IV.—IN DEFENCE OF HUMANISM.

BY F. C. S. SCHILLER.

MR. BRADLEY'S paper on *Truth and Practice* in the July MIND will assuredly mark an epoch in the history of British philosophy.

For it shows (1) that the long-dominant sect of Absolutists are at last arousing themselves to face the new movement which is promising to supersede their doctrines. It shows further, as might have been augured from the stertorous complacency of their repose, that they are awakening in a great state of exasperation. This is a pity, because in this temper they are more likely to miss the new points, which, in philosophy, usually demand the closest attention.

(2) A reply from Mr. Bradley must excite the greatest interest. For though he is incomparably the most brilliant and formidable champion of Absolutism, he has never been an extreme or naïve intellectualist.¹ Hence he, if any one, seemed capable of appreciating a systematic protest against intellectualism. And yet his authority is likely to deter the more intellectualist wing of his party from defending any position he might deem it advisable to abandon.

(3) Mr. Bradley's authority is enhanced by his great literary power, and of this his present paper also makes a lavish display. Indeed its style and tone are so characteristic that in it Mr. Bradley may fairly claim to have beaten his own unrivalled record. And I am sure Mr. Bradley's invective has done good. He has not only liberated his soul, but also cleared the air. And it is milder to treat 'heretics' thus than to organise another Latimer-cum-Ridley affair in front of the Master of Balliol's house, for settling the burning questions of modern philosophy.

Personally, therefore, I have only two regrets. The first is that an incautious phrase in an article in MIND should have

¹ Indeed he could hardly be classified as such at all, but for his definition of will as 'the self-realisation of an idea'.

been taken as a deadly insult by Mr. Bradley. In point of fact the obnoxious clause was not erased in proof merely because the Editor did not think it mattered.¹ I can hardly think, moreover, that if Mr. Bradley had observed that it has been expunged in the more permanent form of the paper in *Humanism*, he would have made such a grievance of it. No doubt I am to blame for an expression which was open to, though not intended for, an invidious interpretation. But it is hard to allude with sufficient delicacy to one of the greatest, and saddest, of the obstacles to the advance of truth, *viz.*, the psychological fact that, as time brings honours and influence, the minds of 'great authorities' grow less elastic and less hospitable to new ideas. The result is that almost every new and important truth has to struggle for its life against the authorities who pronounce it to be logically, because they feel it to be psychologically, subversive, and that the hegemony of a science is held by much the same tenure as was the priesthood of Diana Nemorensis. At the time of its first promulgation were not the great authorities, almost to a man, violently and immovably hostile to the Copernican astronomy, the Newtonian physics, the Kantian epistemology, the Darwinian biology? And seeing that new *methods* in a science are infinitely more valuable than new systems, and that the pragmatic method in philosophy bids fair to be as serviceable as the Darwinian in biology, and will probably transform our whole outlook upon life still more, one had to prepare for the bitterest opposition. These psychological prejudices, however, are not wholly unavoidable; for at any age the receptiveness of a human mind depends largely on its own volitional attitude, and some of the best minds are still active, open and able to assimilate intellectual nutriment at seventy (*e.g.*, Gladstone and Martineau), while others are hopelessly closed and fossilised at thirty. The very fact, therefore, that Mr. Bradley has always seemed to me by far the ablest and most open-minded of his party, seemed a reason for hinting at this to him, even at the risk of a severe rebuff.

My second regret concerns some rhetorical phrases from the preface to *Humanism*. They form about the only passage from my writings which Mr. Bradley sees fit to quote textually, and he enormously exaggerates their scope. It is of course quite true that a new philosophy must chiefly appeal to the young, and that Humanism is well fitted to become

¹The interpretation of it, if as a personal "insult," simply did not occur to him.—(Ed. G. F. S.)

the philosophy of the men of action, the 'strong and virile'. But to emphasise this could hardly have been meant as a way of recommending its truths to technical philosophers. In point of fact these phrases were intended chiefly for the indolent reviewer of the newspaper press, who cannot be trusted to read beyond the preface of a serious book which he knows he has not the time to digest properly. It becomes thereby a degrading necessity of literature to emphasise the freshness of any novel view, and its divergence from the dominant creeds. Which accordingly the philosophers also have always done, as witness Plato's treatment of the Sophists, and the signal way in which Aristotle's unfairness paid him out in kind. Nor need any more recondite reason be sought for the acrimony against the British school of philosophers by which Mr. Bradley made his reputation. Nevertheless I should never have ventured on Mr. Bradley's bold comparison of our present philosophic situation with the siege of Jericho. Not that I am not quite willing to accept the simile, and Mr. Bradley's testimony to the 'jerry-built' character of the walls he has done so much to raise. And this perhaps would be a further reason for making a little noise. On the whole, however, I incline to think that we have had enough of mere battle cries, and should now settle down to serious fighting, if it is still too early for calm investigation.

(4) The new Humanism,¹ I quite agree, does need criticism for its own development. For it has hitherto been able to get itself stated only in so piecemeal a fashion that it may well seem to display to an unfriendly eye a number of gaps, obscurities and even incongruities, to which attention should be called. Of course if the critic can in addition drag to light a real difficulty, or catch the real point, the value of his remarks will be enhanced. But to sling ink is not necessarily to throw light, and the mere airing of infuriated prejudices is likely to end only in the discovery of mares' nests. Even these, however, are not, practically, unimportant. For the Humanist at least will never be tempted to slur over the gulf which separates logical proof from psychological accept-

¹ I prefer this term for several reasons. I agreed with most of the contributors to *Personal Idealism* in preferring *Empirical Idealism* as our title (cp. *Personal Idealism*, p. viii). I have further noted that Prof. Howison, for whom I entertain a great respect, has bespoken the term 'personal idealism' (*MIND*, N.S., xii, 228). I am not, moreover, enamoured of double-barrelled names. And finally 'idealism' seems so scandalously vague and ambiguous a term that I somewhat shrink from using it as a label, either for Absolutism, or for what is so much better called Humanism.

ance, nor expect the removal of psychological prejudices in other minds to prove much less arduous than the actual discovery of novel truth.

I propose, therefore, in this paper to consider the objections Mr. Bradley seems to think important.

I

Mr. Bradley boldly begins with an avowal that he has so far failed to understand the new philosophy.¹ This did not seem a very credible or promising premiss for a critic of Mr. Bradley's calibre to set out from, but long before I had finished reading I found myself entirely in agreement with him. What he had failed to understand, that is, was the doctrine I had maintained; what he had refuted with much superfluous subtlety was a mass of misconceptions which he had developed into misrepresentations, and finally distorted into absurdities entirely irrelevant to my position. Now if these misconceptions had really been contained in a fair interpretation of anything I had said, I should feel duly contrite, and would gladly admit the obligation of removing the occasion for them. In point of fact, however, it is difficult to see how the text of any of my essays anywhere lends itself to any of Mr. Bradley's interpretations, and in the absence of precise references to it, it seems impossible even to conjecture what occasioned them.

Where, if point-blank questions may be put, has Mr. Bradley ever found it stated that 'truth consists in the mere² practical working of an idea,' or that 'the words true and false have not a specific meaning,' or that 'truth everywhere subserves practice *directly*,'² or that 'the *entire*² nature of the situation is first made by the idea,' or that an idea's 'agreement or discord with fact other than my will can be excluded,' or that 'the *entire*² truth is made by my end and my ideas' and is 'a mere² deed,' or 'a means to a *foreign*² end' or '*merely*² what happens to prevail'? I do not ask, *bien entendu*, for literal quotations in support of these dicta, but even for passages which can legitimately be said to

¹ In his controversial methods this does not preclude a subsequent claim to understand it much better than its authors (pp. 332, 333). Afterwards he reaffirms his inability to understand (p. 329), which finally (p. 335) extends itself to all things!

² The italics (mine) indicate the points misapprehended. Curiously enough Mr. G. E. Moore in the *Archiv f. syst. Phil.*, x. 8, p. 260, makes this same addition to Pragmatism, out of the fulness of his heart, I must presume, rather than out of the accuracy of his memory. Perhaps he will kindly assist Mr. Bradley in finding '*Beloge*'.

countenance them, and meanwhile must question whether Mr. Bradley has at all entered into the pragmatist conception of the 'making' of 'truth' and 'reality'. He has, *e.g.*, wholly ignored or dismissed as unessential¹ such cardinal doctrines as the presence of limiting conditions in each experiment and the voluntary acceptance² of a basis taken as factual, the distinction of postulate and axiom, the selection and verification of postulates by subsequent experience, and the psychological and social criticism which inevitably purifies the passing wishes of the individual.

Now controversially nothing is more embarrassing than a criticism which is totally irrelevant. To meet it one must either re-state one's own position, or criticise the critic.

In this case I should have been only too glad to show more explicitly what is actually the contention of Humanism regarding the conception of 'truth' and its relation to 'fact,' and how exactly it disposes of Mr. Bradley's difficulties, and achieves what hitherto all idealisms have attempted in vain, *viz.*, the abolishing of the dualisms of 'truth' and 'fact' and 'fact' and 'value'. In view, however, of the spatial limits imposed on me, and the reluctance of my critics to consider the new doctrines in their connexion, I feel constrained to postpone such explanations for the present. Until there are more distinct symptoms of a willingness to consider our solutions, it must suffice to show critically that, whether we are right or wrong, the old doctrine at all events cannot stand.

I must observe, therefore, that even Mr. Bradley can state nothing tenable or coherent on either of the points alluded to. As regards the conception of 'truth' he seems only just to have realised that there is a question as to the 'specific meaning' of the attributions 'true' and 'false' (p. 311). But he excuses himself from telling us what he takes it to be!

On the relation of 'Truth' and 'Fact' he is somewhat more explicit. But as he has not realised how deadly a blow at Absolutism Prof. Dewey has dealt by his admirable proof of the superfluity of an absolute truth-to-be-copied, existing alongside of the human truth which is *made* by our

¹ Especially *Personal Idealism*, pp. 54-63 and 95, and *Humanism*, pp. 12, 55-60. Indeed one would not suppose that he had read beyond the Preface in the latter work, but for his strange manipulation of the former.

² I am gratified to find the importance of this in the recognition of 'fact' so strongly emphasised by Prof. Royce in his valuable paper on "The Eternal and the Practical" (*Phil. Rev.* for March, 1904). Strictly, nothing further is needed to establish the pragmatic view of 'fact'.

efforts,¹ and still adheres to the correspondence-with-reality view of truth, it is no wonder that he involves himself in terrible embarrassments.

(1) By retaining this view he pledges himself to the assumption that Truth is determined by Fact, by which it is 'dictated'. Fact exists whether we will it or not, whether or not we acknowledge it. It has naturally to be left obscure what part is played by the intelligence which accepts this 'dictation,' and how the facts manage to 'dictate' to us the ideas with which we work and which we have to acknowledge as true, because they are thus called for. And it is manifestly an unanswerable question how we ascertain the nature of the eternal text, the supercelestial Koran, which the dictation reveals, nor can we venture to ask how we are to authenticate the correctness of the dictates we receive. For it must clearly be ignored, that the 'facts' we recognise are always relative to the 'truths' we predicate; that of facts-in-themselves and independent of our knowledge we can know nothing. Neither must we ask whether these imagined facts in their own right are correctly 'represented' by the facts as we take them to be.

(2) But these difficulties are old, and ought to be familiar to all but the naivest realism, of which Mr. Bradley's language here grows strangely redolent. Let us pass, therefore, to a still more perplexing subject, Mr. Bradley's handling of the subjective activity in the apprehension of 'fact'. For 'truth,' it seems, is after all not mere reproduction of 'fact': the 'right' idea is not merely 'dictated,' it has also to be 'chosen' (p. 311). How then, we ask, can this hapless Truth serve two such different masters? How can it on the one hand adjust itself to human demands and interests, and yet on the other slavishly copy and respectfully reproduce a congenitally 'outer' and already pre-existing 'fact'?

At times we find this subjective influence which goes to the making of 'Truth' called merely a *congé d'écrire* (p. 312), i.e., a formality, presumably, which is not held seriously to

¹ Its peculiar deadliness is due to the fact that the absolute idealist can hardly disavow a contention with which he himself is wont to ply the realist, viz., that an existent beyond knowledge, which does nothing to explain knowledge, is invalid, alike whether it is called an 'independent' reality or an 'absolute' truth.

Mr. Bradley, who (for purposes of contrast?) praises Prof. Dewey, also does not seem to have noticed that something not utterly unlike the doctrine of 'doing for doing's sake,' which he vainly tries to fasten on me, appears to be upheld by Prof. Dewey, so that in this important respect his form of Pragmatism would seem to be the most radical in the field.

impair the dependence of truth upon an already determinate 'fact'. And yet in the same breath a 'selection' is mentioned. If this is not to involve volitional preference and acceptance, what can it mean? Surely it is something more than a mechanical registration of an outside 'fact'? Elsewhere it is admitted that our idea "reacts and then makes the whole situation to be different" (p. 311), that "truth may not be truth at all apart from its existence in myself and in other finite subjects, and *at least very largely* that existence depends on our wills".¹ Nay our moral ends in their turn 'dictate' even to truth and beauty (pp. 320-1). Indeed in one aspect at least truth is an ideal construction (pp. 324-5).

Now what are we to make of this double nature of Truth? Is it not clear that if there is to be a real selection there must be *real alternatives*, which can be chosen? And is it not almost as clear that even in a 'forced' choice such alternatives are really presented? Even the poor bread-and-butter fly (now extinct) that would live only on the 'weak tea with plenty of cream in it' which it could not get and consequently 'always died' exemplifies this. We get then this dilemma: if our 'choice,' 'selection' or *congé d'élire* does not affect the rigidity of 'fact,' it is an illusion which ought not even to seem to exist, and we have certainly no right to talk about it: if on the other hand there really is 'selection' (as is asserted), will it not stultify the assumption of a rigid fact, introduce a possibility of *arbitrary* manipulation and lead to *alternative constructions of reality*?

Mr. Bradley's insistence on the 'determinateness' of being does not help us in the least. For he does not specify whether he conceives the determination to be (a) absolute, or (b) partial. If (a), then how is it to be *altered* by our 'reaction'? That too, indeed, must be wholly determinate, and the 'selecting' must be mere illusion. If (b) the determination is only partial, it will form the starting-point for alternative modes of operating upon 'fact' and alternative results. That is, 'fact' will be plastic, and responsive to our will.

In short a constructive conception of the relation of Truth to Fact is nowhere to be grasped. Everywhere Mr. Bradley's meaning seems swiftly to evaporate into metaphor or to dissipate into ambiguity. Not that these difficulties are likely to prove a permanent embarrassment. Eventually no doubt some subtlety can be requisitioned from the Christological controversies of the sixth century wherewith

¹ P. 320, italics mine.

to reconcile the 'divine' with the 'human' nature in the body of the one Truth. But at present I cannot find that Intellectualism has anything even apparently coherent to substitute for the pragmatist account it rejects so haughtily

II.

I pass to Mr. Bradley's second point, which concerns the relation of Practice to Theory. The importance of this seems to me to be secondary, both (a) because I here find myself more in agreement with Mr. Bradley, and (b) because our differences rest largely on the connotation of terms whose meaning is somewhat a matter of convention.

As to (a) I should not dream of denying that the end must be "the fullest and most harmonious development of our being" (p. 319), and still less that this "coincides with the largest amount of mere doing"—except in so far as I repudiate the notion of 'mere doing'! It is gratifying also to find Mr. Bradley so emphatic that "every possible side of our life is practical," that there is nothing "to which the moral end is unable to dictate" (p. 320), "and even truth and beauty, however independent, fall under its sway". These dicta seem at least decisive disavowals of the old-fashioned intellectualism, and I should conjecture that, but for lapses of inadvertence, very little more will be heard of it.

My difficulties, however, begin when I try to follow Mr. Bradley's attempt nevertheless to provide for an 'independence' of the theoretical. We are told that though all the ends and aspects of life are practical, yet in a sense they are also *not* practical. There exists, it seems, an attitude of 'mere' theory and 'mere' apprehension, which has indeed 'to alter things' and is thereby 'practical,' but "so far as it remains independent" is "essentially" *not* practice. Both truth and beauty therefore are practical "incidentally but not in their essence" and "at once dependent and free" (p. 320), 'free' in their 'nature,' dependent in their actual functioning. Whether this claims for theoretic truth something like Kant's noumenal freedom and phenomenal necessity it is hard to say. But it is clearly an important article of Mr. Bradley's faith: "we believe in short in relative freedom" and "this is even dictated by the interest of the spiritual commonwealth" and identified with "the independent cultivation of any one main side of our nature" (p. 322).

Now, quite humbly and sincerely, I must here beg for further elucidation. I cannot in the least conceive how this

semi-detached relation is possible. Evidently there is here between us a divergent use of terms which must breed confusion. What (1) means the antithesis of 'incident' and 'essence'? And how are they related to Aristotle's *συμβεβηκός* and *οὐσία*? 'Essence' clearly does not imply to Mr. Bradley, as it does to a pragmatist, a reference to purpose. But I suppose it means something important. And if so, why is it not divulged? Again (2) does it not evince a serious laxity of terminology to equate a 'relative freedom' with 'independence'? And would Mr. Bradley allow the same equation in another context, *e.g.*, in a pluralistic attempt to derive the 'unity' of the world?

However Mr. Bradley may answer these questions, and indeed whether or not he sees his way to answer them at all, I must once more add that, be the argument coherent internally or meaningless, it is at all events irrelevant. It attacks a position which has never been defended: it fails to repel the real attack. For it is *not* our intention to prove that Theory and Practice are fundamentally different, and foreign to each other, and then to enslave Theory to Practice, Intellect to Will. Something of the sort may possibly be extracted from that great matrix of the most various doctrines, the philosophy of Kant.¹ But we contend rather that there can be no independence of theory (except in popular language) and no opposition to practice, because theory is an outgrowth of practice and incapable of 'independent' existence. And what our epistemology tries to do is to trace this reference to practice throughout the whole structure, and in all the functions, of the intellect. There is no question therefore of degrading, and still less of annihilating, the intellect, but merely one of its reinterpretation. We deny that properly speaking such a thing as pure or mere intellection can occur. What is loosely so called is really also purposive thought pursuing what seems to it a desirable end. Only in such cases the ends may be illusory, or may appear valuable for reasons other than those which determine their value.² What, therefore, we have really attempted is to overcome the antithesis of theory and practice, and to unify

¹ I do not say *justly*, because I am convinced that if Kant had been twenty years younger when he attained the light, he would have rewritten his *Critique of Pure Reason* on pragmatist lines. At all events he lays the foundations of Pragmatism in a remark no pragmatist would seek to better, when he says that "all interest is ultimately practical, and even that of the speculative reason is merely conditional, and only complete in its practical use" (*Krit. d. prak. Vern.*, II., 2, iii. s.f.).

² Cf. *Humanism*, pp. 58-60.

human life by emphasising the all-pervading purposiveness of human conduct.

Such attempts at unification are not new, but they have usually been conducted with an intellectualist bias, and with the purpose of reducing all willing and feeling to cognition. And this has often been supposed to be something magnificent and inspiring. I cannot see, however, that there is any greater spiritual elevation in saying *All is Thought* than in saying *all is Feeling* or *Will*. The whole question seems merely one of the convenience and use of psychological classifications. And so when Mr. Bradley wonders (p. 327) what I am "to reply when some one chooses to assert that this same whole is intelligence or feeling," I am not dismayed. I should merely underline the "*chooses*," and beg both parties to observe that this is what they are severally '*choosing to assert*,' and therefore *arbitrary*. *Not more arbitrary*, doubtless, than my own choice, but far more awkward for *their* scheme of classification than for mine. For on mine I should *expect* to find that ultimate questions sooner or later involved *acts of choice*; as indeed I have repeatedly, though perhaps too unobtrusively, pointed out.¹ Moreover, I have expressly guarded myself against this particular criticism by passages in *Personal Idealism* (p. 86) and *Humanism* (p. 53). These no doubt occur in footnotes, but then Mr. Bradley will hardly accuse me of putting too much into footnotes.

Finally, before leaving this part of Mr. Bradley's argument I must say something about his definition of Practice (p. 317) as an *alteration of existence*. This seems altogether too narrow. For (1) the *means* to an alteration of existence must surely be called practical. If Mr. Bradley will not concede this, *cadit quaestio*.² For I should never have asserted the absorption of the theoretical in the practical, if I had thought that the means to an end were excluded from the practical. And (2) we do not even in practice always seem to aim at alteration of existence. The *preservation* of the desirable seems frequently to be our end. Again (3) the fruition of the end attained would fall without Mr. Bradley's definition. Whereas to me it would seem intolerable to exclude from Practice, *e.g.*, the 'Ενέργεια Ἀκινησίας which forms the ideal of life and the goal of effort. I could wish only that it were practicable, as well as practical!

But even if we accepted Mr. Bradley's definition, we should continue to be perplexed by his ambiguous use of

¹ *E.g.*, *Humanism*, pp. 158, 49, 157.

² He finally (p. 834 *et seq.*) seems to concede this.

'practical'. We seem to find the 'practical' subdivided into the practical and the non-practical (p. 319): we are told (pp. 322 *s.f.* and 333) that Mr. Bradley is *clear (!)* that in the end there is no distinction between 'theory' and 'practice'; and then again (what I own I had suspected) that there are several senses of 'practical,' such that what *in one sense* is practical is not so in another (p. 323).¹ Possibly all this is symptomatic merely of a Hegelian contradiction emerging from the bosom of a true idea, and should strike the spectator with silent awe. But I have no head for contradictions, and am minded rather to record one of the last philosophic utterances of Henry Sidgwick, to the effect that 'he had never been able to understand from the Hegelians how they distinguished the contradictions which they considered evidence of error from those which they revered as intimations of a higher truth'.

III.

I hardly know how much notice to take of an apparently casual remark on page 322 to the effect that if I understood my own doctrine, I should have to hold that any end however perverted was rational, and any idea however mad was truth, so soon as any one insisted on it. For subsequently (p. 329) Mr. Bradley seems graciously to decide that he will not attribute so 'insane' a doctrine even to me. Why then did he mention it as if it were relevant? Did he not know that he was merely dishing up an old objection to Protagoras,

¹ In his Note on pp. 832-334 Mr. Bradley recurs to the point in a way which seems to betray a feeling that his first treatment was not wholly satisfactory. After again asserting that the distinction of practical and non-practical is ultimately one of degree, he lays it down that nevertheless a 'practical' activity may be so called "when and so far as its product *directly* qualifies the existence which is altered".—This involves a distinct correction of the definition given before. A little later he admits that "*in a secondary sense* anything is practical so far as it is *taken* as subserving a practical change".—This surely would amply account for the 'perception of a horse' which Mr. Bradley is pleased to call a 'revelation'. For, as the psychologists are daily showing, our very modes of perception are relative to our practical needs. The human eye is not like the eye of an eagle or a cat, because it is *used* differently, and the perception of the horse would never have been attained, unless it had been useful to such of our ancestors as had acquired eyes. Presumably the eyes of Micromegas would be fitted to see a horse as little as Mr. Bradley's are to see a microbe or a ghost.

Mr. Bradley proceeds to state what I can well believe, *viz.*, that he feels joy in calling a spade a spade after he has 'adorned' it (with epithets?), but that this is not 'practical' because it is 'æsthetic'. But of course, I should as little admit the 'independence' of the æsthetic as of the logical, and the difficulties are just the same.

the effeteness of which even Plato was candid enough to avow?¹ Since then this caricature has often been exposed, most recently in the explicit account of the development of objective truth out of subjective valuations given in *Humanism*, pages 58-60. Its reappearance now that the conceptions of variation and selection are in universal use is simply stupefying, and if it is intended as a serious argument, it shows clearly that Mr. Bradley has yet to grasp the essential difference between an axiom and a postulate. And in any case Mr. Bradley could do his followers a great service if, instead of so crudely travestying my argument, he supplied them with an alternative to it, and showed them how to deal with the empirical existence of the infinite variety in ends and ideas. Or does he not admit this to constitute a scientific problem, and is it merely in "appearance" that our views diverge?

IV.

Mr. Bradley's article is so rich in provocations of all sorts that I forbear to reply to all of them in this paper. Still I should have liked to discuss the difficulties he raises about the conception of Will, which seems to be the only other point which may be thought to possess some relevance to the controversy, did we not seem so far from agreeing on the meaning of the term. And so rather than plunge into a long disquisition on the proper senses of 'Will,' and their proper correlation, I will relinquish the attempt to clear up matters. I will remark only that I can accept Mr. Bradley's second definition of (a depersonalised) Will as "a process of passage from idea into existence" as little as "the self-realisation of an idea," and am curious to know how he gets from one to the other without exemplifying the pragmatist doctrine that definitions are relative to purpose. Moreover, it seems to me exceedingly arbitrary and inconvenient to deny the volitional quality of an achievement simply because the Will has realised itself, and now accepts and sustains the situation it has created. In the theological language Mr. Bradley affects in this article, that would be equivalent to the assertion that because God is the Creator, He cannot also be the Sustainer, of the universe. I conclude therefore by pointing out that all the arguments which Mr. Bradley bases on *his* conceptions of Will are to me, once more, corrupted by irrelevance.

I shrink, similarly, from meeting many other interesting

¹ *Theaetetus*, 166-7.

points (most of them highly barbed !) with which Mr. Bradley's paper bristles. I cannot really now gratify his curiosity about (p. 315) Prof. Bain's theory of belief (which I have always found it very hard to recognise in the account given of it in Mr. Bradley's *Logic*), or Individualism (p. 317), or Hedonism (p. 318), or Evil (p. 314), or Pluralism (p. 327), or Mysticism (p. 315), or Polytheism (p. 316), or Error (p. 326), or Erotic Philosophy (p. 333), though I fully admit the suggestiveness of his remarks. But I should be pleased to tell him, privately, why I once wrote *Man* with a capital (p. 328).

On page 331 Mr. Bradley appears to summarise under four heads that part of his paper which may be called argumentative. In the *first* charge that 'the whole essence' of truth has been subverted, I would read 'analysed' for 'subverted'. The *second* calls it 'a thoughtless compromise' to treat the result of past volitions as being my will and choice. But why a 'compromise'? With whom or what? What have I compromised but Mr. Bradley's preconceptions, by declining to ignore the volitional acceptance in the recognition of 'fact' or to plunge into the flagrant contradictions of his own account? And why 'thoughtless'? Because it does not lend itself to Mr. Bradley's travesties? The *third* charge is partly irrelevant, in so far as it rests on definitions of 'will' which I reject, partly answered by the account I have given of the factual basis in our cognitive procedure.

As for Mr. Bradley's *fourth* difficulty I must own that I should never have guessed from his very perfunctory and obscure exposition of it that he attached any particular importance to it. And even after I had perceived that it was to be made into a capital charge, it failed to impress me. And so it seems sufficient to point out that if knowledge be conceived as secondary without being *divorced* from action, and if due reflexion is thus rendered a useful habit, there is no paradox in holding that it may also profitably reflect on its own genesis. So far from condemning philosophic reflexion, I could even wish that its use, especially when conducted on the right humanist lines, were more extensive.

V.

I would gladly conclude with these replies, were it not that Mr. Bradley's paper exhibits also some striking features which, although they do not strictly enter into its logical texture, seem calculated to arouse prejudice, and therefore imperatively demand notice.

I was greatly surprised by the general air of *religiosity* in which Mr. Bradley had enveloped himself. I looked in vain for my beloved *bête noire*, the Absolute, and wondered why it had been sent to dwell with Hegel in eternal night. In its place I found not only the old ambiguous 'God' in all its philosophic deceptiveness, but even allusions to the Jehovah of Mr. Bradley's youth, and wondered why the Baal of Jericho received no honourable mention. Now, as I had always respected Mr. Bradley's philosophy for never seeking to curry favour with the 'orthodox' by playing on ambiguous phrases, I was naturally greatly puzzled by this change of face. Was it to be respected as an indication of a change of heart, of a pathetic recrudescence of what Mr. Bradley had learnt (or "imbibed") in his youth about Jehovah (p. 332)? Or were we witnessing a strategic movement of the absolutist host, necessitated by the unexpected force of the enemy, and a recoil of its 'left' upon its 'right' wing? Or lastly, was it to be interpreted, less charitably, as an attempt to enlist religious prejudices against the new philosophy by unfair appeals to a few travestied formulas of a musty theology?

The last seemed the boldest and riskiest strategy, and I am far from attributing it to Mr. Bradley. But I feel that we must safeguard ourselves against an interpretation and an impression which his language may countenance. I must protest therefore against the insinuation that because our views do not conform with the dogmatic definition of religion it has pleased Mr. Bradley to impose, we may fitly be branded as irreligious and as blasphemers against the deity whom Mr. Bradley so strangely denominates "the lord of suffering and of sin and of death" (p. 315). Now I am well aware that the definition of religion is a difficult matter, and that many of its empirical manifestations accord ill with any of its definitions. But since the publication of James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, I should have thought that there were two things that even the hardest apriorist would have shrunk from. The first is dogmatizing concerning what religion *must* mean, without troubling to inquire what *psychologically* the various forms of religious sentiment *have* meant. Now if Mr. Bradley had condescended for a moment to contemplate the objective facts of concrete religion, he could not but have been struck with the fact that Humanism has the closest affinities with such important religious phenomena as Newman's 'grammar of assent' and the widespread theology of Ritschl. And from James also he might have learnt that amid all the varieties of

religious feeling the one most constant conception of the divine has been, not some desiccated formula about the Unity of the Universe, but a demand for *something* to respond to the outcry of the human heart.

I should have thought, therefore, secondly, that whatever might be said about the logical subversiveness of the new views, their value for religion was secured against attack. For has not James's doctrine of the Will to believe made manifest the pragmatic value of faith, and put the religious postulates on the same footing with those of science? Nay, has not the common charge against us been that our doctrines pander to all the crudest superstitions of the vulgar? Mr. Bradley, I suppose, acquits us on this charge; but his own is far less plausible.

And when one remembers further how Mr. Bradley has himself described religion as mere 'appearance' riddled with contradictions and denied that "a God which is all in all is the God of religion,"¹ it seems—well—slightly humorous to find him now setting up standards of 'orthodox' theology and solemnly anathematising those who have doubted the omnipotence of *their* 'God' and the religious value of *his* (p. 331, cp. p. 316). One is inclined merely to retort in the words of Valentine—"Lass unsern Herr Gott aus dem Spass".

Mr. Bradley must have been well aware that his language was wholly 'popular'. He must have known, as well as Dr. Rashdall or I, that the 'omnipotence' he claims for his Absolute is *not* the 'omnipotence' of the theologians, nor is the latter obviously identical with the superhuman power adequate to all human needs which the religious sentiments seem to postulate. He must know too that in *no* religion is the Divine, the principle of Help and Justice, ever actually regarded as omnipotent in practice. Again, seeing that he has plainly shown us that his Absolute possesses the religious attributes only as it possesses all else, and that for all human purposes it is impotent and worthless, was it not most injudicious to attack our 'orthodoxy'? And has he not justly provoked the retort that *we* feel his whole Absolutism to be a worthless technicality, if its true character is revealed, and a fulsome fraud upon all man's most sacred feelings, if it is *not*?

VI.

Curiously enough, however, Mr. Bradley's paper does not close with the enigmatic piety which has provoked these

¹ *Appear. and Real.*, p. 448 (1st ed.).

comments. It is followed by a fit of agnosticism which might have come straight out of Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography*.¹ The promise of philosophy "even in the end is no clear theory nor any complete understanding or vision"; "its certain reward is a continual evidence and a heightened apprehension of the ineffable mystery of life". Only Spencer and Mr. Bradley tend in opposite directions: the former feels that this final incomprehensibility is a "paralysing thought," and inclines towards the authoritative dogma of some religion that will claim to know; the latter seems to regard it as edifying, and abandons the religious formulas to disburden himself of his contradictions in the bottomless pit of the Absolute. To the one religion holds out *more* hopes of knowledge than philosophy, to the other *less*. But as a satisfaction to the philosophic craving, to the will-to-know, neither policy, alas, seems to promise much. The philosopher's reasoning is rewarded merely with the sorry privilege accorded by Polyphemus to Odysseus.

For what profit is it, if break down it must, that it should perish somewhat later? What a satire too it is upon a philosophic quest that started with the most confident anticipations of the rationality of the universe to have to end in such fiasco! Can Mr. Bradley wonder, if this is really all his philosophy can come to, that philosophy is disregarded and despised, or that other philosophers prefer to bend their footsteps in more promising directions? And it seems still stranger that it should be deemed appropriate to scathe all fresh attempts at exploration with unmeasured contumely *a priori*. Surely a somewhat humbler and less 'hybristic' note would better become the actual situation!

VII.

I note indeed with satisfaction that in places Mr. Bradley seems to evince some dim consciousness of the real predicament. At all events he is growing more liberal in throwing open for discussion questions which we have always been assured on his side had been definitively closed. I welcome, therefore, and note for future use, Mr. Bradley's admission of "well-known difficulties" in the infinity of God (p. 331), his description of pluralism as "a very promising adventure," and the "pleasure" it would give him to learn that its difficulties can be surmounted (p. 327). The tone of these admissions, it is true, still smacks of the judge who was 'open to conviction, but by Jove would like to see the man who

¹ Cp. ii., pp. 469-471.

could convince him'. And he hastens to add that there are 'obvious difficulties' (not stated) on the other side. Nor does he make it clear why, if real antinomies exist on these points, he should have so decisively adopted the one alternative, instead of suspending judgment and looking out for a real solution.

But on the whole I read these admissions as a hopeful sign that the dwellers in 'Jericho' are not so content with their gloomy ghettos as they had seemed, nor so sure that it is in very deed the heavenly Jerusalem. Ere long they may come out to parley of their own accord and offer us terms, nay themselves dismantle antiquated defences that are useless against modern ordnance! And when the stronghold of the Absolute is once declared an open town, no longer cramped within walls, nor serving as a strait prison for the human soul, it can be refurbished and extended for those to dwell in whose tastes its habitations please. We too shall then have no further motive to molest an Absolutism which has ceased to be a menace to the liberty of thought. We may still decline to go to 'Jericho,' and prefer the open country, abiding in our tents with the household gods who suffice for our needs and need our co-operation because of their "pathetic weakness".¹ But why should we contend against Absolutes like Prof. Taylor's, which is finally reduced to an emotional postulate,² or Prof. Royce's³ genial conception, which becomes the ultimate satisfaction of our social instincts and forms a sort of *salon* where all are at home and can meet their friends, so long as we escape the grim all-compelling monster of Mr. Bradley's nightmare? And when we are no longer treated as Ishmaelites, there will be peace in the land, a peace attained, not by what must surely by this time seem the impossible method of snubbing and snuffing out the new philosophy, but by a mutual toleration based on respect for the various idiosyncrasies of men. Nor will there then any longer be occasion to reproach Philosophy that its favourite *idolon fori* is simply Billingsgate.

Life will be easier in those days, with it philosophy. For philosophers will have ceased to confound obscurity with profundity, difficulty with truth, and to expect that because some truths are hard, therefore all hard sayings are true. Nor will they any longer feel aggrieved, like Mr. Bradley (p. 335 s.f.), at the prospect of everything that would render

¹ In Dr. Bussell's striking phrase (*Personal Idealism*, p. 341).

² *Elements of Metaphysics*, p. 317.

³ *On the Eternal and the Practical*.

philosophy easier and more attractive. For they will realise that the intrinsic difficulties of thinking as an exercise of faculty will always suffice to preserve the 'dignity' of philosophy, and that it is needless to enhance them by adding unintelligibilities and aimless word-play.

Philosophy will always be hard, I agree. In some respects and for three reasons: because thinking is the hardest of exercises, because it presupposes much special knowledge to grasp the *use* of general conceptions which are devoid of meaning in abstraction from the experience they serve to organise, and because to rethink *old* conceptions into *new* ones is irksome and frequently demands a flash of insight before we can really 'see' it all. But one might well despair of the human reason if what had once been clearly thought could not always be lucidly expressed. And so there exists no reason for making Philosophy anything like so hard, repulsive and unprofitable as the systems with which we have been cowed too long.

In conclusion I must deplore that this paper has had to be so polemical that it has had to leave unnoticed many points of agreement between Mr. Bradley's views and mine. But though in his polemic zeal Mr. Bradley also has failed to emphasise them, they are clearly growing, and if they are studied, more particularly by those friends of his from whose failure to understand he appears to have derived so much comfort (p. 329), it will be vain to deny that Philosophy has really been progressing.