his refusal to go more than one inch at a time beyond the evidence, that I owe many of the facts on which are based the conclusions that he condemns as, at best, premature. All I can suggest to him is that our attitudes are complementary, & that there is as deep & as practical a need for large-scale structures of thought as for their building materials. Let him allow me my function as I allow his, &, where I have failed, ~~show the alternative~~ let him put me right. As the ancient Chinese philosopher wisely says, "The man who criticizes others must have something as an alternative. To criticize without an alternative is like using fire to put out a fire."

There is another type of reader to whom much of what I have to say will be all too acceptable. I refer to the lazy-minded & intellectually undisciplined enthusiast, to the cult-monger ~~follower of cults~~, who, ~~is not~~ unprepared for the long grind of ~~thinking~~ working his way, through ~~its~~ stubborn facts, towards the goal of his desire, ~~but arrives~~ hopes to leap there at a single bound. But in fact quick ~~rewards are worthless~~ gains advances ~~not on~~ that number, & nothing worth while is achieved without industry, patience, & humility. Let there be speculation — without it man is ~~less than~~ scarcely human — but let it be informed speculation. The warning ~~saying~~ of Heraclitus that "men that love wisdom must be acquainted with very many things indeed" is more to the point ~~truer~~ now than ever it was. Dr. F. Sherwood Taylor ~~does not~~ neither the size nor the urgency of the undertaking ~~nor~~ task when he writes: "the only hope for the world is the incorporation of the religious, philosophical, & scientific outlooks in a single comprehensive view, & I would say emphatically that this incorporation has not been accomplished & that its accomplishment is the most immediate & urgent of tasks for those who wish men well." We are the victims of our specializations. The scientific jungle needs the taming hand of the thinker & the saint; on the other hand philosophy can find in the ~~abundant pro~~ luxuriant growth ~~use~~ of modern science just the food she ~~needs~~ should have for further growth, & religion can find in it a much-needed purgative & tonic. Dr. Inge has said that the task of the century is to spiritualize science; it is also (I would add) to intellectualize religion. In both tasks philosophy has a great opportunity & a great responsibility. ~~In this book I have tried to~~ The following pages are an ~~attempt~~ attempt to discharge my own share of this responsibility.

Finally, let me ~~say~~ emphasize the fact that I carry no stock of patent medicines or labour-saving devices. I can offer no easy way out or in, no short cut to bliss, no philosophy without tears, no brand-new gospel. What I can promise are some ancient teachings in modern dress — teachings that are difficult only because they are simple, with some old recipes for living even more precariously & uncomfortably than we do at present. ~~It makes demands on us too~~ — together with ~~to go forward (as we must) to new ideas is to go back to old ones~~ The merely new-fangled is as useless as the merely traditional. We must go forward to new ideas ~~and~~ or back to old ones; we must get down to the ~~truths~~ facts of science ~~and~~ ~~we~~ wake up to those of religion. Real progress is not ~~towards~~ one-way advance from the ~~Here-Now~~ present into the future, but the symmetrical expansion of the ~~Here-Now~~ present pastwards & futurewards, so that time is in some sense transcended. ~~At least that is one of the possibilities we have under~~

Note on the relation of this inquiry to metaphysics, logical positivism, & science.

What is the ~~proper function~~ task of the modern philosopher? Logical positivists,* ~~having dismissed metaphysics as nonsense, & having taken one great part~~ dismissing one of his traditional functions ~~& labelling it as~~ the exposition of metaphysical nonsense, & another as ~~an improper~~ unwarranted encroachment upon the realm of Science, leave him with very little to do. Professor Ayer writes: "The propositions of philosophy are not factual, but linguistic in character — that is, they do not describe the behaviour of physical, or even mental, objects; they express definitions, or the formal consequences of definitions. Accordingly we may say that philosophy is a department of logic."° (57) (says Prof. Ayer) The view that philosophy is a ~~department~~ kind of speculative knowledge existing alongside the special sciences is quite mistaken. "Those who make this supposition cherish the belief that there are some things in the world which are possible objects of speculative knowledge, & yet lie beyond the scope of empirical science. But this belief is a delusion. There is no field of experience which cannot, in principle, be brought under some form of scientific law, & no type of speculative knowledge about the world which it is, in principle, beyond the power of science to give." (48)*

Now I do not dispute the value of much of the work that logical positivists have done, or the validity of much of their criticism of metaphysics.* Nor, indeed, can I ~~object to~~ deny the right to define philosophy in his own fashion, as a department of logic, ~~except to say that it is, for me, unnecessarily~~ This definition nevertheless seems to me to depart from current usage unnecessarily, & therefore ~~tends to~~ to mislead. Moreover, ~~In particular~~, it leaves ~~nameless & unacknowledged~~ anonymous a class of persons (~~I know one of them~~ ~~& whom I am one~~) who are neither scientists, nor metaphysicians, nor logicians, but who take as their ~~province~~ subject-matter the broad findings of the special sciences & ~~seek to see them as a whole, to overcome their~~ cutting across all departmental divisions, seek the larger patterns. ~~Logical positivists~~ Logical positivists would say (I suppose) that in so far as this ~~work is neither~~ task of integration is neither a matter of metaphysics (i.e. ~~of nonsense & therefore incomprehensible~~ proper nonsense) ~~&~~ nor a matter of logical analysis (i.e. of philosophy) ~~in this sense of the word~~, it is the task of science, in which the philosopher has no business to meddle. ~~But~~ Ideally, perhaps, this is so: T. H. Huxley defined Science as "all knowledge that rests upon evidence & reasoning", & Dr. Alex. Hill goes so far as to say that "all intelligent knowledge is science" (CMK 775). But it is ~~not obvious that~~ clear, I think, that science does ~~not~~ shows no sign of ever including this work ~~undertake this task~~ of self-integration; second, that scientists, by reason of ~~their~~ the individual nature of his inevitable & necessary specialization, ~~are not~~ is rarely in a position to undertake this task; ~~I think~~ that the methods of the task cannot yet be exact or 'scientific', but must be rambling, speculative, & provisional; ~~I think~~ that the task is nevertheless worth while, & indeed of the first importance. Therefore I say that, for the present, & until such time as science can take over (~~if ever~~ supposing that time should come), there is an urgent need for a ~~that scientific~~ non-metaphysical philosophy, ~~which is~~ when propounding are factual rather than linguistic, ~~in character~~. Without such a philosophy, science ~~permits itself~~ opens up a chaos which is intellectually & aesthetically intolerable. It is ~~overwhelmed with masses of information~~ in a state of uncertainty & undigested theory.

It may, of course, be ~~objected~~ said that there is in fact no work for this kind of philosophy; ~~to do, or that doing~~ ~~suggest~~ or that it is incompetent ~~for its~~ self-imposed task. ~~Tautologically~~ ~~make it nonsensical or useless~~. To this objection ~~I can only say~~: the present book is my answer. Read this book, before deciding!

~~If~~ While I cannot expect ~~anyone~~ any reader to agree with all that I say, in detail, I do claim to show (1) that important ~~meaningful & non-tautological~~ general propositions about the universe ~~are~~ propositions which are neither nonsense, nor tautological, ~~& which~~ propositions which are not confined to one particular science, but which nevertheless have an empirical basis ~~& can be~~ are forthcoming; (2) that these propositions ~~they~~ are capable of supplying new & fruitful lines of research in the special sciences; (3) that ~~without~~ such ~~interaction~~ cross-fertilization of the sciences is capable of ~~giving~~ leading to the birth of new sciences. Let me give one example. I show, in the following pages, that there exist (besides the physical & chemical & biological units of which science now takes account) ~~certain~~ several kinds of ~~units~~ objects, units, material things, ~~physical facts~~, concerning which much empirical evidence ~~exists~~ is available, but which science does not yet recognize.* And the chief reason ~~why science ignores them~~ ~~further neglect~~ ~~why they remain outside the purview of Science~~ is that their temporal dimensions are such that they lie beyond the borders of the scientists' field of vision: ~~they seem to~~ ~~for~~ the 'specious present' he takes to them is too ~~small~~ brief to contain them. In other words, ~~this~~ they are non-existent for him because he does not give them time to exist: he destroys their physical character by dividing their time. Here, then, is work for the philosopher — to discern & to study these numerous orders of (or rightly, psycho-physical) physical units which ~~do~~ only especially differ from those of science. ~~science recognizes is that only~~ ~~because of~~ their 'minimum time' (the time they need to be themselves) is ~~greater than~~ somewhat large.

* See, e.g. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, (the object of philosophy is the logical clarification of thoughts"); Bertrand Russell, Our Knowledge of the External World, II; A. J. Ayer, Language, Truth & Logic. (1946).
° Op. cit., p. 57

* ~~Op.~~ A. J. Ayer, op. cit., p. 48.

* While I keep as close as I can to empirical data in this book, I ~~can~~ cannot ~~do not~~ allow the ~~metaphysics, which discusses the ultimate nature of reality~~ 'metaphysical' question. For I believe ① that all serious discussion (even by ~~that of~~ logical positivists) unavoidably makes assumptions about the ultimate matters, which assumptions had better be frankly admitted; ② that though the nature of the most comprehensive & least comprehensive aspects of the universe is obscure, the intermediate aspects do provide curves which may be extrapolated (after the manner of St. Thomas at least and analogia entis) & 'yield ~~so~~ reasonable hypotheses; ③ that lines ordinarily called 'transcendent' or 'metaphysical' or 'unknowable' are accessible ~~there~~ to empirical investigation when they orient, the worshipper of the ~~principles~~ form forces (particularly when they unite in the mystic) to make discoveries which are not wholly incommunicable, & which are verifiable by persons who qualify themselves for the work:

the ~~assumption~~ assumption that the intellect ~~alone~~ is the only truth-getting instrument is one dogmatism which never counters to the empirical evidence.

* Mr Ayer's claim "that material things are reducible to sense-contents" (p. 69) would be unexplainable if he were to recognize that 'sense-contents' are relative to the observer & his spatio-temporal field, & ~~the degree of division of the contents~~ has ~~temporal~~ extent ~~in the world~~ makes all the difference to what they are. ~~If~~ To look upon 'sense-contents' of one ~~order or~~ spatio-temporal level (or one spatio-temporal order) only, is a disastrous over-simplification, & one observer's 'sense' becomes another's 'nonsense'. ~~No longer~~ which

It is to be hoped, indeed, that science will (by adding for example, her line - field to the class of object studied) eventually ~~in time~~ take over, piecemeal, the work that philosophy thus begins. ~~one~~ Meanwhile, the philosophers must do the best he can. And, after all, this function ~~of two~~ philosophy, namely to bring to birth & to rear the infant sciences — is precisely that which the older positivism accorded to philosophy. The only mistake of ~~the~~ Comte ~~was~~ in this respect was to suppose that ~~that~~ philosophy is now ~~was~~ old & past bearing, & that the family of grown-up sciences had ~~not the~~ little further use for their mother. In the following pages I do my best to show that, on the contrary, she is ~~at once~~ still ~~owing~~ ~~head of~~ the grown-up family, & head & often at loggerheads) without whom the children are practically strangers, and the potential mother of ~~some~~ ~~more children~~ ~~of a new family.~~ ~~If~~ new children.

~~So~~ The present limitations of science & common sense ~~are such that~~ demand that philosophy ~~can't~~ should do precisely what Professor Leger declares it cannot do — afford "knowledge of a reality transcending the world of science & common sense."° ° Op. cit. p33

Let me sum up by ~~saying~~ suggesting that there ~~is~~ is not one (utterly) remedy for the well-advertized infertility of philosophy, but two; & that though they seem opposed they are really complementary. The first is the positivist's, who says that the philosopher should narrow his field to certain very limited (but answerable) questions, that lie on the borderlands of science; the second is ~~that~~ ~~which I~~ the one I advocate in this book, ~~in which I say~~ namely that the philosopher should broaden his field till it includes the whole territory of science & art & religion. These two contrary prescriptions correspond to the two ~~modes~~ aspects of humility, ~~the~~ which the complete & ~~a preliminary~~ to speak metaphorically) ~~may~~ be described as of ~~the~~ ~~self~~ & its filling with ~~other, or~~ the object, or the depreciation of the self as ~~the condition of~~ the appreciation of the other. The first remedy reduces the pretensions of philosophy by the method of abstraction & exclusion; the second by the method of concreteness & inclusion.* The first is ~~philosophy's~~ the philosopher's Self-denying Ordinance, the second ~~his~~ act of generous acceptance & out-going. The first is an attempt to see what ~~philosophy~~ ~~the~~ can ~~do~~ hope to do in her own ~~narrow~~ very restricted department; the second, what she can hope to do as the general liason-officer between all the great departments of human endeavour. Now I am ~~per~~ ~~so~~ convinced that both attempts are ~~well worth while~~ worthwhile. Accordingly I have, in the following inquiry, made some effort to combine them. Or rather, I have adapted to my own purposes as much of the method of the positivists as I could conveniently use, in order to further my aim of Synthesis. The measure of my failure, ~~is the measure of what I leave unconsidered & uncorporate,~~ ~~& the abstractness of what I do incorporate.~~ ~~succeed~~ is the extent of what ~~I~~ ~~fail to~~ cannot incorporate, ~~the of~~ twofold there, can incorporate. In other words, I can only ~~attempt~~ provide a beginning, an outline, or a programme, ~~which will~~ sufficient to demonstrate that, immense though the task of synthesis will prove, the reward ~~is~~ likely to prove ~~to~~ correspondingly great.

* ~~two other words,~~ to use William James' celebrated distinction, the 'tough' philosophies which are critical & mainly verbal & devoid of empirical content, & the 'tender' philosophies which are the opposite of these, require one another. ~~Each~~ The former lack body, the latter rigour

Science

My part here is common ground. Science does not ~~use~~ Science takes as accepted the world as it is — obviously the dead — but that they ~~does~~ are not ~~both the~~ take account of their unity, their kinship, their duration, beyond a certain rather arbitrary limit. Thus

I accept the positivist dictum that IS a modernity good method of such a conclusion

I mean natural things which are interest

~~Thus which~~ We allow ~~the~~ light waves, ~~the~~ atoms, ~~the~~ molecules, & even ~~the~~ man, that minimum undivided time which each requires in order to weave its characteristic pattern of existence. We ~~some the~~

Man is man's A.B.C. Francis Quarles: 'Hieroglyphics' 16. ODR!

~~It is an extraordinary blindness to live without investigating what we are.~~
~~Pascal: Pensées §495.~~

~~To understand everything except one's own self is very comical.~~
~~Kierkegaard: Unscientific Postscript, p. 316.~~

I will see if I have no meaning, while the houses & ships have meaning. Small Ed
Walt Whitman: By Blue Ontario's Shore.

Thou all thy days must live,
Thyself the quest.
Laurence Housman: ~~The Confessing City~~

I will confess then what I know of myself, I will confess also what I know not of myself.
St. Augustine: Confessions, Bk. X, Ch. II.

.....the awful ultimate fact, which is the human being.....
A. N. Whitehead: Religion in the Making, p. 16.

Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man. ✓
Sophocles: Antigone, ~~[illegible]~~.

If thou desirest peace of mind and true unity of purpose, thou must put all things behind thee, and look upon thyself. Must
Thomas À Kempis: Imitation of Christ, Pt. II, Ch. V.

Mediant of Man

We are the miracle of miracles.
Carlyle: The Hero as Divinity.

The great Pan of old, who was clothed in a leopard-skin to signify the beautiful variety of things, & the firmament, his coat of stars, — was but the representative of the, O rich & various Man! Thou palace of sight & sound, carrying in thy senses the morning & the night & the unfathomable galaxy; in thy brain, the geometry of the City of God.
Emerson: The Method of Nature. (165)

O the riches of thine infinite goodness in making my Soul an interminable Temple, out of which nothing can be, from which nothing is removed, to which nothing is after off; but all things immediately near, in a real, true, & lively manner.

Traherne: Centuries of Meditations, I, 92

I felt no dross nor matter in my Soul,
No brims nor borders, such as in a bowl
We see. My essence was capacity,
That felt all things;
The thought that springs
Therefrom's itself . . . . . .
It acts not from a centre to
Its object as remote,
But present is when it doth view,
Being with the Being it doth note
Whatever it doth do.

Thomas Traherne: My Spirit.

Sir, he who is perceived in the water, & he who is perceived in a mirror, who is he?

Chhandogya Upanishad, Khanda 8.

Was somebody asking to see the soul?
See, your own shape and countenance, persons, substances, beasts, the trees, the running rivers, the rocks and sands.

Walt Whitman: Starting from Paumanok

Everything contains all things in itself, and sees all things in another.

Plotinus: On Intelligible Beauty

In being aware of the bodily experience, we must thereby be aware of aspects of the whole space-temporal world as mirrored within the bodily life.

A.N. Whitehead: Science & the Modern World, p. 113.

Matter is where the concentration of energy is great, field where the concentration of energy is small.

Einstein & Infeld: The Evolution of Physics, p 256.

When we see the colour, size, figure, & motions of a man, we perceive only certain sensations or ideas excited in our own minds; & these being exhibited to our view in sundry distinct collections, serve to make out unto us the existence of finite & created spirits like ourselves. Hence it is plain we do not see a man; if by man is meant, that which lives, moves, perceives, & thinks as we do.

Berkeley.

As a beauty I am not a star,
There are others more handsome by far.
But my face — I don't mind it
For I am behind it.
It's the people in front got the jars.

Attributed to Woodrow Wilson.

There is in the universe an Aura which permeates all things & makes them what they a[illegible] Below, it shapes forth land & water; above, the sun & the stars. In man it is called spi[illegible] here it is not.

Wên T'ien-Hsiang (1[illegible]

PART I

PRELIMINARY

"Off with their heads off?" shouted the Queen.
"Their heads are gone, if it please your Majesty!" the soldiers shouted in reply.

"Now, I give you fair warning," shouted the Queen, stamping on the ground as she spoke; "either you or your head must be off, and that in about half no time! Take your choice!"

CHAPTER I

SELF - PORTRAIT

~~LOOKING AT MYSELF~~ ONE

1. What am I?

What am I? That, for every thinking being, is the question. Let me then try to answer it as truly and simply as I can. I will try to forget the ready-made answers, and discover what I am to myself at this moment.

It is an extraordinary blindness to live without investigating what we are. Pascal: Pensées § 495

To understand everything except one's own self is very comical. Kierkegaard: Unscientific Postscript p 316

I hail no if I have no meaning, while the houses and ships have meaning. Walt Whitman: By Blue Ontario's Shore

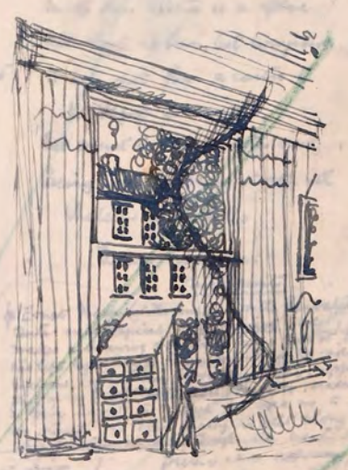
My common sense tells me I am a man very much like other men, five-feet-ten tall, thirty-nine years old, weighing about eleven stone, & that I am now sitting at my desk writing a book about myself. Common sense isn't concerned with philosophical subtleties, but is quite certain what it is like, here and now, to be me, writing on this sheet of paper.

Thou art too narrow, wretch, to comprehend
Even thy self: yea, though thou wouldst but bend
To know thy body. Donne: The Second Anniversary

2. The Missing Head

So far, surely, I cannot have gone wrong. But has common sense really described what it is like to be me? What is it like, at this moment? Others cannot help here: only I am in a position to say what I am. And what I find is that common sense is utterly wrong in supposing I am much like other men. For I have no head! There on the desk are my hands; there are the sleeves of my jacket; between them are hazy areas of my tie & ~~lapels~~ jacket; if I look under the desk I will find my feet, encased in their shoes — but what has become of my head? It is missing. I am headless.

What is there, in place of my head? Let me attend, carefully and with an open mind, to what I shall find. There are, instead of my head, writing paper, a fountain pen, an ink-bottle, the carpet & chairs & walls of the room, the lime trees and houses, outside the window, the cloudy sky above them. My head has gone, & in its place there is this curious collection of objects.



To be me is to be unique, the one man on Earth (surely the one creature in the Universe) who is evidently built on this amazing plan: where the rest carry small rounded body-terminals, furnished with hair and eyes and mouth, and fairly constant in shape, there is for me a boundless and lively world.

BKE

The Napoleon of Notting Hill, Chst.

A I am not the only one.

* Descartes, recalling the things he holds "true because perceived by the senses," begins one of the acutest minds of all time, "Meditations VI. ~~his list~~: "Firstly, then, I perceived that I had a head....." "It is odd that with all the worlds fragment to choose from, he should have picked on just that fragment ~~& had his lists. And~~ as odd as the fact that Chesterton, parodying the latter-day prophets, compiles his list of crazy future wonders, with the final absurdity — "men without heads!" ~~now odd~~, again,

+ There were with heads (common sense points out) report that they are in reality worlds like myself. In that case (I reply) each is everything except that body which he appears to me to be. In other words, he is more or less that I am, except that he has my body + I have his. I do not quarrel with this view, but it can hardly be called a common-sense alternative to the one I am putting forward.

It is said that a wasp takes so little notice when his abdomen is snipped off that he will go on drinking syrup just as if nothing had happened, while the syrup collects in a globule at his waist, ~~where the abdomen used to be~~. A man is like that ~~such a wasp~~ — his head ~~the head again~~ is no less veiled, his unconsciousness of loss no less profound.

Wordsworth E. Pa. 229/620

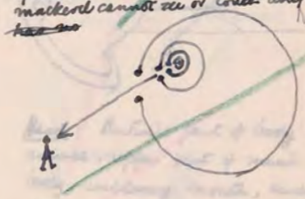
The part which perception of ~~parts of~~ one's own body plays in the perception of the direction of objects, has been fully treated in H. Carr's An Introduction to Space Perception. (1935).

Only I have a body that fades out so that the only hints that remain of it above my shoulders are a pair of transparent shadows thrown across the world. (I am in the habit of calling these shadows "my nose", but is a nose a fuzzy thing that one can see through, that is quite detached from any face, that can be swung from side to side at will? If this is a nose, I have one — or two — of them; if it is not, I have no nose.)

In J. B. S. Haldane's story called My Friend Mr Leakey a character, having become invisible, remarks: "Everything looked slightly odd, at first I couldn't think why. Then I saw that the two ghostly noses which I always see without noticing them were gone." ~~the~~

Common sense suggests a simple explanation: the reason I cannot see my head is not that I lack one, but that I am looking out of it. A man cannot look out of his window at the street, and at the same time see his own house with the window in it. This inability of his to face both ways, however, ~~is~~ merely does not mean he has no house. In any case, he does glimpse aspects of the house.*

* Some creatures, however, ~~cannot see themselves~~ also does not apply: at all. According to the late G. Kingsley Noble, of the American Museum of Natural Science, a mackerel cannot see or touch itself. ~~the species has no~~ News Ch. 1935. V.



Is common sense's explanation good enough? Where am I, where do I actually spend my time? Do I live inside an eight-inch ball, peering through its pair of portholes? And if I do, has the ball's tenant eyes in his head too, and a tenant who peers through them? And so on, endlessly?

No. I am certain I am not shut up in the gloomy interior of any object — least of all a head — living my life there in its interstices. I am at large in the world. I can discover no watcher here, & over there a thing watched, no peep-hole, no window-pane, no barrier. I do not detect a world; it is open to me. Ink marks are forming on this sheet of white paper. They are present. There is nothing else now but this paper, this blue & white pattern, no screen here (when I imagined I had a head) upon which the pattern is projected, no apperture through which it is glimpsed. There is only the paper & its pattern. My head, my eyes, my brain — all are a myth. It is incredible that I ever believed in them.

reconstructing it from such evidence as I can get, like Sherlock Holmes ~~deducing~~ a client's life history from his watch.

* On the contrary, the world is vividly present to my inspection, unbelievably clear, immediate, vivid.

I felt no dress nor matter in my soul,
No brims nor borders, such as in a bowl
We see. My essence was capacity,
That felt all things;
The thought that springs
Therefrom's itself. It hath no other wings
To spread abroad, nor eyes to see,
Nor hands distinct to feel,
Nor knees to kneel;
But being simple like the Deity
In its own centre is a sphere
Not shut up here, but everywhere.
It acts not from a centre to
No object as remote,
But present is when it doth view,
Being with the being it doth note
Whatever it doth do.

Thomas Traherne: My Spirit.

Here, surely, is the biggest hoax, the greatest illusion, the silliest face, ~~that~~ — that a man should be troubled ~~& thus suspect his condition~~.

How is it that for thirty years and more I had never noticed that between myself and other men there is literally a world of difference? A discrepancy so startling, once it is seen, ought to have been evident every second of my life from childhood onwards. But in fact even now I realise it with difficulty, & only for a moment at a time. Then back I am again in my old habit, seeing myself as others see me, and as blind as ever I was to the obvious truth that I alone amongst men carry no head upon my shoulders, that I am another species of animal, another order, another class altogether. I am as unlike this thing with a head that I call man as it is — this amazing, tremendous, unbounded universe, ~~which~~ of which they are ~~at most~~ minute fragments. ~~spots~~. I can move the sun at will, obliterate the world, ~~&~~ make ~~it~~ all things revolve about me; they can do none of these things. Such no wonder — ~~each of them~~ he is only one man, himself, whereas ~~I am all~~ I bear upon my shoulders ~~as the world of men~~ the sum of human minds. ~~more than all men~~! Between myself & ~~other men the distinction is~~ there is an absolute distinction. This is not a matter ~~for~~ of theory or argument, but ~~for~~ of ~~simply looking at it~~ simple observation. Theory it is which ~~is thing which~~ blinds me to this the most obvious yet the most overlooked of all the great facts about myself.

Ernst Mach ('The Analysis of the Sensations' — Anti-metaphysical, The Monist, Vol. I, p. 59) makes a drawing of the world as he sees it through his left eye: "In a frame formed by the ridge of my eyebrows, by my nose, & my moustache, appears a part of my body, so far as it is visible, & also the things that I see about it. But he goes on to speak & speak about it as though his head really existed along with this picture — as though the head & the picture were not compatible.

K. Pearson 59

I watch (A man shuts his eyes, or turns ~~his head~~, or stands on his head, & I cannot detect the slightest change in the rest of the universe.

is possible to be. To give the same name to two such diverse beings is the grossest misuse of language imaginable. I have been properly taken in, & by no-one else but myself. What reason can I have for thus suppressing the facts about myself?

Species: group subordinate in classification to genus and having members that differ only in minor details; the or our species: mankind.

Concise Oxford Dictionary

3. The Head Found.

Common sense cannot let this portrait of myself as a headless body pass. Agreed that there are big differences between myself as I am to myself & myself as I am to others, it remains a fact that in neither case can I do without a head. Or, if I can, what is a headache? And where do all the sensations belong that go with the play of the muscles of my eyes & tongue and face, if not in my head? What does my voice issue from? What do my hands feed?

Head: Anterior part of body of animal, upper part of man's body, containing mouth, sense-organs and brain.....

Concise Oxford Dictionary

No doubt common sense is right thus far: that something is going on when I thought I had a head. It is equally certain that this something is not a head. Wherever they are & wherever they are then aches and tastes, and sensations of warmth and cold and pressure, are not furnished with hair or eyes or ears. They are not spherical or eight inches across. They are quite different from the dictionary definition of a head.*

* To put the matter bluntly, my tongue is (for me) the taste of things, my ear the sound of things, & nothing more.

But, replies common sense, I can always reassure myself by looking in a mirror.

So I have found my lost head. But it is not here on my shoulders. It is over there 'in the mirror', and in every reflecting surface within range. Thus, while I have no head in the place where I thought I had one, I have innumerable heads in places where I thought I had none. And these heads have, so to speak, been tampered with: they are twisted back to front; they are all smaller than the head I thought I had; they shrink and swell. I am a decapitated body watched from the middle distance by its missing head, now made elastic, turned round to face its own trunk, and multiplied times without number.

Sir, he who is perceived in the water, and he who is perceived in a mirror, who is he?

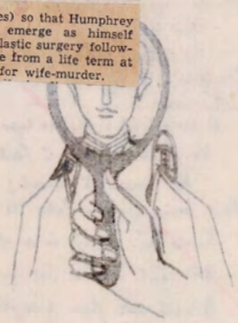
Chhandogya Upanishad, VII, 7.

It is true, of course, that I don't find the missing head wherever I look, but that is because it is concealed rather than absent. If I give the thing I happen to be looking at a polish, there is my head in it. I must suppose it was there all the time, and the polishing brought it out. (Is not this ~~rather than the overworked Freudian explanation~~ the real point of the story of Aladdin & his wonderful lamp? And are not we, who, unlike Aladdin, find ~~no~~ no magic ~~matter for astonishment in the story~~ in its polished reflecting surface, the victims of a profounder hallucination than Alladin's?)

Of the sun & heavens, trees & mountains, as seen in a mirror, Irakema says: "Which were it not that the glass were present there, one would have thought even the ideas of them absent from the place."

Centuries of Meditations, II, 78.

THE first-person camera is used for thirty minutes in **Dark Passage** (Warner. Directed by Delmer Daves) so that Humphrey Bogart can emerge as himself after some plastic surgery following an escape from a life term at St. Quentin for wife-murder.



Common sense ~~takes me up~~ interrupts here: what about objects that will not take a polish?

Well, a man is such an object. And he will prove to me, in words or in sketches if need be, that he, no less faithfully than my mirror, has my features in their minutest detail, with all their subtle and momentary changes of expression. He has them there where he is; concealed from me, they are open and evident to him.[x] In fact, the face with which he confronts me is a mask for mine. He cannot take off this mask, but he can tell me what it hides.

Common sense takes me up again: these things that either mirror or are alive, are special cases. The rest, dull and dead things, hide no missing heads. Consider this sheet of paper that lies on my desk: does it contain my head?

Certainly it does. But it contains other things too. If I can keep out these other things by putting a box, with a small hole in it, over the paper, my head will appear on the paper. Now all I have done to the paper is to shield it. I have revealed the presence of my head by subtracting from the paper's condition, not by adding anything to it. Why then should I not say that my head was there all the time, blurred by the other things that were there with it? Pierce a hole in a box, and you have my head trapped inside it — a head perfectly formed, though very likely no bigger than a pea. And your camera cannot play tricks. It exhibits what of me it contains. It does not grasp what is going on elsewhere; it reveals what is going on in the place where it is. If it could report about the place I call here it would, as a camera, be a failure, because its photographs of me would show me beheaded.[x] (A notable exception is the device known in the film world as 'first-person camera'. Instead of seeing ~~the principal~~ one of the actors, the audience sees what he sees. In some instances his hands & feet are visible*: in other words, the actor with whom the audience identifies itself is a headless body. When well-done, the effect is startling in its realism.)

G. Willoughby-Meade Chinese Ghouls & Goblins p. 11.

4. The ~~My~~ Human Region, and its Centre.

~~When~~ When I am being photographed the camera is in the place where I keep my head. ~~When it moves there~~ The camera has to adopt the peculiarities of ~~that place~~ its location, of which my head is ~~an~~ one. To visit space saturated with my head is to take on my head, in some fashion or other. Not all space is so saturated. An approaching camera comes to places where my head gets bigger & bigger, then to places where my head gets hazier & hazier, & finally to places where I have no head at all — neither camera nor photographer will register it. They have reached my inner headless region. Conversely, when they recede from the centre, they

The beauty that is borne here, in the face,
The beaver knows not, but commends itself
To others' eyes: nor does the eye itself
(That most pure spirit of sense) behold itself,
Not going from itself: but eye to eye opposed
Salutes each other with each other's form:
For speculation turns not to itself,
Till it hath travelled, & is mirror'd there
Where it may see itself.

Troilus & Cressida: III, 3.

[x] ~~Cf. the doctrine of~~ Leibniz taught that the monad has no windows ~~or communicates with the outside~~ out on to the world & ~~it~~ needs none, for it can discover the universe in itself by introspection. Similarly ~~my take on~~ my premiss is that I can only know what is here. And I find the world here: I cannot, & I do not need to, look through any window to find it. ~~outside~~

The near side of the box (which is simply a 'pin-hole camera') has been removed to show the interior.

[x] According to the Sou Shen Chi (a ~~chinese~~ work of the fourth century A.D.) there lived in the south of China a people whose heads could detach themselves from their bodies, &, using the ears as wings, could fly to great distances. The tale is told of a certain ~~several~~ female slave whose head flew about in this fashion every night, returning to the trunk at dawn. As so often with traditional tales, the underlying idea is true as the surface details are fantastic.

* An excellent example is the scene in the film Movie Over Executives (London Films, director ~~Harris~~) where Lucian, having crashed into the jungle, ~~starts out~~ is captured by Japanese soldiers.

(Often as vampires) Flying heads ~~that pounce their victims on suck their blood~~ appear in the folklore of several peoples. Cf. also Plato's Timaeus, 44D.

A Headless Mandarin (from T'u Shu Chi Ch'eng, Sec. XVIII, Chüan 27-38 — after G. Willoughby-Meade: Chinese Ghouls & Goblins.)

Cf. Othello, Act I, Sc. III: "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders."

"Just as a stone flung into the water becomes the centre & cause of various circles, ... so each body situated in the luminous air is spread out circle-wise & fills the surrounding parts with infinite images of itself & is present all in the whole & all in every part" — except (Leonardo should have added) at the centre itself. × × Leonardo da Vinci's Notebooks (trans McCurdy) p. 56. See also pp. 117, 217-218.

come to regions where I keep my small heads. These heads eventually shrink to nothing. Photographer & camera have reached my outer headless region. Here I no longer make my presence felt.

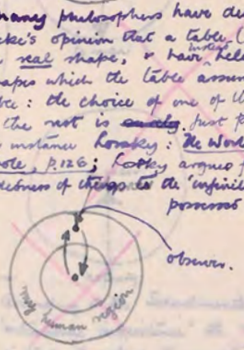
It is as though this mysterious centre which I call myself here were a magician who casts a spell over the surrounding space, whereby visitors entering it are in some degree transformed. All who come within his conditions, & his system of differences is perfect. His ~~magic~~ spell, however, is neither arbitrary nor of unlimited range. It works only inside a belt extending from a foot or so to a few hundred yards of the centre, & only near the inner rim of this belt is the spell really binding. This is the region that is saturated with my head; beyond, the spell thins out to nothing.

After all, then, I am not only a headless man here at the centre; I am also an ordinary man-with-a-head out there, living in the outer world a very odd sort of life — or rather I am innumerable such 'ordinary' men, giants & dwarfs & homunculus, cyclopes & two-wits, with two arms or legs, or one, or none. A wonderful spectacle of monsters, a menagerie of wonders. ~~big men & little men, men in front view & side view & back view, men viewed from above & from beneath.~~ This is what it is to be a man: my shape a hollow sphere, my size exceeding a whale's, my whole body wide open to all comers, a free-for-all playground. Or, if common sense objects that this spell-bound sphere is not my human shape, but only the region which that shape haunts, I shall agree; but in that case I am infinite in number, elastic in size, proteian in shape. Either way, to be what common sense is pleased to call an 'ordinary' man, a man-with-a-head, is evidently no simple or common-sensible matter.

But I have only begun to discover the subtleties of the situation I am in. This spell I cast over all who enter my human region has the peculiarity that they shall divorce its influence, & shall reflect back on to me at the centre the effects of the influences that radiate from me. My friend who tells me how well I am looking this morning can only get his information from the place where he is. But this he denies, claiming that he describes the state of affairs where I am at the centre. It is no use my telling him that only I am in a position to know what is here, & that all he can do is describe the effect I produce in him where he is. He will not be persuaded. And, of course, I am equally obstinate about the spell he casts over me. While it is true that I register his head because I am where he keeps a head, I am quick to return it to the spot where I considers it belongs. × And this I do regardless of the fact that if I were to check my opinion by moving towards that spot I should soon find out my mistake: he would vanish, like Eurydice when Orpheus turned to make sure of her presence, the underworld. The world exists because I do not push home my inquiring like a faint dot when we gaze directly at it. my friend, the world exists because he is there; I exist because I do not inspect me too closely. To look for the self in the self, or for nature in nature, is to lose both. For they exist in each other. "For the division of man from the world is his division from himself, & when he shuts himself up within his own soul, he finds there nothing but emptiness & vanity."•

+ The magic circle & the sacred circuit are found in the folklore of many lands. For example, Protection against evil is had by drawing a circle about oneself to the right; against this the dividendashes wildly (in various guises) but cannot prevail. See J. G. Campbell: Superstitions ~~p. 247~~ of the Highlands & Islands of Scotland, p 247. In this, as in so many other 'superstitions', there is a good deal of sense.

Many philosophers have disagreed with Locke's opinion that a table (for instance) has one real shape, & have insisted held that all the shapes which the table assumes belong to the table: the choice of one of them & the rejection of the rest is ~~merely~~ just prejudice. See, for instance Horsley: The World as an Organic Whole, p.126; Horsley argues from this many-sidedness of things to the 'infinite wealth of content possessed by every object.'



× This activity Lloyd Morgan calls 'proficience' "All the objective characters with which a thing is clothed — including but nowise restricted to its "out-thereness" — are proficient in so far as they are the outcome, however indirect or mediate, of the relation of the distance-receptors of the retina. The hardness, coldness, & slipperiness of a piece of ice; the taste & colour of a strawberry; the beauty of a landscape or of the rainbow which overarches part of it; these are proficient properties inherent to the several objects of vision when we see them." (Emergent Evolution, p.49)

• Edward Caird: Hegel, p.205.

John Scotus ~~Erig~~ Eriugena taught that, since knowledge & being are one, to know a thing perfectly is to become it. In knowing himself man knows the essence of all things: they are 'divine apparitions' within his mind. ⊗

E 314

There was a child went forth every day,
And the first object that he look'd upon, that object he became. ×

So begins Whitman's poem. Everything in this amazing world is elsewhere, out ~~absent from home~~, on a visit. It is the universal calling-day; & nobody meets anybody else because nobody ~~stays at home to be met~~ is at home.

What, then, am I? And where am I? If, on the one hand, I take myself as I am to myself, I find sky and clouds, trees & houses, furniture, this sheet of paper with its ink-marks; & all of these, though primarily belonging at the centre, ~~they reside here with me in some sense,~~ I scatter as if by a centrifugal machine ~~engine~~, leaving the centre itself unoccupied, ~~a blank~~.° If, on the other hand, I take myself as I am to others, I discover a ~~countless~~ host of men of all ~~sizes~~ shapes & sizes ~~most of them manikins~~; and all of these, though they reside out there, I pull in to me here as if by a centripetal machine ~~engine~~, leaving not one of them at large in the world. Which of these two pictures, ~~equally fantastic,~~ equally incredible, yet (it seems) equally unavoidable, is a true portrait of me?

Both are true likenesses — or rather, when combined, they describe me truly. ⁜ My condition is that I am not simply ~~clouds & trees & so on~~ all the world except ~~D.E. Harding~~ that central ~~tiny~~ fraction of it ~~the world that~~ ~~part~~ which bears my name, nor am I simply ~~called D.E. Harding,~~ that fraction; I am ~~one man, but~~ both at once. ~~and that~~ I am not simply here at the centre, nor simply out there in the surrounding spaces, but both ~~at once~~ in places. In Emerson's phrase, 'everything refers.' ✗ It is impossible to pin me down to one spot, ~~place~~, or to describe me as one thing. For ~~as soon as~~ when I am located ~~in one place~~ I do not stay ~~there~~ for close inspection, but retire elsewhere, like a rainbow or a mirage. ~~& as soon as it is settled what I am I turn into its opposite~~. The world is the field ~~arena~~ in which this game of hide-&-seek is played; in it I have room to get away from myself sufficiently to be myself. ~~Here~~ The content of the centre is sent off to ~~lies at~~ the circumference, and the content of the circumference is drawn in to ~~lies at~~ the centre. Objects are always somewhere else, + & everything is inside-out. Common sense says I cannot be in two places at once; experience ~~reason~~ says that is the only way ~~to~~ I can be anything at all. I must be the nothing in the middle of the web, with my whole existence poured out upon the fly caught at the web's edge; I must be the nothing at the web's edge, with my whole existence poured out upon the spider at the centre; & I must be spider, fly, and web at once.

There are, ~~as Bergson says~~ tells us, "two profoundly different ways of knowing a thing. The first implies that we move ~~round~~ the object; the second that we enter into it." • ~~As for myself~~. When that object is myself, I do both. For I do not only live here at the centre, contemplating the objects around me. Equally I live out there in those objects, contemplating the view inwards; I see myself "as mirrored in other things." × Indeed there is a sense in which I am far more at home out there observing ~~seeing~~ my human shape ~~myself as a once man~~ (through other men's eyes) than I am at home here observing ~~seeing~~ myself as the world mounted on a human trunk. Reversing Burns' prayers, ~~My Burns' prayer is reversed:~~ ~~for me:~~ the gift I need is the power to see myself as I see myself. ⊕

"Unheard-of things," ~~says~~ Victor Hugo exclaims, "it is within us that we must look for the external. There is in the heart of man a deep & sombre mirror. Therein is the terrible chiaroscuro." ×

Here, then, though provisional and incomplete, is a new portrait of myself. ~~Though~~ It is not what I expected to ~~discover~~ find, but it is drawn from life; ~~Common sense rejects it; [illegible]~~ what if it were to

---

~~The~~ Pascal's ~~saying~~ • "It is not in Montaigne, but in myself, that I find all that I see in him," ~~is~~ is no more than a half-truth: what I find in Montaigne is in-me-from-him, but also in-him-from-me.

⊗ McKeon: *Medieval Philosophers*, i, p 103

° Though I thus disclaim these objects I cannot do without them, & any serious change in them upsets me; as Bradley says, their alteration may produce a self-estrangement that kills me. (*Appearance & Reality*, p. 80)

⁜ 'Against the question, 'What are we to make of the world?' we must set the question, 'What is the world to make of us?' It is only when we take both these sides of experience together that we grasp the field of common experience as a whole.' John Macmurray: *The Structure of Religious Experience*, p.35.

"There is thus an intrinsic & an extrinsic reality of an event, namely, the event as in its own prehension, & the event as in the prehension of other events."

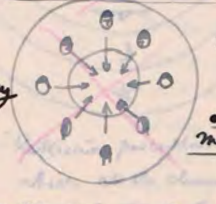
E+MW

✗ *The Method of Nature*. Nature p 141

VI.

+ According to the Schoolmen's doctrine of 'intentional inexistence' the soul's essence is that it *refers* to something other than itself: we cannot know ourselves save in terms of other things. In the nineteenth century this doctrine was adopted & developed particularly by Brentano in his *Psychology*.

Laird R.P. 109



× Whitehead: *Science & the Modern World*, p. 184.

• *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p.1. Russell KEW 37

⊕ "Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?" Thoreau inquires. ~~[illegible]~~ In fact we do so ~~We are blind~~ all the while, & the real miracle is when for a moment we look through our own.

p9

× *Intellectual Autobiography*. (*Postscriptum de Ma Vie*): 'Supreme Contemplation'.

• *Pensées*, 64.

How would it be ~~to realize that there is one spot in~~ if I were to surrender myself to the knowledge that in all the world ~~which there~~ this, of all places, is one spot where I definitely ~~stars + men + trees~~ am not? ~~+ that is here? — here, namely here, + one spot where~~ — here, namely here, + ~~one spot where stars + men + trees~~

or a mere intellectual puzzle?

become for me a living reality, instead of an occasional insight, ? How would it be, while walking along the street, sitting at home, talking to friends, working with colleagues, to realize vividly what and where I am? How would it be to know ~~this~~ all the world ~~in~~ in me (because I am nothing here) and I ~~am~~ in all the world (because all I am is there) — not incidentally, but as the very condition of my existence — to know this not as ~~a~~ Newton's Binomial theorem ~~mathematics~~ but as I know the layout of the furniture in this room, of the letters in this ~~sentence~~ ~~this paper and the sentence of this~~ ~~into~~? Common sense may find this self-portrait too surprising to be true, and cold reason ~~(perhaps most)~~ may find it too true to be surprising; but only on those occasions when I find it both true and surprising do I get its full savour. Real knowledge is half wonder.

Everything contains all things in itself, and sees all things in another.

Plotinus: On Intelligible Beauty

"The world that I regard is myself; it is the Microcosm of my own frame that I cast mine eye on ..... Men that look upon my outside, perusing only my condition & fortune, fortunes, do err in my Altitude; for I am above Atlas his shoulders. The earth is a point not only in respect of the Heavens above us, but of that heavenly & celestial part within us."

Sir Thomas Browne: Religio Medici Pt II, XI

5. The View Outwards from the Centre.

Realization does not come for the asking; meantime I can at least fill in some of the details of the new portrait. I ~~will~~ shall begin with the view outwards from the centre. What do I find presented for inspection?

The sage, according to the Chuang Tzu Book, "is the reflection of heaven & earth, the mirror of all creatures." (XIII) p 204

I find a world, rich, confused, in a turmoil of change. ~~From~~ Within this wealth of material I succeed in ~~picking out such~~ distinguishing certain relatively permanent objects, ~~& then~~ which I sort out into stars, trees, houses, men, sheets of paper, & what-not. These objects can be arranged according to many types of order, but the type that concerns me now is their order in ~~space~~ "depth". Somehow — just how remains to be seen — I am able to ~~arrange~~ sort objects according to what I call their distance from me here at the centre. Thus I relegate a certain whitish patch to a distance of ~~a foot + call it~~ twelve inches & describe it as my hand, another to a distance of eighteen inches & ~~call~~ describe it as a sheet of paper, another to a distance of a mile and ~~call~~ describe it as a cloud. Tonight I shall probably relegate a large number of tiny whitish patches to a distance of many billions of miles. In every instance what is presented here is pushed out, as if by some irresistible but nicely calculated force, to what I take to be its proper station in outer space.

And clearly the nature of the object has much to do with the length of its journey. Everything I relegate to a distance calculated in billions or trillions of miles I call a star; everything I relegate to a distance calculated in ~~hundreds of~~ millions of miles I call a member of the Solar System. ~~A town is a town for me only at a certain range.~~ If a man is to present himself to me as a man he must keep his distance — not too much of it nor too little. If he gets nearer than a few feet

Ev. Atlas

"Reflective perception is a circuit, in which all the elements, including the perceived object itself, hold each other in a state of mutual tension as in an electric circuit, so that no disturbance starting from the object can stop on its way & remain in the depths of the mind: it must always find its way back to the object whence it proceeds"

Bergson: Matter & Memory p 57

See also p. 58, where Bergson speaks of our virtual action upon an object as referred to (or projected upon) the object.

o Mach, Hering, James, & others have pointed out the 'thickness' & 'voluminousness' of sensations. Mach says that 'every sensation is in part spatial in character; a distinct locality, determined by the element irritated, being its invariable accompaniment.' Space & Geometry, (Open Court Edn, p.13.)

If I want to find my friends again, I must ~~move~~ move from them.

be born into a head or a hand, or, nearer still (provided I am equipped with the necessary seeing apparatus) into a collection of cells. Nearer still so science assures me, I be born into molecules, atoms, electrons. In other words, the walls does come a point when I to get to the Red Queen, Alice has to walk in the opposite direction.

! ~~you~~ 'bounded in a nutshell' ~~I~~ get I am ^ a Ring of infinite space.' *

~~Hamlet, Act 2.~~

+ The Heavens & the Earth move you, ... as within you also, they magnify, beautify & illuminate your soul..... ..... And no man would believe it (your soul) present everywhere, were there no objects there to be discerned. Your thoughts & inclinations pass on & are unperceived, but by their objects are discerned to be present: being illuminated by them. For they are present with them & active about them.

Traherne: Centuries of Meditations II, 78.

This world of countless objects lies here at the ~~centre and~~ kernel set it lies ~~out there~~ scattered throughout ~~space. Come~~ the universe. It seems that I am able, without committing gross errors, to put these things 'where they belong.' o (In details I go wrong, but ~~rarely~~ rarely, for instance, to the extent of suspecting that the stars are stuck on the window-pane or that ~~and~~ the tree tops are scraping the moon.) My guests do not stay: do I see them home, so that my boundaries include all their destinations to the farthest visible nebula? + Or do I stay behind here, content to see them off, after having made sure that their labels are properly attached? It is too soon to try to answer these questions definitively, but at least it can be said that, centred on the place I call here, is a series of graduated spheres which contain the home addresses of the beings I entertain here; & that the class distinctions I discover amongst them here correspond to the equally strict ~~distinctions~~ boundaries between these localities out there. If you are a star you belong in my star-belt & nowhere else. If you are a man you cannot be very far away. There is no trespassing.

Of all the spheres or regions which have me for centre there is one in which I take a special interest — the sphere of men. If I do not ~~see~~ accompany the stars home, at least I see human beings to their destinations, since I am able to turn round when I get there & ~~see myself here through their eyes~~ what I imagine to be their view of me. At any rate this sphere is mine to use. As for the other spheres, there is nothing save poverty of imagination to prevent me from taking my stand ~~there~~ in them, & observing ~~what lies at their centre.~~ the world from within myself. Their contents ~~are sufficiently mine~~ perceived from the centre are mine: & it takes them all to keep me going & make me what I am. Take away these things which I say are not myself & I disappear; take away the least of them & I am altered. The fluctuation of a variable star is a change in me. I am a different man on account of the cloud I can see from my window. + No wonder then (as Victor Hugo says) "it is impossible to admire a masterpiece without at the same time experiencing a certain self-esteem." X Temporarily, I ~~am~~ the masterpiece.

But for the most part I am content not to figure what it is like to be a star, to imagine the ~~stars that~~ contents of spaces bounding about their true life.

I have moreover an ~~certain~~ astonishing power over these objects — a power which I exercise almost without effort. I can wipe them out at will, & restore them as suddenly. (I call this opening and shutting my eyes, but this explanation will not do — I have no eyes here.) I can cause ~~them~~ the world to rotate violently around me. (I call this turning my head, but again, since I am headless, this is no explanation). Distant

All things to Circulations owe
Themselves; by which alone
They do exist; they cannot show
A sign, a word, a groan,
A colour or a glimpse of light;
The sparkle of a precious stone,
A virtue, or a smell; a lovely sight,
A fruit, a beam, an influence, a kiss,
But they another's beauty must wear:
And borrow matter first,
Before they can communicate.....

Thomas Traherne.

+ This ~~matter~~ ~~is~~ the important question of our ownership. To be beautiful is to surround oneself with beauty & to make others so, for no woman (being headless) is beautiful in herself. Do I not own the stars that ~~are~~ become stars within me? ~~not within themselves~~? Can a picture, a face, a building, a poem, a symphony, a philosophy, a universe, a God, be possessed in any other way than by & in their exteriors? Truly I do not realize in what my wealth lies, & how vast it is, & how poor I am in mind.

X Intellectual Biography (Postscriptum de Mr. Vie): 'Genius'.

'GENIUS'

things I can shift in the mass, crudely, in all-or-nothing fashion, but I exercise a more genuine control over certain nearer ones. I am now initiating the most complex movements of this hand that writes on the page before me, though I have no notion how I do so.* And this same mysterious power of mine, particularly if I have money to spend, is extended over certain men & certain things so that I can move them very nearly as I move this hand. (Or so it seems to me – I suppose I should not rule out the possibility that I am merely acquiescing in what is going on.)

It is no use common sense pointing out that these limbs of mine are privileged parts of the scenery, uniquely permanent, uniquely sensitive, uniquely obedient. The line I draw between my body and the world is no more than a convenient fiction, for I am more liable to feel the pinch in my goods than in some portions of my flesh; I have more control over my dog than over my circulation; my town is a more permanent organ of my life than my hand is. If, then, I have (as I look out from the centre) a body at all, that body is the world. It is the world in the form of 'limbs' radiating from a headless trunk, limbs that become increasingly numb & beyond an exp't to my conscious control as they get away from the central here. A very curious body this, vast, magnificent, mysterious. And not the least mysterious thing about it is the manner of my occupation: I sit at the centre, and I pervade the whole.× I exclude it all, & I include it all. It is me, & it is not me. I belong in all its spheres or regions, even in the furthermost, but I belong in them as directed towards the centre. I belong at the centre, but I belong here only so long as I am occupied with what is out there.

Bowling 30

6. The View Inwards towards the Centre.

The view outwards is certainly strange. Common sense says it is because I am facing the wrong way, & that if I turn about and look towards the centre I shall perceive that I am not so mysterious & unusual after all, but an ordinary human being like the rest. (C.S. goes on) Surely it is because I take this sober view of myself is to the time view looking at it through any observer's eyes. The view outwards is arbitrary, & changing: one moment I embrace a galaxy, the next a speck of dust, or anything between the two — whereas the view inwards is constant. 'It is time of me'. My friends know me in the street. Though I am contemplating the Galaxy I am to my tailor what I was while I studied a pinhead. ~~I look the same, and if I didn't, what would not me from dissolving away altogether into the flux of things?~~ It makes no difference to my hat-size, ~~C.S. points out~~. Whether I study stars or postage stamps. According to C.S., the view out is the accident, the view in is the essence, of what I am.

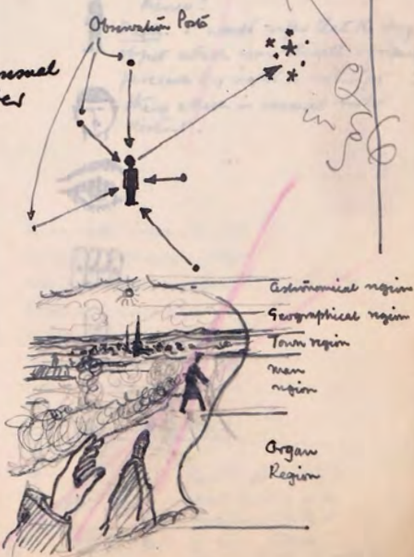
*If I could cause the sun to describe patterns in the sky that would be no more remarkable than my ability to move my hand, and no more mysterious. By 'the sun' I mean the sun alone, for it is easy enough to shift the sun along with everything else.

A = Inner region out of control

B = Region under control

C = Outer region out of control.

× Nicolas of Cusa (in De docta ignorantia) taught that the centre of the universe is just above the observer happens to stand in it: Bruno adopts the same doctrine, ~~which is simply the doctrine of regions implies~~ I adopt it here because I cannot make order my sense of experience unless I do so.



The regional view out: the pictures framed by my nose, eyebrows & upper-lip, when I walk in the country.

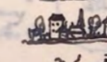
is it in fact true that

But ~~is~~ I always look more or less the same? Is the view in practicalls constant? Let me call in a really efficient observer. Here am I seated at my desk, writing. He stands facing me. His description of me tallies with common sense's. But one point of view is not enough. He moves round the room. Every position reveals a new me: there are large discrepancies between back view & front view & side view, not to mention the views from the ceiling & the carpet. Which of these is truly myself — there is an infinite number to choose from — and if they are all true, what becomes of the common-sense portrait? *

The problem is not difficult; ~~All is in order~~ common sense explains: what the observer does is to combine all these pictures in a composite portrait. I am what I seem to be from every viewpoint.

* In its most general aspect, the principle of relativity means that one 'thing' (or 'event' or 'system') has as many aspects as it has 'observers', and each aspect is true yet unique. Modern physics cannot dispense with or ignore the subject for whom the object exists: a the-object-in-itself, apart from any 'observer', carries no meaning. See Richardson: Spiritual Pluralism, pp. 45 ff.

In that event my observer is free to shift as he pleases, provided he does not take his eye off me here, sitting at my desk. This time, therefore, instead of rotating around me, he retires through the window, into the garden, out into the world. What does he ~~finds~~ make of me now?



Sc + M.W. 85

⊗ Cf. Berkeley: Alciphron, Fourth Dialogue, §10:-

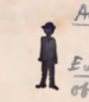
Euphranor: Tell me, Alciphron, can you discern the door, windows & battlements of that same castle?

Alciphron: I cannot. At this distance it seems only a small round tower.

Euph: But I, who have been at it, know that it is no small round tower, but a large square building with battlements & turrets, which it seems you do not see.

Alc: What will you infer from thence?

Euph: I shall infer that the very object which you strictly & properly perceive by sight is not that thing which is several miles distant.



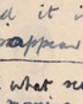
I lose my shape & I lose my colour.

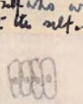
He finds a man, dwindling. I turn into my house, then my street, then my town. My observer has unlimited travelling facilities. Very soon I turn into England, then the Earth, & eventually into the Solar System. If he still goes on, I become this universe, which in the end dwindles to a point of light in Space.

Common sense protests that this will not do at all, & that the only true aspects of me are those which lie near at hand — the nearer the better. Language gives the right idea: to find the truth your inspection must be close, & indeed penetrating; you must see into the thing. ⊗

My observer takes the hint: instead of retiring out of the window, ~~the observer~~ he approaches me. What is his story this time? He finds that I lose my feet, then my legs, then my arms & trunk. My dismemberment is complete: only my head is left. For him I am now a body-less head, just as I am for myself a headless body. So far he can get along without special apparatus, but for the rest of the journey I must suppose him to have (shrinking to one eye) eyes that will enable him to get a clear view of me at a range of inches and fractions of an inch. Thus provided, he continues to draw nearer, and reports that I am several cells, then one cell, then several molecules, then one molecule. ~~To rest of the journey~~ The picture is getting increasingly obscure. By some means or other, however, the observer concludes that I am

∴ it might as well be argued that because the observer, like other, different observers does not spot along a viewing rod, they must be observing two universes.





+ ~~But consciousness is a movement of concentrating~~. I am not the ~~same now as~~ man I was a second (~~at most~~ to say nothing of thirty years) ago, nor the same from one ~~hour~~ to as from two, nor ~~the same~~ identical in blue light and in pink. Change is of my essence,+ and it is just prejudice to lay down how much of it is permitted before I am said to disappear.

+ In Ch XVI § this theme will be developed.

⊕ Hume:

In what sense can the man be said to be the baby? Am I ~~quite~~ absolutely certain that the self who gets up in the morning is 'the same' self that ~~went to sleep in his~~ ~~[illegible]~~ dream, & that both are ~~the same as the~~ identical with the self who went to bed the night before? If we are going to be thorough, in this matter, let us be really thorough, & admit that the self, ~~however it is viewed, is a mere fiction~~ ⊕ But at least allow that

'in reality' not limbs or cells or molecules, but atoms, which in him are electrons & protons — whatever these may be. ~~other unsubstantial objects~~. Anyhow there comes a limit: my observer has made contact: there is no view of me to be had. I have gone.*

Whether my observer recedes or approaches, the results are very much the same: I am transformed into a series of objects as unlike the common-sense version of myself as possible, & I end up a blank, an emptiness. All this he sees in me.

7. (6) Some Common-sense Objections Answered.

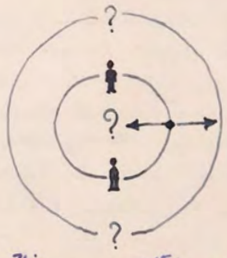
But there has been a grave mistake, says common sense. When the observer sees my house, my town, my planet, he has ceased to see me. He has left my presence. I have disappeared. I have been superseded, and to be superseded by something is, in common sense's opinion, emphatically not to become that thing. In fact the one is the opposite of the other.

But observer common sense's method ~~is going round in circles~~. Having settled in advance that I cannot change into ~~something~~ else, then having been shown just that transformation, common sense insists that the something else cannot be me — because, of course, I cannot change into something else! Anyhow, # am ~~me~~ I really superseded by ~~my house~~, my town, my country, my planet, & so on, ~~if I still lie at their centre of them all?~~ still lie at the centre of all these centrifugal & centripetal processes? me into the whole? It might as well be argued that the acorn cannot become the oak because the oak is a different sort of thing altogether, which could only replace the acorn. The difficulty is not that common sense isn't clever enough to grasp the ~~argument~~, but that it is altogether too clever. It cannot just look. ~~& see~~. The vision of me slowly growing into a town, a planet, a star, is impossible only if I have made up my mind in advance that it is impossible. It is not as if C.S. could find ~~any~~ immutable object that is myself once & for all.

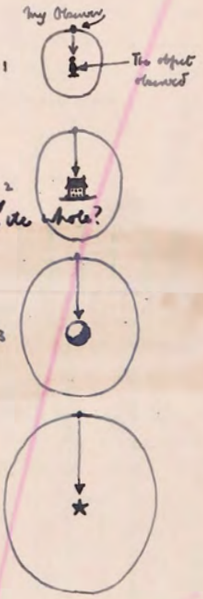
Unpersuaded, common sense makes another point: ~~looks at~~ considers the observer's behaviour. He is not content to watch. He acts, putting distance between himself and his object. Then he makes the mistake of attributing to his object the consequences of his own action. ~~to his object~~.

This argument will not do either. My observer ~~is perhaps quite~~ would be totally justified in assuming that he is still, & that it is I who am rushing away from him or towards him. I for my part am ~~persuaded~~ equally entitled to the opinion that I am still & he is moving. In actual fact, there is nothing to choose between us: we are both right. In any case what is the act of putting distance between oneself and an

‡ ~~and~~ It might as well be argued that because two observers A & B tell utterly different stories about my speed along a winding road, they must be observing two motorists.



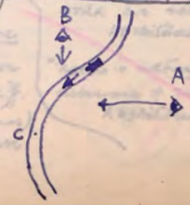
This ~~my~~ observer is rather like the Guard in Through the Looking Glass, who "was looking at Alice" first through a telescope, then through a microscope, & then through an opera-glass. At last he said "You're travelling the wrong way," ~~shut~~ & shut up the window & went away."



In the words of A.N. Whitehead:

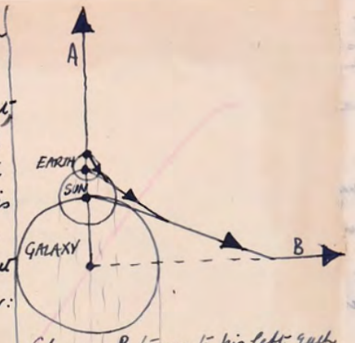
"I loyally accept what is given as what veritably is. Thus it is given; thus must it be taken. What we deal with under the old mistaken expression 'physical objects' are constructs, of which 'sense-data' — typical 'sense-data' pre-eminently — are the given stuff & the only stuff with which we are acquainted."

The Concept of Nature



When I reach C my speed for A is at a maximum; for B it is nil. Who is right? Both, of course, are right.

A further objection occurs to common sense. The observer relinquishes from me shifts, from time to time, the direction of his gaze. First it is centred upon a ~~molecule or a~~ cell, then upon a man, a planet, a solar system, a galaxy — & at each stage the direction of the ~~two~~ new object changes, sometimes more sometimes less, according to the eccentricity of the previous object. (For instance, if the cell chosen is in my left hand, the observer will, when I the man come into view, turn slightly to ~~the~~ my right. The ~~same principle applies~~ procedure is repeated at every stage.) But if this is so, the observer can no longer be said to be ~~my~~ observer: he has allowed his attention to be diverted from me.



Observer B turns to his left each time the larger unit comes into view. Observer A keeps the new centre in line with the old.

My reply is this: ~~so far from this~~ the shifting of ~~the~~ my observer's attention from one centre to another is a fact; but it is a fact which, far from disproving ~~the doctrine of my front~~ my ~~attention~~ theory, lends it valuable support. My observer sees ~~—~~ truly when his ~~see~~ observations force him from the centre of the part to the centre of the whole, & again to the centre of a still more inclusive whole. For that is precisely my own experience. When I abandon, for the time being, my private interest, & identify myself with my town, or country, or district, I do, in fact, transfer my allegiance; I acknowledge ~~the~~ new headquarters, & the larger the unit the more remote the headquarters are likely to be. But (as common sense is quick to point out) I may happen to be at headquarters; sometimes I do not have this ~~feeling of~~ sense of reliance upon a remote centre, but seem to be at the very heart of that larger whole that commands my loyalty. Again, I reply, ~~my observer~~ ~~the~~ if my observer is sufficiently observant, he will see me truly for he can move so as to bring my centres into line, making them (from his angle) coincident. Whether he sees the molecule or cell or man as the offshoot of larger units, ~~or trying~~ encased within them, he sees aright: man is at once at the very hub of the world, and at the rim.* To ignore either aspect is to misunderstand his nature.

C. But note that the man, to ~~neutralize the~~ overcome ~~the difficulty~~ object, has to shift centre. Which brings me to one of my main objections to the doctrine of this chapter. The observer relinquishes from me ~~does not play fair~~ is dishonest, for he shifts, from

* Bruno, metaphysics

+ This fact has often been noted, for example in

object, but the observation of certain changes in the object? What is this 'distance' which common sense is so sure is something? My observer cannot see it: he observes only me, and I am as open to his inspection at thirty billion miles as at thirty inches. It ~~seems that~~ is as if nothing intervenes. ~~Is distance then a sort of principle of non-intervention~~? For something that comes between things, distance is singularly unobtrusive, self-effacing.* But my observer does not speculate about anything so elusive. What he is sure of is that first there was a man, then a series of remarkable transformations, & in the end Space, thinly strewn.

"Empty space — space without some quality (visual or muscular) which in itself is more than spatial — is an unreal abstraction. It cannot be said to exist."
F.H. Bradley: Appearance & Reality, p.38.

* That distance is inferred and not seen is Berkeley's ~~[illegible]~~ point in the first part of his New Theory of Vision. See Bertrand Russell's Outline of Philosophy, p.145, also.

~~But~~ Common sense, constrained by science, cannot altogether reject the observer's picture of me. This is particularly true of the near view. ~~Common sense~~ It will hardly be denied, for instance, that I am atoms. Why then reject the far view, and deny that I am the Solar System? Atoms and Solar Systems have a good deal in common, and they are equally unlike the common-sense version of what I am. Surely it is ~~[illegible]~~ unreasonable to accept the one & reject the other. Doubtless common sense will ~~[illegible]~~ retort that the Solar System includes so much that is not me. ~~I am~~ My observer might be tempted to reply that the atom excludes so much that is me, & that the sin of omission is as great as its opposite. But that would be to fall into the trap that common sense is always setting: it would be to allow a preconceived notion of what I really am to get between the observer & me, his object. So far, his report is this — I am not a man who is more than atoms & less than the Solar System, but I am, in some queer fashion not yet revealed, atoms, and man, and Solar System, and a great deal besides.

AA represents that part of the Solar System which (according to Common Sense) is not me.

BB represents those atoms, molecules, etc. which the naked eye view of me leave out.

Only at CD does the change seem truly a

Is there no distinction then, common sense inquires, between what a thing really is, & its appearances? Can I not ~~look~~ seem different from different places, yet be the same?

No doubt I can, but which is the true me & which the appearance? What will shall guide my choice? Accident, convenience, or some more august principle? I am the victim of my own prejudices. All I can say is that my instinct is to call true that view of myself which integrates all partial views, from electron to universe. Within this one synthetic portrait every partial perspective is valid, & indeed indispensable, while amongst them special emphasis must be placed upon the view from the middle distance, the view that is neither very far nor very near.

+ "Out of all the visual magnitudes of each known object we have selected one as the 'real' one to think of, & degraded all the others to serve as mere signs. This real magnitude is determined by .... practical interests."
William James: Textbook of Psychology, p.344.

The sphere in place of the shapes of the object

"Our experience of the apparent world are nature itself." 61.9
A.N. Whitehead: Principles of Natural Knowledge

"Nature is nothing else than the deliverance of sense-awareness."
A.N. Whitehead: The Concept of Nature, p.155

What is the point at issue? Common sense has to admit that, even when my observer sees me as a man, he sees only a part of me, & that the way to see ~~the rest~~ more is to move. Common sense proposes circular motion about me, plus the approaching radial motion of science. Uncommon sense proposes these plus receding radial motion. A man (says uncommon sense) is a partial view of something more, & all three ways of investigating that 'something more' are needful.

My human region common sense will allow — I ~~take it about a garment~~ wear it as I wear ~~with me~~; I can no more escape from it than from my shadow; it encloses me like an atmosphere — but not the other regions. They lack, says common sense, the same connexion with the centre.

But do they? ~~I am the only individual who is absolutely forbidden to travel in my regions, & the reason is that when I move I take them with me as an intact system, with the centre just where it always was.~~ Even if I were to journey to a Star, I would get no nearer my Star region, because my system of regions would transport the Star, as it drew near, out of all recognition. Wherever I go I am a ~~dictator~~ King at the centre of a worldwide realm whose elaborate ~~laws~~ code all must obey. No Star can pass this point; Planets are there abolished; their opt is reserved for molecules — so do I lay down the law. My sway is absolute & unbounded. Indeed I do not lack 'presence' — anywhere.

Yet, says common sense, if all things are in fact what they ~~are~~ seem to every beholder, ‡ & nothing has just one status, the danger is that all individuality, all boundaries, all distinctions, will vanish in a ~~kind of~~ universal fog of opinion.

My answer is, first, that, so far from discounting ~~distinctions — that is~~ the differences made out by various regional observers, I ~~can~~ find in them the very stuff of reality. Secondly, though it is true there are two standpoints where all things ~~do~~ lose their separateness or individuality (I refer to the nearest position, ~~where the object is observed to be Nothing~~, & the furthest ~~to the observer's luminiferous~~ ~~where it is deemed to be all things~~) what ~~makes the~~ makes all the difference is ~~events on the~~ our route. ~~between the two~~. The experience of ~~the~~ the receding observer is ~~very~~ full of possibilities, even though ~~they~~ he starts & finishes at the same place. ~~Every object~~ In a word, every finite object marks out for the observer a unique path from ~~the~~ Centre to ~~the~~ ~~the~~.

‡ C.H. Richardson, (Spiritual Pluralism, p.100), criticising Russell's definition of change in a thing, discusses the question whether a thing can be defined as the class (in which case it is arbitrarily limited) of all its appearances (in which case it is exhaustively variable) or of some of them. See also Wm. James' Text Book of Psychology, pp 171 ff., on which views of a thing may be reckoned essential & objective, & which accidental & subjective: e.g. the 'real' sound of the cannon is the sound heard when the ear is fairly near it. ➡

But ~~that~~ If I am asked why one path differs so from another, I cannot answer. The facts have to be accepted with natural piety. Why the track from one Centre should reveal a stone, from another a tree, from a third a man, I do not know. What I do ~~know~~ find is that every centre has its system of regions, which conform to a general & ordered geography, & that no peculiarity discoverable ~~as~~ in ~~these~~ the regions can be attributed to some peculiarity of their centre — for the centre (as I shall show) is itself without peculiarities.

× One of the commonest topics of debate amongst the Scholiasts was whether the difference between ~~two~~ one man & another ~~was~~ is a difference of Form, ~~the of region~~ or of Matter, or of both — (or, as I would say, ~~of~~ regional, central, or radial.). St Thomas' ~~made~~ interpretation of Aristotle led him to make Matter the principle of individuation, but this is a solution I cannot accept. The subject is further discussed in Ch. 19 §.

A.E.T. p78
Aristotle

my observer — who is really a part of myself — starts off with the fact that I am a 'mere' man; then, having by travel discovered that I am also far less & far more than a man, returns to this human base with a sense of home-coming. This human sphere is my own place. But — and this is the vital point — I am what I am from *every* place, & am really no more a 'mere' man than a 'mere' fingernail.* It takes every sphere of me to sustain the sphere of my choice. The non-human aspects of me are the condition of the human, & to be what common sense says I am is to be what common sense declares I cannot be.

8. The View Inwards and the View Outwards Brought Together.

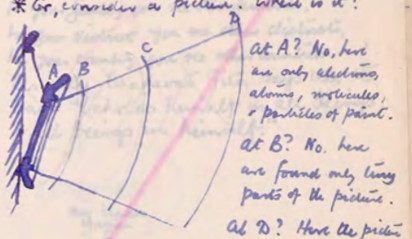
I have now filled in some of the details of the two portraits. At first the one contradicts the other; in fact it was precisely what the other was not — what have a bodyless head & a headless body in common except their need of each other? But fundamental likenesses have now been brought out. ~~To look at~~ ~~looks with~~ ~~looks at~~ me & to look outwards we come to much the same thing.◎ ~~Each of~~ the two portraits have one ground-plan. This is a series of spheres, based on a common centre, & embracing the world. (It will be my task in the Second Part II of this book to ~~try to~~ define these spheres more precisely. For the present I have indicated some of them, ranging from the electron region very near the centre to the galaxy region very far away from it, with the human region somewhere between.)

Now the two portraits involve precisely the same spheres or regions, but put them to different uses. Looking outwards, I conceive the regions ~~spheres~~ to be the home addresses of the miscellaneous ~~objects~~ company which I ~~grasp~~ are lodged here. Looking inwards, I conceive ~~them~~ the spheres to be a series of observation-posts for inspecting what lies at their centre. In short, there is two-way traffic between centre & circumference. The outward movement is the business of myself as I am to myself, the inward of myself as I am to my observers.

And there is the other ~~very obvious~~ difference: the view inwards reveals me & mine — ~~my eyes~~, ~~my~~ head, ~~my~~ house, ~~my~~ planet — my human body, whereas the view outwards reveals the other — the other man's ~~eyes or~~ head, the other man's body, the other ~~town~~ house, the other planet. Of course I see parts of my body & my house & my planet (all allocated to their proper spheres) but ~~never do I~~ I do not see these things whole.× That is because I lie here in the middle of them, where all other men but this man, all other planets but this planet,

+ This fact has often been noted, for example in

* Or, consider a picture. Where is it?



At A? No, here are only electrons, atoms, molecules, & particles of paint.

At B? No, here are found only tiny parts of the picture.

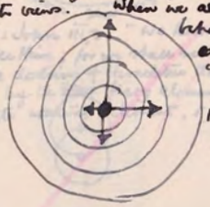
At D? Here the picture as a whole can be viewed.

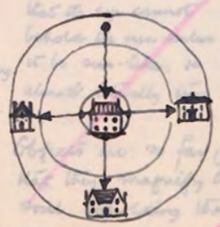
Yet the picture is not simply at D. All regions from A to D, & from D outwards are necessary to the existence of D, & of the real picture.

'Many an irksome noise, says Thoreau, if it go a long way off, is heard as music, a proof sweet satire on the meanness of our lives' (Walden: Higher Laws)

218 Which is the more 'real' — the noise or the music? The answer is that both are regional manifestations of a third central reality which is neither noisy nor musical.

◎ The two ways of observing are well illustrated by the two main branches of psychology, one endeavoring to ~~to~~ observe the organism, & the other to observe with the organism. All social life, with its moral & psychological judgments, means the constantly ~~exercise of the same body~~ adopting both views. When we ask why a person behaves so, we inquire about the person's 'view-out'. On this subject see Wm McDougall: Psychology pp 42, 66.





× Paradoxically, the reason I have no head is that I am a head, & the reason I have a hand is that I am not a hand. I am here in the region where my hand (in itself nothing) becomes a hand.

+ This fact has often been noted, for example in

are open to inspection.° The centripetal picture completes the centrifugal. So far from contradicting one another, the two portraits demand one another. The right way to discover what I am is to look outwards and inwards at the same time.

Let me then try facing both ways. I have already recorded the observer's impression of me: what about my impression of him? Suppose I am watching him as carefully as he is watching ~~to~~ me here at my desk. We start off very close, then draw apart. We experience one another as heads, then as men. Provided conditions are favourable, when he has got to the next town across the valley he is for me that town, just as I am for him this town. If we are anything at all to one another we ~~feel~~ appear, no longer as a pair of humans, but as a pair of towns. He continues his journey, & presently gets to the moon. We are now a pair of heavenly bodies to each other. And so the story goes on: when he sees me as a Star (that is, as the Sun with her planets) he is a Star to me, and, in the end, we turn into a pair of Universes.

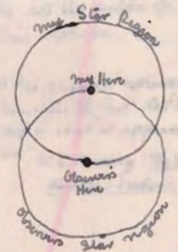
If, instead of retreating from each other, we had approached, our findings would have been in principle the same. However near, however far, we are always equal: that is the great law.+ I only deal with individuals of my own rank. The more I find in things, the more I have in me. I adjust my status as each occasion requires. I am like a man who, to avoid offending any, is all things to all men, simple to the simple, great to the great, learned to the learned; or like a king travelling incognito, who adopts the appearance & manners of the men he happens to be among. If I am in the place where my observer is human, he is in the place where I am human. My centre, my here, lies in his human sphere or region, as his lies in mine. If I am centred in the place where he is molecules, he is centred where I am molecules. Only stars see stars: men cannot see them. A cat cannot look at a king. Just as it takes a poet to know a poet, so it takes a man to know a man.° "You can only behold that which you are," said Evelyn Underhill. "Only the Real can know Reality."

The doctrine of equality is no mere political slogan, but is rooted deep in the nature of things. ~~Our seeing is looking into a mirror, & what~~ I am ~~is~~ always staring myself in the face. What I fail to see in things is not necessarily absent from them: more likely it is absent from me, & that is ~~why~~ the reason for my blindness. I see what I bring to my seeing.

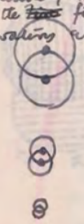
Of course this is an over-simplification, & I shall have to qualify and elaborate later on. Meantime the principle is clear: if I do not literally see myself in things, at least I see my equivalent, a sample of myself. All my looking is looking in a mirror — in a mirror which has the trick of showing me, not this face, but my other very similar faces,

"The universe slumbers in the soul," says W. Macneile Dixon, "In proportion as we come to know it we come to know ourselves" ⊙ The Human Situation, p. 70.

° At every level I know myself in terms of my colleagues at that level. The words of the Tao Te Ching are literally correct:— 'For thus it is that in yourself you see other selves, In your family you see other families, In your district you see other districts, In your country you see other countries....' And the Bhagavat Gita says that the sage "beholds himself in all beings, & all beings in himself."



+ Cf. I John III, 3. "We know that ... we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is." & the doctrine of Heraclitus that a man recognises Fire by the ~~fire~~ fiery element in himself, Water by the watery element, & so on. Farnaton Gk. Sc. 53



° Mysticism, p.

The saying of Plotinus (based on the notion propounded in Plato's Republic) that the eye cannot behold the sun unless it be sun-like, is almost literally true.

Objects are so far from diminishing, that they magnify the faculties of the soul beholding them. A sand in your conception conformeth your soul, & reduceth it to the size & similitude of a sand. A tree apprehended is a tree in your mind; the whole hemisphere & the heavens magnify your soul to the wideness of the heavens; all the spaces above the heavens enlarge it wider to their own dimensions. Traherne: Centuries of Meditations

— faces which are by no means always human — or even alive. + Unfortunately my arm is too short and my hand-mirror too small: I cannot hold it out there in space beyond my human region, to discover what I am there. Nor can I inquire of the stars and planets their opinion of me. If I could, I would not have needed to call in an observer, and my Earth-hood and Star-hood would be as evident and as unsurprising as my manhood. Instead I must make do with simple sight — that ~~other~~ different sort of mirror which tells me in terms of others what I am.

+ This fact has often been noted, for example in ~~+ Cf~~ that rather curious passage of Marcus Aurelius, in which he grades ~~people~~ minds according to what they admire: the common people admire inanimate things, mere goods; ~~the better~~ a higher grade of people admire animate things, as flocks & herds; a higher still admire men as skilled in arts & crafts; the best people admire men as reasonable souls. (Meditations vi, XIII.)

I, at A, am where the star is a star, the planet is a planet & so on. These things are not stars, planets &c at the centre of their spheres.

9. The Elastic Self.

At this point I find myself arguing with myself thus:

Common Sense: When I stop looking at a star to attend to a speck of dust on the window-pane, the changes I detect in myself are trivial. If I am what I seem to myself to be,* I remain a man. My objects may swell and shrink, I do not. My there is elastic, my here constant.

* "No physical 'explanation' can alter the fact that the self is what it appears to be." W. E. Hocking: The Self, its Body & Freedom, p.28.

Uncommon Sense: Consider this word here. What do I mean by it? When I tell my dog to come here, I want him to come to where I am standing; when a football team comes here it comes to this town; when a foreigner comes here he comes to this country; if Martians were to invade the Earth I would say they had arrived here, even though they would alight in Australia. In fact my here is infinitely elastic, swelling to gigantic proportions, and shrinking again to next to nothing in an instant. It always keeps pace with my there.

C.S.: But this is very likely a verbal difficulty, a defect in our language.

U.S.: Our language is generally wiser than its critics, & in this instance it certainly is. Do I not identify myself with my elastic here? A single conversation may find me taking up the viewpoint of my 'mere' human self, of my family, of my nation, of my race, & of my planet, successively. + "Let the Human Organs be kept in their perfect integrity," says Blake, "Art will Contracting into Worms or Expanding into Gods."*

* Jerusalem 5:5

My here is what I, more or less unconsciously, feel I have behind me when I am dealing with an object there. It is the 'backing' I assume to be mine, and it is on a par with what I am 'facing'.

C.S. It is a theoretical identification, no more.

U.S. How is it then that I take to myself so unquestioningly the praise, resent the blame, suffer the pains, & enjoy the triumphs, which which belong to these more inclusive things? Not only am I always thinking & speaking for them, but feeling for them — or, rather, thinking and speaking and feeling as them. The truth is that my 'body' (by which I mean that ~~part~~ taken-for-granted part of the world in which I am, for the time-being, ubiquitous ⊕) is just as elastic as my 'mind' (by which I mean that ~~other~~ not-taken-for-granted part of the world which I am 'up against' or definitely exclude.) ~~and~~ or (15)

+ human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbour, first wit it embrace,
His country next; & next all human race;
Wide & more wide, the overflowings of the mind
Take every creature in, of every kind.
Pope: Essay on Man.

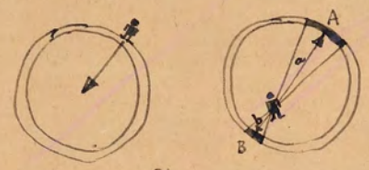
⊕ Sir James Ward: Essays in Philosophy p.303.

(0) How region of space is capable of incorporation. ~~Let me put the situation this way.~~ Every successive garment

So, to change the figure, ~~let me put the situation this way.~~ Every successive garment I wrap around myself ~~is~~ a cloak of nothingness: when I wear it, I incorporate it in my own nonentity; I abolish it, along with the rest of me. The way of escape is to ~~get inside~~ the menacing object; ~~become myself~~. It ~~is no~~ goes the way of all the rest ~~of me~~. * In this fashion I can take on the Earth, the Solar System, the Galaxy itself, putting myself at ~~the~~ its centre & bringing it to naught. ~~How do~~ How can I do this? There is only one way, & that is, occupying myself with the other individuals, my colleagues — planets, stars, galaxies — at every level. It is for this that I make myself nothing, that they may ~~be~~ come to themselves in me.

~~The evidence is with them~~ I have put the evidence for myself. Take

* ~~This is beautifully illustrated by~~ Newton's hollow sphere. A man on the outside of it is subject to its gravitational pull; once he goes inside ~~of~~ the pull ceases, — it is now for him as if the sphere did not exist. He ~~wants~~ does not fall ~~through the~~ ~~but wants~~ remain pointless wherever he happens to be; ~~because~~ A does not pull him harder than B, because the greater mass of A is offset by its greater distance.



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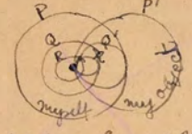

P Q R are for me nothing: their place is taken by P' Q' R'.

This is all ~~very~~ too vague, for one must a matter of ~~feeling~~ unmistakable feeling ~~& be taken seriously~~ & be taken seriously.

~~The degree of subjectivity is the one thing what we look for.~~

If there were objective evidence only ~~that I can nullify an object by putting myself inside it~~ & the sort that science can ~~take~~ recognize, that an object can be nullified by placing myself inside it & incorporating it.

Show here I can nullify the effects of an object by leaping from there to here

▲ According to Petrucci (Natural Origins of Ownership, Brussels, 1908) an object must be looked upon as the true owner of the space it occupies. What space do I occupy? Modern physics, (no less than the doctrine of regions I am proposing here) answers: all space. Any point in space is jointly owned by every individual in the universe, but has a different value ~~for each~~ in respect of each.

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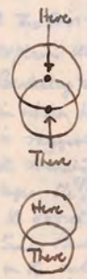
C.S: I might agree that my here expands beyond the merely human. I am sure it could not contract to less than human.

U.S: ~~It~~ I am always doing so. I observe my arms & legs and trunk: where are they? They are there, from here. The here is then ~~not~~ something less than the whole human body. A pain in my hand, but is there, not here; even a general feeling of well-being or discomfort is felt as somewhere: it is located there. The here is by nature a blank but it is an elastic blank. It is like a Cap of Invisibility or an infinite capacious magician's top hat: all ~~sorts~~ manner of objects are always being produced from it ~~to~~ (they are then something there) ~~to~~ and always be put back in it (they are then nothing here).[x]

x ~~#~~ Whitehead ~~&~~ describes the object as neither simply where it is perceived, nor simply where it is perceived as located, but as present at the first with mode of location in the second. (Eg. Science & the Modern World, p. 88)

C.S: If the here is really nothing, how does it keep pace with the there? What about the 'law of equality'?

U.S It is only by (so to speak) taking a sidelong glance at the here that I discover that while in one sense it is truly nothing, in another sense it is something that swells & shrinks with its opposite number the there. "We think not little of others, than we think of ourselves."+



+ Whichcote: Aphorisms, 716

C.S: Then the law of equality does hold?

U.S. It does, and it does not. I am the equal of my object so long as I am really absorbed in it.* But the moment my attention wanders to myself & my equality with my object, the spell is broken.

* Scientists, wrapped up in the object & overlooking themselves the observer, is par excellence the equal of his object. But this is no reason why he should not also, qua philosopher, realize this equality. It is often said (e.g. Wm. James. The Will to Believe pp 97 ff) that there are two kinds of world view — the naïve, which ignores ~~other~~ world views, & the philosophical, which allows for ~~them~~ & includes them. The difference between these, in ~~respect of~~ accordance with the law of equality, is very great indeed. If it takes a star to observe a star, that is a most important fact about the nature of stars.

C.S Which answers an objection I have been wishing to put: ~~the objection~~ that I am in danger of entertaining illusions of grandeur.

U.S. ~~The~~ Any tendency in that direction is checked by four considerations: first, that my base of operations, to which I must always return, is the human region; second, that, if I am more than human I am ~~summarily~~ also less than human; third, that it is only by sinking myself in my object that I attain its level; and fourth, that while the not-me (being there) is something, the me (being here) is in a real sense nothing.[x] To say the least of it, ~~this~~ any high estimate of myself ~~self-congratulation~~ would at this stage be premature. I am a decapitated body or the look-out PP 107 for a head. The choice is unlimited. I may place on my shoulders heads divine or human or diabolical, heads vast as universes or tiny as pin-heads, heads as sublime as the star-strewn heavens or as mundane as a pork chop. Every one ~~is a~~ of them fits as perfectly as if it grew there. ~~For~~. Having a star for a head comes as naturally to me as having a cell or a man for a head, or a mountain or a tree. The only restriction is that it shall be on loan to me: I can have whatever I like so long as I do not claim ownership.

+ The saying of St. John of the Cross, that the soul lives in & by that which it loves ~~most in the~~ rather than in the body, is no figure of speech, but plain truth. ~~to~~ Cardinal Bérulle says of man: "He is a nothingness surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God, filled with God, if he so wishes."

Self-congratulation is self-defeating

the moment my attention wanders ~~from~~ to myself & my equality with my object, the spell is broken, & I sink to a lower level;

C.S. Could not depth be as objectively real as height & breadth, in spite of its being less evident?

US. What is being objectively real ~~but~~ if not being evident to someone sometime? ~~That is a big question that must wait to have for an answer.~~ At all events it is quite clear that I do not share responsibility for my object's shape to the same degree that I share responsibility for its range: if I do not actively put distance between us, making myself & it scarce, at least I am party to that deed. Its range is really our range, ~~but its height~~ in a sense in which its height is not our height.

10 The depth of the picture

~~Cf~~ ~~This is all very contrary to experience.~~ I live in a world with depth, a world of places & objects, a world of ~~there~~, not a flat here world.

After all, there is nothing difficult about ~~these~~ the basic facts of my nature — not that a child cannot see. If I miss the point it is because I am irritated with learning, & ~~and~~

~~It is because you are too~~ sophisticated to notice ~~slow to see~~ what is staring ~~you~~ me in the face. ~~It~~ ~~Once I stop & think of it, it is a very extraordinary fact~~ that ~~my~~ field of vision should be primarily two-dimensional, ~~or flat~~, & that its depth should be a secondary or derived dimension.[X] How is it that when I turn this pen through ~~a~~ right angle & 90° it shrinks from a long rectangle to a small circle? It is not as if the ~~notion of the depth~~ distance of things were somewhat beyond my grasp, ~~belonging to a later Columbus, Magellan perhaps~~, or as it ~~that~~ were arrived at only with great difficulty & easily overlooked: on the contrary, my estimate of ~~the thickness of things~~ depth is for ordinary practical purposes ~~so~~ almost as adequate as of ~~their~~ height & breadth. Why, then, this peculiar mode (so very complex in analysis,* so very simple in operation) of apprehending depth? Or rather I should ask (since 'explanation' is out of the question) what significance this odd difference ~~could~~ can have for me.

~~(5)~~ The difference may (C.S suggests) be coincidental. Or more probably it arises out of the necessities of the case: there was, so to speak, no room for depth, which had to fit itself into the picture as best it could. And certainly ~~I cannot~~ it is not easy to conceive how it depth could possibly manifest itself directly to the beholder at the same time as height & breadth, or in the same fashion. (Word count 112)

~~(5)~~ Let me ~~suggest~~ mention three good working rules: (i) ~~nothing is~~ four things are coincidental; (ii) ~~nothing is~~ none ~~impossible~~; (iii) ~~everything is visible~~ all are improbable. Familiarity with a two-dimensional field is no explanation of it, & a hundred-dimensional field could hardly be more miraculous. ~~The fact~~ What I actually ~~facts~~ ~~these things have~~ have to be accepted in a spirit of natural piety, & ~~then~~ some significance extracted. In this instance the meaning is indeed tremendous — may time never take away the awe I feel when I realize that any ~~depth that~~ distance which separates me from my object is of my own making.[O] A more striking or more beautiful confirmation of the foreness of my object could not be imagined. Between a pair of glass I see an ~~space~~ interval, but between them & myself ~~I see no space~~ there is no interval: I have no need to stretch a tape-measure between us because I know in advance that it would not, end-on, cover an inch. Of course the depth of perspective that I go on to read into the picture is an important fact; yet it is a secondary fact — ~~the~~ again & again I must come back to the flat version, to the here without admixture of thereness. If I find any difficulty it is because I am not simple enough, not sufficiently humble in face of the facts. For weighting, even the nature of space itself, bears witness.

~~(5)~~ ‡ The fact that I cannot conceive my field with ~~its depth given (or not underlined)~~ the depth of its objects given (in the same way that their height is given) is no more to the point than the fact that I cannot conceive a fourth or four hundred primary colours.

~~(5)~~ "A fine linen endeavis to the eye", as Hylas says to Philonous in Berkeley's First Dialogue, is ~~incredible~~ for that eye no line at all.

I ~~fix my gaze on~~ attend to the window pane, or ~~to~~ the stars beyond, as I please, & there is no primary or distance between them.

X Aldous Huxley, in Time must have a Stop, p.294 (Chatto & Windus, 1945), comments on the sudden unspeakable mysteriousness of the third dimension of depth.

* The first notable attempt to explain the perception of depth was Berkeley's New Theory of Vision (1709) in which he maintains that distance is suggested by certain 'ideas', as the sensation arising from turning the eyes, the apparent magnitude & clearness of the object, the straining of the eye, etc. Since Berkeley, much has been written on the subject. ~~In particular~~, the Gestalt psychologists (reacting against the view that we infer distance, or reach it by a process of association based on past experience) try to show that the total primary brain response to the situation gives the facts directly. If ~~Koffka & Köhler are right~~ (so, up to a point, I feel sure they are) this does not take away from ~~my~~ the main point I am making here — that distance is perceived differently from height & breadth, & that in the perception the subject is much more active. See also James: Textbook of Psychology, p.346 ff. Modern experimental psychology tends ~~rather~~ thus to stress the visual cues of distance, however, rather than the tactile-kinesthetic. See Woodworth: Experimental Psychology, p.680.

O The fifteenth-century book of Fortunatus is a collection of tales recounting the adventures of Fortunatus & his sons, with their inexhaustible purse & wishing-hat: the wearer of the latter, wishing himself anywhere, found himself there.

Is this not an instance of the laws that we

‡ Cf George Herbert's famous lines:—
'A man that looks on glasses,
On it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleases, through it passes,
And then the heav'n espy.'

OBMV 27

Heard Pain Sex & Time 79/80

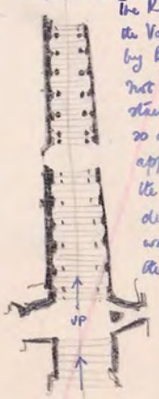
I have been much struck by the almost total indifference of the people living in the neighbourhood of Cairo & Kinchinjunga to the grandeur of their surroundings. Consider how seldom a view of the Eastern Himalayas is mentioned by classical writers, or how many centuries of primitive European or Chinese painting preceded the discovery of the principles of perspective by Leonardo & others. Even Dr. Johnson & his contemporaries looked upon precipices as 'horrid'. mountains as uncouth objects. +

Woodwell E. Ryden 65

Newton Europe Paintg 28

The Royal Staircase in the Vatican Palace, designed by Bernini, c 1665. Not only does the staircase narrow in plan so as to exaggerate the apparent length, but the height of the vault decreases. This device was common with the Baroque architects.

Pevsner 136



CS. My accumulated experience enables me to impute depth unconsciously, automatically. To go back on this experience & live in a flat world would be to revert to the sub-human. But, in fact, there is no such danger.

US. Appreciation of depth is neither so automatic nor so thorough as you suppose. Our depth-range is normally very small, with the result that our lives are ~~great~~ much impoverished. It is for this reason that, in architectural design, the approach is so important. The avenues of sphinxes ~~that~~ leading up to the Egyptian temples, the long Gothic nave culminating in the high altar, the colonnaded piazzas, the transparent & the Scala Regia of the ~~Renaissance~~ Baroque, with their deliberately faked perspectives, the ~~avenues~~ vista of trees before the country seat, the corridor-like ~~room~~ chamber, designed to ~~awe the visitor~~ put the outsider in awe of the functionary who presides at the end of it — these are a few of the ways of forcing a man to put depth into his world. But their scope is small. A child can catch the moon in his fingers because between it & him there is no mediation, no graduated series of objects which, like the figures in the proscenium of a Turner landscape, stimulate his depth-creating activity.

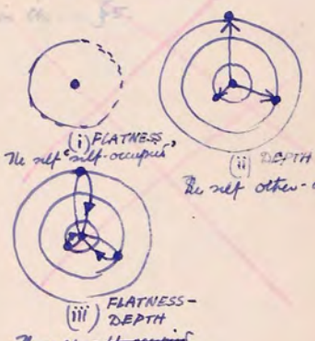
Pevsner 139

CS. Why all this elaborate machinery of deception — if it is deception? Is depth illusory or isn't it?

US. It is not illusory, neither is it the final fact. Let me explain. There are three 'stages', all of them essential: (i) the flat world here, undifferentiated from myself, (ii) this world projected over there, seen in relief, & so made other than myself, (iii) the same world as both here & there, both myself & other than myself. Now the odd thing is that ~~it is~~ the ~~otherness~~ thereness of the second stage, ~~which~~ in the third, ~~does~~ gives reality & value to the hereness of the first; in fact, (i) does not exist without some of (ii), & none of the stages is self-supporting. Again & again in this enquiry I shall come across this paradox of the self that can only ~~realise~~ recognise itself when it wears the disguise of the not-self. The self self-occupied is really a blank. I cannot give the here its due without giving the there its due also. Is this too ~~vague~~ obscure? Then ~~let~~ I will put the matter another way. The trouble with the flat or non-original world of the Centre is that ~~I do not appreciate~~ the varying status of its contents ~~is~~ would be unrealistic: there is no clear distinction between the stars & the candle, between the moon & green cheese. The trouble with ~~my~~ the projected or original world, on the other hand, is that the distinctions between its contents are emphasized at the expense of their unity here in me. The third stage, resolving this contradiction, recognizes original & Centre as ~~involving~~ implicated in one another. It is not enough that I live ~~with~~ in a room with a view printed on the windows: the prospect's depth is indispensible.+ Scenery that is on top of me does not satisfy. I must lose it to gain it. In thinning away from me these fields & clouds & sunsets & stars I do not surrender them; on the contrary, I make them mine. The further I send them the more they are here. They are myself because they are not myself, & without them I am not all there.

"To see no possession but for every person it, enjoying all without labour or purchase, abstracting the first yet not abstracting a particle of it." ×

Walt Whitman is telling only half the truth, but it is the neglected half.



These three stages (which I call the Pre-Ptolemaic, the Ptolemaic, & the Copernican) are fundamental. ~~They~~ Different versions of them will crop up in many connexions; e.g. Ch. III, §14, Ch. XV, §9, §10, 18., Ch. XVI, §5 9, §10, 18., Ch.

+ On the 'intolerable strain' of focussing on near objects, ~~characteristic of present~~ & the lack of remote perspective characteristic of modern life, see Heard: Pain Sex & Time, pp. 220 ff. As Emerson says,

4 "The health of the eye seems to demand a horizon. We are never tired so long as we can see far enough." ~~Emerson~~ Nature (1836) Ch. III.

○ As John Cowper Powys says: 'there is a primeval necessity, harsh, inhuman, rugged, formidable, — not in the least 'artistic' or sentimental — about keeping our eyes upon sun, moon, earth, sky, sea, & letting our nature grow ~~action~~ 'natural & induced' to these solemn powers'

Philosophy of Solitude, p. 122.

× Walt Whitman: Song of the Open Road.

~~#~~11. Conclusion

This book is a self-portrait, the portrait of a man. There are two methods of making a portrait: the first — it is the wrong way — is to pick on an eye and draw it in meticulously, then go on to the mouth and do the same, and so on with every feature. The second is ruthlessly to suppress all details & block in only the main shapes, in the midst of which eyes & mouth will in due time appear; then from start to finish the whole is given, & each stage is nothing but a correction of the erroneous — but necessarily erroneous — generalisations of the previous stage. The one method aims at exactness from the beginning & fails in the end, while the other achieves some success by realising that exactness belongs not at the beginning (where it is a nuisance) but at the end (where it is an unattainable ideal).

It is the second of these methods that I am trying to follow here. What I have written in this chapter serves as a kind of scaffolding for the chapters ~~these~~ to follow — a scaffolding which reveals some of the broad outlines of the plan, but which in many of its details is destined to disappear. ~~Many~~ a number of questions have been dealt with cavalierly; more have been left out altogether. Thus I have ignored all the senses but sight; I have left unexamined the paradox of the mirror (if I am where my mirror is me-as-a-man, have I <u>another</u> centre or <u>here</u> in the mirror?)*; I have been intentionally vague about the 'spheres' or 'regions'; I have left many seeming exceptions to the system unaccounted for. In particular, the portrait I have sketched suggests a passive, theoretical contemplator of static 'presentations', whereas ~~I am really complex~~ a man is much more than this; in reality he is dynamic, practical.* The explanation is that this chapter maps out roughly the field on which the practical, full-blooded issues are fought out. The more involved ~~& swift~~ the battle, the more the observer has need of landmarks.

* This question is taken up again in Ch 2a §5.

The rest of the book can be left to amplify and correct the first sketch. What concerns me at the moment is the question of realisation. I find in myself two ~~attitudes~~ tendencies which war against a vivid appreciation of a thing or an idea — too ready an acceptance, in which I swallow the thing whole & there is no time to taste it, and too ready a rejection, in which I spit the thing out before it has had a chance to prove itself upon my palate. To be human is strange; so strange that when I do momentarily grasp the wonder of it I cannot think how I ever came to take my condition ~~it as~~ for granted. Even as I write this down the act of writing destroys the wonder. What am I? What is this wildly improbable fact

of man? Are the answers I have sketched commonplace, not particularly exciting? Then I am already half dead. Are they ~~impossible~~ 'six impossible things before breakfast'? ~~strange~~? Then, though I am not yet fully alive, there is hope for me. For I may be sure I am in reality far more fantastic than any mere portrait of myself. And even nonsense, if it jerks me out of self-complacence, is no longer nonsense.

1. ~~WHAT AM I?~~ The Missing Head

What am I? That, for every thinking being, is the question. Let me then try to answer it as truly and simply as I can. I shall try to forget the ready-made answers, and ~~to~~ discover what I am to myself at this moment.

My common sense tells me that I am a man very much like other men, five-feet-ten tall, thirty-eight years old, weighing about eleven stone, and that I am now sitting at my desk writing ~~a book about myself~~. Common sense isn't concerned with philosophical subtleties, but is quite certain what it is like, here and now, to be me, writing on this sheet of paper.

2. ~~THE MISSING HEAD~~.

So far, surely, ~~I cannot~~ nothing can have gone wrong. But has common sense ~~really described what it is like to be me?~~ ~~What is it like, at this moment?~~ Others cannot help here: only I am in a position to say what I am. And what I find is that common sense is utterly wrong in supposing that I am much like other men. For I have no head! There on the desk are my hands; there are the sleeves of my jacket; between them are hazy areas of my ~~jacket~~ sweater and tie; if I look under the desk I shall find my feet, encased in their shoes -- but what has become of my head? It is missing. I am headless. And I had never noticed the fact!

What ~~is there~~ exists in place of my head? Let me attend, carefully, and with an open mind, to what I may find. I find that there are, instead of my head, writing paper, a fountain-pen, an ink-bottle, the carpet and chairs and walls of the room, the lime trees and houses outside the window, the cloudy sky above them. My head has gone, and in its place is this ~~very~~ utterly different collection of objects.

It seems that to be me is to be unique, the one man on Earth (surely the one creature in the Universe) who is built on this ~~amazing~~ plan: where the rest carry small rounded body-terminals, furnished with hair and eyes and mouth, ~~and~~ fairly constant in shape, there is for me a boundless, ~~and~~ lively world. I alone have a body ~~that~~ which fades out so that the only hints that remain of it above my shoulders are a pair of transparent shadows thrown across the world. (I am in the habit of calling the shadows 'my nose', but ~~is~~ a nose, a fuzzy ~~thing~~ one can see through, that is quite detached from any face, that can be swung from side to side almost as if it were a trunk? If this is a nose, then I have one ~~two~~ or a pair of them; if it is not, then I have no nose.)

Common sense suggests a simple explanation: ~~the reason I cannot see my head is not that I lack one, but that I am looking out of it~~. A man cannot look out of the window of his house at the street, and at the same time see his own house with the window in it. This inability of his to face both ways, however, ~~surely~~ does not mean that he has no house. In exactly the same way, the reason I cannot find my head is not that I lack one, but that I am looking out of it.

Is this explanation good enough? Where am I, where do I actually spend my time? Do I live inside an eight-inch ball, peering through its pair of port-holes? And if I do, ~~has the ball's tenant eyes in his head also~~, and a still tinier tenant ~~who~~ peers through them? And so on indefinitely?

No. It ~~am~~ is certain I am not shut up in the gloomy interior of any object, and least of all in a rather small tightly-packed sphere, somehow managing to live my life there in its interstices. I am at large in the world. I can discover no watcher here, and over there a thing watched, no peep-hole out into the world, no window-pane, no barrier, no frontier. I do not detect a world: it lies wide open to me. At this moment ink marks are forming on this sheet of paper. They are present. There is nothing else now but this paper, this blue and white pattern, no screen here (where I imagined I had a head) upon which the pattern is projected, no aperture through which it is glimpsed. There ~~is~~ are only the paper and the pattern. My head, eyes, brain -- all are a fiction. It is incredible that I ever believed in them.

How is it that for thirty years and more I had never noticed that between myself and other men there is literally a world of difference? A discrepancy, so startling, once it is seen, ought to have been evident every second of my life from early childhood onwards. But in fact even now I realise it with difficulty, and only for a moment at a time. Then back I am again in my old habit, ~~seeing myself as others see me~~, and as ~~blind~~ as ever I was to the obvious truth that I alone amongst men carry no head upon my shoulders, that I am another species of animal, another order, another class altogether, right outside the entire animal kingdom in a realm all my own. I am as unlike this thing with a head that ~~I~~ called a man as it is possible to be. To give the same name to two such different beings is the grossest misuse of language imaginable. I have been properly taken in, and by nobody else but myself. What reason can I have for thus suppressing ~~the that~~ facts about what I really am?

Do I inhabit a house of flesh & blood, & look out upon the world through its ~~windows~~ walls?

3. THE HEAD FOUND.

Common sense cannot let this portrait of myself as a headless body pass. Agreed that there are big differences between myself as I am to myself and myself as I am to others, it remains a fact that in neither case can I do without a head. Or, if I can, what is a headache? And where do all the sensations belong that go with the play of the muscles of my eyes and tongue and face, if not in my head? What does my voice issue from? What do my hands feed?

No doubt common sense is right thus far -- that something is going on where I thought I had a head. It is equally certain that this something is not a head. Whatever they are and wherever they are, these aches and tastes, and sensations of warmth and cold and pressure, are not furnished with hair and eyes and ears. They are not spherical or eight inches across. They are utterly different from the dictionary definition of a head.

But I can always reassure myself (common sense replies) by looking in a mirror.

So I have found my lost head, not here, where I thought it belonged on my shoulders, but over there in the mirror, and in every reflecting surface within range. Thus, while I have no head at all where I ought to have one, I have innumerable heads in places where I ought to have none. What is more, these heads have apparently been tampered with: they are twisted back to front; they are all smaller than the head I thought I had; they shrink and swell unaccountably. I am a decapitated body watched from the middle distance by its missing head, now made elastic, turned round to face its own trunk, and multiplied times without number.

It is true, of course, that I cannot find the missing head wherever I look, but that seems to be because it is concealed rather than absent. If I give the thing I happen to be looking at a polish, there is my head in it. I can only suppose it was somehow there all the time, and that the polishing brought it out. (Is not this, perhaps, ~~in addition to~~ the over-worked Freudian explanation, the point of the story of Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp? And are not we who, unlike Aladdin, find no magic in its polished and reflecting surface, the victims of a profounder hallucination than his?)

Common sense interrupts here to inquire about objects that will not take a polish.

Well, a man is such an object. And he will prove to me, in words or in sketches if need be, that he no less than my mirror has my features in their minutest detail, with all their subtle and momentary changes of expression. He has them where he is; concealed from me, they are open and evident to him. In fact, the face with which he confronts me is a mask for mine. He cannot take off this mask, but he can tell me what it hides.

Common sense has a further objection. These things that either ~~mirror~~ reflect or are alive are special cases. The rest, dull and dead things, hide no missing heads. Consider this sheet of paper on which I am now writing: does it contain my head?

Certainly it does. But it contains much else besides. If I can keep out most of these other irrelevant things by putting a box, with a small hole in it, over the paper, then my head will appear. Now all I have done to the paper is to shield it. I have revealed the presence of my head by subtracting from the paper's condition, not by adding anything to it. Why then should I not say that my head was t there all the time, blurred by the other things that were there along with it? Make a hole in any box, and you have my head trapped inside -- a head perfectly formed, though very likely no bigger than a pea. And remember that your camera is unlikely to play tricks. It is honest about ~~what~~ of me ~~it~~ contains. It cannot be credited with the power of grasping what is going on elsewhere; it reveals what is happening in the place where it is. If it could report about the place I call here it would, as a camera, be a failure, because its photographs of me would show me beheaded, with a camera mounted on my shoulders.

(Actually, there is such a camera, whose business is ~~to report~~ to head the subject. ~~what the world is like to the human observer.~~ When the device, known in the film industry as the first-person camera, is used, the audience sees, not the principal actor, but what he sees. An excellent example ~~was~~ the scene in the film Mine Own Executioner, where ~~the hero~~ is dragged along the ground by his legs; the audience is shown exactly what he would see -- his legs and at times his hands and arms, but not his head. The body with which the audience is to identify itself is headless. The effect is startling in its realism, but very few cinema-goers are aware of how it is achieved. In the film studio, either a headless dummy is used, with the camera placed where the head should be, or the camera has to be mounted as near as possible to the living subject's head, and facing the way he faces.)

~~Common sense is uncomfortable. Though incompatible with common sense, it is nevertheless, a fact.~~ All this business of flying heads + headless trunks, common knowledge, at deeper + designed wisdom grasps the essential point. Thus, according to a work of the fourth century A.D., there lived to the south of China a people whose heads could detach themselves from their bodies; +, using their ears for wings, could fly to great distances. The tale is told of a certain female slave whose head flew about in this fashion every night, returning to the trunk at dawn. Flying heads — ghoulish, or vampirous — appear in the folklore & mythologies, + "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders" ~~are found~~ inhabit outlandish parts of the earth. ~~Perhaps also the~~ Perhaps the medieval fondness for ~~saints~~ martyrs who ~~pitted themselves~~ walked (even if with the help of a friend) after their heads had been cut off, owes something to the unconscious network that we all share in the same condition.