III.—THE STRUCTURE OF REALITY.

BY GERALD CATOR.

I DESIRE that this paper may be regarded rather as an essay in Metaphysics than as an effort in Religious Apologetics. It is my purpose to recommend Theism solely on its merits as the metaphysical solution of the metaphysical problem as to the structure of Reality.

The postulates from which I set out are two: (1) Reality is intelligible. (2) Whatever appears to be is. I shall endeavour to prove each of these postulates and to show that while the first implies the spiritual nature of the Absolute the second secures the reality of the finite.

(1) That true knowledge is possible or that Reality is such that it can be truly represented in a mind is a position the denial of which involves the denier in self-contradiction. He does not merely stultify himself but in addition disproves his own assertion, since it implies the jurisdiction of logic. Now a statement is not true unless it says what it means, and this it does not do if it only holds under conditions of which it makes no mention—leaving us, so far as dependent on it for information, to suppose it unconditionally true.

Further, as Mr. Bradley says,¹ "thought demands to go *proprio motu*, or what is the same thing with a ground and reason. Now to pass from A to B if the ground remains external is for thought to pass with no ground at all." Putting together these two requirements, we may say that true knowledge must be complete in itself and must contain its own ground.

Now truth imports relation to a mind, and this relation is therefore essential to truth and is implied in asserting it. If therefore the mind for which knowledge is true is external to this knowledge, the ground of assertion is external, that is, as Mr. Bradley says, "for thought no ground at all". From these considerations it follows that Reality is not intelligible until it is represented as the content of the

¹ 4pp., 2nd ed., p. 562, note A.

thought of a mind containing within itself the whole ground of its own being and of all possible predicates.

Should the reader feel tempted to suspect this reasoning considered as a proof of the existence of an Absolute spirit in our world—'that with which we come into contact in perceptive experience'—I would remind him that it does not hold merely of judgments considered formally, but that if he ventures on any statement whatever about our world, he will be driven, by the sole necessity of making it true, to represent the character which it aims at ascribing to our world in its place in the consciousness of the Absolute spirit.

It is surely a little odd to be haunted by a suspicion that success in expressing what our world is may lead us to regard it as otherwise than as it is.

For detailed proof that the demand of thought is what I have stated, that it is a demand intrinsically capable of satisfaction, and that what goes on in knowledge is its satisfaction, I must refer the reader to the sources whence I have learnt, to *Appearance and Reality* and specially to Dr. Bosanquet's *Logic*.

There is one point to which I should call attention here—Mr. Bradley denies that the Absolute knows itself. This denial I attribute to a defect in his construction of the Absolute, that is to say, he constructs it not by any logical process starting at appearances, but by subsuming the content of appearances under an axiom of non-contradiction. Now Mr. Bradley himself has repeatedly pointed out that by subsuming we never really make the matter treated intelligible, because the principle of explanation—the axiom—remains external to the content to be explained. The Absolute so obtained is not a determinate logical function of appearances but is a bare unknowable. Appearances cannot be said to be harmonised in it in any other sense than that in which parallel lines may be said to meet at infinity, the meaning in each case being, as regards the lines that they never meet within the conditions which constitute their parallelism, as regards the appearances that they are never harmonised within the conditions which are essential to their being as appearances.

The meeting point of the parallel lines falls outside space, i.e. at infinity, and therefore outside the condition—the spatial system within which alone parallelism has either meaning or consequences.

Dr. Bosanquet¹ shows—to me it is almost the most

¹ *Logic*, vol. i., pp. 175-179.

interesting part of his argument—that an infinite series is never quite infinite: it can only be a series on condition of displaying some tendency to form a closed system.

Reality as a whole can only be intelligible by displaying the same tendency.

Now, according to Mr. Bradley, the negative relation which is of the essence of system does not hold within Reality between the Absolute and appearances. Therefore his Reality is not a system; therefore it is not intelligible; therefore neither of its correlative functions—appearance and the Absolute—is intelligible. Therefore the Absolute cannot know itself.

The *Principles of Logic* (pp. 449-450) contains a presentation of the Absolute resting on that conception of Reality as a logical system, which is so inconspicuous in *Appearance and Reality*.

The very title of this latter work discloses its fundamental error. Appearances cannot be opposed to, for they are part of Reality. Their true logical opposite is not Reality but the Absolute, and to it they are opposed as the finite to the Infinite, the relation being, if viewed from the side of appearances, one of total dependence; if viewed from the side of the Absolute, one of absoluteness, independence or irrelativity.

(2) *Whatever appears to be is.*—By saying that a content is real, we mean in the first instance, that it is a logical function of the real system with which we come in contact in perceptive experience. Now this real system (the real world of common-sense) is itself an intellectual construction, and it owes its reality to its being a logical function of the absolute and all-inclusive system. If these positions are granted, it will follow that every appearance is real if every appearance in its integral and proper nature is a function of the absolute system.

Since it is in the content of error and illusion, if anywhere, that we must look for unreal appearance, I propose to undertake an analysis which I hope will serve the double object of at once justifying this test of reality and of showing that every appearance satisfies it.

Consider such cases as the following: the variations of colour which an object presents in different lights and at different distances; the blueness, for example, of the hills on the horizon, which we refuse to refer to them as their *real* colour, or the ghostlike appearance of a scarecrow at night to a belated wanderer, or the likeness—unrecognisable by themselves—which strangers sometimes see between members

of a family ; or the various ways in which one piece of scenery or some situation recalls (because it seems like) another ; or again, let us consider the crookedness of the stick seen half in water, half in air, the sourness of the honey to a fevered tongue, the universal yellowness to a jaundiced vision, the colourlessness of objects to the colour blind, etc., etc.

We will begin with cases of colour. Is it not fairly clear that what we pitch on as the real colour of an object is that one of all the colours it presents under different circumstances and to different eyes which can most easily be systematised, having regard to the relations of its other sense presentations to its colour, to the intellectual economies of our mind and to the needs of human intercourse? The real colour is in fact the one presented in standard circumstances to standard eyes, in a standard light—it is, as it were, the reference colour of the object. It is neither more nor less real than the other colours, because they are all, like it, functions of the laws of the reflexion of light and related to one another in such a systematic way that the presentation of one colour aspect at one distance implies the presentation of another colour at another distance. In saying of the hill-side "that is green," we assert implicitly the whole of the laws of light in virtue of which it is blue at another distance. This is very well illustrated by a case, which Prof. Clifford quotes, of Sir W. Rowan Hamilton predicting that a dot looked at through a certain kind of crystal at a certain angle would appear as a continuous circle. In such a case as this we speak of the visual object as "really" a dot, but the accurate statement is, that it is such as to appear a dot looked at through air and a circle looked at through Iceland spar. Neither of these aspects is more real than the other, but the one is more often encountered.

Take now a case of sheer illusion—the seeing of a ghost. Coming home late one evening I have to cross the churchyard ; the moon peeps from behind a cloud and I see an oblong object—a human figure—it moves—I see through it. "That is a ghost," I say, with a thrill of conviction. What I am concerned to urge is, that the object in itself really possesses this evanescent ghost aspect, just as it possesses its other qualities. The distinction between the qualities an object really has and those it seems to have to such and such a percipient is futile, because an object has all its qualities in definite relation to some percipient, and under some definite circumstances, so that the idiosyncrasy of the percipient and the peculiarity of the circumstances are not distinguishing conditions. We often find some quality of

an object as it were trembling on the borders of reality. For example, the colours, by artificial light, of silks and wall papers enter into a logical construction (by the female mind), and are therefore allowed to be real, although as a rule we index a colour by means of its daylight value and admit only this to be the real colour.

Often, again, some aspect of an object which we set down as unreal and as not really qualifying it, turns out to have consequences and causal connexions and so enters into a logical scheme and becomes real. In ordinary life we have to conceive of an object as it were on a small scale, so that the less important aspects are invisible and are considered subjective only or illusion; then when attention is directed to the object with a view to understanding it, the conception as it were expands, the minor aspects take their place in the system as significant of its nature and then are recognised as real.

We find that a tendency to regard sensible colour as subjective and unreal asserts itself directly we find it more convenient to systematise our knowledge of colour in terms of the molecular motions which are its cause, and when from molecules we get back to electrons the molecules themselves are on the way to become displaced and relegated to the position of products of our subjectivity.

What we commonly call the real world is a congeries of index aspects of that part of Reality with which we come into immediate contact. It implies—because it is relative to—the less obtrusive aspects which therefore are also real. Finally all is real which is involved in the satisfaction of logical implication, and the ultimate real is that system which is logically complete and free from further implication or relativity to any beyond.

I would have the reader note that I am not taking up the position of such writers as Prof. K. Pearson, who says that the value of a conception consists simply in its conformity to our intellectual economies. I do not say for example that Heliocentrism is no truer than Geocentrism, but is only a simpler hypothesis.

Anybody who having accumulated a sufficient store of observations set out to theorise the motions of the Heavenly Bodies would find (because of the relativity of motion) that nothing within the phenomena to be formulated compelled his taking any one point as at rest, therefore (because of the intellectual necessity which I have already insisted on of making the ground of any truly satisfactory explanation internal to the content to be explained) it would be necessary

for a satisfactory understanding of the Heavenly motions to refer them, not to one arbitrarily chosen origin, but to the law in virtue of which reference to such and such a one out of a range of possible origins imposes on the series of motions such and such a formulation out of a series of possible formulations, *i.e.* to generalise the relations between origins and motions—in such a generalisation Heliocentrism and Geocentrism would occur as two cases, each confirmatory of the other (just as a stick is crooked seen half in water *because* it is straight seen all in air, or as the dot is a dot looked at through air *because* it is a circle looked at through Iceland spar). But Heliocentrism would be found to be nearer than Geocentrism to the wider generalisation which is their common centre and so would be truer.

We must now leave our postulates to receive what further elucidation they need from the use that we shall make of them.

Since, according to our conception, Reality is primarily a logical system, and since in describing its contents we must follow some plan, it will be best to take advantage of this fact and to follow the logical order, beginning at the logical beginning, *i.e.* pure datum.

An example of this is found in sense presentations, as is proved by experience, since growing independence of figure, working models, phantasms, particular illustrations, is the measure of the progress of the mind in knowledge, and is besides the distinguishing characteristic of the operations of superior and powerful minds as opposed to ordinary ones.

I will now give an example of this process of growing independence of data, and will then as it were comment on the significance of the details in the light of our postulates.

Let us suppose a man in possession of all his faculties, but utterly ignorant of machinery, to enter for the first time a large workshop. He would be conscious of a bewildering variety of sights, smells and sounds, cranks, wheels, shafts, revolving and reciprocating motions, clanging hammers, belts—figures moving to and fro, and he would know only that he was in the presence of moving things, metal things, etc. The concepts he would indeed have acquired before entering the shop, but since he would have gained them from objects similar to those before him, there is no error of principle involved in supposing him to

gain them from these very objects. At this first stage of knowledge, the differences (the details) merely, as it were, lie loosely on the surface of the universal (thing) like stones on ice, the universal is known and appropriated by the mind, the differences are experienced. As, however, the man's knowledge advanced, he would get to understand that the whole complex before him was dictated by, and could therefore be deduced from, considerations as to human needs, the material to be working human capacities as applied to the management of tools, etc. Then he would seek to understand more thoroughly by means of more universal representations becoming more and more independent of the particular Phantasm before him. He would approach to a self-sufficing universal representation, giving in pure unity a knowledge of the whole complex in all its details.

Since, then, knowledge as it becomes more perfect becomes less dependent on datum, and since this is not merely by concomitance but is the very measure of its approach to perfection; it follows that on reaching absolute perfection it would be independent of datum altogether, and would have its object within itself.

Let us now try to interpret this process in the light of our postulates.

First, as to the nature in which the ideal of knowledge would be completely satisfied. It would be an intuition complete in itself and therefore not based on datum, since, as we have seen, the necessity of datum is due to the incompleteness of knowledge. In it would be known at once all things in the light of all, and yet each in all its detail and individuality. Because it would include in itself the knowledge of all possible changes and their results, it would be pure act and for the same reason eternal. Also as depending on and referring to nothing beyond itself, it would be absolute. Further, it would be the self-conscious Absolute and not merely the absolute idea, since an idea is a separated portion of ideal content and, so far, is much the same as a possibility, which the Absolute cannot be.

Second.—The Absolute must be free from Phantasm, *e.g.* all sensible experience, because of the completeness of its knowledge, and yet because Phantasm *quod* datum is a logical function of the absolute system, Phantasm is real.

In the ordinary experience of life, a relatively complete consciousness encounters a quite strange object now and then (as in our machinery example), but, taking the logical process in all its latitude, the subject and object are exactly correspondent. The only adequate object therefore for the

Absolute consciousness is the Absolute, which must therefore be the primary or immediate object of such a consciousness: other objects, *e.g.* Phantasms, being indirectly known as logical functions of the Absolute because of its logical reference to them.

Reality then, as we conceive it, is a graded logical system, the content of an Absolute consciousness. This consciousness has itself for its primary object, but in itself it knows—because of its logical reference—the non-absolute. The Absolute, therefore, as such, is not the whole of Reality, but is the culmination of Reality, or, shall I say, its centre. It falls within Reality, but it falls within it not as a part within a whole but as its absolute, its whole ground and reason. The non-absolute is known *in* but not *as* the Absolute.

I will now proceed to prove a series of propositions in part further explanatory of the results already reached in first breaking fresh ground.

That the Absolute exists.—The question whether the Absolute exists, I take to be equivalent to the one, Is your construction true of our world, *i.e.* "that with which we come into contact in perceptive experience," etc., or is it true only of a world of its own, like the worlds of fiction?

Supposing this restatement to be justified, we must next inquire in what way the existence of a content is dependent on its being one tissue with our world. Is it because the given has some intellectually inaccessible quality in virtue of which it is said to exist and which flows from it to all that is continuous with it, as the sap of a tree flows from the root to the branches? Some such view as this is, I think, held by writers of high authority, *e.g.* by Prof. A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *Man's Place in the Cosmos* (p. 148), where he speaks of 'the background of feeling which constitutes the Being of the world'—this background of feeling is the presentedness of the given viewed from its subjective side. This view, however, we must reject. Either the Being of things is something about them we can intellectually isolate and make an idea of, in which case it is a function of a complete logical system, so that it can be derived from the internal necessity of such a system and does not belong incommunicably to the given *quâ* given; or else it is something intellectually inaccessible, and in this case it can never enter into judgments, so that we can never have any right to affirm or deny existence. As for the view (if any one holds it) which allows existence by their own right to sense presentations and to all by transfusion, it is too obviously anthropomorphic to need refuting.

Now considér—*our* real world—the real world of common sense is most clearly a function of *the* real world, the all-inclusive system which forms the content of metaphysic. Further, for us it is the central or pivotal function and so symbolic of the whole. It seems then that continuity with our world is demanded of the existent, because our world is a function of ultimate Reality. The existent is, as it were, equated with ultimate reality *via* our world, which is used as the middle terms as in A is B : B is C : A is C.

Notice that everything nameable exists in some character or other. Rebecca exists in *Ivanhoe*—the chimera bombilans in *vacuo quæ comedit secundas intentiones* exists too—in our fancies while we fancy it. Nothing itself is *ens rationis*, it is something—namely nothing. I suggest therefore that when we ask, when a certain content exists, we mean—Is the view of Reality, in which it occupies such and such a place, *pro tanto* final and irreformable? would the whole construction of a wider and more detailed conception spread out concentrically from this as from a centre, or would the world of the content in question turn out to be a sub-world needing an epicyclic connexion to bring it into its place in real reality?

On this interpretation of the question, Does the Absolute exist? will mean—Is our system as exposed in this essay ultimate and all-inclusive?

This question I answer in the affirmative because :—

(a) Starting from any content whatever, the mind comes to rest finally in the system as has been shown.

(b) Starting from the system any content whatever may be conceived as an integral function of it. It is common enough in scientific inquiry that what was at the beginning an outstanding difficulty against some generalisation becomes in the light of more knowledge an instance of it. For example, according to Darwin's theory, species of the same genus should (other things equal) differ in proportion to their distance apart. An apparent exception occurs when such species inhabiting two neighbouring islands nevertheless differ very widely. Then investigation shows that these two islands have water of ocean depth between them, and so must have been mutually inaccessible for land-crawling animals for long ages ; so that, though the actual distance is but small, what the law aims at and what in the ordinary course is secured by distance apart is secured. In this way the exception becomes an instance.

This we may generalise.

Ignorance is the logical beginning of knowledge. If therefore in relatively complete knowledge a function (A) is known

as the immediate object, a function (not-A) will also be known in this knowledge as the indirect object; or to put it otherwise, not-A will be known in complete knowledge as immediate object to the ignorance corresponding to this knowledge.

Applying this to the universe at large: If in complete knowledge the immediate object is A the Absolute; the indirect object will be not-A the non-Absolute.

All Reality will be known as a system of A and not-A, or rather as a system A—not not-A. Now, since A and not-A are in pure contradictory opposition, any content whatever can without distortion or being subject to any kind of stress be placed in such a system. That is to say, any content whatever is not merely included in the system and subsumed under its law, but is one tissue with it.

That the Absolute knows.—This proposition was dealt with somewhat summarily at the beginning; I return to it here in order to amplify.

An intelligible *suggests* an intelligence.

Now, though contents taken separately do not logically involve all they suggest, this is because they also suggest the opposites. That is to say, the suggestion is really subject to conditions—to interference from outside, but where Reality as a whole is the subject of a suggestion there is no outside whence interference can come, and therefore the suggestion is satisfied in fact.

To illustrate this we may compare the universe to a picture, or again to a drama, or to a decorative design, in each of which the place of each item is dictated by the idea of the whole. Now suppose in a picture partly covered over one saw a man staring fixedly in a certain direction, the primary suggestion would be of an object in that direction *in the picture*, but if the picture represented the imaginary terrors of a murderer visible to no eyes but his own, the satisfaction of the idea of the picture as a whole would require the frustration of this primary suggestion, and therefore though viewed in isolation the primary suggestion is frustrated, yet since the frustration of this primary suggestion is part of the satisfaction of the whole suggestion, the picture as a whole has all its suggestions satisfied.

In the same way a broken sentence may be an integral function of a complete tragedy, and a broken column is a common form of a complete monument. And in Eastern decorative designs, broken and isolated lines, bits of curves, scrolls, etc., contribute to the completeness of the whole, and very well typify the Eastern conception of the created universe as leading nowhere.

Because of the natural logical implication of subject and object the perfect intelligible (in which all implications are satisfied) implies a perfect intelligence relatively to which the various grades of Reality are as they are in their logical structure. The maintenance of this coincidence requires the identification of the perfect intelligible with the supreme intelligence—the Absolute.

In treating of error I showed that the whole content of error, as referred to the object, is capable not merely of being allowed for, but of being taken up in its proper integral and distinctive nature into a higher truth. The same is true of error as referred to the subject, and because the erroneousness consists in the limitation, the subject must be finite. As therefore all finite contents are indirect objects to the Absolute consciousness, so also are the minds which in judging ignorantly, inadequately or erroneously, identify themselves with such contents.

But while error as referred to the object is an indirect object at one remove only to the Absolute consciousness, error as referred to the subject is doubly indirect, being known in and through its proper subject.

That the Non-Absolute is real.—It is so because it is a logical function of the absolute system.

I wish here to direct attention to the difficulties in which the view of Mr. Bradley that the non-absolute as such is unreal and that the Absolute is the inclusive whole involves him.

Because of the logical correlativity of subject and object, the immediate object of every intelligence is of a grade correspondent to that of the intelligence. Something of this kind may be seen in the progress of knowledge in a human mind, in that the dependence of Phantasm progressively diminishes as the mind by understanding elevates itself.

Every one has had his moments of mental expansion, in which he seemed to be able to see at a glance the whole ramifications of (say) a system of Philosophy as involved in its characteristic principles.

The type afforded by these intellectual experiences is what we have to serve ourselves of as best we can to conceive Absolute knowledge—a knowledge of Reality, intuitive, pure act, simultaneous, exhaustive.

Because of the inadequacy of our model, in which the process towards a new immediate object involves the dropping out of sight of the indirect object, we are apt to think that in absolute knowledge the content of all kind of sense presentation disappears altogether and Reality becomes in

very deed "an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories". That Mr. Bradley does not take up this position need hardly be said, but he avoids it, not by giving a corrected account of the logical process, but by giving up, or at least by leaving very much out of sight, the view that Reality is primarily a whole of logical functions.

His Absolute has no systematic character, and there is therefore no distributing principle on which to refer to it different classes of contents. As has been shown, the immediate object is to its corresponding mediate object as "A" to "not-A". Mr. Bradley cannot avail himself of the distinction between the Absolute system, i.e. the whole content of the Absolute consciousness, and the Absolute as such—an object—the immediate object—within that consciousness, for he denies that the Absolute knows. His Absolute is a mere structureless point of reference. "A" and "not-A" are referred to in it in the same way and by the same title, they cancel one the other and the result is the neutrum.

Thus the harmony achieved in his Absolute (Prof. A. S. Pringle-Pattison aptly quotes, "*Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant*," Tacit. Agr., xxx.) is like the harmony which may be said to prevail in a melting-pot, where the distinctive colours, smells and tastes of the constituent ingredients may truly be said to "perish," to be "swamped," "submerged," "fused," "engulfed," "blended past recognition," "suppressed," "absorbed," "run together," "destroyed," "transformed," "neutralised," as are appearances in Mr. Bradley's Absolute.¹

For us the Absolute is the product of a logical process, for us (since we have no direct or specific experience of it) it loses not merely an incidental quality but its definition and essence, unless we consent to regard it as at the limit of a process of which sense-presentations form the terminus *a quo*.

It is the Absolute to these appearances. Mr. Bradley seems to me to fall into an extraordinary error on this point. He insists that nothing is lost in the Absolute, that failure, error, strife, the exclusiveness of the "this" and the "mine" though fused, submerged, blended, suppressed, etc., as such are nevertheless not lost, because by each resolution the Absolute gains some product. Now it is quite true that the Absolute (as conceived by us) does gain something—becomes richer every time we refer to it a new class of appearances.

¹ Fancy a lady's feelings if, getting caught in a shower, the colours of her dress were 'harmonised' by being 'run together'.

It is true also that all that is in appearances is found *in a sublimated form* in the Absolute as in a subject. But in this sublimated form it is a product—a product connotes a process, a process two terms negatively related, a process which ends in, must begin out of the Absolute. The product will necessarily be for all mind “the product of the resolution of these elements,” and it will therefore involve a reference to the elements as unresolved, *i.e.* in their special or proper natures.

That the Absolute exists necessarily and that the Non-Absolute does not exist necessarily.—Before entering on the proof of this I must set down some definitions.

Abstract Idea.

Content which has not only that incompleteness which is essential to ideality but which is also incomplete as idea.

Essential Being.

Content which is complete as idea so that any further expansion must be from ideality onwards to existence. This expansion is not a process, since its terms are in contradictory opposition, as the following definitions of possible and actual Being will show.

Actual Being.

Content referred to its final place in Reality.

Possible Being.

Content denied of its final place in Reality.

The Absolute system.

The whole content of the Absolute consciousness *quid* system of differences.

To prove the proposition we must consider the structure of Reality as disclosed in the logical process, *vis.*, a system of differences (the Absolute system) within which the Absolute as such is the ground or logical *prius*. From this it follows at once that the Absolute as ground and presupposition is necessarily referred to its final place in Reality and therefore that It necessarily exists.

In respect to the consequent differences—the non-absolute—the case is different.

These differences are formally consequents and are therefore in negative relation to antecedents.

This outstanding negativity proves that the Absolute system considered as appearing in these connexions is not finally determined since relations of antecedent and consequent are hypothetical. Antecedent and consequent belong as it were to an Absolute system *in fieri*. Given the under-

lying system and given the antecedent, the consequent follows necessarily, but, if the consequent *follows*, the system is further determined by its appearance and therefore the ground is changed and the sequence altered.

Relation of antecedent and consequent hold *within* a system. All inference holds *within* a system. Therefore a system of antecedents and consequents is necessarily a subordinate system, and no content is finally determined within such a system, except the ultimate ground which is within such a system as its logical presupposition and which is therefore literally an absolute necessity.

The difficulty of this question must be my excuse for attempting a further explanation.

(1) If A then B holds within system C; (2) If C then A-B within system D; (3) If D then C-A-B within system E, and so on *ad infinitum*.

But "if A then B" after all asserts something absolutely, therefore it does not merely presuppose, it partly supplies its ground. If we conceive a knowledge knowing all Reality at its roots, knowing *a priori* why such and such fancies and suggestions are possible and why no others are, we can see that for such a knowledge the whole infinite series of grounds and consequences would fall within a system, which every possible connexion would presuppose.

The ultimate system taken as difference would (like the self in self-consciousness) fall within, while remaining identical with itself, taken as ground: taken as ground it would be absolute, and taken as difference necessary—necessary, because involved in every possible connexion, and therefore capable of being exhibited as logical antecedent to every consequent whatever.

When we retreat down a series as 1, 2, 3 above, each succeeding system C, D, E approximates nearer than the last to this all-inclusive Absolute system. This system as simultaneously present to the Absolute consciousness would unite the character of a logical construction with that of an object of intellectual vision. But only in its character of logical construction are its differences referred to their systematic places by logical necessity, and, as explained, this necessary reference is not final and therefore does not import existence.

The expansion of content from Abstract Idea onwards to essential Being is strictly a logical process of which existence is the unattainable limit; the final expansion which attains the limit is not logically motivated.

Taking a circle to represent existence and an inscribed triangle to represent the most abstract idea, the logical

process up to essential Being may be diagrammatised by increasing the number of sides of the inscribed figure—the process will always be towards circularity, but because the inscribed figure is bounded by *straight* lines can never reach it. Similarly, the logical process is towards existence, but because a logical system is a system of grounds and consequences can never reach it.

That the Non-Absolute is caused to exist by the will of God—the Absolute Being.—We start from Mr. Bradley's definition of will. "The self-realisation of an idea with which the self is identified." The Idea is self-realising only as identified with the self, and to make this clear I should prefer "Will is the realisation by the self of an idea," etc.

"By the self" is introduced because in so far as other independent causes concur with the activity of the self in producing the realisation of its idea, in so far, that is, as the intention to realise is not the total but only a partial cause of the effect, we do not recognise the effect as produced by will. Now the Absolute, considered as cause, is the cause of causes, it is the centre where all threads of causality meet, it is therefore total cause of all effects so far as referred to it in a way appropriate to its nature.

The Absolute considered as Absolute intelligence is the unity of all ideas, the single, universal representation where all ideas come to unity.

Since *all* ideas (therefore all ideas of effects) are in it, all effects pre-exist in it in idea; since in it all ideas come to unity, all ideas (and therefore the ideas of all effects) are identified with it *quâ* known in its unity.

Putting these two conclusions together we get that the Absolute is cause of all effects and that all effects are realisations of ideas with which it is identified. That is to say, the non-Absolute is caused to exist by the Will of God, the Absolute.

That the act of the Divine Will realising the Divine Ideas is an act of Creation.—Creation is production out of—nothing. The question is, as to whether the Divine Ideas as realised in finite Beings have any thread of real identity with themselves, as unrealised, or as Ideas.

What is formally not not-A is formally A, but the Divine Ideas, as ideas, are formally not not-God (Definition of Possible Being). Therefore the Divine Ideas, as Ideas, are identical with God.

The non-Absolute is that essentially, its non-Absoluteness is its central, fundamental and determining attribute, and it imposes on all that falls within the non-Absolute a de-

termination of non-Absoluteness or finitude as its inmost essence.

For a similar reason all that falls within the Divine Nature is determined as Absolute and Infinite.

Now that which by its whole essence is formally A cannot *change into* that which by its whole essence is formally not-A, for change requires as vehicle an unaffected substratum of identity, and is therefore impossible where the negativity of two terms penetrates their *whole* essence. It follows that the existent non-Absolute is produced out of nothing, that is to say, it is created.¹

Let us then conceive the Divine Consciousness contemplating the Divine Essence, and so having before it the world in its essential Being. This world though it is conceived in entire abstraction from both actuality and possibility of existence is essentially not-God. But though we may pause at, we cannot rest in this abstraction. God in one intuition knows all that is knowable, therefore in that intuition He knows that the world while retaining its negative relation to Himself, as regards Essence, is capable either of receiving or of foregoing negative relation to Himself as regards existence: that is, He conceives it as essentially capable of being actual or possible.

He conceives also still in one intuition all the conditions of its becoming actual and all the determinations, *e.g.* as to dependence on His Will, as to this Will being free and as to time. Further, this Act of Will is eternally present to Him and is not as something future. Thus resting in His eternal Self-Knowledge, God has in pure act a knowledge of all possibilities, an immutable knowledge of all changes and their conditions, an eternal knowledge of things temporal and of all their circumstances, and a necessary knowledge of His freedom.

¹ The argument here employed is, in principle at least, due to Duns Scotus.