

scious. Our belief in the existence of external objects, in their undergoing certain changes, and in their possessing certain physical properties, rests on a different foundation, namely, the evidence of our senses; for it is the result of inferences which the mind is, by the constitution of its frame, necessarily led to form. We may trace to a similar origin the persuasion, irresistibly forced upon us, that there exist not only other material objects besides our own bodies, but also other intellectual beings beside ourselves. We can neither see nor feel those extraneous intellects, any more than we can see or feel the cause of gravitation, or the subtle sources of electricity or magnetism. We nevertheless believe in the reality both of the one and of the other; but it is only because we infer their existence from particular trains of impressions made upon our senses, of which impressions alone our knowledge can, in metaphysical strictness, be termed certain.

Upon what evidence do I conclude that I am not a solitary being in the universe; that all is not centred in myself; but that there exist other intellects similar to my own? Undoubtedly no other than the observation that certain effects are produced; which the experience I have had of the operations of my own mind lead me, by an irresistible analogy, to ascribe to a similar agency, emanating from other beings; beings, however, of whose actual intellectual presence I cannot be conscious, whose nature I cannot fathom, whose essence I cannot understand. I can judge of the operations of other minds only in as far as those operations accord with what has passed in my own: I cannot divine processes of thought to which mine have borne no resemblance, I cannot appreciate motives of which I have never felt the influence, nor comprehend the force of passions, never yet awakened in my breast: neither can I picture to myself feelings to which no sympathetic chord within me has ever vibrated.

Our own intelligence, our own views, and our own affections; then, furnish the only elements by which it is possible