

IMMEDIATE RESEMBLANCE.

May another word be permitted in reply to Mr. Bradley's second utterance on this subject, as possibly helping to clear up the dispute? My point of view was merely psychological in contending, as I did in my book, for the admission of immediate resemblance as an ultimate category of our perception, and of comparison as an ultimate function of our thought. The doctrine (made so plausible by familiar examples) that all resemblances must be analysable into identities concealed under non-identities, I showed could not be extended to every imaginable case. Mr. Bradley now says that immediate resemblance without identity seems to him 'sheer nonsense,' and that 'to deny the principle of Identity is to destroy the world,' and he challenges me again to 'state the principle' on which I 'object to identity'. To which challenge I can only reply that to Identity as such I have no objection in the world, and am astonished that any one should suspect me of such an irrational aversion. Every act of reasoning, every bit of analysis, proves the practical utility and the psychological necessity of the assumption that identical characters may be 'encapsulated' in different things. But I say that there must be *some* things whose resemblance is *not* based on such discernible and abstractable identity. Now, the identity on which Mr. Bradley himself thinks that the resemblance between all things must be based is no such abstractable identity. It is not separable, it is not even discernible, he says, from difference. It is only one aspect of an integral whole on which you may lay stress for a moment, but if you abstract it, or put it ideally in a box by itself, you make it self-inconsistent, or reduce it to nothing. But an 'identity' thus conceived is so different a thing from the stark self-sameness which 'identity' denotes in logic, that it seems unfortunate to describe it by the same name. The usual English name for that sort of identity between two things which you cannot abstract or distinguish from their difference is their 'resemblance'. So that Mr. Bradley now makes perfectly clear that in seeming to attack Prof. Stumpf's and my doctrine he is but reaffirming it under a changed name. When he insists that every resemblance must have for its inner ground an 'identity' thus complicatedly conceived, he is like a man who should say "every resemblance must have for its inner ground the resemblance itself." Why, such being the case, he should quarrel with me I cannot fathom: for this is exactly the opinion I have myself stood up for in all simple cases. Can it be the word 'simple' which has caused all the trouble?—for I believe that in my book I did heedlessly use the expression 'simple resemblance' in one place. But I never meant thereby to imply that the simplest phenomenon of resemblance might not seem, when contemplated long enough, fairly to curdle and swim with inner complexity, to embody inseparable oppositions, or whatever more of vital mystery any one may find. The simplest ideas, as I meant to use the word simple, begin to look the queerest when gazed at in this

way. But such gazing is a 'metaphysical' occupation, in which we shall all indulge, I am sure, with the greatest profit, when Mr. Bradley's new book comes out. I never meant to go beyond psychology; and on that relatively superficial plane I now confidently greet Mr. Bradley, no longer as the foe which by a mere verbal ambiguity he has seemed, but as a powerful and welcome ally.

WM. JAMES.

I should be glad to accept Prof. James' conclusion that the question between us is about a word. But to me both resemblance and identity, as he advocates them, are mere self-contradictory ideas. Resemblance without identity, and again "stark self-sameness" without difference, seem counterpart pieces of nonsense, nonsense unwarranted either in psychology or logic. And surely Prof. James does deny Identity in the one sense in which I admit it. But with regard to Resemblance I would once more solicit attention to certain points.

Is Prof. James prepared to maintain that where the point of sameness is not explicit it does not exist? Does he hold that in the end we have resemblance, though there is no point in which the things are alike and on which the resemblance is founded? Or, if not, will he explain why this point is not to be called one and the same? Does he teach that in a series you may have degrees of more and less which are more and less of nothing? Or, if not, will he tell us why this one something, of which there are degrees, is not to be called the same? And, when a series is perceived as one, is its unity to lie in resemblance without sameness? And, if so, may we be informed whether there is only one such resemblance or several? And, if there are several, where are we to hold that the unity lies? And, if there is but one such resemblance, will Prof. James say how the serial differences in resemblance remain themselves, so long as through all there may not be any point of sameness? This last question cannot be troublesome to one who has understood and applauded Prof. Stumpf's dialectical exploit. But if the objection is verbal and applies not to "same" and "sameness" but only to "identity" and "identical," may we have that stated?

It is easy to discredit such questions as idle conundrums asked in the interest of some obscure and foolish mysticism. It is easy to disregard them and to stand on inherited dogma. That is all so easy that in the present case I looked for something more interesting. But I leave it to the reader to judge whether these inquiries do not fall within psychology, and whether some answer to them should not be supplied by any satisfactory treatment of psychological principles. I am confident that Prof. James, if he could be induced to deal with these problems, would not fail to throw light on them. He would certainly find that our difference involved much more than the mere meaning of a word.

F. H. BRADLEY.