There are two meanings of the words possible and necessary which are of special interest to the
logician more than to other men. These refer to the states of information in which we are supposed to
know nothing, except the meanings of words, and their consequences, and in which we are supposed
to know everything. These I term essential and substantial possibility, respectively: and of course
necessity has similar varieties. That is essentially or logically possible which a person who knows no
facts, though perfectly au fait at reasoning and well-acquainted with the words involved, is unable to
pronounce untrue. The essentially or logically necessary is that which such a person knows is true. For
instance, he would not know whether there was or was not such an animal as a basilisk, or whether
there are any such things as serpents, cocks, and eggs; but he would know that every basilisk there
may be has been hatched by a serpent from a cock’s egg. That is essentially necessary; because that
is what the word basilisk means.