CHAPTER X

THE LOGIC OF MYSTICISM

All this chapter we propose to pass by in passing for the lesser critical deals with personal, psychological, and practical matters, and we come at once to the central question of the value of the mystical state as a means of knowledge, and to the question of its reality as a fact in the universe.

The word mysticism is further so loaded and so vague, that mysticism is called now-a-days by almost every name but its own. Some people call it Idealism, and some people call it Pantheism, and some people call it Poetry, and some people call it Religion, and some people call it Science, and some people call it Philosophy, and some people call it Nonsense, and some people call it Sin. Mysticism, in the proper sense of the word, is the name for a certain state of consciousness, and it is a state of consciousness which has been described by many people who have had it, and it is a state of consciousness which has been described by very few people who have not had it.

It is a state of consciousness which is not to be described by those who have not had it, because it is a state of mind which is so unlike other states of mind that it cannot be described. Whatever faculties we have, we have them in order that we may be able to deal with the world of our fellow-men and the world of material things, and we have no faculties which are not adapted to this purpose. We have no faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding the Infinite, and we have no faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding God, or the Soul, or the Universe as a whole. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding the Finite, and we have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding God, or the Soul, or the Universe as a whole, only in so far as God, or the Soul, or the Universe as a whole, may be treated as if they were finite. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding the Infinite, only in so far as the Infinite may be treated as if it were finite. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding God, only in so far as God may be treated as if He were finite. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding the Soul, only in so far as the Soul may be treated as if it were finite. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding the Universe as a whole, only in so far as the Universe may be treated as if it were finite. We have faculties which are adapted to the purpose of understanding God, or the Soul, or the Universe as a whole, only in so far as God, or the Soul, or the Universe as a whole, may be treated as if they