as without all that is greatest in man. Tennyson expresses this in the words "Doubt no longer that the highest is the wisest and the best." Still it seems probable that this passage from the conception of power to that of goodness was not reached, until the terror of a mysterious agency was supplemented by gratitude or admiration. But when this passage is reached religion is combined with morality. The religion of fear grows into the religion of reverence and love. Each as it exists and develops is influenced by the action of the other. Each presupposes the other. But, as man still conceives God as requiring something on his own account, for his personal glory or advantage, as he has transferred to him human egoism and vanity, as well as justice and love, so this element of selfishness in religion tends again to separate it from morality as it tends to alienate man from his conscience. To a later age the beliefs and practices which God is held to require on his own account may be regarded as immoral. Morality has advanced; Religion has remained stationary. The best and most courageous men are found outside its ranks. Judged by the higher moral conceptions which society has reached, religion no longer presupposes morality, but immorality. But, by this alienation, both are losers. Religion sinks to a superstition whose function it is to preserve effete moral conceptions and to soothe the terrors of men in respect of this world or another; and morality, deprived of its faith, its stimulus, its consolation, tends to grow weary and pessimistic.

ON MR. F. H. BRADLEY'S "APPEARANCE AND REALITY."

By H. W. CARR.

My intention in this paper is to put before you as clearly as I am able Mr. Bradley's view of the Nature of Reality as explained in his recent work entitled *Appearance and Reality*. It is only possible in a paper to deal with a very small part of the problem, and I have chosen that part which seems to me the central point of the doctrine, and I shall have to leave unnoticed entirely all that most suggestive part of the book which deals with the aspect of the problem to the various spheres of experience and its application to the various problems of philosophy.

To criticise Mr. Bradley is at once the easiest and the most difficult task. The easiest, inasmuch as he never fails to give you

the clue to the weakest point in his argument and never attempts to disguise it; and the most difficult inasmuch as he states for you an objection to his argument with such clearness and effect that you are often in doubt as to whether he rejects or accepts it.

The parts of the book that I am about to notice are the chapters on "The General Nature of Reality," "Thought and Reality," and also some points in what is probably the most pregnant chapter in the book, that on "Degrees of Truth and Reality."

The argument put forward by Mr. Bradley to prove that we possess a knowledge of Reality starts from the logical necessity of a criterion in all judgment. It is impossible for us to say that anything experienced is unreal unless we are able to judge it from a positive standpoint. We do possess, or at least suppose ourselves to possess, an absolute criterion of reality which enables us to test every claimant. Mr. Bradley, in the first part of this book, has examined and criticised in detail the various attempts that philosophy has made to distinguish the real from the apparent. The criterion that has destroyed the claim of one attempt after another to establish itself as real has been the test of self-subsistence. The real must be self-contained, it must not contradict itself, but everything that can come within our knowledge as part of our world turns out on examination to be inconsistent with itself, its being is in another. The attempt to find reality in Primary qualities as distinct from Secondary qualities, in Substance, in Relation, in Space and Time, in Motion and Change, in Causation, in Activity, in Things, in Self, in Phenomena, and even in "Things-in-themselves" has proved in every instance futile, each has proved to be appearance, none has succeeded in being reality. But more than this, it is in the nature of the case inconceivable that any one-sided aspect or part of experience should be able to establish a claim to reality, for it is in the nature of thought to distinguish content from existence. To conceive of anything unrelated is impossible; such a thing is for thought, nothing. Existence without content or merely identical with its content is meaningless. Yet this very knowledge of the unreality of every part of experience that we test, this knowledge that it is appearance and not reality is a knowledge of reality. We at least know what reality is not, and, as every negation affirms something, therefore we have positive knowledge of reality.

This, in very brief outline, is what I take the starting point of Mr. Bradley's argument to be. Having established the conclusion that we possess a positive knowledge of reality, he proceeds to enquire what knowledge we have of its content, and he claims to have discovered that our knowledge is by no means confined to a bare formal abstraction.

Let us take the stages of the argument as they proceed: "Whatever is rejected as appearance is for that very reason no mere nonentity. It cannot bodily be shelved and merely got rid of, and therefore, since it must fall somewhere, it must belong to reality. To take it as existing somehow and somewhere in the unreal, would surely be quite meaningless. For reality must own and it cannot be less than appearance" (p. 135).

But may not reality be such that our knowledge cannot reach it? Even to raise such a doubt, we are told, is a claim to know reality. To say that knowledge must fail to transcend appearance is in fact to transcend it. If there is no absolute criterion, how can we say anything at all about appearance? We cannot accept open self-contradiction. In rejecting the inconsistent as appearance we are applying a positive knowledge of the ultimate nature of things. Ultimate reality is such that it does not contradict itself, and this is an *absolute* criterion, for even in attempting to doubt it we tacitly assume its validity. "Thinking means the acceptance of a certain standard, and that standard in any case is an assumption as to the character of Reality" (p. 153).

In this argument I wish to distinguish two propositions—(1.) We have an absolute criterion of reality. This proposition seems to me quite unassailable. I do not call in question either the criterion or the absoluteness. I entirely agree with Mr. Bradley that the absoluteness is unaffected even if we take the view that the criterion has been developed for us by experience. (2.) The second proposition is this, that the possession of a criterion amounts to or involves the positive knowledge of reality. This I entirely fail to see. I cannot even make it intelligible to myself. Philosophy, we are to consider, has been striving to discover reality, every attempt and every imagined success has proved delusive, as Mr. Bradley has shown in this book in a truly masterly manner; is it the fact that this very reality that was being sought was positively known in or by the very criterion by which the unreal was being shown to be unreal? Put it another way. Every negation affirms, but also every affirmation negates (I am not going to raise the question as to whether this is a universal logical axiom, any exception, if there be one, will be allowed not to affect our use of it here). The negation, everything inconsistent with itself is unreal, affirms that the real is self-subsistent. Is this that knowledge of reality that I am seeking? If it is, it seems to me quite compatible with the conclusion there is no reality or reality is not. I can extract no more out of it than a criterion of reality, try how I will. Reality and a criterion of reality are not identical. Until I can find something that will bear the test of my criterion, I do not know

reality. I find it impossible to pass simply from knowledge of criterion of reality to knowledge of reality. I have stated this objection in the way in which it forces itself upon me. Mr. Bradley does meet it and allows it so far as to admit that "to know only so much may very possibly be useless; it may leave us without the information which we desire most to obtain; but for all that it is not total ignorance" (p. 139). No, it is not total ignorance in that absolute or rather extreme sense of the phrase that makes it equal to inconceivability. In that sense the phrase becomes unmeaning. I cannot say I am ignorant of anything without contradicting my statement in the very fact of making it. But surely there is an intelligible sense in which I can say, for instance, I know that I do not know reality; here I assume the possession of an absolute criterion doubtless, but I assert that so far I have applied it without finding anything to stand the test of it, and until I am successful my conclusion is sound. I allow, then, this much to this part of the argument that Reality is not inconceivable. I think such a conclusion might have been reached immediately by simply pointing out that the absolutely inconceivable cannot be even talked about.

I shall have to notice further on the question as to whether Mr. Bradley in all this argument is using the word "Reality" in a particular sense of his own, but the answer to that question will best appear in following the argument.

Possibly some one may reply that I am missing the point of the argument; that knowledge of reality is involved in, not identical, with knowledge of a criterion of reality, that I can only say the real is self-subsistent if I have positive knowledge of a reality and have discovered that this attribute belongs to it. I do not suggest that this is Mr. Bradley's meaning; if it were it could not be very difficult to solve the puzzle of reality. It would be almost incredible that philosophers should have gone on a blundering search for it among primary qualities, substances, spatial and temporal relations, &c., if it were something they had already recognised before they set out. I state it because it seems to me to show the nature of the criterion. Reality is an attribute which we try to discover in the various objects of consciousness. The judgment, the real does not contradict itself, is logically prior to the judgment, the real is one. The criterion does not explicitly exclude the possibility of a plurality of reals. The possession of an absolute criterion is quite compatible with the judgment, reality is a quality not possessed by any known object.

The next stage in the positive characterisation of Reality is this. "The character of the real is to possess everything phenomenal in a

harmonious form" (p. 140); or, again, "Reality is one in the sense that it has a positive nature exclusive of discord" (*ib.*); or, again, "The real is individual. It is one in the sense that its positive character embraces all differences in an inclusive harmony" (*ib.*).

This conclusion is based on the proposition that all appearance must belong to reality. Reality is not something apart which cannot appear; such a doctrine would lead to that absurd inconsistency, the thing-in-itself. Appearances exist, and they must be appearances of reality. Therefore, we may say of Reality that it embraces the whole of appearance, and combining the positive information of the criterion, add in such a way as to exclude contradiction. And, having reached this stage, there is apparently no limit to our ability to characterise reality with positive content, for every negation that appearance presents is an affirmation of reality. But every affirmation is an assertion of identity in difference, and it is this logical principle that constitutes my difficulty as I follow this argument, and my difficulty becomes intensified as I go on. When I think of reality, I must distinguish, to quote Mr. Bradley's phrase, the "what" from the "that," and it is this same necessity of thought that constitutes the unreality of appearance. Take the judgment—Reality is self-subsistent; clearly I distinguish here something that is not self-subsistent, and consequently excluded. Yes, I imagine Mr. Bradley to reply, but then also we know that the not self-subsistent, which we distinguish, is embraced by our subject—reality, because, as we have seen, Appearance is appearance of reality. But how? The reply I get is that we do not know how, we know only that it must be so. But surely unless we know how, the contradiction remains. The certainty that it is so is well enough; I doubt if anyone has really doubted it. Surely the puzzle is the how? And unless we know how, we pass on with an unresolved contradiction.

Our next step is the conclusion, Reality is a single whole—the Absolute. This is reached by the consideration that a plurality of reals is impossible, as plurality implies relation, and the real must be independent. The Absolute is one system. Independent reals are for us nothing. This concludes the first part of the argument, and the result thus far is summed up by Mr. Bradley as follows:—"Everything phenomenal is somehow real; and the Absolute must at least be as rich as the relative. And, further, the Absolute is not many, there are no independent reals. The universe is one in this sense that its differences exist harmoniously within one whole, beyond which there is nothing. Hence the Absolute is an individual and a system" (p. 144).

So far the result is formal and abstract. Can we fill up the

outline? Can we say anything about the concrete nature of the system? Yes, Mr. Bradley replies, the answer is—Experience. "The Absolute is one system, and its contents are nothing but sentient experience. It is a single and all-inclusive experience, which embraces every partial diversity in concord" (p. 147).

I most thoroughly agree with the argument here most lucidly stated, that anything that does not come under the general head of sentient experience is simply unmeaning. The Absolute may be much more than any feeling or thought that we know or may ever come to know, but it is more of the same nature. I raise no criticism on the point as to whether we could know anything that falls outside experience, an absolute partly or wholly outside experience is contradictory and unmeaning. But we here touch on a most important point in Mr. Bradley's whole position, namely, that by experience he means "sentience" and not "consciousness," and that the two are not synonymous. This is argued out in the chapter of this book that bears the title "Thought and Reality." But the argument is most concisely stated in *Mind* for April, 1893, p. 211.

In this article consciousness is defined as "the being of an object for a subject," and it is declared to be "not original, nor at any stage is it ever all-inclusive, and it is inconsistent with itself in such a way as to point to something higher." I will briefly notice the points of this argument as it is of extreme importance to the full understanding of Mr. Bradley's drift. (α) The inconsistency of consciousness consists in this that we have an object, a something given, and it is given to a subject. The subject is not given, if it were it would be an object, it is felt. Hence we have one term and a relation. But a relation with one term is self-contradictory, nor are terms ever entirely constituted by relations. And even in self-consciousness, where the subject is given as object, the difficulty remains, for it is given to a new subject that is not given. Consequently there is in consciousness a "more," and this "more" must be experienced or else be nothing, and therefore experience is wider than consciousness. (β) Consciousness is not original. Feeling is prior. "Feeling is a state without either an object or subject, it is immediate experience without distinction or relation in itself. It is a unity complex, but without relations." (γ) Even when consciousness arises, feeling does not wholly cease to exist. "Everything experienced is on one side felt, and the experienced is in part still no more than felt." It is on the felt background that the unity and continuity of our lives depends. "Our personal sameness consists in the ideal identity and the continuity of the experienced."

The gist of this argument I take to be that in consciousness we necessarily transcend consciousness and that larger whole which the transcendence of consciousness implies is experience. This single whole is feeling, which is immediate and logically prior to the distinction of subject and object which is consciousness. All distinction is relation, and relation implies terms, and the terms are feeling, which is given immediately and prior to distinction. I cannot then ask the question what is undistinguished feeling, not even when I want to answer nothing, because the question implies distinction, and when distinction arises immediacy is gone. And this is my difficulty; knowledge of the undistinguishable is knowledge of that which cannot be known, which is absurd. I try and utterly fail to present it to thought, because it is in the nature of the case unrepresentable. What then is that part of experience which falls beyond consciousness, I can give it no content, I can only say that it is unknowable, and to be unknowable is to be unmeaning, that is, to be nought. This is a crucial point of Mr. Bradley's whole theory, for this simple immediacy is reality, but on a lower plane, it is prior to distinction and thought, the Absolute is immediacy on a higher plane, which, in an all-inclusive whole, reconciles feeling and thought, thought and existence, will and desire.

Now to find the missing terms that consciousness requires, in *feeling*, that is, in a sense outside consciousness, seems to me quite unmeaning. It is no reconciliation of the contradiction of consciousness, because the terms as such are not feeling, and also the terms present are in exactly the same sense feeling as the terms absent. Then again the subject is not given as object, it is true, for then it would cease to be subject, but no object is given simply as object but always for a subject, I do not see by what right the subject is relegated to a sphere outside consciousness, it seems to me as much an element in it as the object.

The subject falls "partly beyond" thought. "I do not deny that reality is an object of thought, I deny that it is barely and *merely* so." What then is that part which falls beyond? It is "existence" as distinct from "idea." "Reflect upon any judgment as long as you please, operate upon the subject of it to any extent which you desire, but then (when you have finished) make an actual judgment. And when that is made, see if you do not discover, beyond the content of your thought, a subject of which it is true and which it does not comprehend. You will find that the object of thought in the end must be ideal, and that there is no idea which as such contains its own existence" (p. 169). Thought makes its own judgment that it is less than the universe, and this is not a self-contradiction. How then does this doctrine

avoid the contradictions and absurdities of the Kantian Thing-in-itself? I take the difference between Kant and Mr. Bradley to be this: Kant said reality transcends experience, Mr. Bradley says reality transcends thought, but does not and cannot transcend experience. So stated the difference seems fundamental, but I think it is misleading, for it seems to me that Kant meant by experience just exactly what Mr. Bradley means by thought, and though I do not mean to undervalue the advantage of correct statement yet it seems to me the two doctrines are essentially the same. It is of course quite fair criticism to represent Kant's thing-in-itself as standing apart and independent, out of relation to experience, for this was involved in the way he stated it, but to Kant the thing-in-itself marked the limitation of knowledge, and was the assertion of the necessity in thought of transcending that limitation. For what else could it mean. The matter of knowledge is Sense and the form of knowledge is Thought, but the matter is given, consequently we must imagine it to exist otherwise than under the form of thought, but such existence is unknowable. Now I say of Mr. Bradley's doctrine that this "partly beyond," in so far as it is beyond, this "existence" that is given to thought, in so far as it is not thought, is unknowable. And I do not see that this difficulty is got over by saying that thought is an element in a whole, and that the remainder of such a whole does not stand apart. How can we know what does not take on, so to speak, the form of thought, and how can anything be thought without exhibiting contradiction? This is the crux.

And in saying the Absolute is Experience are we indeed advancing our positive knowledge of it? The absolute is experience clearly, for the only possible alternative is, the absolute is nothing. But it is not experience as such. Appearance is experience, and all experience when analysed in the only possible way in which we can analyse it turns out to be appearance. To say experience is real is simple contradiction so long as I only know it as appearance. I am puzzled about the one and the many, I know there is contradiction, and I am convinced there is a solution, otherwise I should not be puzzled, what use is it to tell me the many are one, unless you explain and reconcile diversity and unity? Unity is not reality, and diversity appearance; both alike are appearance, and both in some sense are reality. But this constant expression of Mr. Bradley, "How we do not know," is a confession of failure in the crucial point.

The real, then, to take up again Mr. Bradley's argument, is experience as a single and all-inclusive whole. "To be real," he says, "is to be indissolubly one thing with sentience. It is to be

something which comes as a feature and aspect within one whole of feeling, something which, except as an integral element of such sentence, has no meaning at all" (p. 146); and the result so far is expressed thus: "The Absolute holds all possible content in an individual experience where no contradiction can exist" (p. 147). This is the theoretical part of the argument, the second part deals with practical considerations. "We have been resting on the theoretical standard which guarantees that reality is a self-consistent system. Have we a practical standard which now can assure us that this system will satisfy our desire for perfect good? An affirmative answer seems plausible, but I do not think it would be true. Without any doubt we possess a practical standard, but that does not seem to me to yield a conclusion about reality, or it will not give us—at least, directly—the result we are seeking" (p. 148).

With this I entirely agree, and with the conclusion Mr. Bradley comes to as to the relation between the theoretical and the practical standards: "If the intellect is contented, the question is settled. For we may feel as we please about the intellectual conclusion, but we cannot on such external ground protest that it is false" (p. 155).

The practical end is defined as "Individuality, the harmonious or consistent existence of our contents" (p. 149). This is not necessarily at variance with Hedonism, as practical perfection will carry a balance of pleasure. Assuming this practical end, our question is whether it is known to be realised in the Absolute, and Mr. Bradley's view is that such knowledge is at least not supplied by the practical standard.

This brings up the famous "ontological" argument. The ontological argument says, I have the idea of perfection, existence is included in the idea, therefore perfection exists. Mr. Bradley in this place is content with denying the applicability. Perfection may be simply theoretical perfection and not practical perfection, that is to say, the element of pleasure may be an addition incongruous, incompatible, and contradictory. It seems to me that the premiss, we have the idea of perfection, is open to doubt. Mr. Bradley says there is no doubt as to that; but if we mean a concrete, positive idea, I think there is very great doubt. I do not find that I can give any positive content to the idea of an absolutely perfect being; I can abstract from the imperfections of the finite, but that is not to give content to the infinite. In another connection, however, the ontological argument is admitted with an important qualification, viz., that real must not mean real-as-such. The idea of the Absolute and the reality of the Absolute are identical in the

Absolute, but the Absolute is not ideality-as-such nor reality-as-such.

The argument now proceeds as follows:—The Absolute is theoretically harmonious. A collision of perceptive elements, the clashing of idea with sensation, unsatisfied desire, unrest, discord, are incompatible with harmony. Therefore in the Absolute there are no unsatisfied desires.

How is this conceivable? The particular satisfaction of particular desires is manifestly absurd. If the struggle is not a mere struggle it must subserve a unity and a whole, taken in which, it is a struggle no more. Unsatisfied desires merged in a whole lose their character of discordance and so cease to be desires. But may there remain a balance of pain? To suppose so is to suppose the whole imperfect. If we hold the view that pain is caused or conditioned by an unresolved collision, which is a tenable but not absolutely certain view, then a balance of pain is inconsistent with harmony and therefore impossible. A balance of pleasure is possible, and if it exists will harmonise all the facts. The possibility of the Absolute resting tranquilly in pain is almost inconceivable, though the contrary supposition is allowed to be barely possible. With this modification we may conclude that the Absolute possesses a balance of Pleasure.

Here I must confess to complete bewilderment. I cannot conceive what is meant by the Absolute possessing pleasure or pain. If pleasure and pain are real as such, why do we want a doctrine of the Absolute? Here is reality ready to hand. But this is not intended. "Pleasure and pain it is obvious are not the one thing real" (p. 458). Are not pleasure and pain appearance, at least as much so as time and space, self and nature? Taken in themselves are they not pure abstractions, are they separable from the pleasant and the painful?

Let us assume that pleasure is positive, and that the contrary view cannot be reconciled with facts, still, can I calculate them and strike a balance? Can I form any conception of this resulting balance of clear pleasure or clear pain? And if I can then what is meant by saying the absolute must possess this balance? Is the conflict taking place outside the absolute, and the absolute only in some sort of way interested in the result. Why must there be a balance at all? May we not conceive both pleasure and pain as merged in the unity of the whole, subserving some purpose in the Absolute? Why must we conceive them as retaining their character, their as-suchness in the Absolute? The world of appearance is contradictory throughout, but the contradictions are not supposed to be solved in the absolute by the remaining balance. The very notion is

a contradiction. And what is gained by it? Does it solve the mystery of pain? It would hardly reconcile us to hell that we should know that there was one soul more in heaven.

Mr. Bradley's treatment of this part of his subject seems to me contradictory in itself. On p. 157, in the discussion as to whether the balance may be a balance of pain Mr. Bradley uses these solemn words "I will urge this so far as to raise a very grave doubt. I question our right even to suppose a state of pain in the Absolute." But on p. 535 I read "The idea of a painful universe in the end seems to be neither quite meaningless nor yet visibly self-contradictory. And I am compelled to allow that, speaking strictly, we must call it possible." Then in the whole passage we have been examining, pleasure and pain are treated as obstinate facts, as in some sort of way possessing a special claim to reality, as offering a peculiar kind of difficulty, but when I turn to the chapter on "The Absolute and its Appearances" I find their claim is rejected as completely as that of anything else in the world of appearance. "Pleasure and pain are antagonistic and when in the whole they have come together with a balance of pleasure, can we be even sure that this result will be pleasure as such?" And further on again, "They are but appearances and one-sided adjectives of the universe, and they are real only when taken up into and merged in that totality" (p. 459).

Having constructed our idea of the Absolute, the question now occurs whether we have a positive idea of it. "Do we at all know what we mean when we say that it is actual?" "Fully to realise the existence of the Absolute is for finite beings impossible. In order thus to know we should have to be, and then *we* should not exist" (p. 159). But it may be possible to gain an idea of its main features, for these are within our own experience and the idea of their combination is in the abstract quite intelligible. This knowledge being abstract and incomplete differs enormously from the fact. But it is true while it respects its own limits, and it seems fully attainable by the finite intellect. What, briefly, are the sources of this knowledge? In mere feeling, or immediate presentation, we have the experience of a whole. This whole contains diversity and is not parted by relations. It is imperfect and unstable and its inconsistencies lead us at once to transcend it. It serves to suggest the general idea of a total experience where will and thought and feeling may all once more be one. This unity felt below distinctions shows itself later in a kind of hostility against them. The relational form points everywhere to unity. The ideas of goodness and of the beautiful more or less involve the experience of a whole beyond relations, though full of diversity. These considerations, gathered into one, supply us with a positive idea, viz., the knowledge of a

unity which transcends and yet contains every manifold appearance. Not an experience, but an abstract idea which we make by uniting given elements. And the mode of union is given. We know what is meant by an experience which embraces all divisions and yet somehow possesses the direct nature of feeling. Our complete inability is no ground for rejecting it. If we can only realise it in the abstract our result is certain. Our conclusion is real knowledge of the Absolute, positive knowledge built on experience.

Such in the briefest outline is Mr. Bradley's account of the general nature of Reality. In criticising it, it is, of course, of the most special importance that one should make allowance for the extreme difficulty of expressing such a doctrine in language. When once our Absolute becomes a concept it loses immediacy and exhibits contradiction and ceases to be the absolute. The Absolute as a concept cannot be free from the contradiction that is inherent in thought. The Absolute that we know and speak about is appearance, not reality. The Absolute as a possible experience is reality. This is what I take Mr. Bradley's meaning to be when he says that we can only realise it in the abstract. And the ground of this knowledge is that we have in experience an element that is irreducible to thought—an immediacy of feeling. Mr. Bradley's statement of this ground seems to me open to serious criticism. "In mere feeling or immediate presentation, we have the experience of a whole. This whole contains diversity, and, on the other hand, is not parted by relations" (p. 159). The word *whole* is a logical term and feeling, as intended here is distinctly not logical, or to use a word invented by Mr. Belfort Bax, is alogical. If feeling is not an alogical element of experience, I fail to see the distinction between experience and consciousness that I have already noticed. If it is alogical or, what I suppose is the same thing, always and essentially particular, then it must be altogether unanalysable, its as-such-ness must be something quite inexpressible in language and thought. How can we found a doctrine on what takes place in mere feeling? At any rate is it not quite wrong to describe it as the experience of a whole and then to describe this whole as not parted by relations, as though we could have experience of a whole without experiencing parts. If Feeling is essentially particular, then we can say no more about it; to analyse it is at once to contradict its particularity. How can we say that in Feeling we have the experience of a whole, that the whole contains diversity and is not parted by relations and so on, if we mean by Feeling, immediate presentation as such. These are universals, and have meaning only for discursive thought. Is not "particularity" a relative term? Can it, any more than universality, stand apart? And if not, where is the difficulty? Feeling in its pure particularity,

in its *thisness*, not only cannot be described, as Mr. Bradley allows, but also it does not exist.

So far the Account of Reality we have reached is simply this: Reality is the Absolute, everything relative is unreal—is Appearance. Nothing within Experience is real as such, not even consciousness, only the Absolute is real, and the reality of the Absolute is unrealisable to finite intelligence. Now I must raise the question that I indicated at the beginning of this paper, is this the ordinary use of the word Reality, and, if so, is not Mr. Bradley's exposition of it in effect to render it an unintelligible and entirely useless concept? It seems to me that it is Mr. Bradley's consciousness of this criticism that has given us the chapter on "Degrees of Truth and Reality." A concept of Reality that rejects equally and alike everything that is relative, everything in fact that can engage our attention is of no use in everyday life, in science, or even in religion or philosophy. If it is true metaphysically, it is too abstract to throw any light on the various problems of philosophy. Beside the Absolute everything is equally unreal. "The Absolute considered as such has, of course, no degrees; for it is perfect, and there can be no more or less in perfection" (p. 359). But in the nature of the process of thinking truth for us can never be absolute, it remains conditional, because, as we have seen, thought consists in the separation of the "what" from the "that." "Our judgments can never reach as far as perfect truth, and must be content merely to enjoy more or less of *Validity*. By *validity* I mean that less or more they actually possess the character and type of absolute truth and reality" (p. 362). "Truths are true, according as it would take less or more to convert them into reality" (p. 363).

The Standard of perfection of truth and of reality is Individuality, and Individuality has two features essentially connected—internal harmony and expansion or all-inclusiveness. The degree of Reality is measured by the approach to the standard. "The truth and the fact which, to be converted into the Absolute, would require less rearrangement and addition, is more real and truer" (p. 364). Now, certainly, if this is meant seriously we cannot complain of the uselessness of the Absolute. For we take it about with us as part, I presume, of our mental equipment to judge the degree of truth and reality in the world of appearance. But what has become of the test of self-subsistence, to talk of more or less of self-subsistence seems absurd. We have to measure, Mr. Bradley tells us, the interval that separates any fact from self-subsistence in order to find its degree of reality. Now, even if this is a possible process, it is a misnomer to call it a degree of reality. But is it a possible process? The account of Reality as consisting in individuality, and individuality as

exhibiting harmony and expansion is quite intelligible, but has it any necessary connection with this doctrine of the Absolute as a standard? It seems to me that it is the exigency of connecting the absolute as the one real, with a doctrine of reality of practical utility that has led to this mode of statement. Expansion clearly admits of degrees, harmony we are accustomed to speak of as more or less, but a more or less of self-subsistence or absoluteness seems absurd. And I cannot see how, if we accept the account of reality we have been examining, we can test by it the degree of reality possessed by the relative. Everything is either absolute and real or relative and unreal. How can we judge by it the comparative reality of the hundred dollars thought of and the actual hundred dollars in the pocket. Harmony and expansion may be relevant but surely to imagine that we go through a process of calculation of the amount of alteration necessary to convert either into the absolute is absurd.

I agree with Mr. Bradley's view of the shortcoming of other commonly accepted standards, which I will briefly notice. (1.) That Reality is Sense-perception. *Esse is percipi*. The failure of this standard is shown in the fact that no perception ever has a character contained within itself. In order to be fact each presentation must exhibit identity or self-transcendence. And on the other hand the less a character is able to appear—the less its necessary manifestation can be narrowed in time or in space—so much the more is it capable of both expansion and harmony, two features which are the marks of reality. (2.) That Reality is pure thought. But if the world of thought be excluded wholly from the serial flow of events it is limited externally and is internally discordant. To attempt to qualify the universe by our mere ideal abstract, and to attach it to the Reality that appears in perception is to bring in obvious Confusion. It is the co-presence everywhere in all appearances of fact with ideality that is the one foundation of truth. (3.) That Reality is existence. Reality must exist, but it is more than existence. It includes content. Existence is a form of Appearance of the Real, not reality, which is all-inclusive, the absolute.

Here I must conclude this paper, quite conscious that I have given but a maimed account of the most interesting treatment of a most interesting problem. To give a thorough account would necessitate following carefully Mr. Bradley's application of it to the main aspects of the world, and would, of course, far exceed the limits of a paper. I hope I may have succeeded in making the outline clear. My own opinion with regard to it that I have tried to justify is this, that if we confine the word Reality to the Absolute, then

we have an abstract barren concept that can throw no light on any problem of experience. In principle it may be impossible of refutation or even of serious doubt, but it is empty and valueless. Of this attempt to connect it with the various problems of experience, to enrich the concept by endowing it with the diversity of the world of appearance it seems to me that it fails in the crucial point or, at any rate, it never succeeds in being more than an assumption.

ON THE ETHICAL INTERPRETATION OF LIFE AND NATURE.

By A. BOUTWOOD.

I AM desirous this evening of inviting your attention to a question which we have often incidentally touched upon at meetings of this Society, but which, so far as I know, we have never formally discussed as a whole. Stated briefly it is this: Is it possible to give such an interpretation of Life and of Nature as shall at once satisfy our moral aspirations after goodness, and justify our moral consciousness of right and wrong,—of a morally better and worse in human affairs,—and, also, those deeper feelings of duty and of sin, which—more particularly the latter—have not infrequently received but slight consideration from those who have from time to time spoken in the name of moral philosophy.

In a certain sense, of course, all systems of philosophy which have been at all completely elaborated have given us ethical interpretations of Life and Nature; in the sense, that is, that they have professed to harmonise the theories by which they have sought to explain the realm of ethics, with their theories concerning the rest of existence, and to give such an account of the non-ethical realms of thought and observation as shall be in agreement with their view of the content of the moral consciousness. In most cases, however, the centre of philosophical interest, and the starting point of philosophic thought in these systems has been in the non-ethical region—in ontology, or in natural science, so that they have been prone to look upon ethics as a comparatively unimportant field of almost residuary phenomena, which can be adequately examined by the light of doctrines and principles regarded as already sufficiently established elsewhere. Hence, these systems of interpretation, although they deal with ethics, and although they profess, each for itself, not only