

concluding chapters of my *Symbolic Logic and Its Applications*, a book to which Mr. Shearman refers in his recently published volume. This *Calculus of Limits* was published in the *Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society* in 1877, under the title of *The Calculus of Equivalent Statements and Integration Limits*. From the logical principles therein laid down flowed all my subsequent researches. By a general symbolic process this calculus solves with ease, though not always briefly, various kinds of problems in mathematics which (except in very simple cases) cannot (so far as I know) be solved in any other way. This calculus Mr. Shearman entirely ignores. Will he allow me, in all courtesy, to put to him the following pertinent questions: Does he know of any other general symbolic method that can deal with the same classes of problems? If he does, will he kindly show how the method can be applied to the last two problems in my recently published book? And with regard to the ordinary traditional logic, does he know of any other symbolic system that, like mine, first corrects a fundamental error running through all syllogisms as usually written, and then supersedes the so-called "canons" of the ordinary text-books by one simple and easily applied formula? It is true that this formula is founded on my division of statements into *certainities*, *impossibilities*, and *variables*, and that, like mathematical formulæ, it is wholly independent of psychology—two revolutionary innovations in formal logic which Mr. Shearman has evidently made up his mind never to accept.

NOTE IN REPLY TO DR. FAIRBAIRN.

Before offering some remarks on such of his criticisms as seem to betray a misconception of the relevant facts, I wish to thank Dr. Fairbairn for the kind words with which he concludes his review of my *History of English Rationalism in the Nineteenth Century*. If so distinguished a representative of religious thought has found my book "interesting" and "instructive," and if I may take him as representing a class, the hopes expressed in my Preface have been amply fulfilled.

In reference to the long discussion about the meaning of the words "rationalism" and "dogma," which occupies about three-fifths of the review, I might say a good deal, but must forbear, all my space being required for points admitting of a direct appeal to facts.

"Scarcely a man here named" [in my *History*], says Dr. Fairbairn, "began to be in the nineteenth century" (p. 274). Such an assertion takes away one's breath. I have read the sentence over and over again to make sure that my eyes did not deceive me; I have consulted a keen-sighted friend who assures me that the words stand as I have quoted them; I fear there can be no mistake. Yet my Index contains over seventy names, mentioned in connexion with the rationalistic movement, of English writers who "began to be" or, in ordinary language, were born within the century.

"Those that do" (*sic*), continues Dr. Fairbairn, "are characteristic only so far as they are formed by other than English or native influences." I can make no grammar and little sense of the first three words, the first example given being Coleridge, who was born in 1772. But presumably the reviewer means that the English rationalists named by me who did "begin to be" in the nineteenth century without exception got their rationalism from foreign sources. If so against this hardy assertion I set the names of Charles Hennell (who impressed Strauss as eminently English), F. W. Newman, W. R. Greg, Buckle, Herbert.

Spencer, Huxley, Clifford, Romanes (in his rationalistic period), J. R. Green, Mr. John Morley (who seems to have been converted by Greg and Mansel), Holyoake, and Bradlaugh. That makes a round dozen, and the list could be extended.

"Nothing is said to explain the influence of Kant's works [on English thought] either as original or as recent." Who would imagine on reading this that I had given a summary of Kant's philosophy from the theological point of view; that I had traced his influence on Coleridge; that I had defined the extent of Hamilton's indebtedness to him; or that I had shown how the character of the English genius renders it peculiarly fitted to accept an agnosticism largely based on Kant's *Critique* (vol. ii., p. 201 *seq.*)?

"Strauss is credited with introducing to us the knowledge of Hegel, though Baur did more to introduce him than even his brilliant pupil." As it happens, Strauss came first, having been read in England long before Baur, whose Gospel-criticism is much later than that of his "brilliant disciple"; and Hegel once introduced could take care of himself; G. H. Lewes reviewed his *Aesthetics* in the *Westminster* in 1842; and Jowett began to study him in 1844, two or three years before he took up Baur.

"Nor is anything said about Holland, though there is a brief reference to the French translation of Kuenen." My reference is not to the French translation as such but to Renan's Preface to it. I recognise Kuenen's position fully in pointing out the decisive direction given to his criticism by reading Colenso's First Part (ii., 143).

A singularly obscure reference to Collins's definition of Free-thought seems to insinuate that I ignore the dependence of Collins on Locke, whereas I expressly mention it. Dr. Fairbairn becomes clearer when he quotes me as saying that "the leading Free-thinkers were Whigs," adding, "left to myself, I should have said they belonged to the opposite section of political thought. His evidence is mainly taken from their adversaries. What Pope and Bolingbroke, what Hume and Gibbon were in politics we know; and it is a great mistake indeed to attribute a later temper to an earlier time." I make no such mistake, and the charge is simply scandalous. The words quoted are indeed mine, but the qualifications accompanying them are omitted. What I really say is as follows: "The leading free-thinkers of that period [1713]—or at least the declared ones—were Whigs; although some distinguished Tories such as Pope and Bolingbroke were known to hold the same opinions in private. Swift takes advantage of this circumstance . . . to saddle the whole Whig party with the odium of rejecting the popular religion" (i., 121).

At the time of which I am writing the leading avowed free-thinkers were Shaftesbury, Toland, and Collins. All three were Whigs. So was Tindal, then not yet famous, but not unknown. My evidence about their political opinions is *not* mainly taken from their adversaries but from their biographies.

It is alleged that I "give a list of writers of the eighteenth century, and infer that literature was mainly Irish, Scotch or Continental. This," adds Dr. Fairbairn, "is surely a mistake, when we have men like Pope, Addison, Berkeley, Fielding, Gibbon, and, rounding off the century, Johnson. If we go with Arbuthnot into Scotland we shall find Thomson, Robertson, Hume, Boswell, Smollett." Noting incidentally that Berkeley was not English but Irish, I protest against this utter perversion of my meaning. I make no such list and draw no such inference. Speaking solely of the Queen Anne period, I infer (rightly or wrongly) "a relative sterility on the side of the mother country" from "the surprising number of Irish writers," giving in a note the names of Swift, Berkeley, Steele, and Farquhar. I also mention that Congreve was

educated in Ireland, that Vanbrugh was of Flemish extraction, and Arbuthnot a Scotchman (i., 118). None of the Scotch writers mentioned by Dr. Fairbairn came into literature until a good while after Queen Anne. The isolated mention of Arbuthnot might surely have opened his eyes to the sufficiently obvious fact that I was occupied solely with the time when Collins's *Discourse* appeared. Not content with making mountains out of molehills he makes them out of valleys.

"Mr. Benn's account of 'Positive' and 'Positivism' is more popular than scientific. The term is to be understood through Roman Law which opposed the *Jus Positivum* to the *Jus Naturale* rather than through any analysis of the positive man." Dr. Fairbairn must excuse my saying that he is quite mistaken. He will admit, I hope, that Littré in his double capacity as a Comtist and an etymologist knew something about the matter. I open his Dictionary at the word "positif"; I find it defined, to begin with, as "qui est assuré," then secondarily as "qui s'appuie sur les faits"; and in this connexion he explains that Comte's philosophy is called "positive," as professing to emanate from the sciences that are based on facts. Then he specifies, as I have done, the use peculiar to French of positive as opposed to imaginative and ideal. Afterwards comes a quite distinct section explaining the legal use of "positif" as opposed to "naturel," and here there is no reference to Positivism. Indeed so far is there from being an antithesis between "positive," in Comte's sense, and "natural," that Comte himself points out a considerable analogy between his philosophy and what the English since Newton understand as natural philosophy; while Littré again in his Introduction compares Comte's classification of the Sciences to the natural as distinguished from the artificial systems of botany and zoology. Thus Dr. Fairbairn's etymological clue leads off on a false track. If that is a specimen of his "scientific" method, I prefer being "popular".

Had such unfounded criticisms appeared anonymously in a weekly religious journal, they might have been let pass unnoticed. Appearing in MIND under an authoritative signature they might damage my credit as a historian if I did not show on what sort of basis they rest.

ALFRED W. BENN.

SOME REMARKS ON A RECENT FOOT-NOTE BY MR. BRADLEY.

In a foot-note on page 172 of the last number of MIND Mr. Bradley seems to reiterate his former claim (N.S., No. 55, p. 439) to have answered by anticipation, in his *Appearance*, my criticism (N.S., No. 54) of his doctrine of the "Absolute Criterion". But he maintains a complete, if not unintelligible, silence in regard to the fact that in N.S., No. 57, page 141, he was challenged to produce "any passage or passages in the pages he now refers to in which the main objection I have urged has been even so much as recognised". In that short reply I further took the trouble of condensing the said objection as follows: "The gravamen of my criticism lay in this, that whereas Mr. Bradley had asserted that the principle of contradiction affords an absolute criterion for distinguishing appearance from reality, I pointed out that self-contradiction is only foreign to reality in so far as it is foreign to appearance as such".

To excuse one's self from directly answering an adverse criticism by claiming to have answered it already, and then, being exhorted to state