

THE COHERENCE THEORY OF TRUTH IN

BRADLEY'S PHILOSOPHY

by

JONATHAN ROBINSON, M.A.

OCTOBER 1953.



## INDEX

	<u>page</u>
Chapter I. Bradley's Philosophy in Ethical Studies.....	1
Chapter II. Immediate Experience.....	36
Appendix I. A Remark on Whitehead's Theory of Feeling.....	66
Appendix II. The Sense Data Theory of the Given.....	69
Chapter III. Judgement.....	79
Appendix III. Kant and Hegel on Judgement and System.....	99
Chapter IV. Modality.....	109
Chapter V. Inference.....	129
Chapter VI. Inference II.....	164
Chapter VII. Appearance and Reality.....	193
Appendix IV. Hegel and the Knowledge of Reality.....	237
Chapter VIII. Truth.....	245
Bibliography.....	276

## THE COHERENCE THEORY OF TRUTH IN BRADLEY'S PHILOSOPHY

'When in the reason's philosophy the rational appears dominant and sole possessor of the world, we can only wonder what place would be left to it, if the element excluded might break through the charm of the magic circle, and, without growing rational, could find expression. Such an idea may be senseless and such a thought may contradict itself, but it serves to give expression to an obstinate instinct.'

### Bradley in The Principles of Logic

'Only a rich man may wear a bad coat, and only a philosopher of Mr. Bradley's force could escape suspicions of a crude dualistic realism.'

### B. Bosanquet in Knowledge and Reality

CHAPTER 1.

Bradley's Philosophy in Ethical Studies

'Those who try to treat politics and morals separately will never understand either of them.'

Rousseau: Emile Liv. IV.

The purpose of this thesis is to expound the coherence theory of truth as found in Bradley's philosophy, and the aim of this chapter is to illustrate the general shape and emphasis of Bradley's thought by outlining some of the important points in his ethical theory. That is, while his work is by no means a tightly organized system, nonetheless his writings do possess certain common features and show a fairly consistent orientation towards philosophical problems; and, consequently, if we take one part of his thought and describe it in general we will be able to detect certain principles which will serve to guide us through the more detailed analysis of subsequent chapters. We will examine these principles below, but in the meantime we will make some remarks on the aim of this thesis.

The title, that is 'The Coherence Theory of Truth in Bradley's Philosophy', suggests that we have two purposes. The first of these being an account of the coherence theory in general, and the second a description of its particular form in Bradley's work. This supposition is correct to the extent that the historical background of Bradley's thought can illuminate his own position. Yet if our historical background is incomplete we have not thus imperfectly fulfilled our first task, for in discussing Bradley's own theory we are at the same time discussing the coherence theory; that is, the theory does not live by itself in some remote heaven

apart from its particular embodiments in the work of different philosophers. Thus even if the theory has had a long history it is not something apart from Bradley's work, and this means that our two purposes will for the most part be identical.

Nevertheless, they do diverge to the extent that Bradley introduced radical innovations into the traditional view, and these innovations can only be understood to be such when at least something of the historical background is presented. Thus, in spite of the fact that in discussing Bradley's work we are ipso facto discussing the coherence theory of truth, this study will be at least facilitated if we are enabled to appreciate something of the philosophical context in which he wrote, and the problems set him by the history of philosophy.

Bradley's own philosophical environment was the empiricism of Mill and Bain and their train of minute philosophers. In later years he was to call this empiricism 'a dense body of stupid tradition and ancestral prejudice'.<sup>1</sup> It was an environment which did not differ too much from our own, with its insistence on analysis, and its rejection of 'transcendentalism' which all the time hid the presence of unexamined metaphysical dogma. To this philosophy he brought his critical sceptical mind and a warm admiration for German thought. Yet this admiration was by no means unqualified, and one of the basic reasons for this was his adherence to what might be called the motive behind a great deal of British philosophy. This motive is respect for fact and for the common world of perception,

---

1. Appearance and Reality, 'Preface' p. 10, Second Edition, Tenth Impression, 1946. In future I shall refer to this book as A&R in the notes, and in the text, for the most part, as Appearance.

and this at least Bradley shared with his countrymen.

We are faced then with the task of providing at least enough of an historical background to appreciate how Bradley differed from the German philosophy which so influenced him.

We can learn enough of this background by considering Kant and Hegel. Bradley's philosophy, in so far as it shows the influence of German philosophy which is not Hegelian, is of a Kantian origin. Now when I say Kantian I do not mean that the particular view in question is derived specifically from Kant, but that the view is common to Kant and his successors. In 1885 Bosanquet accused Bradley of attaching himself to the 'writers of the German reaction'<sup>1</sup>. This phrase may have indicated the neo-Kantians at Marburg, or the 'scientific metaphysicians' such as Lotze and von Hartmann, but whichever it meant, it signified a reaction against the Hegelian form of idealism.<sup>2</sup> But in so far as such a reaction is still a kind of idealism it seems to me that some sort of Kantianism will be the result.

I put the matter in this indefinite way as some of the ideas which Bradley and Kant have in common are shared with other thinkers. For example, both Kant and sometimes Bradley teach that human thought cannot glimpse anything beyond itself, or more generally, that human experience does not transcend itself.<sup>3</sup> This idea is shared by many other thinkers as well, but given Bradley's philosophical interests I can see no reason to deny, in so far as the idea is derived at all, that it is Kantian in origin. Thus, while it is no doubt correct to say that Hume held that human experience could not go beyond itself no one ever thinks of saying so, because Hume never

1. Knowledge and Reality 'Preface' p. VII, London, Kegan Paul, 1885.
2. The information on the state of German philosophy at Bradley's time is taken from Contemporary German Philosophy, by W. Brock, C.U.P. 1935.
3. This is especially true of the first edition of the Principles, but see infra pp. 270-275.

discussed problems in this way, and we know long before any such problem is even raised what his attitude towards it would be. But when we say that Kant holds the same doctrine we are asserting something of importance as it marks a definite line beyond which he would not go.

The notion that there is a Kantian element in Bradley's thought is familiar to anyone who has read any commentaries on his work. C. R. Morris for example in Idealistic Logic brings out the tremendous influence which Kant had on all subsequent forms of idealism, and more particularly the similarity of many of his and Bradley's views. Again, G. R. G. More has no hesitation in attributing many of the non-Hegelian elements in Bradley's work to the influence of Kant. In both An Introduction to Hegel and a Study in Hegel's Logic he gives careful attention to the Kantian elements in Bradley's thought. Finally, Professor Kemp Smith in his Commentary on the First Critique, states that 'Modern logic, as developed by Lotze, Sigwart, Bradley, and Bosanquet, is, in large part, the recasting of general logic in terms of the results reached by Kant's transcendental enquiries'.<sup>1</sup> It would thus seem that we are at least justified in looking for a Kantian element in Bradley's thought.

We must add at once, however, that even when we have searched for, and elucidated, the Kantian elements in Bradley's thought, he accepted everything which Hegel wrote in criticism of Kant. This will mean that those Kantian elements which we are able to detect will represent a return to the Kantian position which has been mediated by the Hegelian criticism. To enable us to understand this we must adumbrate the relation of Bradley to Hegel's thought.

---

1. N. K. Smith, Commentary on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, Macmillan, London 1918, p. 181.

In the 'Preface' to the first edition of The Principles of Logic, published in 1883, we have his own statement of this relationship. 'For Hegel himself, assuredly I think him a great philosopher; but I never could have called myself an Hegelian, partly because I cannot say that I have mastered his system, and partly because I could not accept what seems his main principle. I have no wish to conceal how much I owe to his writings; but I will leave it to those who can judge better than myself, to fix the limits within which I have followed him. As for the "Hegelian School" which exists in our reviews, I know no one who has met with it anywhere else.'<sup>1</sup> Again in 1922 he wrote 'I did not, and do not, know the limits of my indebtedness to Hegel; and if once I began to acknowledge what I owed, I felt that I might be taken to deny or to ignore, wherever such an acknowledgement was omitted. I feared to fall into at least a tacit claim to originality, a claim which throughout my whole career I have, I hope, everywhere avoided, and with regard to which I entertain a feeling of something like contempt'.<sup>2</sup>

It would be a brave man who would consider himself better qualified than Bradley to judge the precise limits to which he had followed Hegel. Yet from the above we learn at least that he was greatly indebted to Hegel, but could not accept 'what seems his main principle'. This principle I take to be Hegel's belief that the real is the rational. Bradley was unable to accept this fundamental principle, which is taken as a starting point and is supposed to be justified in the actual process of philosophizing, because he could not see how a reality which was Mind could account for the existence of feeling. This is not to say that Hegel was unaware of feeling, he

1. The Principles of Logic, 'Preface' to the first edition. All references in this thesis are taken from the second edition published in 1922, corrected in 1928, and reprinted in 1950, which preserved the text of the first edition and added notes to each chapter, and twelve 'Terminal Essays'.
2. Principles of Logic, p.515.

had some important things to say about psychology, and feeling plays an important place in both the Phenomenology and The Philosophy of Spirit. Hegel was not the fool he is so often made out to be, and he is often more 'empirical' than the empiricists in his analysis of the actual situation in which finite experients find themselves. What Bradley is objecting to is Hegel's belief that feeling and the world of our experience is ultimately a manifestation of Spirit or Mind.<sup>1</sup>

When we say 'manifestation' this is not to be understood in the Christian sense of creation, but in the Spinozistic interpretation as substance. Hegel's Absolute, however, is not merely substance, it is also subject, that is, it is an active principle which, in order to achieve a more concrete embodiment of itself, puts itself forth in a dialectical process.<sup>2</sup> This process has, as some of its 'moments' or functional parts, the world of nature and of finite experience.

Bradley attempted to retain the doctrine of an absolute reality which was manifested in different forms, but this absolute was not Mind but was an experience which was more like feeling than anything else.<sup>3</sup> Now, because the Absolute is not thought, but something other than thought, Bradley is less metaphysical than Hegel. He is content to describe the outlines of reality; what we know must be, but which we do not see is the case, or understand how it can be so. The fact that thought cannot know reality in any detail introduces a dualistic element into his work. Dualistic, that is, in the sense that reality and thought are looked upon as being of two distinct natures.

This separation of thought and experience also gave a peculiar twist to his metaphysics in that his proof for the existence of the Absolute is of

1. See infra pp. 62-63.
2. See infra Appendix IV, pp. 239-241.
3. See infra Ch. VII, pp. 215-221.

the cosmological and not the ontological type. Hegel contended that the ontological proof was the basis of all sound philosophy because it asserted the unity of thought and being. Now in maintaining this he was following a tradition as old as Plato, and one which dominated the thought of the early Middle Ages. The argument depends on a kind of experience, on an inwardness, and for thinkers of this type the way to a knowledge of the ultimate reality is by a kind of inward experience.<sup>1</sup>

The later Middle Ages under the influence of Aquinas rejected this inward approach of Augustine and Anselm and maintained that the way to the one reality was more 'objective' and 'scientific', it was by a consideration of nature, and by a realization of its deficiencies that we proved the existence of God. A contingentia mundi was the watchword of these thinkers.

Most idealist thinkers are insistent that the early way is the better way, and they accept Kant's argument that the cosmological proof depends for its validity on the ontological,<sup>2</sup> while at the same time discounting his rejection of the latter argument. Bradley, on the other hand, attempted to build his argument for the Absolute on a cosmological type of proof. The reasons for this, aside from a sceptical element in his own nature which made him seek something more than the proof of his philosophy in a personal experience, was the dualistic element in his thought. The world of our experience has two elements, thought and reality. Thought considers reality and seeks to understand the implications of the finite and so pronounces that there is an Absolute. Only when we have reached this stage can we assert that in some ultimate way thought and existence are manifestations of the same Absolute.

---

1. See Chapter VII for a more detailed discussion of this point.  
2. See Critique of Pure Reason A 603, B 631.

The germ of this dualistic element can be seen even in his first book Ethical Studies, although it does not become explicit until the first edition of The Principles. In Ethical Studies we find that in spite of his acceptance of many Hegelian doctrines such as the concrete universal, and an emphasis on the importance of the state for morality; nonetheless, we do not see the state as an expression of the Absolute because the nature of morality is such that it demands our adherence to an ideal which is beyond any visible institution. This ideal, furthermore, is only grasped in religion which depends on faith. In other words, then, even in Ethical Studies the world of everyday living and experience is contrasted with a more perfect reality which we can only imperfectly grasp.

We have said that there was a Kantian element in Bradley's thought, although it was mediated by the Hegelian criticism. Now, that we have some idea of Bradley's differences with Hegel, we are in a better position to understand what this means. Because the reality which the nature of morality demands is imperfectly known, Bradley's ethical theory emphasizes the finite individuals' relation to the whole, not the whole's realization of itself in and through finite individuals. His theory in the end is 'realize the good will', and while there are significant differences in his and Kant's understanding of this, such a theory is at least not un-Kantian. In this chapter we shall consider these ethical problems in more detail, but first we shall indicate what I regard as Bradley's partial return to Kantian positions in those other parts of his work which will be our concern in the remaining chapters of this thesis.

Kant's logic, unlike Hegel's, is largely concerned with the theory of judgement, and this is true of Bradley's as well. Again Bradley holds that

thought is discursive and has no moment of intuition, and this again he shares with Kant. These logical views have important consequences for Bradley's metaphysics, and in the latter chapters of this thesis we will have to ask if Bradley's Absolute is not something very akin to Kant's thing-in-itself,<sup>1</sup> and whether reason's ideal of systematic coherence is not something closer to one of Kant's regulative ideas than to Hegel's belief that coherence is a description of the nature of reality itself.

For the remainder of this chapter, however, we will be concerned with Bradley's ethical theory. Here we shall try to show how, in spite of his acceptance of Hegel's criticism of the Kantian moral philosophy, he evolved a theory which in many respects marks a return to Kant, or at least possesses certain Kantian characteristics.

## II.

In this section we will begin with an outline of the argument of the remainder of the chapter, which is itself divided into three parts. In the first we consider how Bradley argues, as did Kant, that morality can have no theoretical justification. We then go on to give a brief summary of Kant's theory of the good will. In the second section we have Hegel's criticism of this doctrine, and a resumé of how he sought to make the idea of the autonomous will concrete in the state. Thirdly we consider how Bradley's essay 'My Station and its Duties' is in many ways a non-dialectical reformulation of the Philosophy of Right; but then we show how his insistence that the laws of the state are not always the expression of the free will of the individual, lead him to assert that the good which we seek is partly ideal, or unrealized, and that consequently my duty may necessitate my disobeying the laws of the state.

---

1. See infra Chapter VII, Sec. 2b, p. 227 et seq.

This throws the individual back on himself, and of course wreaks havoc with the Hegelian ethical theory. At the same time we insist that, while his theory in the end is summed up by 'realize yourself as the good will', it is, metaphysically speaking, far removed from Kant.

1. In this part we are to consider the argument common to both Kant and Bradley that morality can have no theoretical justification, as well as to give a brief outline of Kant's theory of the good will.

Ethical Studies is a book containing seven essays and a chapter called 'Concluding Remarks'. The most important for our purposes are numbers II, IV, V, and VI, that is, 'Why Should I be Moral', 'Duty for Duty's Sake', 'My Station and its Duties', and 'Ideal Morality'. The most difficult problem for an interpretation of Bradley's thought is the relationship between the fourth and fifth essays, but for our purpose in this part it is the second essay which will be our concern.

The second essay makes the point that the material for moral philosophy is sui generis, and is of a different type from our ordinary knowledge of objects. That is, while we might feel that it is rational to ask why I should be moral, nonetheless, 'morality (and she is reason) teaches us that, if we look on her only as good for something else, we never in that case have seen her at all'.<sup>1</sup> In fact to ask why in this case shows that we are dogmatically assuming that morality must be dependent on something else, we are asking for an end which is not in itself moral.

Here, then, practically at the beginning of his career, Bradley is closer at least to the spirit of Kant than Hegel. For in Hegel's work there

---

1. Ethical Studies, O.U.P., second edition 1927, p. 49. This book was first published in 1876. Hereafter referred to in the notes as E.S.

is at least the attempt to give morality a theoretical justification, as the idea of the good is subordinated to the idea of the true. Bradley, on the other hand, seems to be expressing Kant's own position on this particular point. Kant, that is, distinguished between theoretical and practical reason. Reason in its practical employment was concerned with the grounds for determining our will. This practical reason is said to have the primacy by which is meant that the interest or motive of practical reason determines theoretical reason, because all interest is ultimately practical.<sup>1</sup> The idea of freedom, for example, only becomes of importance to theoretical reason because of its importance in connection with morality.

Morality Kant held had need of three postulates, freedom which plays the most important role, and God and immortality. Insight into these ideas, in the sense of understanding what they were really like as objects of the speculative reason 'would render theology and morals', and through the union of these two, likewise religion, and therewith the highest ends of our existence, entirely and exclusively dependent on the faculty of speculative reason'.<sup>2</sup> If this state were ever to be achieved then morality would be impossible, because we would no longer act from the only moral motive which is respect for the concept of law, but we would be constrained by motives which were external to the will. '(God and eternity with their awful majesty would stand unceasingly before our eyes... Transgression of the law, would, no doubt, be avoided; what is commanded would be done; but the mental disposition, from which actions ought to proceed, cannot be infused by any command, and in this case the spur to action is ever active and external...most of the

---

1. Critique of Practical Reason, Abbott translation, paragraph 260 et seq.  
2. Critique of Pure Reason, B 395, note.

actions that conformed to the law would be done from fear, a few only from hope, and none at all from duty, and the moral worth of actions....would disappear.<sup>1</sup>

Morality, then, for both Kant and Bradley can have no theoretical justification, for if it did morality would cease to be independent, and for Kant at least the possibility of moral action would altogether disappear.

For Hegel, on the other hand, the moral idea is not underivative, but needs 'the moment of the theoretical idea'.<sup>2</sup> That is, the idea of the good is incomplete, and requires a final theoretical justification. Hegel seems to argue that as morality is a rational activity it is deficient in the degree to which it cannot provide its own justification. The idea of willing is not fully consistent with the rest of knowing, because willing seeks to alter reality, but if it alters reality then it alters the world of truth, and in doing this it separates itself from the theoretical idea which seeks to comprehend what is. But in so separating itself it is not consistent, because so long as it is so separated it cannot become what it has in it to become, that is, what it truly is. And it cannot become what it truly is because it has cut itself off from the theoretical idea.

The reader even if he has tried to follow this last paragraph might still ask why morality should try to become what it truly is. That is, he might see that morality is an incomplete idea, but agree with Kant that so far as we are concerned there is no more to be said. It is here that we meet with Hegel's insistence that the real is rational and that consequently

- 
1. Critique of Practical Reason, par. 294
  2. Science of Logic, Johnston and Struthers translation, p. 463, hereafter referred to as L.L. (larger logic) to distinguish it from the Logic of the Encyclopaedia.

the moral idea is only real to the extent it can be seen to be part of a rational dialectic.

We can conclude, then, that on this first point Bradley is closer to Kant than Hegel. We cannot call Bradley a Kantian in moral theory, however, at least not yet, because we find that he accepts verbatim Hegel's criticism of Kant's theory. This theory holds in essence that the only thing which is good without any qualification is a good will. Bradley says of this that it is 'no metaphysical fiction. It is a truth of life and the moral consciousness. A man is not called good because he is rich, nor because he is handsome or clever. He is good when he is moral, and he is moral when his actions are conformed to and embody a good will, or when the will is good'<sup>1</sup>. Now while Bradley accepts this, he also insists, along with Hegel, that the concept of the good will tells us little or nothing, and indeed we find that Hegel has no quarrel with this general formulation of Kant's position. We must, then, probe a little deeper in order to understand the Hegelian criticism.

Kant held that to act morally was to act in accordance with the conception of law, and the motive for such action was respect for the law, which was engendered by our experience of obligation. If we act with regard for consequences we find that our will is determined by objects in the world of nature and this leads to what is called heteronomy. A moral will, however, is autonomous and free. Free, that is, from the determinations of the sensible world, but not free in the sense of license to act in a purely idiosyncratic way. The freedom of morality is another type of causality in which we become subject to the necessity of not being able to do wrong. Thus the freedom of the will also means that we are not determined by any sensible particular.

---

1. E.S., p. 143.

Kant also tried to provide a kind of formula by which we could determine whether any proposed action was in fact moral. This was to universalize the maxim of our action and see whether or not the result was fit to serve as a universal law; 'this is the sole condition under which a will can never contradict itself'.<sup>1</sup> In human beings this universal law is always present to us as an ought, something which we only imperfectly realize, and consequently practical reason is conscious of its own defects and limitations.

Finally, Kant introduced the idea of a summum bonum. Moral action in this world has no connection with the happiness of the agent, and yet we feel it ought to have. Yet given the world of nature which is not determined by freedom and morality, the notion of happiness which is proportionate to freedom must remain a continual beyond, something which is unrealized. We should add in fairness to Kant that while he calls the summum bonum the object of practical reason, he does not intend that it should be looked upon as a motive to morality.<sup>2</sup>

In Chapter IV of Ethical Studies Bradley argues that a good will must be universal, in fact that the good will is a universal will because it must be good for everyone. I think that this may be so, but on the other hand I do not believe that Kant wanted to say this. There is a similar problem facing anyone who tries to deal with Kant's theory of the transcendental unity of apperception -- is there only one, or are there many? Kant, I believe, would not have held that there is only one will which is differentiated in so far as individuals do not perfectly realize it. On

---

1. Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals, Abbott translation, p.55.  
2. See The Critique of Practical Reason, Bk. II, Ch. II.

the other hand, as we shall see, there seems no reason why he did not say this. And in his political philosophy he does speak of the general will.

This then is a brief sketch of some of the points in Kant's moral philosophy which were to be of importance in the philosophies of both Hegel and Bradley. In the next part we shall examine Hegel's criticism of this doctrine, and present a summary of how he sought to give the Kantian philosophy a more concrete nature.

2. Hegel believed that Kant's moral philosophy was far superior to his First Critique, as practical reason was sensible of its own deficiencies, and so was aware of 'absoluteness', where theoretical reason was not. That is, for the latter its ideals were only ideal, while for the former the law itself showed practical reason its own limitations, but at the same time it became aware of the reality which was beyond itself. 'The satisfying part of Kant's philosophy,' wrote Hegel, 'is that truth is at least set within the heart; and hence I acknowledge that, and that alone, which is in conformity with my determined nature.'<sup>1</sup> Kant might have disliked the language, but it certainly expresses one facet of his thought.

The moral man, as we know, has the moral law as part of his own nature, and this law is grounded in freedom and the autonomy of the will. The essence of the will is that it should determine itself from itself; and so practical reason gives itself laws. All this is contrasted with the will which determines itself by inclinations so leading to heteronomy; for desires belong to nature, not to the real world of freedom. All this, says Hegel, is most important, and it is essential to emphasize that the will

---

1. Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. III, p. 458, translated by E. Haldane and F. Simpson, Kegan Paul 1876.

has no aim other than that derived from itself, the aim of its freedom. It is a great advance, he says, when it has been established that 'the last hinge' on which man turns is freedom -- freedom which is a 'highest possible pinnacle', which allows nothing further to be imposed upon it; 'thus man bows to no authority, and acknowledges no obligations, where his freedom is not respected'.<sup>1</sup>

The defect of this is that the practical reason as law giving is supposed to be concrete as delivering the moral law. But its freedom is at first only the negative of everything else; no bond of sense, no external obligation has any claim on the will; thus freedom seems to be only 'the identity of the will with itself, its at-homeness with itself'.<sup>2</sup> In fact the law has no content, it does not say anything. The principle itself is nothing more than the agreement of itself with itself, and so is something which cannot possibly have reality in the practical sphere. As Bradley was later acidly to write 'Our practical maxim is realize non-contradiction. Whatever act is self consistent, and is done for the sake of realizing self-consistency, and for the sake of nothing else, is moral. This is simple and this is practical; and there surely is cause for thankfulness in the arrangement of things which has placed the standard and text of all that is most important, of everything which really is important, in a form which even the unlettered can understand and a child can apply.'<sup>3</sup>

The determination of duty, the categorical imperative, is thus nothing but an abstract rule of the understanding, a bare A is A, which cannot possibly have any bearing on action. Any action can be put in the form of a universal

---

1. *ibid.* p. 459.  
2. *ibid.* p. 460.  
3. *E.S.* p. 148.

moral law and got in a form in which it would not contradict itself, and so says nothing or is in error. We might put Hegel's criticism by saying that, if the law is purely formal, it can have no content, and so will tell us nothing; if it does tell us something, then it is not purely formal, and presupposes that of which it legislates. 'This is the defect in the principle of Kant and Fichte, that it is really formal; still duty is the final indigested lump left within the stomach, the revelation given to reason.'

The second point Hegel criticizes is the relation of the Notion of the will with the particular will of the individual. That is, I am a moral human being in so far as my will and the general will are identical, in so far as my willing is determined by the causality of freedom. This unity which is necessary for the morality of man is, says Hegel, only postulated, and beyond. It must always remain an unrealized ought, for morality presupposes a difference between the particular and the general will. Morality is a struggle in which the particular and sensuous are to be determined by the universal, and this can only happen when the two stand in some degree opposed. Hegel objects to the infinitude of morality that results from this, viz. immortality, and argues that it is wrong to put ultimacy and permanency into the finite will. That is, one can say that the only thing in Kant which keeps the finite will from being perfect is its limitations, it is only the evil which infects it which keeps it particular, and the more that sensuous determinations are removed, then the less there will be to distinguish it from the pure will. Kant never says this, but it is in some ways a logical extension of his principles.

---

1. Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. III, p. 461.

Bradley repeats both these arguments in Chapter IV of Ethical Studies. The maxim of non-contradiction is useless, since it posits a content which is the contradiction of its own form; but apart from that it gives us no information. The second one he puts in the following way: "negate the sensuous self". But if the sensuous self is negated, possibility of morality disappears. Morality is thus as inconsistent as theft.<sup>1</sup>

Hegel's third criticism is of the summum bonum. The union of nature and the moral law is again only a beyond, a thought which has no existence, but is something which ought to be. The law of necessity and the law of liberty are different, and placed in a dualism, which so far as we are concerned is irreconcilable. In the practical unity of nature and freedom, nature would remain nature no longer, if it were confronted with the Notion of the Good; and this means for Kant that the two sides remain in utter opposition. The point here is that if willing is to mean anything, then it must take place in the sort of world which will can affect, and it is difficult to understand how willing can have any effect on Kant's world of nature. The criticism of Kant is summed up in the following way: 'The vanity of man aspires to have an ideal before him, in order to be able to find fault with everything alike. We possess all wisdom, it is within us, but is not forthcoming. That is the ultimate standpoint; it is a high standpoint, no doubt, but in it the truth is never reached. The absolute Good remains "what ought to be", or without objectivity; and there it has to remain.'<sup>2</sup>

Hegel's attempt to make the good actual, and to remove it from the sphere of what 'ought to be' is found in the Philosophy of Right. In this

---

1. E.S. pp. 154-155.

2. Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. III, p. 462.

book Hegel examines how Mind put itself forth through the agency of the will in order to realize the good. 'The basis of Right is, in general, Mind; its precise place and point of origin is the will. The will is free, so that freedom is both the substance of right and its goal, while the system of right is the realm of freedom made actual, the world of mind brought forth out of itself like a second nature.'<sup>1</sup>

The three main sections of the dialectic of right are abstract right, morality, and ethical life. In the first of these the free will has the character of immediacy, and has a negative actuality as compared with the real world. That is, the existence which Mind gives itself here is an abstract universal. It sets this universality up as its pre-eminent characteristic. Thus rights are said to be negative, because compared with the actual world they are only abstract idea. To have a right is to have a permission or warrant, but right being abstract is negative and all its commands, even those of an apparently positive sort, will be seen to be based on the prohibition that we are not to infringe on personality and its rights.

Right, however, has an inward aspect, and on one side at least is concerned with the intention and insight of the agent. This is the field of morality, and is regarded as the sphere of subjectivity as here the will is actualized in the subject and becomes purpose, intention, good and conscience. We may pause for a moment to ask what Hegel means by 'acting morally'. The answer to this shows why some people say that Hegel has no moral philosophy at all. Hegel as we have seen denies that Kant's formulation of the moral law can have any effect on experience. The ground being indeterminate cannot be

---

1. The Philosophy of Right, para. 4, translated by T. M. Knox, O.U.P. 1942, hereafter referred to in the notes as P.R.

the ground of any particular duty. Most men, says Hegel, accept the laws and regulations of their society; but the moral man has gone beyond this standpoint, and his freedom consists in obeying the universal law of duty. But since the moral law cannot in fact determine any actions, it follows that he must be determined by particular impulses, desires, and the like which escape the dictation of any law whatsoever. The good man is only saved from this position because of the fact that he continues to follow the traditional morality under the delusion that he is acting under the law of duty. 'The consistently moral man would not be thus deluded; his actions would therefore be determined solely by desire, and would differ from those of the profligate in nothing but in the hypocrisy that they were determined by the law of duty.'<sup>1</sup> Hegel then concludes that the purely moral will is identical with the impulse of passion; and that moral freedom is indistinguishable from the empirical 'freedom of following desire'. It should be remembered that this is not the whole of Hegel's ethical theory, but only the outcome of Spirit 'in the condition of being certain of itself'. Left to himself without the guidance of society this is all that morality comes to, but ethical life is the fulfilling and completion of morality. This is Hegel's solution to Kant's dilemma that as nature and will have no common ground of which we can know, that morality must remain a perpetual beyond.

Ethical life, being the synthesis of the triad, contains the Idea as external in objects, which was abstract right, as well as realized in the subject, which was morality. This synthesis is, says Hegel, the good come

---

1. Foster, M. B. The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel, O.U.P.1935. This 'disintegration' of morality is worked out in the Phenomenology under the heading of 'Morality', but the reader is warned that 'Ethical Life' does not mean the same thing in the Phenomenology and the Philosophy of Right.

alive, 'it is the concept of freedom developed into the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness'<sup>1</sup>. Ethical mind constructs for itself a world of institutions in which the individual selves lead a common life, and in which they find that the only complete freedom is the acceptance of the rational ends of the state as their own.

This is the dialectic of Right in broadest outline. There are only two points which we can notice here. The first of these contains what Hegel calls the element of subjectivity. Freedom is the satisfaction of the subjective element, and this satisfaction is found in the subjective willing of an objective law. This law is the law of the state, and this is the law that the man who has advanced to the moral standpoint of Kant and been disappointed, adopts in place of the empty super-sensible.

This, very crudely, is Hegel's position, and the trouble with trying to make it any clearer is that it involves us in a very difficult problem, and this is the precise meaning of 'subjective element'. Two things seem to be meant by it. The first is the subject's willing of the law for its own sake, a kind of Kantian idea of freedom; that is, the right of giving recognition only to what my insight recognizes as rational, the universal. On the other hand he sometimes means the very opposite, the willing of the particular, just because the particular, qua particular, cannot be determined by a law. It clearly makes a great deal of difference which of these two is meant, and we can only indicate the difficulty as it appears in the transition between what Hegel calls 'Civil Society' to the State. This is the second point mentioned above.

---

1. P.R., par. 142.

Civil society is the state as the understanding sees it, and so is compounded of particulars and abstract universals. The first of these are the individuals who are a 'totality of wants', 'a mixture of caprice and physical necessity'. The second principle is brought in because each person is related to other particular persons and these other persons serve to satisfy his wants, and this brings in the abstract universal of universality. That is, here, every member of society is his own end, everything else is nothing to him. Yet except in contact with others he cannot attain his ends, and these others are therefore means to the attainment of his ends. But because of this relation to other people the particular end assumes the form of universality. 'Particularity, restricted by universality, is the only standard whereby each particular member promotes his welfare.'<sup>1</sup> This is the sphere where economic laws are fulfilled, and civil law is enforced. It is here that we find the freedom of the subjective element in the second sense noted above.<sup>2</sup> 'Civil society' is what the 18th century empiricist philosophers meant by the State.

The State for Hegel, on the other hand, corresponds to the Absolute Idea in the sphere of Right, and is the actuality of the Ethical Idea. It is the ethical mind as the substantial will as it manifests and reveals itself to itself, accomplishing what it knows 'and is so far as it knows it'. In Civil Society the Idea was only imperfectly realized, and so the transition from it to the state was necessitated by the idea itself. For, while the subject was governed by a law which was the expression of Reason, nevertheless it only regulated its activities, and was not itself the object of the individual's

---

1. P.R., par. 267.  
2. P.R., par. 278.

actions. The true freedom is the willing of the law of the state for its own sake. 'If the state is confused with civil society, and if its specified end is laid down as the security and protection of property and personal freedom, then the interests of the individuals as such becomes the ultimate end of their association, and it follows that membership in the state is something optional. But the state's relation to the individual is quite different from this. Since the state is mind objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual himself has objectivity, genuine individuality, and an ethical life. Unification pure and simple is the true content and aim of the individual and the individual's destiny is the living of the universal life.'<sup>1</sup>

This freedom to obey the laws of the state, the willing of the universal seen as rational and concrete, is the first sort of freedom distinguished above.<sup>2</sup> The question is, does everyone possess it? The answer seems to be no, only the ruler has this true freedom. Only he wills the universal as his end, and the rest of society are the matter -- in the Aristotelian sense of τὸ ὑποκείμενον on which the form is imposed. The theory is, however, much more subtle and difficult than this. For one thing, Civil Society, as no moment in the dialectic is lost, continues in the actual state -- this is difficult to understand, but even an attempt to consider it would lead us too far from our main purpose.

This then, in broad outline, is the dialectic of Right. It represents an attempt to combine an ethical theory which recognizes society as indispensable for the moral life, with Kant's insight that there are obligations which cut across every other consideration and yet are obeyed because

---

1. P.R. p. 156.

2. P.R. par. 278.

they are expressions of my rational will as autonomous and self-legislating. Hegel's theory, it seems to me, in no way deserves the contempt with which it has been visited; it may be wrong, it may even be wicked, but the books which dispose of his work in two or three pages show they have no appreciation of the difficult ethical and political problems with which he was dealing.

It is to Bradley's credit that he admired the achievement and insight, and recognized its greatness. At the same time, however, because of what I consider a firmer grasp on the moral situation, he would not accept the theory. In the next part we will examine how he sought to make use of the Hegelian insights without accepting the whole doctrine.

3. In this section we are to deal with Bradley's reformulation of the Hegelian moral philosophy, and his return to a position which is in some respects the same as Kant's.

Bradley accepted Hegel's criticism of Kant, and said that as a system Kant's philosophy had been 'annihilated' by Hegel. On the other hand he realized that the 'fact or reason' which Kant was working with, that is the categorical nature of obligation, the doing of duty for its own sake, was a plain deliverance of the moral consciousness. 'Everyone knows' he says, 'that to do right is to do one's duty for its own sake, and that, if duty is done for the sake of some ulterior object, that act may be legal but it is certainly not moral.'<sup>1</sup>

We see then that he accepted Hegel's 'annihilation' of Kant's system, but wished to retain what he regarded as the most important part of

---

1. E.S. p. 147.

that system. He tried to construct a theory which will take account of both these facts, and this he does in three stages. He first of all criticizes Kant's theory in 'Duty for Duty's Sake'. This essay is completely Hegelian, and there are places which are even paraphrases of the Philosophy of Right. Next, in the same way as Hegel does, he tried to incorporate the notion of the moral will into the social structure, in order to give the dictates of the will some content which is not purely subjective. This he does in 'My Station and its Duties'. There is, however, a third stage, which is a criticism of the Hegelian viewpoint, and is largely concerned with the problem of personal morality.

It will perhaps make his differences with Hegel clearer, if we say that for Bradley the end for morality is self-realization, with the emphasis on the self, while for Hegel the interest is centred on how the Idea is realized in selves. The emphasis in each case is different. We might also say that for Bradley morality is a higher category than ethical life. We will attempt to explain these differences by considering 'My Station and its Duties' and 'Ideal Morality'.

When Bradley says that the end is self-realization he is not putting forward some 'music hall theory of life', but uses the phrase to express what he calls the 'ultimate practical why'. That is, we have seen that morality presupposes an end which is not outside morality, for otherwise morality would be dependent and derivative. This end is simply being moral, so we can say it implies a good to be realized, or a something to be done. On the other hand, morality is not merely the means to realizing this good, or in performing this act, it is also the realizing of this

---

1. His description of Mill's Theory.

good and the doing of this act. The doing of an action by a moral agent Bradley calls self-realization. When the term is seen to have this broad meaning it is surely not objectionable, and could be used even of Kant or Aristotle. It only means the realization of the moral part of our natures.

There may be apter expressions than self-realization, but I can see no objection to it when it is used in this general way. Furthermore, Bradley makes it plain that the self to be realized is not the self to be pleased. Neither is it to realize the good will, because this formula, as Hegel showed, is useless for action. Nor again is it the self as I happen to find it now. It is important to notice this point because many of the objections to a self-realization theory seem to rest on the belief that self-realization is a kind of aesthetic rather than moral criterion. But Bradley insists that the moral consciousness teaches us that morality implies a higher or a better self, and self-realization means realize this better self.

Yet morality, besides this individual aspect, implies a universal side, and Bradley uses for this Kant's term the good will; the good will which confronts man with a law and an ought, and which does not depend for its existence on the individuals' choice or opinion. 'Either there is no morality, so says the moral consciousness, or moral duties exist independently of their position by this or that person; my duty may be mine and no other man's, but I do not make it mine.<sup>1</sup>' In this sense duty is objective, because it does not depend on my particular wishes, yet this is not to say that it is always and everywhere the same.

---

1. E.S. 162.

This universal aspect of all morality is not a kind of Platonic universal which lives apart from its copies, but is an Aristotelian form which has no reality except in and through the particulars which embody it. 'The good will (for morality) is meaningless, if, whatever else it be, it be not the will of living finite beings.'<sup>1</sup> Thus the good will is what the idealists call a concrete universal; it is universal because it is more than any particular, and it is concrete because it is in and through all its embodiments, and is only so far as they are.

In this universal, individual selves realize their moral selves by finding the function which is their duty, a function which they could not find when left to their own devices with no concrete and specific obligations. Similarly the whole moral organism is realized in the individual wills. 'Here, and here first, are the contradictions which have beset us solved -- here is a universal which can confront our wandering desires with a fixed and stern imperative, but which yet is no unreal form of the mind but a living soul that penetrates and stands fast in the detail of actual existence.'<sup>2</sup>

Before going on to see where this belief leads Bradley we should notice the doctrines of Absolute Idealism which are implicit in what he has been saying. There is the belief in the concrete universal, there is the seed of the doctrine of identity in difference, and, the notion that the real is active in an objective way is also present.

These doctrines are all represented in the theory of 'My Station and its Duties'. If there is a will which resides in individuals, yet which

---

1. E.S., p. 162.  
2. *ibid.*

is more than any one individual, then, Bradley argues, self-realization, duty and happiness will all find their satisfaction in a social organism. This organism, that is, will be at least a partial embodiment of the good will. "Mere rhetoric" we shall be told "a bad metaphysical dream, a stale old story once more warmed up, which cannot hold its own against the logic of facts".<sup>1</sup> We shall be told in a voice quivering with indignation that the individual is prior to the state, and that the state exists for him, not the individual for the state. Philosophy would be a great deal simpler if one could value such assertion as some appear to do. The objection to such a statement is not so much that it is wrong -- I do not know if it is or not -- but that it provides a convenient escape from many of the difficult problems of moral and political philosophy. This conclusion is only strengthened when we see that the exponents of this hard headed realistically biased argument often take refuge in an untenable metaphysics which makes morality impossible.

When the individual is said to be 'prior' to the state this can be understood in an historical or a metaphysical sense. The former interpretation seems to be wrong from the facts of history. If it is taken in a metaphysical sense then this implies an atomic view of reality. Individuals are real, but there is no reality which answers to the social organism, or the community, nor, I suppose, even to the family. A community is the sum of its parts, the parts are real prior to the community as they would be at its dissolution, and these are 'facts' not 'metaphysical dreams'.

Now there is a sense in which such a view is tenable, but it is

---

1. E.S. p. 163.

a sense which has nothing to do with moral or political philosophy. Kant distinguished between the world of the understanding and the world of reason. For understanding there were sense objects and subjects, and given this world a universal is unreal or abstract. But Kant saw clearly that this world depended on reason for its organization, and that morality could not be fitted into the scheme of the understanding's interpretation of the world. This is so because the possibility of morality is based on the idea of action, and if the world is 'really' only subjects faced by objects, then this barrier can never be crossed in the fulfillment of purpose because by definition subjects and objects are distinct and unreconciled. But Kant never made the vulgar mistake of assuming that the world of the understanding was the same thing as reality.

We can see this if we do as Bradley did and examine the teachings of experience. We will find that man is, as Aristotle said he was, φύσει πολιτικός . The individual man, the man into whose essence his community with others does not enter, who does not include relations to others in his nature is a fiction. There are inherited traits and characteristics as well as the consequences of habituation, from which the individual can never recover. 'Who can resist it?' asks Bradley, 'Nay who but a "thinker" could wish to have resisted it?'<sup>1</sup> Bradley concludes that man is essentially a social being, and that the notion of society or community is more than an abstract universal which answers to no reality.

A man then is a part of a society and the being of each enters into that of the other, and the whole must be the self-realization of each member, for each member cannot find the function which makes him himself, apart from the whole to which he belongs. 'To be himself he must go

---

1. E.S. p. 171.

beyond himself, to live his life he must live a life which is not merely his own, but which, none the less, but on the contrary all the more, is intensely and emphatically his own individuality.<sup>1</sup>

Bradley argues that this theory supplements the deficiencies in the Kantian theory and yet recognizes its strength. We have already examined these defects in discussing Hegel's criticism of Kant, and Bradley summarizes this criticism in three points. The universal which was to be realized was abstract. The universal was subjective, that is while it claimed to be 'objective' in the sense of being independent of this or that person, still it was not real in the world, it always remained 'within' us as Hegel put it. Again the universal left a part of ourselves outside of itself, because we could never make our will one with the moral will. These defects mean that a man cannot find self-realization in the notion of pure duty because he is unable to look upon either himself or any part of the objective world as the realization of the moral law; nor, in fact can he even realize the moral law at all because it has not content, or if it is given content it is not the law that is realized since the content is derived from elsewhere than the law itself. These defects are already familiar to us, but we put them in this tabular form in order to see how they are mended in 'My Station and its Duties'.

In 'my station' we find that the universal is concrete, that it is objective, and that it leaves nothing outside of itself. It is concrete, yet not given by caprice. As we have seen the content we gave to duty in Kant's theory was dependent on the individual. But, while there are certain limits within which I can choose my station according

---

1. E.S. p.163.

to my own liking, yet we cannot escape the fact that we must have some station to which there will be duties attached. Again the universal is concrete as well as objective, for it is not an abstraction, but lives in and through the details of its system. 'The organs are always at work for the whole, the whole is at work in the organs. And I am one of the organs.'<sup>1</sup>

Secondly the universal is objective. Kant's will could have no effect on nature, but the concrete universal has a being in institutions and laws as well as in the individual man. The moral world, Bradley contends, has these two sides which can be distinguished but not separated. The body of the moral world is systems and institutions from the family to the nation. Yet this body must have a soul, otherwise it will go to pieces; institutions which are mere institutions are dead. In the moral organism this soul is in the will of the particular wills of the individuals, but it is felt and known by them to be more than their own particular wills. '..moral institutions are carcasses without personal morality, and personal morality apart from moral institutions is an unreality, a soul without a body.'<sup>2</sup>

It is easy to see that this is merely a reformulation of Hegel's argument in the Philosophy of Right, but it is important to see how completely Bradley accepted Hegel's view that ethical life overcame the dichotomy of morality and nature by arguing that I do not have to force my will on a recalcitrant nature, but rather in fulfilling the duties of my station, which are seen as the external embodiments of my will, we are carrying out into the real world the demands of morality.

---

1. E.S. p. 176.  
2. E.S. p. 178.

Finally Bradley argues that we have also got rid of the contradiction between duty and the sensuous or 'empirical self'. Duty for Kant was ever an unrealized ought, but in the concrete universal of my station we are delivered from 'this last peevish enemy'. This is so because not only what ought to be is in the moral organism, but also I am what I ought to be because I can do my duty. 'My Station and its Duties' teaches us 'that a man who does his work in the world is good, notwithstanding his faults, if his faults do not prevent him from fulfilling his station. It tells us that the heart is an idle abstraction; we are not to think of it, nor must we look at our insides, but at our work and our life, and say to ourselves, Am I fulfilling my appointed function or not?'<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me that there is a great deal of sound sense in all this, and when we consider, as Bradley asks us to, whether the encouraging of ourselves in holding opinions of our own is anything but sheer self-conceit, we begin to see just how much common sense there is in what he says. This opinion is only strengthened when he points out that those who despise the common morality of those around them and try to live a life of their own, often end by finding the despised common rules of society an unattainable ideal. Of course none of this is very exciting, we do not find any stark transcendentalism, nor tortured 'angst', and this is because most morality has little of this type of element.

Yet the theory will not do as an account of all morality, and its difficulties are much more obvious than its strength. The most obvious difficulty is that the community in which the moral man finds

---

1. E.S. p. 181.

himself may be confused and rotten, and even in the best community it will be in gross and not in detail that the external aspects of the world situation will be the outward side of every individual's willing. In none of these cases can the individual see his own self-realization. But this concrete externalizing of his will was the strength of the theory of my station. And so, the contradiction between what ought to be and what is breaks out again 'and we must wrap ourselves in a virtue which is our own and not the world's, or seek a higher doctrine by which, through faith and faith alone, self-suppression issues in a higher self-realization.'<sup>1</sup>

Hegel, it must in fairness be added, had recognized this kind of difficulty. In the Philosophy of Right he wrote:

'..the tendency to look deeper into oneself and to know and determine within oneself what is right and good appears in ages when what is recognized as right and good in contemporary manners cannot satisfy the will of better men. When the existing world of freedom has become faithless to the will of better men, that will fails to find itself in the duties there recognized and must try to find in the ideal world of the inner life alone the harmony which actuality has lost.'<sup>2</sup>

Hegel pays much more attention to the problem of the bad state and the problems facing a moral person in such a state than is generally recognized; but even so this slipping back into the sphere of personal morality is only a second best, and is only a means to achieving a more perfect state. Bradley's doctrine seems to be that this return to inwardness is necessary because no matter how good the community or state may be, morality by its nature can never be perfectly realized in any sort of visible community.

---

1. E.S. p.204.

2. P.R. par. 138.

The most individual or original part of Bradley's theory is found in the chapter on 'Ideal Morality' where he emphasizes that the whole which the individual seeks to realize is not visible in all its aspects. The good self he maintains has a three-fold origin. The first and most important of these comes from my station; but then there is something besides, 'claims beyond what the world expects of us, a will<sup>1</sup> for good beyond what we see to be realized anywhere'. These are virtues which depend on society for their exercise, such as exceptional honesty or self-sacrifice. Finally there is in the good self an essence whose ideal does not involve the relation to other men, and this is the realization in myself of truth and beauty.

Again, while Hegel said in the Philosophy of Mind that art and religion had absolute right, nonetheless it is difficult to make one system out of such statements and the doctrine of the Philosophy of Right. Hegel's position on the worth of personal morality seems at best to be ambiguous, while Bradley is quite explicit in maintaining that it is in the self that the good will is most adequately realized. 'For morals the universal is not realized within my station, and furthermore the moral consciousness does not tell us it is realized anywhere at all.'<sup>2</sup> And he adds that neither in me nor in the world is what ought to be what is, nor what is what ought to be.

Bradley is thus reintroducing Kant's distinction between what is and what ought to be, and rejecting Hegel's view, at least as it is found in the Philosophy of Right. 'It is just as absurd to fancy that a philosophy can transcend its contemporary world' wrote Hegel 'as it is to fancy that

---

1. E.S. p. 220  
2. E.S. p. 231.

an individual can overleap his own age, jump over Rhodes. If his theory really goes beyond the world as it is and builds an ideal one as it ought to be, that world exists indeed, but only in his opinion, an unsubstantial element where anything you please may, in fancy, be built.<sup>1</sup> Bradley's morality is not subjective in this sense, yet it is still ideal and involves an ought.

Yet metaphysically his theory is a world away from Kant, for the basis of most of Bradley's theory is Absolute Idealism, yet it is an idealism which is modified to the extent that we cannot be said to see the embodiment of the Idea in any social structure, and so we must believe, not understand how, that the contradiction between the is and the ought is somehow solved. This refusal to accept Hegel's point that a good state ever can be complete realization of the individuals' good will, and his argument that part of reality demands our adherence to a whole accepted on faith, means in effect that he is breaking with the Hegelian idea that the real is the rational. We believe that the contradiction between the is and the ought is somehow resolved in a whole which we accept because we somehow experience it, yet which we cannot see or understand.

With this hurried survey we have covered in the field of moral philosophy what will be part of our concern in the fields of logic and metaphysics, that is, Bradley's attempt to build a philosophy which accepted the Hegelian criticism of Kant, yet refused to accept Hegel's most fundamental principle that the real is the rational. As I have said,

---

1. P.R. 'Preface'.

it does not seem unfanciful to believe that, in spite of the very Hegelian nature of much of Ethical Studies, many of Bradley's logical and metaphysical differences with Hegel may have had part of their origin in what we can only consider as Bradley's firmer grasp of the ethical situation.

In the following chapters we will trace Bradley's thought from the analysis of experience, through the logical problems of judgement and inference, to the metaphysical questions of reality and truth. We shall see how his unwillingness to believe in the comprehensibility of reality which we have already found in Ethical Studies becomes quite explicit in his Logic. We shall see how his logical enquiries led him in to what Bosanquet called a 'crude dualistic realism' with a correspondence theory of truth. Later we shall see that even when, under Bosanquet's criticism he gave up his more dualistic views and the correspondence of ideas with things; that, nonetheless, while he has the Hegelian insistence that thought is satisfied in an Absolute, this is combined with the most un-Hegelian idea that this satisfaction is not thought.

In subsequent chapters we will not provide the detailed historical background for each topic as we have done here. For one thing it would throw the thesis out of balance, for to include a discussion of Kant and Hegel's theory on every subject we discuss would inevitably end in our restricting the discussion of Bradley's views. Nonetheless, Hegel and Kant cannot be altogether ignored, and I trust that after this chapter it will be seen that Bradley's philosophy can only be clarified when it is placed against the background of Kant and Hegel's thought.

Chapter II.

Immediate Experience

'... Hegel's doctrine of feeling as a vague continuum below relations, seemed and seems to me to have an importance which really is vital....his main doctrine here was to myself the formulation of that which I had felt to be the fact.'

Bradley.

We have seen that there is at least an incipient dualism in Ethical Studies between a world which is and a world which ought to be. This dualism between the actual and the ideal world becomes quite explicit in the Principles of Logic. In this book he teaches that there is the actual world of reality and the realm of ideas, and that our only contact with the world of reality is by means of perception.

An attempt to make this any clearer brings us face to face with one of the most difficult of all philosophical problems, and this is the relation between sense and thought. Furthermore, while any discussion of this problem is difficult enough in itself, our treatment will be even further complicated as Bradley had two different views on the question. One of these I have termed Kantian and the other Hegelian.

The first view is that the datum of thought, or the given, or the reality, is something quite other than thought. The basis from which a judgement of perception starts, and on which it acts 'is for the intellect nothing. It is a sensuous whole which is merely felt and which is not idealized. It is not anything which, as it is, could come before an understanding..... We needs must begin our voyage of reasoning by working on something which is felt and not thought.'

---

1. Principles, p. 479.

This sensuous datum is something unlike thought; it is a primitive awareness which is quite different from our well-defined world of subjects and objects, and it is something which must be 'idealized' before it can be an object of thought. It is for these reasons that I have called this theory Kantian, because like Kant's position it holds that there is no kind of continuity or development between sense and thought, but that each is something quite different. This view naturally leads to at least a dualistic element in a philosophy.

The other theory is different. This maintains that the sensuous whole, with which thinking is at first concerned, is a kind of knowing; and any articulation of this incipiently rational element in explicit thought is more a self-development, or extension of its character, than of a mere 'reporting' of its nature by thought considered as an alien element. That is, thought is not about a strange element, it is merely a continuation, a self-development, of what is implicit in primitive experience.

The first theory is found in the first edition of the Principles, and the theory of thought which it involves is also the basis of the dialectic of Appearance and Reality. The other view is found in the Essays on Truth and Reality, and in the second edition of the Principles. We can see from the dates of publication of these works that he went from a Kantian to an Hegelian viewpoint on this particular question.<sup>1</sup> This theory is spoiled, however, as the most explicitly Hegelian theory

---

1. Principles, first edition, 1883.  
Appearance 1893.  
Essays 1914.  
Principles, second edition, 1922.

of thought is found in Ethical Studies which is the earliest of his<sup>1</sup> books. This difficulty in finding any chronological order of development has led us to consider this problem analytically by presenting the elements of the two different points of view without giving much attention to the question of their development, and without attempting to disentangle them. In the following chapters, where we will be concerned with the theories of judgement and inference, and thus inevitably to some extent with the question of sense experience, we shall attempt a more genetic account of Bradley's position, as well as presenting the separate views as distinct theories.

We have already indicated that the first theory, which leads to a dualistic element in a philosophy, is to be termed Kantian; while the second, which emphasizes continuity, is to be considered as Hegelian. Nonetheless, these labels are to be looked upon only as points of departure, for the first theory is not wholly Kantian, and the second differs significantly from Hegel's.

Thus in the first Bradley rejects the Kantian view of the relation of thought to feeling in so far as he argues that immediate experience, in which the distinction between subject and object is not present, can be made an object of thought without radically altering its character. He uses this doctrine to argue that feeling is a distinct mode of apprehension, which Kant would deny. For Kant, feeling as an object of thought is a product of an operation which involves the same intellectual factors as any other object and consequently cannot be considered as a distinct mode of apprehension. At the same time, however,

---

1. E.S. 1876.

Bradley professes to hold a view of thought which is closer to Kant's than anyone else's. Such a view holds that thinking is essentially judgment, that is the ascription of meaning to an object; an object which, as such, is never present in thought. Thought, in short, is always discursive and never intuitive.

In the second case, although knowing is present in every experience, including the feeling with which the soul life begins, nonetheless, Bradley's belief that feeling was a component of the absolute reality led him away from the metaphysics of Hegel. And because he could not accept these metaphysics, he rejected, at least in part, the theory of thought which they involve. In spite of this Bradley did have the Hegelian view that even in the most primitive feeling experience we have a 'grasp' of the world which is not in terms of a subject and object, a grasp which is called a knowing. In short, at times he seems to have a doctrine of intellectual intuition which is incompatible with his theory that all thinking is predicative and relational.

It must be emphasized that we are not discussing the development of these theories as they grew in Bradley's thought. Rather we shall discuss the relation of feeling and thought as a problem and thus show the kind of consideration which might have led Bradley to his different points of view. To do this we will take Bradley's theory of feeling or immediate experience, and show that this can only maintain itself against a Kantian type of criticism by postulating an Hegelian kind of knowing. We shall then point out that such a view is incompatible with the doctrine of thought in the first edition of The Principles and Appearance. Next we shall show that if we admit this more Hegelian interpretation of Bradley's theory of

thinking the latter's metaphysics become untenable as they are based upon, and presuppose, a theory of thought which is rigidly discursive.

1.

We shall begin the detailed argument of this chapter by considering Bradley's theory of feeling, and showing that it cannot maintain itself against a Kantian type of criticism without assuming a theory of thought which is in many respects closer to Hegel's, a theory which is incompatible with the doctrine of thought put forward in the Principles and in Appearance.

The importance of this theory of feeling is, as we have indicated, that Bradley holds that it is in judgements of perception that we come into contact with reality. This reality is experienced as a 'sensuous whole' which the judgement of perception attempts to articulate. Our problem here is how do we know what this experience is like if 'It is not anything which, as it is, could come before an understanding..'<sup>1</sup> The argument that we cannot know anything about this experience, or if we did that we would have no guarantee that we were in fact having knowledge of it, may be considered as a Kantian criticism. Bradley's theory, and a consideration of this criticism will form the first two parts of this section. The third part will show that Bradley's reply to the Kantian criticism necessitates a view of thought which is partially Hegelian.

---

1. Principles, p. 479.

1a Bradley uses the term 'immediate experience' as a synonym for feeling -- or at least for the feeling of finite subjects as distinct from that of the Absolute's. In this theory we must distinguish between its epistemological and metaphysical aspects. By an epistemological aspect is meant those parts of the theory which deal with how immediate experience is present in a subject's experience, and how it can be known that it is so present. By metaphysical I mean the consequences drawn from a consideration of our knowledge of feeling as to the structure of reality. Here we are only concerned with the epistemological aspect.

Feeling, we are told in Appearance, 'may stand for a psychical stage before relations have been developed, or it may be used generally for an experience which is not indirect'<sup>1</sup>. The first meaning, given the context in which it is written, has a metaphysical as well as an epistemological aspect. The part of the statement which interests us here is that immediate experience is said to be non-relational. We will begin by considering the general meaning of an experience which is indirect and show how this involves a belief in what may best be termed time transcendence; then we will argue that one of the characteristics of such a state is the absence of the consciousness of objects and so is non-relational.

An 'experience which is not indirect' means an experience which is 'direct' and we must try to understand what this means. In ordinary language we use such expressions as 'directly opposite' or 'directly responsible', meaning in one case that the one thing is immediately opposite, while in the second we intend that no one intervenes between the

---

1. Appearance, p. 198.

one who is responsible and the one to whom he is responsible. These examples may help us to understand the meaning of direct, yet it might be said that it is difficult to see how our analogies apply to experience. Any experience, it might be said, is what it is, and thus can never be more or less direct.

While such an argument is not without weight, there is a legitimate sense in which experiences can be called either direct or indirect. From our examples we can extract the sense of 'nothing intervening', and there are some types of experience to which this term can be applied to the subject and what he experiences, and so the experience itself can be called direct. The intervening factor is time and the consciousness of objects which are its necessary concomitant.

Consciousness of time involves consciousness of change, and this is true whether we believe that this change is a mode of time, or something which takes place in a permanent which represents time. The point is, that for consciousness of time there must be consciousness of change, and consciousness of change involves consciousness of something which changes; for, as Kant saw, we do not seem to be conscious of time itself. But once we are conscious of a something which does change, we are already aware of an object set over against us; and thus we have arrived at a stage of experience which can be called indirect, in the sense that it requires something other than the subject for its realization. Immediate experience, on the other hand, is direct in the sense that it involves no consciousness other than that of the self's own experiencing.

We have seen that any experience which involves consciousness of time is indirect, and this means that if there are any direct experiences they will be of a time-transcending character. Consequently, we find Bradley maintaining that immediate experience is the experience of a now, or a present, which is not in time. Most of our present condition seems bound up with the experience of the not yet, and the no longer, or in a word it is successive. Immediate experience, on the other hand, while it may possess a before and after, contains them as one experience which seems to transcend the successiveness of time.

The experience of a present reality, of a now, must not be looked upon as an atomic bit of time. 'In one sense of the word the present is no time.'<sup>1</sup> It is the meaning of this statement which we must try to elucidate. We cannot, without getting into all kinds of difficulties, conceive of the now as a section or slab of time. If, that is, we say that the now has duration, then like all real time it will have succession in itself, and if this is the case it will not be our single present. Again, if the present was an atomic now, how could the combination of these discrete bits account for the ebb and flow of time?

For these reasons, Bradley affirms that it is a mistake to suppose that the present is a part of time as an indivisible and stationary element, or that the now can be atomic. He maintains that the present is the 'filling of that duration in which the reality appears to me

---

1. Principles, p. 53.

directly; and there can be no part of the succession of events so small or so great that conceivably it might not appear as present.<sup>1</sup> A familiar example of what Bradley means is the perception of a melody. Here there is a past and a future, yet successiveness, as the beyond recall, and the not yet, is overcome. Immediate experience, then, involves the idea of time transcendence, if we understand time in the sense of successiveness.

This discussion may appear to be abstract and in order to render the position more vivid we shall take some examples of immediate experience drawn from ordinary experience. These examples will also illustrate the absence of the awareness of objects, which is the second mark of immediate experience with which we must deal.

Bradley's own example of immediate experience is drawn from pleasure and pain. It is plainly inadequate, to say the least, to describe such experiences in terms of a subject experiencing an object. That is, while a twitch might be described by saying 'I have a pain', a fierce attack will elicit the statement 'I am in pain'. I do not think that the force of the point which Bradley is making here is in any way diminished when the many different ways we describe pain are taken into consideration; nor when we take into account the different aspects of experience, distinguished (for example) by Professor Ryle, for which we use the term pleasure. The important thing about pain is

---

1. op. cit. p. 53.

not the different types we experience, but the experiencing of these types. And even the 'confusion' of moods with feelings of pleasure only illustrates Bradley's contention, for if we ask the reason for this 'confusion' it is that both possess an aspect of immediacy. It is this aspect of immediacy to which Bradley is calling attention. The point is that my mood, or my feeling, is mine; it is part of that subtle all-pervading witness of my being, and any description of this experience which 'massively qualifies our consciousness' <sup>1</sup> in terms of an object and a subject is incorrect.

It must be emphasized that we are still engaged in trying to elicit the epistemological aspects of the theory. We are not attempting to formulate a theory of personal identity, nor to discuss what feeling is 'really' like. With this reminder we may consider another example of immediate experience. There is a common expression 'lost in the music', and if we reflect that this is a more adequate description of aesthetic experience than 'listening to the music', we shall have begun to appreciate what Bradley means by direct experience.

'.....music heard so deeply  
'That it is not heard at all, but you are the music  
'While the music lasts.'<sup>2</sup>

We might also give examples from intellectual and religious experience, where the sense of 'otherness' is overcome, and there is no consciousness of any foreign element.

Immediate experience, then, is a direct experience which transcends time, interpreted as succession; and which cannot be characterized

---

1. Whitehead's phrase.  
2. Eliot, T. S., Four Quartets.

as a self experiencing an object, but is best looked upon as an immediate unity of subject and object. We have not attempted to discuss whether or not this unity means that subject and object are really 'fused' together nor why the theory of immediate experience is important, nor what its relation to other states of consciousness may be. Some of these problems will be touched on, but our concern at the moment is to ask how we can have knowledge of immediate experience.

1b. Our problem here is how do we know what immediate experience is like. If all knowledge is about objects, how can we know about a state which by definition is not an object? This question is of vital importance as its solution marks the crux of Bradley's difference with Kant's or any 'sense data' interpretation of experience. The problem, in more detail, is as follows. Feeling, as we have seen, is an experience in which there is no awareness of a distinction between subject and object, no distinction between awareness and that of which it is aware. If I begin to think about this awareness it becomes an object of thought, and so, we may say, is transcended. Yet once it is transcended it is no longer immediate, and so what I think about is no longer immediate experience. '...we are thus led to the dilemma that so far as I know immediate experience, it does not exist, and that hence, whether it exists<sup>1</sup> or not, I could in neither case know of it.'

Before we consider Bradley's own answer to this dilemma we will make sure that both the difficulty and its importance are recognized by examining Kant's views on feeling and its relation to consciousness.

---

1. Essays on Truth and Reality, p. 160, O.U.P. 1914, hereafter referred to as T&R in the notes and as Essays in the text.

Immediate experience, as we have seen, is immediate as the subject's own conscious experience. It is the difficulties involved in this theory we wish to make clear.

In Kant's philosophy there is a clear distinction between 'the given' and the activities of the subject. By the given we might understand feeling and the objects of the physical world -- in fact everything we think about. Kant's doctrine is more complex than this, but at least we can see that the idea of dividing experience into a 'given manifold' and thought about this given has a prima facie credibility.<sup>1</sup> For Kant the given is always particular while the subject contributes all the elements of universality and necessity found in experience. These elements, by means of which the discrete presentations of the given are ordered, are called categories. Furthermore, once the categories are brought into play we are presented with a world which is inexorably subject object and in which there is no room for the vague awareness of immediate experience.

We can now ask whether there is in Kant's doctrine any room for an awareness which although conscious does not involve the categories; or, to ask a question which has the same implications, are the categories necessary for consciousness. While any attempt to discuss this question brings us to one of the crucial points in the controversy as to whether or not the transcendental deduction of the categories is a homogeneous argument or a 'patch work' of conflicting ones; it will, nevertheless, be worth our time to discuss the question as, no matter which interpretation of Kant's work we adopt, either view presents a difficulty for Bradley.

---

1. See, however, Appendix II of this chapter.

The question, then, is whether or not the categories are necessary for the existence of consciousness. Professor Kemp Smith claims that they are: 'Relation to an object is constituted by the categories, and is necessary in reference to sense representations, because only thereby is consciousness of any kind possible at all.'<sup>1</sup> Professor Paton, on the other hand, says: '...I can see no adequate reason (either) for maintaining that Kant held consciousness as such to be inseparable from the categories...'<sup>2</sup> This is very discouraging, but the fact that two such thinkers could differ so radically over the same text seems to indicate that it is not as straightforward as one of them would hold.

While this problem is obviously of vital importance to a correct interpretation of Kant, it is not necessary for our purposes to decide which it is, but only to take each in turn and see what it involves in relation to the problem of the given.

Let us take the simpler view first, that of Paton, who holds that such a statement as 'appearances can certainly be given in intuition independently of functions of the understanding'<sup>3</sup> is quite consistent with everything Kant wrote. Such an appearance would be an object -- interpreted in a broad sense. It is thus quite possible that we could be conscious, as being aware of separate given appearances, although we could not know them.<sup>4</sup> They would only be discrete unrelated presentations for 'Combination of a manifold in general can never come to us through

---

1. Smith, A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, p. 222.

2. Paton, H. J., Kant's Metaphysic of Experience, p. 335.

3. Kant, op.cit. A.90.

4. It seems to me that if Kant's main contention were as Paton makes out, then he would have proceeded at once to examine how this 'quasi-awareness', this awareness which was not a knowing, could become another sort of awareness in which concepts and percepts were fused. The problem of how the knowing mind is related to the first sort of

the senses, and cannot, therefore, be already contained in the pure form of intuition' . . . 'of all representations combination is the only one which cannot be given through objects.'

Kemp Smith on the other hand holds that there can be no consciousness without awareness, and as all awareness is the awareness of meaning, and again, as what is not categorized can have no meaning, then consciousness itself is dependent on the categories. He then goes on to claim that the combination of representations by which objects are constructed out of the unrelated given is not the synthesis which really matters, as this would mean that the synthesis of sensations as a conscious (or possibly conscious) process gives us the external world. Such a position he regards as subjectivism which cannot do justice to Kant's mature position, for sensations are as much the product of the synthetic processes which interpret the noumenal manifold in terms of the two fixed forms of space and time and the categories, as any other object. The 'given manifold' then must be used to mean two things, in the one case the result of physical stimuli upon the bodily organs, and in the other the

---

consciousness, or how the mind could 'escape' from the first to the second, seems to me to be so important that Kant could not have failed to discuss it -- if his theory is as it is described by Paton.

Blanshard in The Nature of Thought (Allen & Unwin, I, 57, first ed. 2nd impression) says that 'We must so construe the world we first live in as to make escape from it conceivable;' but if we accept Paton's view, Kant seems to have a sort of perception or awareness from which the escape, if not inconceivable, at least presents a problem of the greatest difficulty. This consideration leads me to believe that Paton is wrong, but the decision between the two interpretations is not an integral part of the argument of this chapter.

1. Kant, op.cit. B. 130.

result from 'the affection by things in themselves of those factors in the noumenal conditions of the self which correspond to "sensibility"'.<sup>1</sup>

Kant distinguishes between sensations and feeling by saying that while the former is 'an objective representation of senses' feeling is that 'which must always remain merely subjective and can constitute absolutely no representation of an object'.<sup>2</sup> Yet these so-called subjective states, being part of the natural order of existences, are objective in the sense that they are objects for consciousness. As such objects they bring us no nearer an 'unpolluted' given than do sensations. Thus we could sum up our discussion by saying that all feelings are objects for consciousness and, such objects (Kemp Smith), such objects as known or experienced (Paton), are as far removed from the nature of things in themselves as anything else. That is to say if Paton is right a feeling could be given to consciousness without the categories while for Kemp Smith the feeling of which I am aware has already been categorized.

We are now in a better position to appreciate the problem as to how immediate experience can become an object. The problem remains even when we strip it of its Kantian terminology, for once we think about immediate experience it is an object and no longer immediate. How then

- 
1. Kemp Smith, op.cit. p. 276.
  2. The Critique of Judgement Part I, Division I, number 3.

'If a determination of the feeling of pleasure or pain is called sensation, this expression signifies something quite different from what I mean when I call the representation of a thing (by sense as a receptivity belonging to the cognitive faculty) sensation. For in the latter case the representation is referred to the object, in the former simply to the subject, and is available for no cognition whatsoever, not even for that by which the subject cognizes itself.'  
ibid.

can we know feeling as an immediate awareness? Kant's answer would be that whether immediate experience existed or not we could not know it, although the Patonian Kant would say we could be aware of it.<sup>1</sup> This difficulty is of great interest, because it brings into relief the fact that whether or not you agree with Kant as to how it is possible that there are objects of consciousness, the problem still remains as to how you are to discuss what is not such an object.

Bradley's answer runs this way. Although immediate experience is transcended, and becomes an object for consciousness, nevertheless it 'both remains and is active. It is not a stage which shows itself at the beginning and then disappears'.<sup>2</sup> Not only does this feeling remain but 'it contains within itself every development which transcends it', and, 'in its own way it acts to some extent as their judge.' He then goes on to answer the question in more detail, and formulates his problem in terms of attention. How do we know that 'present attending has not vitally transformed its result'?<sup>3</sup>

Here then is the very crux of the matter. 'Can we directly compare attention's object with something to which we do not at all attend?' Bradley says that it is just a fact that we do perform this, as when we recognize a description in a poem of some experience to which we did not attend at the time of the experience. Or we may read a description

- 
1. Whatever this experience would be it would be at least a blind awareness 'something', and this something would not be an object for a subject.
  2. Bradley, op.cit. p. 161.
  3. ibid. p. 162.



by someone else of a scene at which we were present, and recognize in this description elements which we had missed, and yet, in spite of our having missed them, we are able to say that they really were elements in the situation. Still, the Kantian could ask how we know that this present attending has not given a new character to the experience we are now thinking about.

In answer to this Bradley makes it clear that he does not mean that attention could not, but that it does not, alter its object out of all recognition. Yet the question as to the actual ground of our confidence when we refuse to believe that attention has made the thing, or perhaps, the character of the thing, we feel, remains. The statement of the 'actual ground' may appear at first to be curious, for it seems to consist in merely stating the desired conclusion as a premise, and then in concluding that attention does not alter its object. Yet I do not think any other procedure is possible; for, for example, if one were to try to state the grounds for trust in memory, one would have to say much the same as Bradley does in the following paragraph:

'I will state briefly what I take to be the real way of escape. (a) We must first assume that anything remains the same except so far as I have good reason to take it as altered. This assumption is everywhere necessary, and may be called fundamental. (b) Next we must hold that apart from any attention we may be aware of a change in our condition. Without anything which could in any ordinary sense be called attending we can experience a difference when a change takes place in our general or special felt state. (c) There is again an experienced change when attention (say to feeling B) supervenes, and this particular experience is felt otherwise than as a mere change, say from A to B. Hence from the absence of this special feeling, as well as from the presence of the ordinary feeling of change to B, we infer that our sensation B does not depend on attention, but was previously there.'<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Bradley, T&R, p. 163.

This discussion brings out the point that it is possible to distinguish between feeling a change that is the effect of attention, and feeling one which is not. We can attend to an insect bite, and be aware of the adjustments necessary to be aware of it, yet by attending to the other fingers we cannot get the same result. 'I have neither the recalled felt change nor the present effect.'<sup>1</sup>

Now it seems to me that this sort of argument provides at least a plausible counter-thesis to the Patonian Kant. Thus if Kant meant that we could be conscious of a feeling without the categories, it seems that Bradley shows in this essay that we can attend to such uncategorized feelings and know them, even though as an object of thought they are transcended. This is still, however, no answer to the Smithian Kant who believes that there is no consciousness and no objects before the categories have come into action. This will have to be discussed in more detail when we consider Hegel's theory of categories, but one answer to the view that a feeling or a sensation as presented to consciousness has already been synthesized once, and is all ready for an empirical synthesis, is a flick of Ockham's razor. That is, if one can produce a theory of experience without this elaborate machinery such a theory would be more convincing.

For the time being, however, it is difficult to argue against this view of Kemp Smith's interpretation as the noumenal synthesis is by definition something which can never be the object of awareness. Although it could be argued, that if we accept the idea of noumenal data,<sup>2</sup>

---

1. T&R, p. 164.

2. See Smith, N. K. Commentary. pp. 275-277.

Kant conceived of this noumenal data in terms of the sense data of experience and this being so bring the same sort of arguments against it as could be brought against any view of the given in terms of sense.<sup>1</sup>

There is, however, a modification of Kant's view which would cause difficulty if we attempted to relate Bradley's theory to it. It might be argued that there is no necessity to hold that the noumenal synthesis is of the same sort as the empirical, but only that 'recognition as an object', or some such phrase, is essential to consciousness (even if this 'categorization' is not of the same sort as that which takes place in the empirical synthesis). We can make at least a beginning to answering this question by pointing out that Bradley uses the term consciousness to mean two different things. Usually he means any sort of awareness 'As against anything "unconscious", in the sense of falling outside<sup>2</sup> what I experience as mine. On the other hand he often uses the term to mean consciousness in which there is a distinction between subject and object, and it is with this sense in mind that he makes such statements as 'consciousness to my mind, is not original' and 'the identification of consciousness and experience is a wrong assumption'.<sup>3</sup>

If we return to our question as to whether or not consciousness involves recognition of an object we can see that Bradley would deny the statement in terms of the first meaning, and agree to it if expressed in terms of the second; for, if consciousness means a state characterized by the subject object distinction it is obvious that there must be recognition of objects for it to exist. His denial of the criticism when

---

1. See Appendix II of this chapter.  
2. T&R p. 173.  
3. Ibid p. 194.

consciousness is interpreted in the wider sense of any sort of awareness would be based on the arguments for the existence of immediate experience which we have already examined.

His denial that 'recognition as an object' is essential to consciousness does not involve him in trying to gainsay that most human experience involves the relational consciousness. 'Whether there is a stage when experience is merely immediate I have agreed to leave doubtful. Feeling is transcended always, if you please, in the sense that we have contents, which are more than merely felt.<sup>1</sup> Thus to point out that most of our experience is of the subject-object nature, or even to deny that it is ever solely immediate, is no argument against Bradley. That is, while he might agree that recognition of an object always in fact accompanies human consciousness, he denies that it is this recognition which makes consciousness or awareness possible.

This denial that awareness is dependent on the relational consciousness brings us to the final part of this section, which is to point out what is involved in an awareness which is not consciousness of objects.

1c. We have seen that feeling is an experience 'in which there is no distinction between my awareness and that of which it is aware'. We have also seen that transcendence of this experience does not alter it out of recognition, and this we showed was one of Bradley's great differences with Kant. Now if immediate experience is not altered out of all recognition when it is made into an object of thought, and if we

---

1. T&R p. 175.

know this is so because the primitive awareness of feeling acts as a kind of judge on any articulation of its nature,<sup>1</sup> then this must mean that immediate experience is not completely different from thought. That is, it is not the idea of immediate experience which 'judges' the articulation, but the experience itself. Bradley himself is aware of this, and so he calls immediate experience a 'knowing'<sup>2</sup> and 'a stage of mind'.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to see what else Bradley could say if he is to avoid the Kantian position of affirming that immediate experience becomes awareness when, and not until, it is made an object. If awareness is prior to the relational consciousness, in the sense, at least, of not being dependent on it, then any articulation of its 'message' must be a development of its nature, not an imposition of meaning. Now such a view is in many respects very close to Hegel's which claims that all thought has an aspect of intuition or immediacy; and it is not difficult to find passages in Bradley which indicate his support of such a position. Aside from those places in the Essays to which we have already called attention, we find that in Ethical Studies he states quite explicitly that we possess intuitive as well as reflective thought. '...moral judgements....involve the "intuitive understanding"'.<sup>4</sup> "Intuitive" is used here as the opposite of "reflective" or "discursive", "intuition" as the opposite of "reasoning" or "explicit inferring". If the reader dislike the word, he may substitute "perception" or "sense", if he will; but then he must remember that neither are to exclude the intellectual, the understanding and its implicit judgements and inferences.<sup>5</sup>

---

1. See supra, p. 16 et seq.  
2. op.cit. p. 159.  
3. ibid. p. 174.  
4. E.S. p. 194.  
5. ibid. p. 194, note.

This seems to be quite explicit, and the only ways one could neglect the evidence of Ethical Studies as to the nature of thought would be either to hold that his views changed after writing this, his earliest book, or to contend that the above does not refer to theoretical reasoning, but to some kind of practical activity. The first argument does not seem valid as the second edition of the book is his last work, and while he did not complete its revision he, nonetheless, left in all references to intuitive thought, as well as adding that 'in the intellectual world...the relevant and mere essential, is often seized intuitively and not reflectively'<sup>1</sup>. As for the second argument, Bradley has no distinction between intellectual and practical reason, and in Collected Essays in discussing the will he calls a belief in practical reason a superstition.

Yet a view of thought which contains a belief in intuition is incompatible with the one found in the Principles and in Appearance. In these books we are told that all thinking is judgement, and judgement consists in the predication of universals of reality. Thinking, that is, is always about an object; it is never the grasping of the object in intuition. This view of thought which holds it to be purely discursive, has been called 'quality-relational' thinking and accurately describes the doctrine of thought underlying the dialectic of Appearance, and his theory as found in the first edition of the Principles. On this, his 'official' view, it is difficult to see how he can argue for immediate experience as being a knowing, or how he can escape the Kantian position that feeling only acquires meaning when made an object of thought. For if, so far as thought is concerned, there is only a world of qualities and relations, then immediate experience, which is not relational, can never be known.

---

1. E.S. p. 197, note.

The following are the results which we have so far attained in our discussion of the problems in Bradley's theory of the relation of thought and sense. We began by examining certain aspects of the theory of immediate experience and found that it was said to be time transcending and non-relational. Next we presented the problem of how we could know this experience if thought was wholly discursive. We decided that it was only by retracting, or modifying, the contention that thought was solely quality-relational, that we could be said to have such knowledge. We then pointed out that there were places in Bradley's work where he held that thought had an aspect of intuition.

## II.

In the last section we were largely concerned with the epistemological aspects of the problem of the relation of thought and feeling. That is, we wanted to find out what was involved in knowledge of sense experience, and we found that thought would have to possess an aspect of intuition in order to know what immediate experience was like. Here we are to see what it means to say that thought has an aspect of intuition. This discussion will be more metaphysical as a doctrine of intellectual intuition is bound up with metaphysical notions. The lines of our argument are as follows. First we will indicate what Hegel means by intellectual intuition, and show why he believed that if thought possessed this factor then all reality could be seen to be Spirit. Next we will show how Bradley's dissatisfaction with Hegel's metaphysics was partly responsible for his ambiguous view on the nature of thought.

2a. The notion that thought has an aspect of intuition, or of being in immediate relation to its object is not new in Hegel. It is found in Aristotle, Descartes, Leibnitz, and Spinoza. Aristotle held that  $\nu\theta\upsilon\varsigma$  was a rational activity which was one with what it knows, and this was the starting place of Hegel's theory.

One of the consequences of holding that thought has a moment of intuition is a belief that reality can be known. For in so far as thought is immediate there is no distinction between the thought and what is thought about; and this means that thought can, at least in principle, know reality, because in thinking about reality we are in immediate contact with it.<sup>1</sup> This does involve the consequence that the usual distinction between knowing and thinking will be overcome, as all thinking, being partly real, is to that extent, a knowing.

Kant saw this point quite clearly, and it was because he did that he was quite explicit in his repudiation of the intuitive understanding.<sup>2</sup> Once he rejected this notion he was able to hold that there was thinking which was not knowing. If, on the other hand, he had held a doctrine of intellectual intuition he would not have been able to maintain his belief in a noumenal reality. Hegel's criticisms of Kant's belief to the effect that in thinking about this reality we were in a sense knowing it, are thus a criticism of Kant's view of thought. Once, that is, we grant Kant's view of thought it seems to me that his theory of the unknown is quite consistent.

---

1. We can put this more technically by saying that it is only if we pre-suppose Kant's world of the understanding that we can hold that thinking and the object thought in intuition are distinct.

2. See First Critique B 72.

Hegel, believing that thought was intuitive and that reality could be known, held that reality was active Spirit. This is a natural, if not inevitable, consequence of a belief in intellectual intuition. If thought can know the nature of reality, then this at least points to some kind of an identity of thought and being; that, as it were, they both belong and pertain to the same world.<sup>1</sup> With this belief as a starting point, Hegel thought that all being could be shown to be determinations of Spirit, or Mind. Some of these points will be examined in more detail in the chapter on metaphysics, but our immediate task is to see how Bradley's dissatisfaction with the results of the Hegelian metaphysics made him be wary of a theory of intellectual intuition.

2b. Bradley, as we have seen, could not maintain the Kantian view of thought without denying that feeling was a kind of knowing. Yet at the same time he was unwilling to accept the view that thought was immediate, at least not in Hegel's sense, as he could not accept the theory that reality was active Spirit. That is, while he believed that thought and being must in some ultimate sense be one, he did not believe that this could be so in any sense which we could comprehend. If he had held an explicit theory of intellectual intuition, he would probably have been forced into a metaphysical position which was less sceptical than his own. In order to escape from Kant's view that feeling was no closer to the nature of reality than anything else, yet still not to accept Hegel's theory that reality was through and through rational, he tried to maintain that feeling was a kind of knowing, thus involving intellectual aspects, but also that all knowing involved feeling.

---

1. See infra Chapter VII, pp. 197-208.

We will try to clarify this by showing in greater detail the different views of reality and thought held by the two thinkers. These differences can best be put by saying that for Hegel feeling is a form of Spirit or Mind, while for Bradley reality is a form of feeling. Thus Hegel says that feeling 'is the form of the dull stirring, the inarticulate breathing, of the spirit through its unconscious and un-intelligent individuality...'<sup>1</sup>; while Bradley says that the Absolute itself is an experience which resembles the unity of feeling. Furthermore, for Hegel feeling is only a stage which is left behind in the self-development of Spirit, and so there are realities which thought can grasp immediately in intuition in which there is no element of feeling; but in Bradley's case feeling is irreducible to anything else, and intuition, while not sensible in Kant's sense, nevertheless always contains an element of feeling.

Bradley, that is, maintained that feeling is always present in, or together with, any subsequent form of experience. 'Everything experienced is on one side felt, and the experienced is, also in part, still no more than felt.'<sup>2</sup> In very much the same manner as Whitehead was later to do,<sup>3</sup> he maintained that feeling accompanies and underlies every other sort of experience.

The reasons for, or perhaps the consequences of, this view of the continuance of feeling lead Bradley to a view of reality which is different from Hegel's. For Bradley the Absolute is an experience, and

- 
1. Encyclopaedia, par. 400 (The Philosophy of Mind).
  2. T&R p. 194.
  3. See Appendix I to this chapter.

'such an experience may be called thought, if you choose to use that word. But if anyone else prefers another term, such as feeling or will, he will be equally justified'.<sup>1</sup> The absolute reality, that is, transcends and absorbs thought, and consequently, while he struggles valiantly against a Kantian theory which would render this Absolute the thing-in-itself,<sup>2</sup> he does hold that reality is such that it cannot be known in detail.

Bradley's differences with Hegel will be made clearer if we attempt to explain something of the nature of the latter's theory of reality. What I am to say here does not purport to be an adequate characterization of a difficult theme, but is solely an attempt to see Hegel's position clearly enough to appreciate Bradley's difficulties. Hegel's early interests were theological, and some have contended that the germ of the idea of the dialectic, with its emphasis on the reconciliation of opposites, is to be found in his meditations on the Christian ideas of Incarnation and Atonement. From the first he held that the Absolute or God was Spirit, and, as only God was ultimately real, and all else was dependent on God, then everything must be ultimately Spirit. Furthermore, as God is omnipresent and omniscient then everything that occurs and everything that is thought are in some sense the activity of Spirit. 'Thought', he says, 'in its immanent determinations, and the true nature of things are one and the same content.'<sup>3</sup> Again, 'The Absolute is Mind (Spirit) -- this is the supreme definition of the Absolute. To find this definition and to grasp its meaning and burthen

---

1. A&R p. 151.  
2. See *infra* Chapter VII, pp. 215-221.  
3. Ency. 383.

was, we may say, the ultimate purpose of all education and all philosophy: it was the point to which turned the impulse of all religion and science: and it is the impulse that must explain the history of the world. The word "Mind" (Spirit) -- and some glimpse of its meaning -- was found at an early period: and the spirituality of God is the lesson of Christianity.<sup>1</sup>

All this is only an attempt to indicate the general outlines of Hegel's view of the world and not an attempt to argue for it. Now in spite of what we have said about Bradley's theory of feeling and his resulting view of thought which led him away from the Hegelian metaphysics, there are passages in his work, especially in Appearance where he seems to come close to the Hegelian view of the Absolute. Thus he ends his book by insisting that reality is spiritual. 'There is a great saying of Hegel's, a saying too well known, and one without some explanation I should not like to endorse. But I will end with something not very different, something more certainly the essential message of Hegel. Outside of spirit there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and, the more that anything is spiritual, so much the more it is veritably real.'<sup>2</sup>

If the reader will compare this statement with the one on page sixty-one to the effect that the Absolute was not thought, he will begin to appreciate some of the difficulties in interpreting Bradley's philosophy. In the passage referred to Bradley continues by saying that thought in reaching a whole which will contain every aspect of reality within it must absorb what divides it from feeling and will; yet since none of these aspects can perish they must be merged in a whole in which they are harmonious and in which thought as we think it will have vanished.

---

1. Ency. 383.

2. Appearance p. 489.

We might imagine that Bradley means that the essence or truth of feeling and will must live on in the Absolute, which, crudely put, is Hegel's doctrine. Hegel believes that the world of appearance is a series of stages in which Spirit becomes more truly and more perfectly itself, and that each stage expresses more adequately the truth of the one before. Thus perception expresses more adequately the truth of 'sense-certainty' which resembles Bradley's immediate experience.<sup>1</sup> It would seem that if we are to make any sense of Bradley's doctrine that all in the end is Spirit we would have to interpret him in this sort of way. Yet he says, and this seems to be more characteristic, 'Every flame of passion, chaste or carnal, would still burn in the Absolute unquenched and unabridged, a note absorbed in the harmony of its higher bliss.'<sup>2</sup> It is a little difficult to reconcile this with the view that the most spiritual is the most real,<sup>3</sup> and in fact he held for the most part that feeling was not reducible to anything else, and that the Absolute was more like the experience of feeling than thought.

We will be in a position to discuss this problem in more detail when discussing Bradley's metaphysics, and we will close this chapter by indicating that the view that thought is not reducible to anything else accords with our contention that there is a dualistic element in Bradley's philosophy. This can be simply put by saying that even if thought and feeling are ultimately one, nonetheless, in so far as our experience is concerned, they are, with the difficult exception of immediate experience,

- 
1. See the Phenomenology, Preface and Chapter I.
  2. A&R, p. 151.
  3. It does not matter, for the sake of the argument here, whether or not we point out Spirit is also the good for Hegel. The point is that a feeling experience is not spirit.

different aspects of reality. Feeling is a unity without terms and relations, while thought is discursive and thinks about feeling.

In this chapter we have presented the different aspects of Bradley's theory of feeling without any attempt to give reasons for the different tendencies. We will perhaps be more willing to sympathize with his difficulties when we have considered the problem of the relation of sense and thought from the side, as it were, of thought. In the following chapters we will discuss his different theories of judgement and inference, show why he held them and point out how each involves a different theory of the nature of immediate experience. In this way the tangled skeins of this chapter will be seen in their proper place.

Appendix I.

A Remark on Whitehead's Theory of Feeling.

We find in Whitehead, as in Bradley, the denial that consciousness must be the basis of all experience. In Whitehead's case, at least, I think this is directed mainly against Kant. For Kant and Whitehead, experience is a construct, but unlike Kant it does not necessarily involve functions of the understanding. Consciousness flickers, says Whitehead, and even when it is brightest there is always a large penumbral region of experience which tells of intense experience in dim apprehension. Consciousness is the crown, not the necessary base of experience. (See Process and Reality III, V, 3.)

Again, Whitehead affirms that feeling is the continuing basis of all experience. In this he is nearer to Bradley than Hegel, who would insist on the qualification 'finite'. Any actual entity, which is anything that there is, is a concrescence of prehensions; positive prehensions are feelings, and negative ones are the rejection of feelings. This doctrine forces Whitehead to go even further than Bradley, for not only must the understanding work with a continuing basis of feeling, but the understanding itself for Whitehead is a special form of feeling. (op.cit. II, VI, V)

These conceptual feelings must always be accompanied by physical feelings which are closer to what we usually mean by the word. This in effect means that Whitehead holds with Bradley that feeling though transcended by the relational consciousness remains. Even the awareness of a concept must be accompanied by at least the synthesis of physical feelings with conceptual ones. (III, II, 4.)

As for Bradley feeling supplies Whitehead with the key to the interpretation of reality, and the following could also serve as Hegel's description of the sine qua non of a philosophy of nature. Whitehead writes that for the organic theory the most primitive perception is feeling the body as functioning. It is this "withness" of the body which makes the starting point for our knowledge of the circumambient world. Yet he goes even further in maintaining that not only must the living body be interpreted according to what is known of the physical universe, but also the converse, that is that other sections of the universe are to be interpreted in accordance with what we know of the human body. (op.cit. II, IV, V.)

This vague feeling of the "withness" of the body is only a peculiarly intimate bit of the world. 'Just as Descartes said "this body is mine", so he should have said "this actual world is mine". (op.cit. II, II, VI.) Whitehead calls this vague penumbral awareness which accompanies all sensation 'causal efficacy', the experience of the world through sensation is called 'presentational immediacy'. In this latter

mode of experience we have the familiar presentation of the contemporaneous world; 'the experience of the world around us, a world decorated by sense-data dependent on the immediate states of the relevant parts of our bodies'. (Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect.)

It is quite wrong, Whitehead believes, to confine our analysis of experience to this mode, for in so doing we miss most of the really valuable data which will assist us in a metaphysical enquiry. His argument seems to run along the following lines. The most obvious source for the analysis of experience is language. As Broad has said:

'In philosophy it is equally silly to be a slave to common speech or to neglect it. When we remember it represents the analyses made unconsciously for practical ends by our pre-historic ancestors we shall not be inclined to treat it as an oracle. When we remember that they were probably no greater fools than we are, we will recognize that it is likely to accord at any rate with the more obvious facts, and that it will be well to take it as our starting point and to work from it.' (Broad, C. D. Mind and its Place in Nature, p. 148.)

This is an eminently sensible statement, although I believe that its author has himself been misled by the form of language. There are two points to be noticed: in the first place knowledge was developed for practical ends, and secondly it will probably deal with the more obvious facts. Now what is an 'obvious fact'? It would seem to be one which enters our experience by means of a sense organ -- the clap of thunder, the appearance of an animal, or the spasm of pain. Such facts as these are seized upon by consciousness for detailed examination, and the form of experiencing them becomes enshrined in language. Language then, as Dr. Broad points out, will give us a fair indication of the obvious sort of experience.

One of the main reasons that such experiences are so carefully preserved in language is the fact that they vary. In varying they call attention to themselves, and thus enter into conscious discrimination. Yet how important are these obvious facts? Obviously they are very important for practical purposes, but they must not be taken as adequately representing the nature of experience. There is no rule which says that the most important facts are those which lie the closest to consciousness. Indeed Whitehead goes so far as to say that 'the prominent facts are the superficial facts. They vary because they are superficial'. (Whitehead, A. N., Adventures of Ideas, p. 193, Penguin Edition.) There are other elements in our experience 'on the fringe of consciousness, and yet massively qualifying our experience' (ibid.) which it is of fundamental importance to adumbrate if our analysis is to be adequate. If we merely take account of the obvious facts of experience our analyses will be clear and simple, but quite unlike our experience.

Whitehead discusses this neglected mode of experience in Symbolism, and in Chapter VIII Part II of Process and Reality. It would not be relevant to work this theory out in detail, and we need only notice

one consequence of it. If experience is not confined to presentational immediacy then the problem of trying to synthesize or 'collect' discrete sensations into a world does not arise, for the presence of the world is always with us, something quite inescapable, and it does not depend for its being on *sensa*. In the following passage Whitehead indicates what he means:

'In the dark there are vague presences, doubtfully feared; in the silence, the irresistible causal efficacy of nature presses itself upon us; in the vagueness of the low hum of insects in an August woodland, the inflow into ourselves of feelings from enveloping nature overwhelms us; in the dim consciousness of half-sleep, the presentations of sense fade away, and we are left with the vague feeling of influences from vague things around us. It is quite untrue that the feelings of various types of influences are dependent upon the familiarity of well-marked *sensa* in immediate presentment.' (Whitehead, *op.cit.* II, VIII, IV.)

Unfortunately there is a fly in the feeling, and it is the same one Bradley saw forced on his own theory of immediate experience. We can rephrase the difficulty in this way: how can causal efficacy become an object? For in so far as it is an object, it has become something more, or perhaps other than itself. When we come to the stage of talking and thinking about it, it is inextricably bound up with presentational immediacy; and therefore, so far as I know of causal efficacy it does not exist, 'and that hence, whether it exists or not, I could in neither case know of it'. (Bradley, *T&R*, p. 160.) In other words we are back at Kant, and while I think Whitehead's answer would be much the same as Bradley's we must proceed with some care.

To the follower of Whitehead this will all seem very unfair, and before considering what I imagine would be Whitehead's answer I will point out the sort of solution which will not do. It is no answer to say that for Whitehead feeling is not necessarily understood, in fact that understanding is a special form of feeling as this begs the question, for it assumes you know feeling as it is before understanding has it, as an object of thought, and then decided that understanding is really the same as feeling. It is all very well to deprecate consciousness and dilate on the glories of the felt universe, but surely these feelings are as much the objects of consciousness as anything else.

The 'escape' from this is presumably the same as Bradley's; causal efficacy is ever-present keeping watch that it is not distorted out of all recognition of itself. But again, one can only accept this if one accepts the principle that everything remains the same except so far as I have reason to take it as altered, and that apart from any attention we may be aware of a change in our condition. I think that these assumptions are reasonable, but as Bradley was careful to point out they are only assumptions.

Appendix II

The Sense Data Theory of the Given

In this appendix I will make some remarks on the sense data theory. This theory attempts to interpret experience at the level of the relational consciousness, or what we have called 'quality-relational' thinking; Dr. Mure calls this sort of thinking 'empirical thinking' which is a useful term. This theory begins the analysis of experience not at the level of feeling, but of the object world.

There is one interpretation of the theory which I shall only mention here. Some thinkers, notably G. E. Moore (whose theory seems to me to be much more sophisticated than most, and surmounts some of the difficulties in the theory discussed below) hold that a sense datum is the result of what some people would call a logical analysis of experience. That is, the fact that we do not actually see *sensa* as Broad and Price suggest that we do see them, is irrelevant. 'There are (reasons) for doubting whether the directly seen object which I am now "picking out" and which it is natural to take to be part of the surface of my hand really is identical with the part of the surface of my hand which I am seeing.'<sup>1</sup> It is not my purpose to discuss these 'idealized' *sensa*. I am only concerned with those thinkers who hold that what we see, as we see, are *sensa*. The early Russell, Broad, and Price, all fall into this category.

No clearer outline of this theory can be given than Broad's admirable summary of his own point of view:

'Under certain conditions I have states of mind called sensations. These sensations have objects, which are always concrete particular existents, like coloured and hot patches, noises, smells, etc.. Such objects are called *sensa*. *Sensa* have properties, such as shape, size, hardness, colour, loudness, coldness, and so on. The existence of such *sensa*, and their presence to our mind in sensation, leads us to judge that a physical object exists and is present to our senses.'<sup>2</sup>

This theory, then, holds that the given, or the datum of thought is in the form of *sensa*, and it is this contention which we must now examine.

An analysis of the reasons for holding this view reveals that they are of two sorts which we may label the a priori and the empirical. The first says there must be *sensa* even if we cannot find them, and the second that the existence of *sensa* is so obvious that no one could possibly dispute the fact. Thus in support of the a priori thesis Russell argues that there must be *sensa* as a logically irrefutable consequence of the fact that perception gives rise to new knowledge, and that this is so even if we never find any pure datum. The second argument merely states that it is obvious

- 
1. The Philosophy of G. E. Moore in Vol. IV of 'The Library of Living Philosophers' p. 641.
  2. Broad, C. D., Scientific Thought, p. 243.

that there are sensa, and our relation with them is 'a kind of fact, the existence of which no one disputes.... (Russell's) primary use of the term has been simply as a name for an indisputable fact'.....'sense data' ....the existence of which no one disputes'.<sup>1</sup>

The a priori argument holds, as has been said, that as perception gives rise to new knowledge, there must be a datum or given, and I also think that Russell intends that this given is to be taken as consisting of sensa. In the examination of this theory we must distinguish what Russell succeeds in showing, what he seems to think he has shown, and his criticism of the 'Hegelians'. I will show that he produces a good argument for the existence of a datum, although, as we shall see later, by no means a conclusive one. He does not show that this datum is in the form of sensa, and as usual he misrepresents the idealist viewpoint for Bradley and probably Bosanquet would agree with what he actually succeeds in proving.

In his chapter on 'Perception and Knowledge' in an Enquiry into Meaning and Truth Russell states that every perceptive experience, 'if I choose to notice it, affords me either new knowledge which I could not previously have inferred, or, at least, as in the case of eclipses, greater certainty than I could previously have obtained by means of inference....that there must be a pure datum is, I think, a logically irrefutable consequence of the fact that perception gives rise to new knowledge.'<sup>2</sup>

There is a great deal here which seems very questionable to me, but it is not difficult to see the point. All our knowledge seems to be rooted and grounded in perception. I see what looks like a wall and infer that if I walk into it I will be hurt, or I hear a sound and infer it is a bell ringing, or judge that the sound pleases me, but if it were not for 'the sound being given' how could my knowledge ever begin? Russell admits that it may be difficult to find a datum without some interpretation; that is, for example, in seeing the wall as a wall, I have already made a judgement about the given -- whatever that may mean. But says Mr. Russell, of whom it could never be said that pessimism was a leading characteristic, 'it is not impossible to whittle away the element of interpretation, or to invent an artificial language involving a minimum of theory'.<sup>3</sup> This is difficult, as one would suppose that the more artificial the language became, the more theory it would involve. But I find it very difficult to understand Mr. Russell, and it is quite possible that this is not fair.

With the examination of one final point we may evaluate the a priori argument for the existence of sensa. Russell claims in Human Knowledge that the question of datum must not be confused with that of certainty. We cannot then argue against him that as nearly all data

---

1. Broad, C. D., in P.A.S., 1919.

2. Russell, B. An Enquiry into Meaning and Truth, p. 124.

3. op.cit. p. 125.

need interpretation and correction, or even that any datum which is so treated is already irremediably 'polluted' with thought, there is therefore no datum. The essence of a datum is that it is not inferred, not that it is infallible.

In evaluating this a priori defence for *sensa* we shall first have to answer the objection that it is not meant as an argument for *sensa*. It might be said that the word is nowhere mentioned in Russell's discussion of the datum. To this I would reply that these data of knowledge which are propositions whose evidence is at least derived from perception seem to be meant as the propositional form of *sensa*; and I see no reason why, in the light of Russell's other writings they should not be so considered. (Unless, per impossibile? Russell means the propositions are the data.)

However, this is not, I freely admit, conclusive, and the objection remains cogent. But what then? If Russell is not talking about *sensa*, the a priori argument for their existence disappears. If Russell merely means that thought, which seems to be something different from feeling and sensation, must work with, or take account of appearances -- or whatever you choose to call the non-inferential elements of experience, if there are any -- he is only saying that there is more to experience than thought. Furthermore, he seems to admit that we can never actually find a datum which is free from thought, and if he does mean this he is not criticizing the 'Hegelians' by whom I presume he means Bradley and Bosanquet, he is merely stating their position; and as for Hegel it is obvious you cannot find any datum untinged with thought because there isn't any datum in Russell's sense at all.

On the other hand, if Russell's arguments are meant to prove the existence of *sensa* they are plainly inadequate as there is no proof that the datum is in the form of *sensa* as described by Broad. I conclude that the a priori argument only shows that there might be more to experience than thought, but that it is quite inadequate if taken as proving the existence of *sensa*, and pathetic in its weakness as an 'anti-Hegelian' argument.

We should now examine the empirical argument for the existence of sense data -- which will be a more complicated and difficult procedure. The sense data theory has two aspects: in the first place it is a theory of the given, and in the second a description of the world. Of the first we may say that it is conceivably correct, although I hope to show that this is not the case; but as a description of the nature of the world it is ludicrous. One is reminded of some words of A. N. Whitehead: 'Philosophers ... should confine attention to the rush of immediate transition. Their explanations would then be seen in their native absurdity.'<sup>1</sup> We will not be forced to consider this second aspect of the theory as it breaks down even as a theory of the given.

---

1. Whitehead, A. N. Process and Reality II, IV, X.

First we must be quite clear as to the nature of sense data. They are, says Russell in an early work, 'the things which are immediately known in sensation: such things as colours, sounds, smells, hardnesses, roughnesses, and so on'.<sup>1</sup> The experience of being immediately aware of these things is called sensation. Price gives a similar account, and to illustrate his theory he takes the example of seeing a tomato. When I am conscious of seeing a tomato I 'cannot doubt that there exists a red patch of somewhat bulgy shape, standing out from a background of colour patches, and having a certain visual depth'.<sup>2</sup> That this exists and that I am now conscious of it cannot be doubted by me. Furthermore this red patch is 'directly present to my consciousness', it has not, that is, been arrived at by any process of inference. This red patch is called a datum, data of this special sort are called sense data, and acquaintance with them is called sensing.

We have been told several times, indeed the upholders of the theory never cease to repeat it, that sense data are given, or that they are the data of thought. But what does this mean exactly? The term is used so frequently, and with such assurance that it carries a fixed and plain meaning, that it may seem a waste of time to try and discover what this is. This is not the case; for we will see that it is only because the concept is so broad and vague that the theory is able to hold sense to be the datum of thought.

In the first place it is obvious that the theory is not using the term in the most common sense of given. If it were it would mean that someone or something transferred the ownership (more than likely having become a little bored with it) of a red patch from himself or itself to the recipient. This is plainly not the sense meant.

Professor Collingwood points out that there is also a technical use of dari in scholastic Latin, arising out of the terminology of logical debate, where datur means 'it is granted'. 'Here datum means what you are allowed to assert at this point in the debate. In this sense, if a scholastic philosopher had succeeded to his own satisfaction in proving the existence of God, he ends his argument: ergo datur Deus.'<sup>3</sup>

Now clearly more than this is meant, although less than the first, and as the distinction seems to have a basis in common sense we must try to see what it is. Common sense, it would seem, is calling attention to a distinction or a contrast between imagination and sensation 'which somehow vaguely reminds them of the contrast between making (say) a paper-knife for yourself and receiving one from a friend'.<sup>4</sup> Sensation is 'tied down' to each sensing experience in a way imagination is not. At each moment of sensation we seem to be in contact with an intractible element which is absent in imagination.

- 
1. Russell, B. The Problems of Philosophy, p. 12.
  2. Price, op.cit. p. 3.
  3. Collingwood, R. G. The Principles of Art, p. 196.
  4. *ibid.*

This 'at each moment', however, is the crucial point. Surely the presented moment gives no information about the past or future, or if it does we are doing more than sensing as Kant showed with his doctrine of three-fold synthesis. That is, we can only be aware of *sensa* when we are having a sensation, and if we imagine the *sensa* to exist beyond the concrete unity of the seeing or hearing experience, we have ceased speaking of *sensa* as the theory maintains them to exist, but about universals.

Let us take an example. Suppose, instead of a red patch, I look at a cup of tea and then pour milk into it. The colour will turn from a blackish brown to a light brown, and if I pour long enough to a dirty white. But how can I say that the colour changed? That is, at each moment I had a sensation of one colour not two. This analysis already presupposes that I have some way of comparing past *sensa* with present ones. But the *sensum* of a second ago has passed away, as a *sensum*, and been irretrievably lost in the flux of sensation. It is no longer there to be compared with its successors.

In the same way when the theory talks about future *sensa*, possible *sensa*, and other people's *sensa*, it is talking about *sensa* which are not here and now, and it is therefore impossible to talk about considering the relations between them. This even applies to my own *sensa*, none of them seem, as *sensa*, to last long enough to permit of being compared. Professor Collingwood writes nothing less than the truth when he says: 'The flux of sense, it would seem, destroys any *sensum* before it has lasted long enough to permit of its relations being studied.'<sup>1</sup>

This difficulty is a very real one, but it is concealed by the use of a terminology which consists in attributing to *sensa* characteristics which they do not possess. *Sensa* are called sense data, and 'given' here means, not what I tried to show above, but 'given and retained'. Sense data are used and spoken of as if they were fixed and established such as that with which a scientist works, or even worse, the bricks out of which a builder builds a wall.

In the following passage from Bradley I have put 'collection' in the place of 'association'. It then expresses very forcibly the point I wish to make. '...particulars have got no permanence; their life endures for a fleeting moment. In the second place they never have more than one life; when they are dead they are done with. There is no Hades where they wait in disconsolate exile, till collection announces resurrection and recall. When the fact is bodily buried in the past, no miracle opens the mouth of the grave and calls up to the light the perished reality, unchanged by the processes that rule in nature. These touching beliefs of a pious legend may babble in the tradition of a senile psychology, or contort themselves in the metaphysics of some frantic dogma, but philosophy must register

---

1. Collingwood, op.cit. p.169.

them and sigh and pass on.'<sup>1</sup>

This same mistake is made in many ways; we are told that the proper term for apprehension of a sensum is 'acquaintance'. But how can you possibly be 'acquainted' with something so transitory and fleeting, something which lives only to die? We are acquainted with houses, pictures, people, meaning that we have come into contact with them several times, but you cannot come into contact more than once with something that vanishes for ever. Sensa neither persist nor recur, and if this is the case we cannot be acquainted with them. In describing their position the sense data theory speaks of sensa as given, in the sense explained, which is quite justifiable, but then speaks as though it had established the fact that sensa were given and retained. The theory gains whatever plausibility it may possess by equivocating on the meaning of given, by describing sensa one way and using them in another.

It seems that these considerations show the theory to be untenable. The theory insists that its objects are the elements of a concrete particular situation, but uses them as persisting through change which is to deny its own description of sensa. All this is not to deny that we do have sensations, nor that for certain purposes it may be convenient to speak of sensa, but this in turn does not mean that the sensa are anything but artificial constructs of the understanding.

That is, the theory in ignoring Hegel's principle that in sense experience we have one concrete situation which, although we may go on to analyse it, nevertheless remains an essential unity, has produced a theory 'which I am sure is false and the mother of a great family of fallacies. It is plausible because it appeals to what we imagine to be immediate, certain, and actual, and because we do not realize that the possible sense data it has to drag in are purely mythical'.<sup>2</sup>

We may also consider the following points.

In the first place the examples used to illustrate what is meant by sensa are inaccurate; secondly, the theory holds that sensa are given immediately to consciousness, but this is not so; and thirdly the theory ignores the fact that sensation is always accompanied by feeling.

- 
1. Bradley, Logic II, II, 1. It is quite true, that after Bradley tried his hand at Psychology he regretted having expressed himself so strongly, and wrote 'The doctrine that every mental state still survives and is active below the conscious level, was, and is, not to be treated with contempt'. (additional notes No. 4.) If the sense data theory wants to say that sensa are 'mental states' they are welcome to do so, but if I understand it, all they will be most unwilling to do so, and therefore the amended quotation still applies. (at ?)
  2. Ritchie, A. D. Essays in Science and Philosophy, p. 251.

The examples used are inaccurate. Let us take Price's description of seeing the tomato. In the first place it is not the only thing we see. Here we may make use of an observation of Bosanquet's. He states that the mind is never confronted by merely one object at a time. The facts are not described by saying we start with a pair of objects facing each other, one of which may be a mind. 'If there is a mind on one side there is at least a complex of objects on the other.' (The Distinction between Mind and its Objects. Following Hegel, Bosanquet queries the use of 'on one side', but this does not concern us here.) Thus when I see a red patch it is never merely this I see, but rather a red patch within a certain context -- on a table, in a garden, or in someone's hand.

Dawes Hicks put this point well when he said: 'When I look at a table in front of me, however momentary the glance may be, I simply do not see merely a "patch of colour". With some little effort, I may limit what I am aware of to a patch of colour of more or less definite extent, which is continuous with what surrounds it, and which consists of parts related to and distinguished from one another.' (Critical Realism, p. 49.)

It must be concluded that sensa are mental in the sense that without a mind which first of all limits that of which it is aware, and then somehow reproduces this, they could not exist as sensa.

It may be objected that I have reached this conclusion without any consideration of Dr. Broad's careful analysis of whether or not sensa are mental. (Scientific Thought 253 et seq.) It can readily be seen though that his discussion begins with the acceptance of sensa as given and retained, and he then goes on to try and determine whether these 'sensa' are mind dependent, and naturally enough has little difficulty in showing that there is no good reason to hold that they are. But I deny that he formulated his problem correctly, and claim that his whole argument is based on a faulty premise.

Furthermore the view these thinkers take of the nature of sensa leads them into the worst type of metaphysical speculation, the sort which is quite rightly abominated by these thinkers themselves. Dr. Broad claims that it is foolish to think that because I stop looking at a colour it ceases to exist; this may be so, but as I pointed out, the sensa most certainly cease to exist. The question is not an ontological one as to whether colours exist in the real world apart from sensing or perception, but what I suppose is called an epistemological one as to how I can have unsensed sensa before the mind. That is, in spite of what Price says in the first chapter of Perception, the theory assumes that sensa exist apart from sensation, and that this apartness, by some mysterious method, is open to our inspection.

Secondly, sensa are supposed to be 'given' to consciousness, and not arrived at 'by any process of inference'. Sensa that is are supposed to be known 'immediately'. This is not so.

In the first place it follows from the preceding point that the sensa of which consciousness is aware are arrived at by processes of attention

and selection. I do not see how in the face of this the theory can hold *sensa* to be immediate. We may see this by Price's accurate description of 'perceptual acceptance'. But if this description is accurate I just do not see how Price's own first chapter on 'the given' is adequate.

We may illustrate this by an excerpt from Price's book. 'The two states of mind, the acquaintance with the sense-datum and the perceptual consciousness of the tree, just arise together. The sense datum is presented to us, all in one moment. The two modes of "presence to the mind", utterly different though they are, can only be distinguished by subsequent analysis.' Well and good, but this seems to mean that consciousness of *sensa* is dependent on analysis and attention which is what I have been trying to show, and if this is so how is it that sensing is any more given than perceptual acceptance?

Thirdly the theory ignores the fact that sensation is always accompanied by feeling, that is no matter how much feeling is transcended 'it both remains and is active'. (Bradley, T&R VI, p. 161.) We shall discuss this point by considering some arguments of Broad's. In doing this we will see that one at least of the upholders of the sense data theory rejects the only possible way that *sensa* could be said to be given. It will be remembered that all we could make of the meaning of the term was that it indicated a certain intractable element in experience, an element not possessed by imagination. Now suppose it was admitted that *sensa* were not given in the sense of being immediate but in the fact that I am forced to see or feel *sensa*, while I do not have to imagine if I choose not to.

The answer to this is quite simple, you do not have to look at red tomatoes or feel their softness if you do not want to. And if it be said that this is just quibbling and misses the real point of the argument which is that in some cases *sensa* are forced on us, I must beg a little patience. Suppose, for example, you are hit on the head, or have some intense feeling of pleasure or pain which we cannot ignore, surely here you will say we have *sensa* which are given and cannot be ignored. Unfortunately Dr. Broad insists that we must distinguish 'true sensations' from mere 'bodily feelings'. (Broad, Scientific Thought p. 257.) He has seen that intense feelings and many ordinary experiences will not fit into the sensing - *sensa* mould, so in order to protect his theory he says that these experiences are not those of sensing. But if this is the case, and I think it is, the last hope of finding the intractable element of the given in sensing has disappeared. The upholders of *sensa* cannot have it both ways, if bodily feelings are not *sensa*, then the undoubted fact that bodily feelings do seem sometimes to be forced on us cannot be used to prove that *sensa* are given as containing the unique element in experience which constitutes the given, in which by definition they are excluded.

Broad's reason for rejecting bodily feelings is, as I have pointed out, that many experiences do not seem to fit the sensing-*sensa* mould. I will now clarify this point. The experience of pain, for example, is much

more adequately described by the phrase 'I am in pain' than 'I am aware (or sense) that I have a pain (a sensum)'. Dr. Broad, seeing this difficulty, asks in Scientific Thought whether it really is possible to analyse sensations into an act of sensing and a sensum. If we consider the various experiences called 'sensations' we seem to be able to arrange them in an order, starting with those of taste and smell, and ending with bodily sensations like headache. At the visual end of the scale the sensation of seeing seems to fall naturally into an act of sensing and a sensum. But:

'If we pass to the other end of the series the opposite seems to be true. It is by no means obvious that a sensation of headache involves an act of sensing and a "headachy" object; on the contrary, it seems on the whole more plausible to describe the whole experience as a "headachy" state of mind. In fact the distinction of act and object seems to have vanished. (Broad, C. D., Scientific Thought, p. 254.)

Dr. Broad is here considering the question, whether or not sensa can be considered as mental. But as we have seen (see p. 75) this question does not concern us, and we may go directly on and see how he avoids this difficulty.

The series, from seeing on the one hand, to feeling on the other, is continuous. The two kinds of sensation melt imperceptibly into one another. It is equally plausible to analyse a sweet taste into an act of sensing and a sweet sensum, or to treat it as an unanalysable mental fact in which there is no distinction between the subject and the object. Common speech recognizes these distinctions and while we say we have a sensation of red we never say we have a feeling of red. 'The rule is that, when a sensuous experience seems clearly to involve act and object, it is called a sensation and never a feeling; when it is doubtful whether any such analysis can be applied, it is called indifferently a feeling or a sensation.' (Broad, C. D., *op.cit.* p. 255).

The ground of the difficulty in distinguishing feeling and sensation lies in the fact that the word sensation is defined 'not by direct inspection', but by causation. That is, we say we are having a sensation, if our state of mind is the immediate response to the stimulation of a sense organ. Therefore as sensations are defined physiologically and not psychologically, it is at least likely that what we call sensation may include two very different types of experience, one of which can, and the other of which cannot, be analysed into sensing and sensum. 'These might be called respectively "true sensations" and "bodily feelings".' (Broad, *op.cit.* p. 257) He insists that the experiences at the top of the scale are 'true sensations' and he concludes 'that some sensations at least are analysable into act and sensing and sensum.' (*ibid.*)

All this is very interesting, but even granting that sensing may describe a sort of experience, by what possible right can some sensations be called 'true'? Are some sensations 'true' because they belong to the

upper class of the sensational hierarchy? Surely this cannot be the case for the upper class is the upper class because its members are 'true' and have the distinction of being defined psychologically. I confess I cannot see why some sensations should be called 'true' except for the fact that they seem to fit the required pattern, and if this is the case the required pattern cannot be 'true' because it contains 'true' sensations.

At any rate, the sensa of Dr. Broad, are, to use a happy phrase of Collingwood's, 'sterilized'. 'The emotionless sensum, the "sensum" of current philosophy, is not the actual sensum as it is experienced, but the product of a process of sterilization.' (Collingwood, The Principles of Art.) And if sterilized by rejecting bodily feelings, which are, I suppose, 'untrue' sensations, the theory is giving up its last possible defence of finding the given, the intractable element in experience, in the sensing - sensa pattern.

We must also notice that Broad is one of many 'who have disdained the information about the universe obtained through the visceral feelings and have concentrated on visual feeling' (Whitehead, P&R II, IV, VIII.), with the result that we are left with a meticulously worked out theory which is no more like the living nature of concrete fact than a skeleton 'with tickets stuck all over it' (Hegel) is like a living body.

Chapter III

JUDGEMENT

'...his (other) view which horrified me so, I took to be something quite different. I thought that (like Plato) he frequently confused the actual world of organized things and definite relations with the presentation of sense qua presented.'

Bosanquet, from a letter of 1886.

In the last chapter we examined the question of immediate experience and gave some indication of the different points of view concerning this question which were to be found in Bradley's work. We did not, however, attempt a genetic account of these points of view, and we indicated at the close of the chapter that when seen as a development the reason for Bradley's divergent theories would become more evident. In the next three chapters we will see something of the development in his theory of thought, and the resulting changes in his views of the relation of thought to sense.

In this chapter we are to examine the theory of judgement, and show the difference between the doctrines of the first and second edition of the Principles of Logic.<sup>1</sup> These differences can be illustrated by the change in his views on the relation between the categorical and the hypothetical judgement. In the first edition Bradley argued that any judgement which had immediate experience as its subject expressed a fact, and that truth was correspondence of the idea with this fact. In the second edition, partly as a result of Bosanquet's criticism, he

---

1. Hereafter referred to in the notes as P.L., and in the text as Principles.

maintained that there were no purely categorical judgements as they all contained an element of the hypothetical. This is because the simple categorical judgement which is supposed to report the presentation of sense is an impossibility, because, as we have seen, that which the judgement is supposed to report is already thought 'infected'. Thus while the judgement may appear to be purely definatory, it depends on a selection out of a reality which is neither wholly sensuous nor wholly intellectual, and to the extent to which it does not include these conditions it is hypothetical. This will also mean that it will be difficult to hold a correspondence theory of the relation of ideas and facts, as the 'facts' to which the ideas must somehow correspond will already show the work of thought.

The first theory is clearly of a dualistic nature; on the one side there are facts presented in perception, on the other ideas. The second theory is much nearer to a monistic view of the world. This is one way of stating the general difference between the two editions of the Principles, but our purpose here is only the study of the theory of judgement, and this will be divided into four parts. First we will give Bradley's definition of judgement and discuss the theory of the logical idea which it entails. Secondly we shall detail the way the intellect employs these ideas in judgement. Thirdly we will discuss the relation of the idea to the subject of the judgement. Lastly we will examine the distinction between the categorical and the hypothetical judgement, as well as to give Bosanquet's criticism of this distinction .

1. Judgement is a mental act which 'refers an ideal content...  
to a reality beyond the act'.<sup>1</sup> In judgement we unite a logical idea or a universal with a real substantive, recognizing at the same time that the relation made by the act holds independently of and beyond the act. The aim of judgement is to satisfy the intellect by securing the truth.<sup>2</sup> There is a great deal here with needs qualification and explanation, and indeed the remainder of the chapter may be understood as an attempt to explain the meaning of the above definition.

- 
1. P.I. p. 10.
  2. The contention that there are mental acts, and that the purpose of thinking is to secure truth, assumes as true two positions which are disputed today. I do not propose to argue for these two contentions, but to make one or two observations on the controversy.

The theory that there are no mental acts as argued by Professor Ryle does not seem convincing, (see for example Professor Campbell's article in Mind, June 1953.), nor can I see any point or motive in holding it. I do not intend this as an argument against what Professor Ryle actually says, but only to indicate that the whole conception seems singularly fruitless. Thus if we knew that a number of philosophical problems, or even one of them, would be clarified by admitting his hypothesis, then there would be some motive for abusing the mental out of existence, but even the motive or end of this activity seems most obscure.

Secondly I see no reason to deny that at least some of our mental activities are undertaken solely to find out what is true. It is probably the case, as Bradley said, that intelligence is at first practical, and that we learn to distinguish ideas and reality through volitional experience, but this is not to affirm that judgement is the same as practical belief. The judgement that it will rain tomorrow is not the same thing as buying an umbrella today. (See Principles p. 19). Truth says Bradley is 'where the intellect has found its good'. (Essays, p. 1.) This does not mean that everything which pleases us is true, but that, in the first place, only truth can satisfy the demands of our intellect, and secondly, the criterion for truth does not lie outside the intellect. This doctrine is not a form of pragmatism, and even Aquinas held that truth was 'Being qua known'.

Bradley begins his discussion of the nature of judgement by pointing out that it involves the notion of ideas, as there is no judgement where there is no knowledge of truth and falsity, and these conceptions require ideas. It thus becomes necessary to discuss the nature of the idea which is employed in judgement. Any attempt to explain Bradley's notion of the idea is a difficult endeavour as his theory is complicated enough to begin with, but it was subjected to modifications. The most important of these was his rejection of 'floating ideas' which had taken place by the time of the second edition. Another way of expressing this difference is to say that the first edition seems to hold a theory of the abstract universal, while the second maintains the concrete. It must be emphasized, however, that neither edition consists in one definite view; yet we can at least say that the first edition is much less idealist in character than the second.

Bradley makes the distinction between the 'that' and the 'what', that is between the existence of a thing and the complex of qualities and relations which he calls its content. Everything which is, he maintains, possesses these two aspects. Yet there are some facts which possess a third side called meaning, and such facts are signs or symbols. Furthermore, while there is a distinction between a sign and a symbol, it is not important to maintain the distinction in discussing the nature of ideas, and the two terms are to be used interchangeably. A symbol, or a sign, is a fact which stands for something else.

There is nothing very abstruse about this, the roar of a lion may be taken to mean a lion is around the corner, or the lion may be taken to stand for courage. The important point is that as a symbol the fact forgoes individuality and self-existence. It is not the particular 'factualness' of the symbol which is important to us, but its universality;

its ability to be used beyond itself and stand for others. The paper and ink, we are told, 'cut the throats of men, and the sound of a breath may shake the world'.<sup>1</sup>

This is a rather poetic description of the power of symbols, and our next problem is to see in more detail how particulars can possess this universal importance. Facts, we are told, become signs when the fact acquires meaning, and meaning consists of a part of the content 'cut off, fixed by the mind, and considered apart from the existence of the sign'.<sup>2</sup> In so far as logic is concerned all ideas are signs. They all exist as a hard particular as an event in a mind, but it is only when they begin to exist for the sake of their meaning that they are ideas for logic.

The theory thus far is not difficult to understand. Every mental occurrent which is of interest to logic has:

1. existence,
2. content, as:
  - (a) character of the particular psychological event, and
  - (b) as universal meaning.

Yet there is a difficulty in the relation between (a) and (b). It is stated that the idea 'if that is the psychological state, is in logic a symbol'.<sup>3</sup> That is, because the psychological state has a universal part it is a symbol. But, he then states that it is better to say that the idea is the meaning, for existence and unessential content are wholly disregarded. That is, if in logic we are only interested in meaning, we can restrict the term idea to that part of the idea which has meaning.

---

1. P.I. p. 4.  
2. ibid.  
3. P.I. p. 6.

Then, however, he says that 'The idea, in the sense of mental image, is a sign of the idea in the sense of meaning.

'These two senses of idea, as the symbol and the symbolized, are of course known to all of us'<sup>1</sup>. If we recall the definition of a symbol or a sign we seem to be presented with a difficulty. A symbol was a fact which, in virtue of its universal element could stand for something else, but now we are told that the particular aspect of the psychological event is a symbol of the universal meaning. That is, to take X as standing for psychological event or image, we find:

X has: { existence.  
content as: {(a) universal, which is a symbol by definition, and  
(b) particular character.

But if (b) is a symbol which means the meaning, it must itself have a universal aspect other than the meaning which it stands for.

X has: { existence.  
content as: { universal meaning, (symbol 1.)  
character of image as: { particular character of the image,  
and  
universal to symbolize symbol 1.

Bradley may mean that given an image which is a sign, then, given this knowledge, the image is more than an image because it has a meaning. The solution is probably along these lines, and this illustrates the danger of trying to interpret the first edition on purely empiricist lines; that is, in trying to hold that meaning is merely the work of the abstractive intellect, and not the real essence of the psychological event. Thus if the universal is concrete as being already the meaning of the

---

1. P.L. p. 6.

sign, then, I suppose, the psychical event is a sign because it already has a universal meaning.

Yet it is difficult to believe that Bradley believed this when he wrote the first edition. Certainly neither Cook Wilson nor Bosanquet understood this, and the latter wrote 'As I understand him, he holds that in judgement we simply claim for an idea in our mind that it is true of reality'<sup>1</sup>. Thus the difficulty outlined above seems to remain.

There is another point which may have caused the reader difficulty which we shall endeavour to clarify. The theory of the first edition assumes that we always have images when we think, yet it seems to be a psychological fact that many people have few if any images. However, Bradley himself saw this and later wrote that he was 'wrong to speak here and elsewhere, as if with every idea you have what might be called an "image"<sup>2</sup>'. The point, he goes on to say, is that every idea has an aspect of psychical event, and so is qualified as a particular existent.<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Bosanquet, B., Knowledge and Reality, p. 116, hereafter referred to in the notes as K&R.
  2. P.L. p. 38.
  3. We can notice a criticism of Bradley's theory of the idea which does not appear to possess much weight. Blanshard maintains that Bradley went through three distinct stages, and while there is no doubt that his views develop, I do not see that he changed his mind quite so often as Blanshard makes out. Here I shall content myself with showing that the first and third theory which Blanshard discovers do not seem to be different. The criticism of the first view, that is the theory which we have outlined in the text, has four points, but we need examine only the first and fourth of these as the second and third deal with the question of images.

Blanshard maintains that if the psychical event is what Bradley says it is, that is, "a mere fact as opposed to meaning, "a hard particular", "an event in my history", how can a piece of it be eternal and a part of the psychical world'. (Blanshard, *op.cit.* p. 448). This, he continues, is like saying that a streak of lightning is a transient

A logical idea then is a universal, a meaning which has an aspect of psychical existence. The relation between the idea as meaning and as existence is, as we have seen, open to different interpretations. Our next task is to examine how these ideas are used in judgement.

2. 'Judgement proper' we are told 'is the act which refers an ideal content recognized as such to a reality beyond the act.'<sup>1</sup> To grasp the implications of this theory requires a break with our usual ways of thought, for Bradley is maintaining that the subject of the judgement is that about which we judge, not an idea or any sort of representation of it, but the substantive itself. For example, in the judgement 'this tree is green' (or if one doubts that such an explicit formulation is ever made, then 'the awareness of the tree's greenness' or however one

---

occurrence, though the upper half of it is eternal. The fourth point he makes is the reverse of this and claims that if the meaning can be found in the psychical event then it is already more than a 'hard particular'.

Now without asking whether or not this criticism annihilates Bradley's theory I wish to compare this first theory with the third one which Blanshard finds in 'A Defence of Phenomenalism in Psychology'. The point of this theory is that psychology is supposed to deal with everything which enters into experience -- images and meanings, self, objects, sensations and emotions, but is to confine its attention to 'events with their laws of co-existence and sequence'. (Collected Essays II, p. 364.)

Yet this seems to be a theory of method which is represented as Bradley's third theory. It is a method both by which we can divide psychology from logic, and also by means of which we are to study psychology once we have determined its province. This might in itself give us reason to be uneasy, for a theory of how we separate for purposes of study, is not necessarily a theory of how things are in fact separated. Our uneasiness is increased when we find Blanshard quoting with approval that 'every idea has an aspect of psychical event and so is qualified as a particular existence'. If Bradley can be criticised for saying that meaning is a part of a hard particular, how can he be commended for saying that meaning has an aspect of hard particularity; for 'all meaning has hard particularity' becomes by conversion 'some hard particularity has meaning', which was all Bradley's 'first' theory maintained.

1. P.L. p. 10.

likes to phrase it) the subject is that about which we are thinking, that is, the actual tree itself. The subject of a judgement is not another idea but the real thing, whatever it may be, about which we think.

It is here we may begin to appreciate the argument that all experience is not solely of a subject-object kind, but that everything which I experience is in a sense mine. Thus when I judge about physical objects I do not judge about my idea of them, but of the object itself as it constitutes part of the continuing feeling whole which is the basic fact which underlies my existence. It is just because the object is part of my experience that I can judge about it. By means of judgement I seek to clarify and specify this experience.

We should notice that in the first edition of the logic Bradley is concerned almost wholly with judgements within the range of sense. Judgements of metaphysics or morals while they are mentioned are not discussed at any length. This led Bosanquet to say that while it was undoubtedly correct to invest perception with importance as the place where we contacted reality, he was wrong to exclude every other sort of contact. What Bosanquet is objecting to is really Bradley's analysis of thought and sense. Remembering the discussion of the last chapter we can say that he is criticizing the view of sense and thought which would seem to be vulnerable to a Kantian criticism; that is, the view which would hold that the 'message' of sense was nothing for the understanding. If immediate experience in this first sense was our only contact with reality, then Bosanquet felt that our whole conscious world of relations was condemned to unreality. Thus in the letter, an excerpt from which served as the heading of this chapter, he makes the point that Bradley has 'confused' the presentation of sense with the actual

world of organized things and relations. He then continues:

(E.g. if you so much as emphasise or distinguish within the sensuous datum, you ipso facto, he says, "mutilate" the fact.) And therefore, I fancied, the entirety of actual existence as distinct from the sensuous datum ceased to appear to him to be actual (it is all hypothetical on this view, for the slightest abstraction divorces you from fact, and there is nothing definite without abstraction) while the reality which he in this mood admitted to be real of course was not satisfactory, having neither past nor future, nor articulate existence. And in presence of this unsatisfactoriness, as it seemed to me, having lost hold of the actual world of human beings and moral institutions by confusing it with the presentation of sense, he cries out for a "fuller splendour", or "more glorious reality".<sup>1</sup>

The only defect in this criticism is the use of the word confusion.

Bradley may have been wrong in the first edition, he himself says he was, but, nonetheless, he had a perfectly valid reason for arguing as he did. We will examine this reason in the fourth section of this chapter in detail, but we can put this reason generally by saying he wanted to save the categorical judgement, as without it there was no defence against Hegelian relativism, and the only way he could see to save it was to anchor it in perception.

We may summarize this section by saying that judgement is a mental act which refers a universal content to a reality beyond the act.

3. Our task in this section is to enquire into the relation between the idea and that to which it is referred, the relation between the symbol and the symbolized. Here again we have two different views which answer roughly to the two editions of the Principles. The first of these is a straightforward correspondence view in which the idea represents or copies the external reality. The second theory is more subtle, and involves

---

1. Bernard Bosanquet and his Friends, Letters. Edited by J. H. Muirhead, Allen & Unwin, 1935. Letter to James Seth written in 1886.

the contention that the content of my thought and the content of the external reality, in so far as it is thought, is the same.

We have Bradley's own word for it that much of the first edition is written with the correspondence theory in mind. 'The attempt, made at times in this work for the sake of convenience, to identify reality with the series of facts, and truth with copying was, I think, mis-<sup>1</sup>judged....' We can raise against such a theory the usual criticism of any representative theory of ideas. If we only know ideas and not the things, how do we know that the ideas represent accurately or not; but if we do know the original what function does the idea play? At any rate Bradley urged this criticism against a correspondence theory, which is enough in itself to show that his own theory must possess other elements.

The second theory holds that the content (or the what) of the thing thought about, and the content of the thought which thinks the thing, are one and the same; or, in other words, the universal is concrete.

We will begin our explanation of this theory by taking an example. Suppose I say 'this blotting paper is green'. This judgement is the recognition in thought of certain characteristics of my experience, that in the greenness of the blotting paper. Yet what I recognize is not something other than thought, nor, much less, something read into the experience, but it is the character of the experience. Thus, when I say I have an object of thought, I mean that I have a thought, but I also mean that this is what the object is for thought. If Bradley had been a consistent

---

1. P.L. p. 591.

Idealist of the Absolute type, we should not have had to add this last 'for thought', the content of our thought and of the object would be the same, with no non-intellectual 'residue'.

It is difficult to be much clearer on this question as Bradley never came to a final position on this question. All we can say is that the correspondence theory of ideas is inadequate, yet at the same time he does not accept a Hegelian or even Bosanquetian theory of the concrete universal.

We should, however, before leaving this question consider another example, which may show the concrete universal in a better light. Suppose a person who reads music examines a manuscript and decides that it is a four-part fugue at which he is looking. A second person looks at the same music and sees nothing but a series of dots on a page. According to Bradley's second theory the content of the dots on the page, and of my thought is the same. When the first person recognizes the fugue, he recognizes the fugue, not an idea which is in his head. The fugue is recognized as being part of the character of the dots, and belongs as much to the dots as to my head.

In this example the scales are weighed in the idealists' favour because the object of thought is of a complex intellectual nature, to put it bluntly, the thought has obviously been 'put in' before the observer finds it. A critic might say that the case is quite different with nature, for here there is no thought to be found. Now the idealists have a whole series of answers for this contention, and on the whole they are good enough for most renderings of the criticism. If, for

example, there really is no meaning to be found in nature, then we are reduced to some more or less sophisticated theory of phenomenism, which seems a denial of thought's desire to know reality. The point which interests us here, however, is that Bradley himself appreciated the type of criticism we are here considering, and this is the cause of what Bosanquet regarded as his malingering. That is, he did not, he could not, believe that reality was one concrete universal, and this as we have already pointed out, led to a dualistic element in his system. We shall see in the next section how his apathy towards what he called 'a cheap and easy Monism'<sup>1</sup> led him to make a radical distinction between the categorical and the hypothetical judgement.

4. We are now left with the task of indicating Bradley's distinction between the categorical and hypothetical judgements. This distinction will haunt us for the remainder of the thesis, and we shall only outline the distinction and its revision under Bosanquet's criticism.

Bradley's first theory, written with the common sense view of the relationship of thought and facts uppermost in mind, was that singular categorical judgements expressed facts, while hypothetical judgements expressed only the relationship of ideas. We will briefly review Bradley's arguments for this position, and the modern reader will feel quite at home with much of the argument set forth here.

A judgement says Bradley says something about some fact or reality. This seems sound, for we not only want to say something but we want to say it about something actual. The next three sentences are

---

1. P.L. p. 591.

worth quoting in full as they indicate his concern to do justice to the world of experience. 'For consider, a judgement must be true or false, and its truth or falsehood cannot lie in itself. They involve a reference to a something beyond. And this, about which we judge, if it is not fact, what else can it be?'

It is this reference to the real which is the meaning of objectivity. A truth, that is, cannot be called necessary unless in some sense it is compelled to be true. And compulsion is not possible without something which compels, and this something is the real. It will hence be the real which exerts this force, and of which the judgement is asserted. A judgement asserts that the idea S-P is forced on us by a reality X; and this X, whatever it is, is the subject of our judgement. In the first edition this X was, for the most part, immediate experience interpreted in the non-Hegelian manner.

All this must be taken at its face value, and on its simplest interpretation. The reader must forget all he knows of idealism in any of the usual senses. Bradley as we have already pointed out is working with a scheme which consists of ideas 'in the head'; and things 'out there'. The description of the reality, he says, is 'from a level not much above that of common sense'. This reality has many defining characteristics such as that which resists our wills, and maintains itself in existence.

This reality is set over against truth and thought which do not possess any of the characteristics of reality. 'No idea' Bradley states quite flatly 'can be real.' It is for this reason that he insisted

---

1. P.L. p. 41.

2. P.L. p. 44.

3. P.L. p. 45.

4. P.L. p. 46. See Appendix III.

that the subject of judgement must be an actual substantive. For if judgement was merely the connection of universal ideas it could never express the reality which had a self existent and independent character. It is by becoming attached to reality that ideas can serve to express the way things are.

Yet reality as we experience it is not made up of universals, it is not 'a connection of adjectives', nor can it be so represented. If this is the case, and on the common sense point of view it seems to be so, then we are faced with the difficulty of how the categorical judgement can express the reality. If all ideas are unreal universals then how can the categorical judgement ever express the living and particular reality? We seem faced with the possibility that no fact can ever be stated categorically.

For example, if I say 'all animals are mortal' it might appear that the junction of ideas adequately reproduces facts. Thus 'animals' represents a fact since all animals are real. But in 'all animals are mortal' we mean to indicate not only animals which are alive, but past and future ones as well. This analysis is of course familiar to modern readers who meet it decked out with symbols in text books on logic. What we mean when we make a universal and categorical judgement is to assert a necessary connection of attributes. Thus 'all animals are mortal', means 'whatever is an animal will die', which is the same thing as saying 'if anything is mortal then it will die'. The assertion presupposes a reality, but it is not directly about a reality, it is about a 'mere hypothesis', it is not about fact. The 'all' then of categorical judgements is an 'any' or a 'whatever' or a 'whenever', and these all involve an 'if'.

The universal judgement then is always hypothetical, and because all judgements involve universal ideas are we forced to say that no judgement can express fact? To this question Bradley at first gave a firm no, but later under Bosanquet's criticism he argued that all judgement is hypothetical, but in the first edition there is a reluctance to give up the straightforward clear-cut world of common sense, a lively awareness of the relativism which is the logical outcome of a consistent Hegelianism, and a desire to anchor truth firmly into the everyday world. For all these reasons he sought to save the categorical judgement, and endeavoured to do so by asserting that in singular judgements we affirm categorically. 'Where the subject, of which you affirm categorically, is one individual, or a set of individuals, your truth expresses fact. There is here no mere adjective and no hypothesis.<sup>1</sup>'

These singular and categorical judgements are divisible into three great classes, (1) analytic judgements of sense, (2) synthetic judgements of sense, (3) metaphysical judgements. Bradley warns that his terminology has nothing to do with Kant's. An analytic judgement merely analyses the given. It makes an assertion about what I now perceive or feel, or about some portion of this. The examples he gives are 'I see a wolf', 'I have a toothache' and 'that bough is broken'. Synthetic judgements of sense state some fact of space and time, or some quality of the matter given which I do not directly perceive. 'This road leads to Montreal', 'yesterday it rained', and 'tomorrow there will be a full moon' are all examples of synthetic judgements of sense. These judgements are synthetic, we are told, because they extend the

---

1. P.L. p. 48.

given through an ideal construction, and thus involve inference. The third class have to do with reality which is not subject to space and time. 'God is a Spirit', 'The soul is a substance' or the 'Absolute is one' are examples of this class. We can think what we like about the truth of such statements, but Bradley quite rightly claims that in logic we cannot ignore the fact that some people make them.

There is no need to follow Bradley's interesting discussion in detail. All we need to do is to grasp the essential point in order to appreciate Bosanquet's criticism. In both the first two classes the subject is the 'now' and the 'this' which we endeavoured to explain in the chapter on immediate experience, although in the second the aspect under consideration is not actually presented.

The most complex example which Bradley gives of the first class is: 'The cow which is now being milked by the milk-maid is standing to the right of the hawthorn tree yonder'. Now in spite of the complicated set of relations we assert to be true, it is still a part of the presented environment which is the subject of which the whole content is asserted. No idea can take the place of this sensible fact. To show this we are asked to take the ideal elements of a cow, a tree, a milk-maid, and combine them in any way we please. 'Then after they are combined, stand in the presence of the fact, and ask yourself if that does not enter into your judgement.<sup>1</sup>' If in the presence of the fact you keep to the ideas alone you will find you have removed from the assertion just that element you were trying to include. 'Nothing in the world that you can do to ideas, no possible torture will get out of them an

---

1. P.L. p. 59.

assertion that is not universal.<sup>1</sup>

The second class, as we have said, are based on immediate perception in order to preserve their individuality, but depend on inference. For example, 'there is a garden on the other side of the wall' is still particular, because, although it is about something which we do not see, it nonetheless is based on the perception of the wall, or the odour of the flowers on the other side, or some such sensible fact.

The third class are those of a metaphysical nature. We will not consider this part of Bradley's theory, but it is interesting to note that Collingwood in An Essay on Philosophical Method argues in a way which will be familiar to readers of Bradley that metaphysics is the only subject where any truly categorical judgements are to be found.

Bosanquet's criticism of Bradley's theory can be indicated in two ways. He shows first of all that Bradley's singular categorical judgements contain an element of the hypothetical, while all hypothetical judgements affirm of reality and thus contain an element of the categorical.

We will take each point in turn. A singular categorical judgement is impossible because, on the one hand, it wishes to assert of reality, but, on the other hand, it cannot assert of all reality; but, if it cannot assert of all reality, then it only asserts conditionally of the part of reality of which it judges. This criticism of course involves a rather different view of reality from the one which asserts there are 'facts' to be reproduced. An isolated fact is an impossibility because a fact depends upon our consciousness for its being as an independent thing.<sup>2</sup> This does

---

1. P.L. p. 63.

2. See infra Chapter VI, pp. 176-192.

not mean that the 'raw material' of facts which Bradley calls reality depends on consciousness, but it does mean that facts as known depend on consciousness for their being.<sup>1</sup>

Any fact is partly artificial in the sense that its limits are usually adopted for the sake of convenience, that is, no matter what our fact may be we may still ask why, how, or where. 'Take any object, and you find that, as it is, that object cannot satisfy your mind. You cannot think it as real while you leave it just as it comes. You are forced to go outside and beyond that first character, and to ask What, Why, and How.'<sup>2</sup>

Again every hypothetical judgement is categorical because it says something about reality. Here the subjects are thought generally through abstract characteristics and are not individually known. Nevertheless they are fact, says Bosanquet. 'They are universal fact, and to say that this is impossible seems to me a flat denial of our commonest experience.'<sup>3</sup> It is not difficult to see what he means, if the judgements did not in some sense apply to, or refer to, reality why should we make them? Yet, on the other hand, it is equally clear that he is using fact in a very different way than Bradley's first use. Bosanquet is maintaining that the relation between antecedent and consequent in a hypothetical judgement expresses real necessity, and so expresses 'fact'.

- 
1. c.f. Bosanquet. 'We must remember that Mr. Bradley's reality is not simply presentation but is the systematic whole which we come in contact through presentation.' (It would have been better if Bosanquet had inserted 'sometimes' after 'Mr. Bradley's reality' into this sentence.) 'It appears to follow that Reality owes something to the judgement which analyses it, besides lending something to the judgement. It gives a good name, but it receives solid cash. Reality is for us such as our judgements have made it and maintain it.' K&R p. 47.
  2. T&R p. 227.
  3. K&R p. 14.

This discussion at least presents us with the problem of the relation of the categorical and hypothetical judgements which, as we have said, will be with us in one form or another until the end of this thesis.

We can briefly summarize this chapter as follows: First we saw that judgement necessitated the notion of ideas interpreted as universal meanings. We examined some of the obscurities in Bradley's treatment of these ideas, and saw that these could be said to stem from his difficulties with the concrete universal. Secondly we saw that judgement refers these ideas to a reality beyond the act. Thirdly we made a preliminary enquiry into the relation of ideas and reality. Finally we began the discussion of the relation between the categorical and the hypothetical judgements, and the different views of reality required by the varying theories of their relationship.

Appendix III

Kant and Hegel on Judgement and System

In this appendix we will make some remarks on Kant's and Hegel's Theory of Judgement, as well as point out where their influence can be seen in Bradley's theory. We shall also refer to the connection of judgement and system.

Kant distinguished between general and transcendental logic by saying that the former dealt with the analytic and discursive activities of the understanding, whereas the latter dealt with those of a synthetic nature. Judgement is the central doctrine of both logics, as all acts of the understanding can be reduced to judgement. In our first chapter we quoted Kemp Smith's statement <sup>1</sup> that Bradley's logic was a recasting of general logic in terms of Kant's transcendental enquiries. In this section we will try to make this statement clearer.

The only judgement which Kant recognizes is the categorical interpreted in the traditional manner. 'To compare something as a mark with a thing, is called "to judge". The thing itself is the subject, the mark (or attribute) is the predicate. The comparison is expressed by the word "is", ... which when used without qualification indicates that the predicate is a mark (or attribute) of the subject, but when combined with the sign of negation states that the predicate is a mark opposed to the subject.'<sup>2</sup>

This is a faithful expression of the doctrine of the traditional logic, which holds that a concept must be in its connotation an abstracted attribute, and in its denotation represent a class. Thus the subject of any judgement is included in the class of any one of its attributes.

Yet this doctrine was formulated on a view of the relation of mind to the world which it was one of the results of the critical philosophy to supersede. The older view, as found for example in Descartes, would hold that we know the self better than anything else. But for Kant, the phenomenal self -- the only self we can know -- is no less, and no more, an object of knowledge than anything else. Thus the problem is not as to how I can relate a predicate inside my head to the outside world, but what a consciousness, which is at once a consciousness of self and of objects, implies for its possibility.<sup>3</sup> In so far as logic is concerned this problem will be represented by asking how we get from S to P -, not how we move from the inside to the outside, and include objects within our class concepts; or by saying that logic is concerned with relational judgements which express how S is P in terms of the dual category of substance and attribute.

---

1. See supra p. 4.

2. Kant, The Mistaken Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures, II, p. 47, quoted by Kemp Smith, op.cit.

3. See Smith, N. K., op.cit. p. 274 et seq.

We can put this by saying that the reality which reveals itself as S reveals itself as P; for example, the reality which reveals itself as a desk also reveals itself as brown. The way Kant sometimes speaks one would suppose that the problem is as to how the desk 'out there' is included in the class of brown objects, 'in our head'. The problem, it is true, concerns the relation of the brown and the desk, but in the sense of how it is possible that what is revealed as desk is also revealed as brown. The real subject of the judgement is not the grammatical subject; and the formula for judgement is 'what is definable by S is also definable by P'. Thus the relational judgement is fundamental, and the subject is more universal than the predicate. The subject is a determinable, which is made partly determinate by its predicates. The formula will be 'XS is XP', and the question concerns the nature of the X which allows us to see S as P. What the attributive judgement expresses then, is not the inclusion of the predicate within a given group of attributes, but the organization of a given manifold in terms of the relational category of substance and attribute.

Transcendental logic is concerned with this organization; and we can now see why the adoption of such a logic means the repudiation of general logic. General logic, it will be remembered, was concerned with the pure forms of discursive and analytic thinking. It was to be a kind of casuistry of thought. But this logic depends on a view of predication which Kant has at least tacitly abandoned, that is of class inclusion.<sup>1</sup> If his theory necessitates both that S is of wider extension than P, and the attributive judgement does not concern the inclusion of P within a given group of attributes, then there can be no possibility of a logic which concerns the merely analytic extension of one concept from another. The categories are of a relational nature, and all thinking involves them. Furthermore of themselves they are empty of content. But general logic is only possible if merely analytic thinking is possible, and it is possible to think without employing the relational categories.

This difficulty may be elaborated by considering that all judgements are at once analytic and synthetic, and that consequently a distinction of logics in terms of this division will not be valid. All judgement is analytic because in the uniting of different *sensa* under concepts analysis is required. On the other hand all judgement is synthetic because for analysis according to concepts to be possible, that which is analysed must have been synthesized according to concepts in order that there should be anything at all to analyse.<sup>2</sup>

In so far as the distinguishable elements are directly related, the judgement will seem to be purely analytic. In so far as they are related by a number of intermediaries they will seem to be purely synthetic. Yet in the case of the analytic judgement there is an underlying unity which connects the subject and the predicate; and this unity is not an abstract identity but an internal articulation which is a synthesis. Thus there is a synthetic element in all genuine knowledge.

---

1. See Bradley, *P.L.* pp. 21-28.  
2. See *infra* Chapter V on this question.

This has the result that the justification of a judgement cannot be determined by considering it in isolation, but it must rather be considered in an implied context of coherent experience. Kant gives as an example of an analytic judgement, 'all bodies are extended', and 'all bodies are heavy' as one which is synthetic. But surely they have the same logical character. Neither of them can be true save in terms of a comprehensive system of physical existence. 'If matter must exist in a state of distribution in order that its parts may acquire through mutual attraction the property of weight, the size of a body, or even its possessing any extension whatsoever, may similarly depend upon specific conditions such as may conceivably not be universally realized.'<sup>1</sup> The essential point is that the judgement has neither meaning nor truth outside of the system of which it forms a part.

This may be seen in his discussion of synthetic judgements. In all judgement, he tells us, either the predicate B belongs to the subject A, as something which is contained in the concept A, or else B lies outside the concept A. The former relationship is expressed in analytic judgements, the latter in synthetic. This seems relatively simple at first, but in speaking of synthetic judgements, he adds the vital phrase that while B lies outside A, nevertheless 'it does indeed stand in connexion with it'.<sup>2</sup> In synthetic judgement 'I must have besides the concept of the subject something else (X) upon which the understanding may rely, if it is to know that a predicate, not contained in the concept, nevertheless belongs to it'.<sup>3</sup> 'What is here the unknown = X which gives support to the understanding when it believes that it can discover outside the concept A a predicate B foreign to this concept, which it yet at the same time considers to be connected with it'.<sup>4</sup>

In empirical judgements we are told that this X is experience. 'This X is a complete experience of the object which I think through a concept A .. experience is thus the X which lies outside the concept A'.<sup>5</sup> Kant seems to imply here that his peculiar problem of a priori synthesis is not present in empirical judgements, for in the next paragraph he contrasts a priori synthetic judgements with these judgements of experience. But surely the whole point of the critical philosophy in its final form is to show that even judgements about nature have some necessity. As Kemp Smith puts it, the assertion of a contingent relation is one thing, but it is not equivalent to contingency of assertion. Furthermore, if there are relational factors involved in all judgement, and necessity cannot be obtained from experience, then in empirical judgements which are necessary, this necessity cannot come from experience. Experience then, cannot tell us how we go outside a concept, although obviously in an empirical judgement without experience we could not do it either. Intuition alone, then, will not help us; it must be intuition integrated in a system. In the case of empirical judgements the appeal is to an implied system of nature.

- 
1. Smith, N. K. op.cit. p. 39.
  2. First Critique A 7.
  3. ibid. A 8.
  4. ibid. A 10.
  5. ibid. A 8.

We now see that the idea of a purely analytic judgement cannot be upheld, and this means that general logic, the doctrine of purely discursive and analytic thinking, will have to be repudiated. We are now in a position to appreciate Kemp Smith's statement that the development of logic after Kant consisted in a large measure in the recasting of general logic in terms of Kant's transcendental enquiries. We may note the following points. First the doctrine that all judgement involves both analysis and synthesis is made quite explicit. This leads to the construction of the doctrine of identity in difference; for if there are no purely analytic judgements, and if even the attributive judgement does not express mere identity, then some doctrine of identity in difference will have to be evolved.<sup>1</sup> Again, if general logic as a science of analytic thinking is given up, then the distinction between logic and psychology which Kant wanted to make, cannot be upheld in the way he wished to make it. If there can be no logic of the pure forms embodied in all thinking, then logic will have to concern itself with actual thinking, not with the construction of a casuistry of thought. Finally we notice that the view that all judgement is relational and involves the organization of a given manifold which is expressed in the formula 'XS is XP', is the basis of the developed doctrine that 'R (reality) is such that S is P'.

## II.

In this section we shall consider Hegel's theory of judgement which is part of the doctrine of the notion. We shall then go on to compare it with Bradley's views in so far as the two thinkers are in agreement.

Judgement for Hegel is part of the doctrine of the Notion, and while we have already intimated what he means by the Notion or Absolute, we must try to make this clearer if his theory of judgement is to be understood at all. As it is first described in the logics it resembles very closely Kant's transcendental unity of apperception. As Hegel said: 'such expressions have an ugly look about them and suggest a monster in the background', and while we may disagree with him when he goes on to say 'that their meaning is not so abstruse as it looks'<sup>2</sup> it is nevertheless not difficult to give a fair summary of what Hegel made of the doctrine.

Kant believed that necessity could not be of empirical origin, and therefore it had to be grounded in a transcendental condition. There must also, therefore, be a transcendental ground of the unity of consciousness which would make empirical apperception possible. Without this transcendental unity of apperception which precedes all the data of intuition, the representation of objects would not be possible.<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Bradley's treatment of these points will be dealt with in Chapter V.

2. Ency. para. 42.

3. See First Critique A 114 & 107.

Now whether or not Kant was here postulating a transcendental ego<sup>1</sup> Hegel thought he was. 'Kant (therefore) holds that the categories have their source in the "Ego", and that the "Ego" consequently supplies the characteristics of universality and necessity.'<sup>2</sup> The categories give to a world of congeries and diversity the simple points in which these congeries converge. The sensible world in which the categories operate is a scene of mutual exclusion. By this Hegel means that only because subjects are objects and objects subjects can it be at all. The table to be must be set over against the rest of the world, yellow must be something different from any other colour, and without this subject-object relationship the sensible world could not be.

Thought or the Notion is just the reverse of this. 'The "I" is the primary identity -- at one with itself and all at home in itself; and whatever is placed in this unit or focus, is affected by it and transformed into it.'<sup>3</sup> Kant, however, confined himself only to the subject-mind; we each have a transcendental unity of apperception or noumenal self, and consequently Hegel regards him as a subjective idealist. For Hegel 'it is not the act of our personal self-consciousness which introduces an absolute unity into the variety of sense. Rather, this identity is itself the absolute.'<sup>4</sup> Thus we may say that the Notion is Kant's transcendental unity of apperception interpreted in an objective sense -- at least, this indicates part of its meaning.

Hegel's logics are divided into the doctrines of Being, Essence and Notion. Now remembering what has been so far outlined about the latter we may go on to see why it is called the Notion. In common language we use the word more or less synonymously with universal or idea, meaning by this a general conception or a form of thought. Thus in the *Metaphysics* when Aristotle is trying to discover what sort of knowledge Wisdom is, he says: 'if one were to take the notions we have about the wise man, this might perhaps make the answer more evident'. He then goes on to adumbrate these and ends 'such and so many are the notions ... which we have about Wisdom and the wise'.<sup>5</sup> Again, there is the expression 'I had a notion' to do something or other. In common language then we use the word to mean a general conception, form of thought, idea or universal.

This usage often leads to the belief that universals or notions are dead, empty and abstract. But this is to confine our view of them as they are for formal logic, for in speculative logic the Notion is the principle of all life and thus thoroughly concrete, and any particular notion, in so far as it is real partakes to some extent of this concreteness. The Notion itself contains all the earlier categories of thought merged into itself. Yet why, says Hegel, do we continue to use the word

- 
1. See Kemp Smith *Commentary* p. 260-3.
  2. *Ency.* para. 42.
  3. *ibid.*
  4. *ibid.*
  5. *Metaphysics* 982 a 5-20.

notion if we mean by it something so different from the usual meaning of the word? The answer is that a closer inspection will show that his use is not so different from that of ordinary language, and that all notions are to some extent 'alive' and concrete. In common language we implicitly recognize that a notion cannot be treated as mere form without a content of its own because we make deductions from their content. Thus Aristotle in considering the different notions of wisdom arrives at the character of wisdom, or to use Hegel's example we deduce the specific provisions of the law of property from the notion of property. If we could not do this, if universals were merely abstract without content 'there would be in the one case nothing to deduce from such a form, and in the other case to trace a given body of fact back to the empty form of the notion would only rob the fact of its specific character, without making it understood.'<sup>1</sup>

The Notion is said to develop, but not to change. The dialectical process of being is to become something else, of essence to bring something else to light, but that of the notion to make explicit only that which is already implicit in it. This movement of the notion can be illustrated from the organic aspect of the world of nature. The plant is developed from the seed, the seed involves the whole plant, but only ideally or in thought: it must not, therefore, be supposed that the whole plant is contained realiter and in a very minute form in the seed -- this would be the 'box-within-box hypothesis'. In all this of course Hegel is being consciously Aristotelian. The truth of the box hypothesis, however, is that in the process of development nothing new is added from the point of view of content. This then is the nature of the development of the notion; it manifests itself in a process which is the showing forth of its own nature.

This movement of the Notion is to be regarded merely as play, for the other which it sets up is not really an other. That is, while the plant is other than the seed if it were really other we would not call it the plant of the seed. Or to use another of Hegel's examples, not only has God created the world which faces him as an other, He has also eternally begotten himself a son in whom he, a spirit is at home with himself. That is the son cannot have anything but the appearance of otherness otherwise he would not be God.

We may then go on to say that the Notion may be regarded as subject in activity, and as norm. That is, the movement of the actual is regarded as the Notion's development, because in its every phase, Spirit enters as a whole, and so the Notion from one point of view is always subject. Again, as we saw from the example of the plant it is the true nature of any particular thing. But it is also regarded as universal. This can be seen to follow from what has been said. If the Notion is the norm of anything, it cannot be particular. Thus we say that the Notion is the universal subject and norm of reality.

The doctrine of the Notion is itself divided into subjective notion, objective notion and idea. It is only the first of these which

---

1. Ency. par. 160.

concerns us here, and it is again divided into the Notion as Notion, Judgement and Syllogism. The Notion as Notion contains three moments or functional parts; these are universality, particularity and individuality. This universality is the concrete universality of the Notion which is not a sum of features common to several things but a self-particularizing and self-specifying dynamic. It is not we who make the notion, it is we who finally become conscious of its activities in our own thought. 'The notion is the genuine first; and things are what they are through the action of the notion, immanent in them, and revealing itself in them.' In the notion there is no distinction between subject and object, and so we may regard it as a universal subject which is identical with its predicate, which in this case is a concrete single universe.

Judgement is the Notion in its particularity 'as a connexion which is also a distinguishing of its functions, which are put as independent and yet as identical with themselves, not with one another'.<sup>1</sup> Or as he says in the larger logic, 'Judgement is the self-diremption of the notion'.<sup>2</sup> But at the same time it presupposes the primary unity of the notion, and judgement is to be the original partition of the primary unity. We have seen how Hegel took over and developed the transcendental unity of apperception to express the original unity of subject and object; judgement for Hegel is the way in which the notion disrupts this original unity and divides itself into subject and object. But as the unity of the notion is primary, so the subject and predicate of any particular judgement will be a unity a oneness.

This may be made clearer if we consider some of the particular points of Hegel's position and compare them with Bradley's theory. Judgement for Bradley, as we have seen, is the act of referring an ideal content to reality.

First, all propositions are not judgements because a proposition may only contain a statement about the subject 'which does not stand to it in any universal relationship, but expresses some single action, or some state, or the like'.<sup>3</sup> A proposition only expresses a judgement if there is some reference to universality; and because of this the sheerly singular can never be the subject of a judgement. We have already seen how Hegel identifies subject with universal, but this first point may be made clearer if we examine Bradley's lucid argument for the same point. The clearest and shortest statement of this is found in the chapter in the Logic on the quantity of judgements. 'A judgement which is absolutely particular can not exist. It would have a subject completely shut up and confined in the predicate. And such a judgement, if it came into being, would not be a judgement. For it would obviously say nothing else of the subject or predicate than themselves. "This is this" may be taken as the nearest example.'<sup>4</sup>

- 
1. Ency. par. 166.
  2. L.L. p. 260.
  3. ibid p. 300.
  4. P.L. p. 191.

For Hegel even the "this" disappeared into a universal, and Bradley to some extent followed him in this. The subject even though it excludes other individuals has within itself a diversity, and so is universal. 'We may put it thus, that all judgements are of content, and that no content sticks in the mere "this".'

Secondly judgement is not a mere subjective act which combines two independent entities together, whether these be taken as thing and idea, or two ideas. That is, judgement is not the linking of an idea in my head to a self-subsistent thing, nor is it the act of uniting two ideas inside my head so as to reflect the way the things are united in the real world.<sup>1</sup> This means that the subject and predicate must not be considered as complete apart from one another -- the subject as an object which would exist even if it didn't have this predicate, and the predicate which would exist even if it did not belong to this subject. On this view of judgement the act will consist in this, 'that only by this process a predicate is connected with the subject in such a manner that, if this connexion did not take place each for itself would still remain what it is -- the one an existing subject and the other an image in the mind.'<sup>2</sup> Thus 'the copula "is" ... enunciates the predicate of the subject -- so the external subjective subsumption is again put in abeyance, and the judgement taken as the determination of the object itself'.<sup>3</sup> The predicate which is attached to the subject ought to be 'proper' to it, that is 'to be identical with it in and for itself'.<sup>4</sup>

It is considerations such as these which led Bradley to hold that not only does all judgement affirm of reality, but that in every judgement we have the assertion that 'reality is such that S is P'. This is a development of Kant's formula for judgement XS is XP, which resulted from the new standpoint set by his theory of consciousness. That is not how we get from P 'inside' to S 'inside', but how is S related to P.

As I have said above this view means that judgement can be neither the joining together of ideas nor involve the idea that universals and subject are completely distinct. Bradley rejected both views in the end, but the first edition of his logic is certainly compatible with the acceptance of the second.

To take the second point first. As we shall see in the next chapter Bradley at one time held the doctrine of floating ideas. Now if ideas really float unattached, it would seem that when a judgement attached them to the subject of the judgement they would find a home for the first time. The point which follows from rejecting these floating ideas and giving them a home is that when an idea is affirmed of an object it is already attached somewhere. This will be made clearer when we consider modality and the copula, but so far we can at least see that if ideas are already attached, the differentia of judgement cannot be 'attachment'.

---

1. P.L. p. 21 et seq.

2. L.L. p. 260.

3. Ency. par. 166.

4. L.L. p. 260.

Bradley also rejected the theory that judgement could be merely the joining and disjoining of ideas. That is the ideal matter which is affirmed in the judgement, may possess internal relations, which in most cases, although not in all, might be arranged in terms of subject and predicate. But the content which may be arranged in this way is the same whether I judge it to be true or merely consider it, 'so that it is impossible that this internal relation can itself be the judgement; it can at best be no more than the condition of judging'.<sup>1</sup> We must notice at once that when Bradley wrote this he thought there could be mere supposal of ideas quite unrelated to reality. The rejection of these ideas only strengthened his argument, for if no ideas float then judgement must be something more than providing wandering adjectives with a home -- because they already have one.

Next we notice that the copula expresses the objectivity of the connexion between the subject and predicate: 'the copula denotes that the predicate belongs to the Being of the subject, and is not connected with it merely externally.... A judgement requires that predicate should be related to subject as the determinations of the Notion are related, that is, as universal to particular or individual.'<sup>2</sup> That is, to think that by some miracle the verb 'to be' has come to be used equivocally in an existential and predicative sense which have nothing to do with each other, is not, as some would have us believe, the very zenith of sophistication, but rather displays a failure to give any serious attention to what Aristotle called the eternal question -- what is being? And so the copula expresses objectivity because, in Hegel's case at least, all judgements are part of the self-defining development of Spirit.

When we come to compare this with Bradley's doctrine we find ourselves in difficulty. The point is this. When Bradley is being Hegelian, as in the second edition, the objectivity of the connexion of subject and predicate presents no difficulties. 'The real whole', he says in the Principles, 'works in and through myself, its activities and mine are thus one.'<sup>3</sup> This is a faithful expression of Hegel's own view. But as we have already seen there is the empiricist and Kantian aspect of the logic, and the general impression of the Principles is not conveyed by the quotation above, but is rather that thinking is something essentially adjectival to individual minds. Even the Terminal Essays are all written from this point of view, how do I judge, how do I infer; and even in discussing the famous formula 'R (reality) is such that S is P' we are told almost nothing of the activities of reality. How very sensible the modern reader will exclaim, Bradley in his Logic is engaged in a logical and epistemological study of thought and judgement, and why bring in metaphysics. But this will not do for it assumes what no idealist will allow, that individual thinkers somehow copy or reproduce an independent real; but if the real is operative in judgement -- as Bradley sometimes says -- then it is difficult to regard

---

1. P.L. p. 21.  
2. L.L. p. 261.  
3. P.L. ♣.

either his attempt to sever logic from metaphysics, or his treatment of judgement as at all satisfactory.

Again, Hegel does not believe that the form of a judgement is indifferent to the nature of its content. This is because the dynamic of the notion becomes only gradually explicit, and at each stage the 'empty "is" of the copula' is 'filled' by the Notion itself, and thus expresses relationships which are of different degrees of actuality. 'This is hot' and 'This is beautiful' are two judgements but their form is not the same because a different sort of validity and importance apply to each. That is, against the formal logician the form of the sentence will not tell you anything of the validity of the judgement.

Bradley adopts this position in so far as it involves the consequence that logic cannot be expected to furnish a series of rules for valid reasoning. He held that in every case we are involved in a situation which involves new factors, and our reasoning will therefore be different in each case. But surely, it will be said, this is just the point -- we reduce our many reasonings to rules to see if they follow; but this is not so, it is our conclusions we sometimes test, not the reasoning itself. 'It is not a matter for superior direction; it is a matter for private inspiration and insight.'<sup>1</sup> Formal logic is all right in its place so long as it is remembered that it is thought which constructs the rules by collecting and analysing reasonings which have been found to be valid -- the reasonings were not valid because they followed the rules, although the reasonings, if valid, will exemplify the rules if it happens to be reasoning of the particular sort with which the rules deal.

---

1. P.L. p. 286.

CHAPTER IV

MODALITY

'Reality is always before us, and every idea in some sense qualifies the real.'

Bradley in the Essays.

The subject which naturally suggests itself for consideration after judgement is inference, but we will follow Bradley's own procedure and enter inference through the gateway of modality. Modality is not, as Bradley himself remarks, an alluring theme, but, besides providing a convenient transition to inference, it also presents in perhaps the clearest way the different tendencies in Bradley's thought.

Modality in the traditional logic refers to propositions or syllogisms and is concerned with their necessity, probability, or contingency. Kant used the term to express the problematic, assertoric, or apodeictic character of judgements. The problem which is of interest to us is, what is affected by modality? That is, in a judgement is it to the copula we must go if we seek to find whether the proposition is necessary or otherwise, or must we, perhaps, consider the content asserted? Our consideration of these problems will lead us to see the relevance of the discussion of the distinction between the categorical and the hypothetical judgement. We have seen how Bradley was forced to alter his opinion on the question of their reference to reality, and in this chapter we shall see the same question from another point of view. When we have worked through Bradley's different views on this question, we will see why he was forced to give up his singular

categorical judgement and accept Bosanquet's theory that even the hypothetical judgement affirms of reality.

We will begin this discussion by considering Kant's view of modality and then point out that it possessed the germ of Bradley's second theory, and shared the theory of floating ideas with his first. The meaning of these points will then be outlined to prepare for the discussion in the rest of the chapter. We shall then examine Bradley's first theory and show how in most respects it is the antithesis of Kant's own. Thirdly we will consider Bradley's rejection of floating ideas as a transition to this second theory. Finally we will examine the amended theory, which if it had been held consistently would have necessitated his arguing for the concrete universal.

1. In dealing with this question of modality we will begin with Kant's theory, and show how, by employing Cartesian distinctions, he confines modality to the copula. This has the result that he does not believe that the content of the affirmation is affected by the way the proposition is affirmed. Bradley, on the other hand, argued that modality pertained only to the content asserted and not to its assertion, in other words that modality affects the content and not the copula. Both these theories have one thing in common which is the separation of content from assertion, of what is asserted from how it is asserted. That is, for Kant the assertion does not affect the content, while for Bradley modality does not affect the assertion.

This separation of content and assertion means that both theories share a belief in floating ideas. This is quite clear in Kant's case,

for if we can think an idea to be necessary, or only possible, and this has no effect on the idea itself, this must mean that the idea has a kind of independent being or existence which is not affected by the way we think of it. The same kind of argument holds when we examine Bradley's theory. If modality only affects the content and not the assertion, for we always assert categorically of reality, (that is, if I say 'X is probably brown', it is 'probably brown' which is asserted categorically, not 'it is probable that X is Brown'), then, as in Kant's case the idea must be independent but for a slightly different reason this time. For if the idea did not float independently of affirmation by the mind this would mean that when I wondered or doubted about it, the idea would characterize the real world with its possibility or necessity.

When we have discussed these theories in more detail, as well as outlining Bosanquet's criticism of them, we will then be in a position to see how radically Bradley was forced to amend his view that the singular categorical judgement could report fact. We can see something of this if we combine the notion that ideas do not float with the theory that modality affects content. The result will be that modality, affecting the content of ideas, all of which in some way qualify reality, will then be an aspect of reality. This will mean that any theory of a clear-cut world of facts will have to be replaced.

We will begin, then, with Kant's treatment of modality. The point in discussing his theory is that it contains the germ of Bradley's

more fully developed doctrine. That is, while one could probably appreciate the doctrine of the first edition of the Principles without any reference to Kant, the second edition is best viewed as a development and expansion of Kant's theory.

In the second chapter we gave some indication of what Kant meant by a category,<sup>1</sup> as well as point out that these categories characterize not only the way we think, but also the world we know. The categories it can be said are constitutive of the phenomenal world, or to say the same thing, the world of nature is organized in terms of the categories.

There is, however, an exception to this general principle, and this is the group of categories which deal with modality. These categories as Kant says concern 'only the value of the copula in relation to thought in general'.<sup>2</sup> It is true that the 'only' here is intended to emphasize that modality does not affect content, but this as we shall see has the same result. For, as the concept of an object must correspond to its object for there to be truth, we would have to say, if modality affected content, that there were no true ideas. This can be seen by considering an example. When I say 'that might be a horse', if the content itself were affected by possibility, this would mean that I was thinking of 'possible horse'. But if the truth is correspondence of idea with object, then there would have to be 'possible horse' in the real world which on Kant's view is nonsense.

---

1. See Chapter II, pp. 47-48.  
2. Critique of Pure Reason, A74=B99.

At first sight it would appear to be nonsense on any sane person's theory. Before we decide definitely on this we must examine two features of the theory in more detail. The first of these is that modality affects what Bosanquet called the 'assertiveness of assertion', and the second is the manner in which the modality of a judgement is determined.

We have said in a general way that Kant believed that modality affected the copula, and we may well ask what is meant by the copula. There are, I suppose, two answers to this. One might be that Kant merely means the principle of identity as taught by the traditional formal logic. Such an interpretation is, I am sure, inadequate, but as it has been put forward by responsible people I set it down. The other interpretation is more important, and this holds that the copula expresses the action of the understanding in incorporating ideas into the system organized in terms of itself.

Such an idea may seem to confuse logic with psychology, and this is Bradley's criticism in the first edition of the Principles, but before discussing this we must show that the interpretation of the copula which we have put forward is by no means foreign to Kant. In 'The Postulates of Empirical Thought' he says 'the principles of modality.... predicate of a concept nothing but the action of the faculty of knowledge through which it is generated'<sup>1</sup>. Again, these principles 'do not increase our concept of things, but only show the manner in which it is connected with the faculty of knowledge'<sup>2</sup>. The copula, then, expresses

---

1. First Critique, A 235, B 287.  
2. ibid.

the assertiveness of assertion, or the degree of certainty with which I affirm something to be true.

We will now examine his theory on how the certainty or probability of the concept is determined. This theory in brief is that the certainty, or otherwise, of a concept is judged by the degree to which it is incorporated into the system of the understanding. The problematic proposition, Kant affirms, expresses only logical 'which is not objective' possibility -- 'a free choice of admitting such a proposition, and a purely optional admission of it into the understanding'.<sup>1</sup> The assertoric, we are told, deals with 'logical reality or truth'. Kant illustrates this by the hypothetical syllogism in which  $P \supset Q$  is said to be problematic, while  $P$  or  $Q$  in the minor (as the case may be) is assertoric. What this shows is that 'the consequence follows in accordance with the laws of the understanding'.<sup>2</sup> We begin with the tentative and advance to the more certain, while this progress is determined by the system of our knowledge.

Finally the apodeictic 'thinks the assertoric as determined by these laws of the understanding, and because, as affirming a priori, and in this manner it expresses logical necessity'.<sup>3</sup> This process of thought takes place in accordance with the nature of understanding, and it represents, Kant believes, the way we must think if we are to think at all. Kant summarizes his theory in this way: 'Since everything is thus incorporated in the understanding step by step -- in as much as we first judge something problematically, then maintain its truth assertorically,

---

1. First Critique, A 75, B 100.

2. ibid. A 76, B 101.

3. ibid.

and finally affirm it as inseparably united with the understanding, that is, as necessary and apodeictic -- we are justified in regarding these three functions of modality as so many moments of thought'.<sup>1</sup>

We can summarize Kant's theory of modality in the following way:

- (1) modality affects the copula, that is, the assertiveness of assertion;
- (2) modality does not affect the content of the assertion;
- (3) modality is determined by the relation of the content to the system of the understanding, to the degree, or step, to which the particular content is related to the system as a whole.

2. As we have already pointed out Bradley's second theory of modality is in many ways a development of the above theory, but his first is in most respects a direct criticism of it, for:

- (1) modality does not affect the copula;
- (2) modality affects the content;
- (3) there are no degrees of certainty, a judgement is either true or it is not, and it cannot be more or less certain to the degree in which it is incorporated into the understanding.

There is, however, as we have said, one point in common between Kant's and this early theory, and this is a belief in floating ideas. The meaning of this phrase is best seen by returning to Kant's discussion of the problematic judgement. Such a judgement, it will be remembered, expresses mere logical, not objective possibility; the example given

---

1. First Critique, A 76, B 101.

was the antecedent and consequent in a hypothetical judgement, and the isolated members of a disjunction might equally well have been instanced.

These elements of thought are not judgements, for as Kant says, they are not assertory. They are mere ideas which are entertained, doubted, or denied. Such a theory has a long history behind it, for it extends at least to Descartes, and there is much to commend it. That is, there are obviously (it would seem) ideas which do not qualify reality. Again, ideas may be recognized as purely imaginary, and when looked at this way they 'float suspended over the real world'.<sup>1</sup> How is it possible, when we do not know whether an idea is true or not, or even if we know that it is false, that it could qualify reality?

Bradley tells us that arguments such as these convinced him of the existence of floating ideas, and that it was in the light of such a doctrine that much of the first edition of the Principles was written. As this is the case we shall consider some of the points in his discussion of modality as it was first presented, before we consider the reasons which led him to give up the existence of these homeless ideas. Bearing in mind this one point of identity with Kant's theory we may now return to examine the differences in the two views.

Bradley begins by asserting that the doctrine that modality affects the assertion in its formal character and without regard to what is asserted, rests on a misunderstanding. He expands this in terms as uncompromising as any of our more advanced thinkers, 'There are no degrees of truth or falsehood. If S-P is fact, it cannot be more than

---

1. T&R p. 29.

fact: if it is less than fact it is nothing at all'.<sup>1</sup> The dilemma, he continues, is quite simple. Either S-P is affirmed or it is not affirmed. If it is not affirmed it is not judged true, if it is affirmed it is declared to be fact, and it cannot be more or less a fact. 'There clearly can be one kind of judgement, the assertorical.'<sup>2</sup>

Modality then, we may see in a preliminary way, does not affect the copula; we either assert or we do not. It is not the affirmation but what is affirmed which is affected by modality. Bradley then criticizes the Kantian view by saying that it confuses logic with psychology. Kant's theory, it will be remembered, held that a judgement was necessary or otherwise depending on the degree to which it was incorporated into the understanding. But the different ways we stand to a judgement is a matter for psychology says Bradley. 'Logical modality must be limited to that which seems to affect the idea S-P, and to affect it in its relation to the world of reality.'<sup>3</sup>

As we have said, to take the second part of the last sentence first, there are only two relations an idea can have to reality, it is either true of reality, or it is not true, it is either affirmed or denied. 'The reference or denial itself is simple, and cannot be modified.'<sup>4</sup> If this is the case, then either modality has nothing to do with logic, or else it modifies what we affirm of reality. As we already know it is this last alternative which Bradley accepts, 'What..must in some way be modified is the content itself. Not S-P but a transformed and con-

---

1. P.L. p. 197.  
2. ibid.  
3. ibid p. 198.  
4. ibid.

ditioned S-P is the assertion made by logical modality.<sup>1</sup> There are three possible modes of a judgement which logic must consider, and these are the traditional ones of the possible, the actual, and the necessary.

It is important to appreciate how different this is from Kant's theory. For Bradley the basis of every judgement is 'it is true that' (or 'false that') S-P is possible, actual, or necessary. For example:

It is true that he could be coming tomorrow,

It is true that he is coming tomorrow,

It is true that if the letter arrives he will come tomorrow;

For Kant, on the other hand, the content 'he is coming tomorrow' remains the same in all judgements, and the assertion alters:

It is possible that he is coming tomorrow,

It is the case that he is coming tomorrow

If the letter comes then he is coming tomorrow.

Bradley then points out that his choice of the three traditional modes of modality is in no way arbitrary, for 'we have here in a veiled and hidden shape' the distinction between categorical and hypothetical assertion. The possible and the necessary, he maintains are special forms of the hypothetical; while there is no difference between the assertorical and the categorical.

The reasoning behind this statement is not difficult to follow when we remember what we have said of modality. If every statement is prefaced by 'it is true', then only in the second case is the assertion deemed to be actual, for here the content S-P without alteration is

---

1. P.L. p. 198.

attributed directly to reality. This there is no reason to draw any distinction between categorical judgements on the one hand, and on the other judgements which assert directly of reality. The assertorical then is merely the categorical taken in contrast with the possible and the necessary.

Bradley then continues, in the light of the common sense view of facts and ideas, with a consideration of the possible and the necessary. Both of these he says must be forms of the hypothetical, for what may be, and what must be involve a supposition. Neither are said to be actual fact -- how could they be? For a fact either is or is not, and possibility and necessity are both inferences based on a condition, and subject to this condition.

This again seems quite reasonable. To begin with the necessary, we say something is necessary when it is taken not simply in and for itself, but by virtue of something else, and because of something else. We do not say a thing is necessary which simply is; but we call it necessary when we see why it must be. 'Necessity carries with it the idea of mediation, of dependence, of inadequacy to maintain an isolated position and to stand and act alone and self-supported.'<sup>1</sup>

For example, if I merely see a broken window, all I can say is 'this window is broken', and for all I know the window might just as well have been unbroken. That is, confining myself to the categorical judgement I can only report fact which could, as Hume said without contradiction, be otherwise. On the other hand, when I say 'If a stone was thrown through this window then it must be broken', I have a necessary

---

1. P.L. p. 199.

statement, as I declare that the relation between the antecedent and the consequent is necessary. Such a statement is, however, hypothetical because it does not show the statement to be true, and the necessity is in our thinking. To take our example, if a boy threw a stone through the window and we know this, then our statement that the window is broken is both necessary and true, but it depends on the condition of the boy throwing the stone for its truth.

As the reader will have gathered Bradley did not believe, in the first edition, that necessity had anything to do with the facts. 'Is there any "because" outside our heads?' he asks, 'Is it true that one thing is by means of another, and because of an other?' <sup>1</sup> And he answers: 'we must admit that in logic "because" does not stand for a real connection in actual fact; we must allow that necessity is not a bond between existing things'. <sup>2</sup> This is quite in keeping with what we might expect. After all, while one fact is, and is with another fact, it seems natural to believe that they are unconnected with each other. "One fact is and another fact is", so much is true; but "One fact is and so another fact is", must always be false.' <sup>3</sup> To hold any other view would be to say that ideal connection were real in things, and if you say this what happens to your isolated facts which can be reported by the categorical judgements.

' Necessity, then, at least in logic, is nothing but the consequence of thinking. It is a 'force' which compels us to go to a conclusion if

- 
1. P.I. p. 199.
  2. P.I. p. 200.
  3. P.I. p. 200.

we start from a premise. It cannot, as we have seen, guarantee the truth of any statement. No doubt, as in our example, a necessary truth may be categorical, but in so far as its necessity goes it is still hypothetical. It ceases to be hypothetical when it ceases to be merely necessary, and this only happens when we know it to be true, and expressed as a categorical judgement.

Now before examining in more detail Bradley's arguments for the assertion that all necessity is hypothetical, we just notice why he maintains that the possible is a species of the necessary. The possible is defined as that which 'is known or assumed to be the consequence of certain conditions'<sup>1</sup>. To this extent the possible is the same as those cases of necessity where the antecedent was declared to be real, but it differs in the following way, for S-P to be possible the conditions which make S-P necessary must be assumed, but only some of them supposed to exist. Thus the partial existence of the conditions of S-P is the differentia which separated the species possible from the genus necessary.<sup>2</sup>

We have now gained some idea of Bradley's theory of modality as it was presented in the first edition of the Principles, and to effect the transition to his second view we will return to his theory that all necessity is hypothetical.

3. One of the reasons given to support the above principle was an

---

1. P.L. p. 202.

2. This is worked out in a most interesting discussion which is by no means outmoded. There are some important remarks on mathematical 'solutions' of the problems of probability.

argument he was later to term vicious. This maintained that logical necessity being an ideal process we could not assume that either the process or the ideas were facts. 'Even if the ideas exist in fact, and exist in corresponding sequence, you cannot assume that in this sequence your process exists.'<sup>1</sup> The ideal operation, that is, works with ideas, and so far as we can tell it works only with ideas. The ideal process might be more than an idea, but it is as ideal that we must use it. 'And a mere idea is no more than a mere supposal. The result,<sup>2</sup> so far as necessitated, is therefore so far not categorical.'

It is this notion that ideas are 'mere supposals' which Bradley later repudiated and with them his first theory of modality. We shall examine this development of his thought in two stages. First we will see that the view of reality which we have already mentioned, the view which seems so in accord with our common sense notions, is in fact a most inadequate one. The repudiation of this common sense view involved Bradley in a complete revision of his theory of modality. The discussion of this revision will be our second stage. The revision amounts to this, if ideas do not float, but are in some sense always a part of reality, then all thinking will contain an element of the categorical, and thus will be to some extent a knowing. This will mean that modality will affect not only what we affirm but the way we affirm. For if all thinking is categorical, then the idea that modality can affect a content unrelated to reality will have to be dropped, and in its place there will have to be substituted a theory that modality affects the copula.

---

1. P.L. p. 201.  
2. *ibid.*

We will begin with Bradley's repudiation of floating ideas. This will show us why he was forced to retract the statement which we have already quoted to the effect that something is either a fact or it is not a fact. The doctrine of floating ideas rests on what we have called the common sense, or realistic view of the world, and we have already seen that this, to some extent at any rate was the world of the first edition of the Principles. In this world reality is identified with fact and everything outside of it is unreal. The real world on this view is a group or series of actual facts, and the test for its reality is its continuous connexion with my felt waking body. Thus dreams are facts in the sense that they are in connexion with my body, but they are unreal in the sense that their content cannot be ordered into the environment of my waking self. It seems that Bradley is correct when he asserts that this is the view which consciously underlies our common sense view of the world. And it is this view which makes the assertion that ideas float seem so plausible.

Yet this common sense view will not do, both because it does not even explain what it sets out to explain, and because it leaves large experience of our experience unaccounted for.

This first can be shown by considering that the content of the real and the imagined is supposed to be the same thing. If we take Kant's example of the one hundred thalers we can see that his argument depends on maintaining that the content of the real and the imaginary thalers is the same. And when we look at the matter in this way it does

have plausibility. If the thalers do differ qua thalers how do they differ? The answer is that one is real, but if we remove this existence in imagination, we find that we are left with no difference in content -- at least this is how the argument proceeds.

Yet the contrary doctrine also has plausibility. On the view above the real thalers do things whereas the imaginary ones do not. The former is an active, and in some sense a permanent constituent of the real world. This difference, though, when we reflect on it, does seem to affect the content.<sup>1</sup> Is the idea of a real thaler and an imaginary one really the same idea? The orthodox view holds that the ideas differ barely in and through their external relations, and not in themselves. But this assumes, as Bradley points out, that a thing's relations which make all the difference to something else makes no difference to itself. And such an assumption is certainly not free from difficulty. 'For in the end, the doubt is suggested whether in the end, when you have removed the relations, there is any (shilling) at all left.'<sup>2</sup>

It seems to me, purely on the internal strength of these two views about the thalers, that the second is somewhat stronger. But if we consider what the first leaves unexplained, I think we will agree that the second, with all its difficulties, is the more adequate.

Suppose the first view is correct, what will we say of past and future, of art and religion and morality? Do we mean that only present

- 
1. See Hegel's discussion in the Larger Logic pp. 100 et seq. 'This so called concept of one hundred thalers is a spurious concept; the form of simple relation to self does not properly belong to such limited and finite content, it is a form applied and lent to it by subjective understanding. One hundred thalers are not related to themselves alone; they are mutable and perishable.'
  2. T&R p. 43.

facts are real, and that past and future have no meaning? It is true that some of our present day advanced thinkers do hold this with more consistency than wisdom, but compared with this extravagance of dogma, there is little in Hegel which does not seem the voice of quiet reason.

And do we really believe that art and morality and religion are just meaningless or unreal because there are no facts to which they can correspond? Perplexity on these points is more than understandable, but if the principle of verifiability is used with consistency, and the results obtained from such a use are believed, then I can only think that the believer, in the most actual sense, refuses to look at reality. I do not mean to suggest that everyone must have a 'theory' about these different aspects of reality, but to say 'only so and so is real', and to then go on to deny that everything else is unreal, is not even being 'scientific'.

These, and allied consideration, led Bradley to see that the reality implied by floating ideas was inadequate. We can see the importance of this rejection by considering the probable and necessary judgements. We have seen that these judgements necessitate floating ideas, otherwise, as modality affects the content of the judgement, probability and necessity would qualify the real world. Furthermore, they were both instances of the hypothetical judgement. Now with the rejection of floating ideas it is necessary to hold that all ideas qualify reality, and this has the result that the notion of an idea held in a kind of suspended animation before the mind and quite unaffected by its relations will be abandoned. When the implications of this are

worked out Kant's theory that the problematic judgement comes first in the order of knowledge will also be rejected. That is, this theory presupposes the possibility of distinct unrelated ideas which we can consider, and then go on to affirm. But if, from the very beginning of knowledge, ideas are affirmed, it is the whole complex of affirmations which will serve as the beginning of thought. Our thought on this new theory will consist in the progressive modification of judgements, and in the progressive clarification of ideas. But such a process must begin with what we think we know, with all our imperfectly thought out ideas; not from clear ideas which we judge to be true, or possible or necessary. A question, that is, is not the beginning or basis of knowledge, but presupposes assertion before it can be asked.

Now if it is the case that all judgement is assertion then Bradley's statement which we have already mentioned, that if S-P is fact it cannot be more than fact; if it is less than fact it is nothing at all, will have to be amended. This can be seen by combining the ideas that modality affects the content of a judgement, and that all ideas qualify reality. This results in a belief that reality, at least as far as we are concerned, is characterized by modality, and this will lead to a doctrine of degrees of fact. This notion is undoubtedly very repugnant, but once we admit that all our judgements qualify reality, and are affected by modality, it is difficult to see what else can be believed. If reality is for us what our judgements have made it, then facts, as distinct from reality, depend on their relation to the system of our knowledge for their being. If this is the case then some facts will be more factual than others, depending on the degree to which they

are incorporated into the system of the understanding.

4. Here we will expand some of the implications of what we have just been saying about the rejection of floating ideas as it affects Bradley's theory of assertion. It will be remembered that Bradley at first insisted that modality affected what was asserted not the way we asserted, that is, that it affected content and not copula. Once, however, we hold that all ideas qualify reality, and that modality characterizes the real world, then the copula becomes the act by which we recognize the place an idea has in reality. Thus Bradley comes to accept the Kantian view in so far as it holds that modality affected the copula, or as Bosanquet puts it the assertiveness of assertion.<sup>1</sup> Kant's view, at least as it was interpreted by the idealists, came to be Bradley's own and maintained that judgements were more or less certain to the degree to which they could be incorporated into the system of the understanding. But because the understanding in Kant has a fixed and a priori nature, the idealists generally used some such term as the 'organized body of knowledge' to emphasize that there were no fixed elements in knowledge, either in the rationalist's sense of primary intelligibles, or in the empiricist's sense of facts.

Thus modality affects the content of thought and the way this content is affirmed. 'The progressive incorporation of a content with the understanding, that is, with the organized ideal system by which the understanding qualifies the Real, is the same thing as the progressive participation of that content in the certainty that could only be complete in a judgement which would exhaust reality.'<sup>2</sup>

---

1. See the appendix to Chapter III for a discussion of the Hegelian version of this theory.

2. Bosanquet, B., Logic, O.U.P., second edition, 1911.

But we have already run ahead, for much of this last part is only comprehensible when the idea of system is more clearly worked out, and system implies not only a theory of judgement but also of inference. Even in Bradley's first theory the presence of the hypothetical judgement indicated that we were concerned with more than mere recognition, and we are thus led to the theory of inference.

CHAPTER V

INFERENCE.

'An inference is either a result or a process. If we take it as a result..it is the apprehension of a necessary truth. If we take it as a process, it is simply the operation which leads to that result.'

Bradley.

Bradley's treatment of inference is, as with all the other subjects we have studied, beset with complexity. There is first of all the differences between the first and second editions of the Principles, but even in the first theory there are different tendencies.

One of the main differences between the two views stems, naturally enough, from the more realistic bias of the first edition. The problem of inference there could be put in the following way: 'how do I, starting from a given fact, arrive at another fact, by means of an ideal process?'. Thus inference is looked on as some kind of an activity which links judgements, but is somehow at one remove from reality. This, I maintain, is essentially a Kantian theory of inference. On the second view, with the notion that the content of thought and the object are somehow the same, inference becomes more real, and for two reasons. The first results from the repudiation of the notion of a given in the shape of isolated facts, and the insistence that every so-called fact implies a system. This means that every fact can be represented by saying that reality appears to me as so and so, but once we have said this we have already implied some sort of mediation, and mediation is the mark of inference. This will mean that inference will be as

fundamental to thought as judgement, and this leads us to the second reason for the increased importance of inference. If all judgement implies inference, this will mean that the content of the judgement which is the same as the content of the object will be affected by inference.

It is such considerations which lead Bradley to his second definition of inference as the ideal self-development of an object. This is intended to show that inference is not an arbitrary process which goes on between facts, but is the way the object will be seen to develop when we think about it. Inference thus becomes the 'reading off' of the real connections and characteristics of the object. In a word the second theory assumes that implication is a real aspect of the universe.

We will begin by examining the theory of inference as it was given in the first edition. Besides the intrinsic interest of this, it provides the best beginning for our appreciation of Bradley's later views. The doubts and the perplexities which he may have had with this early theory may have been at least partly responsible for the revision of his whole logical scheme. As a preliminary to our examination of this theory we may set down some of its characteristics in a general way. Because the theory was written with the view that in facts sensuously presented was to be found reality; and that truth was correspondence with these facts; the role of inference becomes a process of scrambling from judgement to judgement, and the success of any inference will be gauged by whether or not it issues in another true judgement. This can be illustrated by a person jumping across a stream by means of stepping-stones; the person can only know if he has estimated the distance

correctly when he lands on another stone.

From the above example we can see three things. First of all the stones are fixed and given, and in an obvious sense they are the most important elements in the situation. Secondly, the jumping is a matter which is left to the individual, it does not matter how he arrives at the next stone so long as he does so. Thirdly the stone remains the same whether anyone jumps or not. These three elements which are illustrated by the example are all to be found in Bradley's first theory. Judgement works on a given and the faithfulness to this given is the test of an inference. Secondly, inference is looked upon as something particular to the individual. Not only in the sense that there are no schema or model for reasoning, but in contradistinction to any theory that inference is an ideal self-development of an object. Thirdly the given is not altered by the process, for if our thinking did alter reality, correspondence with fact would become impossible.

All these points were abandoned in the second edition; for judgement implies a system for its possibility, in its essence it presupposes mediation and this means inference is as basic as judgement. Secondly Bradley maintained that inference was not so subjective and personal as he had previously held, and came to hold a theory that it was as much the object which developed as our thought. This is inference of a more Hegelian nature. Thirdly the idea of an unaltered given with which we begin and upon which we perform ideal experiments is abandoned, and a recognition that all such activities involve analysis and synthesis of the given is put forth. This leads to a reinterpretation of what we mean by the given to conform to the more idealistic

view which we outlined in the second chapter.

These are the general lines of our discussion on inference which will be the subject matter of this and the next chapter. Here we will only be concerned with the theory as it was presented in the first edition, and our analysis will be in four parts. We shall begin by outlining the theory of inference as it first appears in the Principles. Next we will examine why Bradley believed this could serve as only a provisional theory, and the qualification he introduced to widen its scope. This will lead us to consider the processes of analysis and synthesis, as well as his belief that the rational is the individual. This third section will show why we have been careful not to refer to the first edition as dualistic or realistic without some qualification. Here, that is, we will see that even in a book which taught that truth was correspondence with fact, there are Hegelian elements. Finally we will consider the question of the validity of inference.

1. In this section we are to deal with the theory of inference as it appeared in the first book of the Principles; and we will undertake this task in three parts. First we will discuss the three aspects of inference which Bradley finds in all theories of reasoning, as well as give some impression of his criticism of the syllogism. Secondly we will outline his own provisional theory and discuss the two principles implicit in all reasoning. Thirdly we will summarize his statements on the conditions of inference, which will lead us to consider the doctrine of identity-in-difference.

1a. When we come to the subject of reasoning there seems to be little agreement, yet Bradley is able to detect three characteristic features of inference to which most people would agree. The first of

these is a negative mark and maintains that there is a difference between reasoning and mere observation. Thinking, although it may involve what we might call vision, or seeing things, also is, most people would agree, something besides this seeing.

Again an inference must be the result of a process. Unlike a judgement which merely reports what it sees, an inference seems to involve what we already know. In inference we advance from a truth we possess to a further one, and so Bosanquet said in Knowledge and Reality<sup>1</sup> that his remarks on inference could be looked on as a vindication of the old axiom that only a person who can give reasons for what he affirms has knowledge. Unless we can show that our statements are not mere isolated fragments or units we cannot be said to reason.

Thirdly, reasoning must convey some new piece of information; an inference must tell us something other than the truth it rests on. This again would seem to commend itself. Whether the truth we seek in a particular instance is occasioned by theoretical or practical interests is indifferent, we want to find something new, not merely to repeat the old.

Bradley remarks that except in the interests of some special theory all three marks of inference would be accepted by everyone. He then proceeds to discuss his own theory, and he begins by considering inference as it is represented in the syllogistic logic. His attack on the syllogism anticipates to a large extent many of the 'logical

---

1. K&R p. 270.

discoveries' about which we hear so much today. He brings up the point that there are many examples of reasoning which cannot be said to have a major premise. For example, A is to the right of B, B is to the right of C, therefore A is to the right of C. In such a case do we think the major premise is 'A body to the right of that which that, which it is to the right of, is to the right of'? We may know that this is the major because we have just manufactured it, but the person who believes in major premises is challenged to admit that he has never used the premise in any reasoning. The truth which the syllogism has imperfectly expressed is that at least one term in every inference must be universal. For the time, how-  
1  
ever, we must glance at the remainder of his criticism of the syllogism.

Bradley admits that many instances of reasoning can be made to fit into the syllogistic scheme, yet it cannot serve as a pattern for all reasoning, as internally it is not satisfactory. This is so because, as has often been pointed out, it either involves a petitio principii, or else we are forced to say it conveys no new information. 'All men are mortal' must either be true of Socrates or withdrawn as a major premise. If it is not withdrawn then the minor and the conclusion do but 'feebly echo' what has been stated in the major.

We are still faced with this difficulty if we say that all men means a class or collection. But while Socrates' personality may have no unity, it would be stretching things to say he was a collection of

- 
1. 'Begotten by an old metaphysical blunder nourished by a senseless choice of examples, fostered by the stupid conservatism of logicians, and protected by the impotence of younger rivals, this chimaera has had a good deal more than its day. Really dead long since I can hardly believe that it stands out for more than decent burial. And decent burial has not yet been offered it. Its ghost may lie quiet when it sees that the truth, which lent it life, can flourish alone.'  
F.L. p. 248.

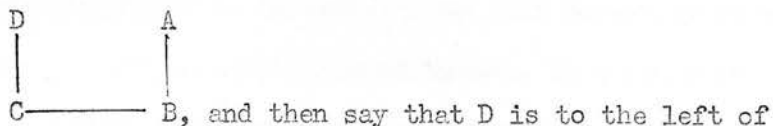
men. In the first case, to sum up, we say 'Each individual has X, and therefore each has X', and this is pointless. In the second if we say 'Each individual has X', 'therefore the collection of individuals has it' our reasoning is not valid.

The doctrine which Bradley wishes to put in the place of the syllogism is as follows. Every inference is a process of construction, followed by the perception of a new relation or connection. Demonstration is the union of this construction and perception. Even more generally inference is an 'ideal experiment' upon data which are given, followed by the ascription of this result to the original data.

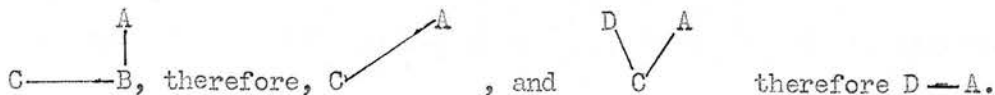
1b. An inference, then, is a process of synthesis or construction which operates on data which is given and combines them into a whole, and the result is a new relation we perceive within this whole. To illustrate this we will take Bradley's favorite type of example that of things related in space. Suppose I know A is to the right of B, and B is to the right of C, these are our given elements; by virtue of the sameness of some of the elements, that is B, we are able to unite their relations in a single construction, A - B - C. The conclusion is the perception of A - C, which is a new relation which results from our construction.

There are no rules for construction, the construction itself is determined by the sort of material with which we work. Nor says Bradley must every inference have three terms. To show this he gives a geographical example. A is ten miles north of B, B is ten miles east of C, D is

ten miles north of C, and we wish to find the relation of A to D. We secure this relation by constructing (in our heads he says)



A. We do not, he says here, go through anything like the following:



Logic sets no limit to the number of premises, the only limit there is is of a psychological rather than logical nature. All this is seriously in error we are to learn later, but it serves as an introduction to his thought.<sup>1</sup> We will now examine the two principles of reasoning which Bradley believes are implicit in all ideal constructions, and the perception of new relations which is the process of inference.

These principles are as follows: 'Things related to the same within one kind will be interrelated within that kind'.<sup>2</sup> The second is that an inference may be obtained from terms which are heterogeneous if one of the relations is that of subject and attribute. We will elaborate on these, following the steps which led to their formulation.

Given our idea of construction we might imagine that all we need to do is combine terms indiscriminately and thus find new conclusions. The principle implicit here would be 'Related to the same are related to each other'. Now this will cover the examples we have given, but it will

---

1. See Chapter VI, Section 2.  
 2. P.L. p. 263.

cover so many more that it will lead us into error. For example, John is taller than Jim, and Jim is driving his car to see Peter. It might be possible to get some conclusion out of these terms, but certainly no new relation between John and Peter could be established. In a sense it is true that John and Peter are related in virtue of the fact that they are both elements in one world of knowledge, but we knew this before and independently of their relation to Jim. This illustrates that the axiom was too wide, but it shows us the truth that related to the same are not related to each other except under certain conditions. To determine these conditions is our next step.

These conditions are that the elements must not only be related to the same, but be related under conditions which secure a unity of construction. The axiom of the operation will now emphasize this point, and read as follows: 'Where elements A and C are related homogeneously to a common B, A and C are related within the same genus'<sup>1</sup>. We could put this by saying that inference must always take place within the same category -- for example, of space, time or degree. For example if I say lunch is later than breakfast, and dinner is later than lunch, then I can conclude that dinner is later than breakfast; but if I say lunch is later than breakfast, and dinner is eaten in the dining room, I get nowhere.

Yet there are inferences which seem to belie the principle that things related to the same within one kind will be interrelated within that kind. For example, Gold is heavier than lead, and lead is a metal,

---

1. P.L. p. 263.

therefore Gold is heavier than some metal. Here we have used two different categories -- one of degree and one of subject and attribute. Bradley then argues that in all possible cases it is the relation of subject and attribute which, if used with another category, is able to give us a new relation.

These principles are not to be looked on as models or patterns of thinking. They are not like the syllogism which 'professed to control from a central office every possible event in all parts of its kingdom'<sup>1</sup>. They represent the general and abstract form of the operation but they will not give us any assistance with the construction in any particular case. It is not merely that these principles leave blanks, it is that in each case we must decide how to effect the construction. And this is not a matter for direction, it is a matter for private inspiration and insight.

Bradley then reinforces his point by considering the unlovely science of casuistry. Here again, no matter how far we work out the implications of a moral principle, there is always the decision, new in every case, which principle or which inference from the principle, is to apply. Ethical and logical theory are to this extent the same that neither seeks to lay down a code. 'Logic has to lay down a general theory of reasoning, which is true in general and in the abstract. But when it goes beyond that, it ceases to be science, it ceases to be logic, and it becomes, what too much of it has already become, an effete chimaera which<sup>2</sup> cried out for burial.'

---

1. P.L. p. 266.  
2. ibid p. 269.

1c. We now have a general idea of inference, together with a reminder that it must not be looked on as a code of reasoning. Next we come to two conditions of inference, and here we see that while Bradley's criticisms of the syllogism are severe, while he believes it clings blindly to exploded metaphysics and teaches superstitions, nonetheless, he does not throw in his lot with its hereditary enemies the empiricists. In fact, he declares that his differences with the traditionalists are 'trivial' as compared to his agreement with them, and against the enemy they have in common two beliefs:

- (1) it is impossible to reason except on a basis of identity,
- (2) it is impossible to reason unless at least one premise is universal.

It will be time to say vicereunt empirici when, and not until, these positions have both been forced.

He begins his campaign with the necessity for an identical point. This contention is of great importance for both versions of his theory of inference, and we find here the doctrine of identity-in-difference set forth as the basis of all inference. We have already seen that inference is an ideal construction based upon different relations, and the point to be emphasized now is that the construction is of no use to inference unless it is united by a common point. And this point cannot be common, unless in both premises it is one and the same.

For example, suppose we are to find the relation of S to P by means of their common relation to M. Now if S-M and M-P are given separately, we can make no inference unless M is the same. Given S-M and M<sup>2</sup>-P we can make no construction, because we have no bridge to carry us

from  $M^1$  to  $M^2$ . 'The back of your inference now is broken and the extremities no longer belong to any individual principle.'<sup>1</sup> Unless M is exactly the same in both cases we cannot reason. And Bradley means 'exactly the same' for we cannot argue merely on the basis of likeness. Likeness refers to a general impression, but similarity is a perceived relation between two terms which implies and rests on a partial identity. If I say X is like Y, I only say that they have some point in common, but I do not say what this point is, the moment I do this I have gone beyond likeness to sameness. If X and Y both have lungs and gills they are to this extent the same and they would present themselves to us as generally similar.

It is difficult to see where, at least at the logical or epistemological level, this is wrong. The only escape would be to say that the attack on inferring through likeness does not apply where the likeness is exact, but 'I am waiting, and have been waiting for years, to be told what is meant by an "exact likeness"'.<sup>2</sup> A and B are not the same but are exactly alike, we may be told, and while this at first sight may appear reasonable it will not stand much examination. For example, if a picture is 'exactly alike' the original then if one is not dead the other is alive. If the cast of a play is 'exactly alike' an original then the same thing will be in two places at once. From these examples we can see that when we say 'exactly alike' what we mean is 'partially the same', or 'identical in some points'. If likeness did not imply this identity then all inference based on it would be vicious.

---

1. P.L. p. 286.

2. P.L. p. 287.

Every inference then must have a common point, and the common point must be an identical term. Thus in  $A - B, B - C$ , therefore  $A - B - C$  the  $B$  in each premise must not only be like it must be absolutely the same. Yet in thus avoiding the error of identifying sameness with mere likeness we must not fall into the other error of saying that sameness excludes differences.

Here then we have arrived at the famous doctrine of identity-in-difference, a doctrine which may look mysterious, but seems to be the only one which will account for our experience. If  $B$  in both premises in the above example were so far the same as to exclude all difference then  $A$  and  $B$  could not both belong to it unless they were both the same and this would mean that both premises were identical, or, if  $A$  and  $B$  were completely different they could not both pertain to  $B$ . In either of these cases there could be no inference. That is, if the premises are the same their repetition is meaningless, and if the differences they contain are indifferent to  $B$  it is clear that no construction can be made 'since if  $B$  is the centre, it carries no radii and has no circumference'<sup>1</sup>. An identity then must be a synthesis of differences, if it is to be of any use in inference.

The particular identity which we select by means of abstraction appears in and is differentiated by different contexts. So far as it is the identity it is absolutely and entirely the same; but so far as it is a member of diverse contexts it carries with it differences. Inference depends wholly on this double aspect, for without the differences there would be nothing to connect and without the identity there would be no

---

1. P.L. p. 288.

connection. Inference 'rests on the assumption that, if the ideal content is the same, then its differences will be the radii of one centre'<sup>1</sup>. In other words what is true of the identity in one context will be true of it in another. That is, if John is taller than Tom, this will still be true when we are considering that Tom is taller than Catherine.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. P.L. p. 288.

2. Bradley then goes on to summarize these conclusions by stating that all reasoning rests on the identity of indiscernibles which may be expressed that whatever is the same ideally is really the same. This was to cause Bradley difficulty before the end of even the first edition (*infra* pp.158 et seq.), but we can see why he said it. If inference is not completely arbitrary it must assume that the middle point is not something imposed onto reality, but is found in reality. This was to be questioned, but in the first book of the Principles he affirms that (1) logic stands or falls with the axiom, and (2) the objection to it rests on metaphysics.

(1) All reasoning as we have seen involves the joining of premises by means of an identical point, which, given as it is in different contexts, is held to be the same because it has the same character or content, which, so far as it is not discernible is taken as one. Without this identity the construction will go to pieces, and the inference will be vicious. It is difficult to disagree with Bradley when he says that without the principle reasoning is impossible.

(2) The objection to the identity of indiscernibles is usually of a metaphysical nature, and while it may sound strange to common sense to say that identity is an ideal synthesis of differences, and that this identity is a real fact, nevertheless common sense has always tacitly accepted its meaning, and so the objections to it stem not from common sense but from a metaphysics of common sense which is a very different thing. We believe, ordinarily, that a body has changed its place, but at the end of the movement the motion is not a fact of sense. We abstract the body from its present position and, treating the abstraction as a continuous identity, we predicate of it the changing differences. Yet at the same time we do not doubt that the motion is a real fact. Thus the identity of indiscernibles is a formulation of the doctrine we all hold.

Now while Bradley does not believe that common sense is the final arbiter of philosophy, it does bring out the fact that objections to his doctrine are based on metaphysics. It is because the philosophy of experience is sure there is no reality except exclusive particulars, that it is horror struck at the thought of a real universal, and

The syllogism is therefore correct in insisting that all reasoning demands a middle, and furthermore that this middle must be universal. We have anticipated this aspect of the argument, but to emphasize we need only ask if one of the premises were not universal how could it have a common identity. Inference being an ideal construction and involving an ideal centre, one premise must be taken as true beyond the limits of the particular subject.

Up to this point the theory has been fairly straightforward and so we may sum up as follows. All inference is an ideal construction or synthesis which unites not less than two terms around a centre, or as in the geographical example, centres of identity. The conclusion is a new relation between the differences, and it is by a perception that we see it to exist within the individual whole which we have constructed.

2. The theory then begins to twist and turn in a way which makes it difficult to follow. The line of thought seems to be as follows. The above definition of inference is unsatisfactory as it fails to cover many different types of inference. The only characteristic common to all inference is that it involves an ideal experiment on the given data, the result of which is ascribed to the original data. This experiment or

---

because its belief is not proved nor thought to need proof, nor is in any way discussed, because it is a mere inherited preconception which has got to think itself a real fact, it is scarcely so much to be called a doctrine as an orthodox dogma and traditional superstition. (P.L. p. 293.)

In sum then, how can the identity of thoughts be denied because one is yesterday and the other today. If such ideal sameness is not real then how can any process or change or continuity be anything but illusion. If a thing is not now what it was, if it is only alike, then the subject cannot have changed. And if it is the same, on what grounds to we make that assertion except on the ground of identity of content?

middle process is either one of synthetical construction or analytical elimination. Yet this again is found to be inadequate, and, with some qualification Bradley returns to the notion that all reasoning depends on an identity. The only difference is that the identity is not always given or explicit, but in many cases has to be constructed or is implicit. Then this modified theory is brought even closer to the original when we learn that analysis and synthesis are but different sides of one process. It will be remembered that it was indicated that the ideal experiment could be of a purely analytic nature, but this will have to be modified if all analysis involves synthesis.

Furthermore, while analysis and synthesis are both sides of a single process, they are not only the only principle involved in the ideal experiment which is inference. The other principle is the belief that the rational is individual, that what we seek to articulate by means of judgement and inference is such that it can be represented by a coherent system of qualities and relations. We shall deal with the two points mentioned in this paragraph in the next section, and in the meantime we will return to the inadequacies of the original theory.

The theory of the first book of the Principles was of a limited and provisional type, and it fails to cover many different sorts of reasoning. For example, once our construction is reached why should not this be our conclusion; if we prefer to treat the entire compound synthesis as the conclusion we want, are we logically wrong? 'Is there any law which orders us to eliminate, and, where we cannot eliminate, forbids us to argue?'<sup>1</sup> The conclusion of an argument is not always the

---

1. P.L. p. 389.

perception of a new relation between two extremes. Or why not try a 'new exit'? There are other things in the world besides relations, and perhaps the whole might develop new qualities. Again, our 'education in logical superstition' leads us to think of immediate inferences, and these will not fit our pattern.

There is no need to examine these different sorts of argument in detail but only to notice that they have two things in common, that the middle term, if there is one, is not explicit, nor is the conclusion the perception of a relation between the extremes.<sup>1</sup> Inference, therefore, is not always a synthesis based on the identity of given terminal points. The place of the construction can be taken by processes of construction and ideal experiment, which are performed on something that is given, and the result ascribed to the original datum. This is a wider application of the principle of identity which we have already noticed, for we here assume that what is true of the datum inside the experiment, is also in some sense true of the datum without regard to the experiment. Thus if we conclude that Aristotle read the pre-Socratics, we believe that this content is somehow true of reality without regard to the ideal experiment which led to this conclusion.<sup>2</sup>

- 
1. Bradley in the chapter entitled 'Fresh Specimens of Inference' gives the following types of reasoning which will not fit his previous formula. Three term constructions where elision is not used, and operations where we go to a quality, as for example, when we are debating on how a room should be re-arranged. Again such processes as addition and subtraction will not fit, nor will comparison, nor abstraction, nor dialectic, nor immediate inference.
  2. This raises the question of in what sense we can be said to make truth. This problem will be discussed in the next chapter.

In reasoning, Bradley goes on to say, we have a starting point that is given and a subsequent modification of that starting point. In an abstract form we may put this as follows. First A, then the ideal experiment resulting in Ab, and lastly the statement that Ab is true of A unconditionally or conditionally. Thus we have: 1. premises, 2. operation, and 3. result.

Bradley under Bosanquet's criticism was led to relinquish this notion of an ideal experiment on given data, but we should see clearly how this idea is a natural component of the realistically orientated first edition. If we are in some sense aware of a world of facts, a world which we can express in judgements, yet which is not constructed or distorted by these judgements, then we can regard the judgements as the data for inference. Now if the real world for thought is found in this way, it is natural to think of the judgements as both the subject matter and the test for any other process of thought, and so to label this other process an experiment whose result must 'fit the facts'.

In an example we have already used we had the data A - B, B - C, and 'Therefore A - C. Here the data are the two sets of terms in relations of space, and the starting point is reality qualified by the judgements which express these two relations. These judgements will be the result of observation. Next we have our construction or synthesis which gives us the same terms but with the difference that they are now united. Finally we have the perception of the new relation which is the result of the synthesis.<sup>1</sup> But since the terms are the same in spite of the con-

---

1. In order to simplify the discussion we have maintained the use of the example illustrating the old formula, but in spite of its former use it illustrates the new equally well.

struction they will remain the same in spite of the new relation A-C. This means that the real which was qualified by the judgements A - B, B - C, is the real qualified as A - B - C and A - B - C is the same subject as is qualified by A - C. In this way we have a sameness both within and without the construction, and the experiment on the given data has rendered a result valid for reality.

Besides showing us the meaning of the term experiment the above also indicates the need for what Bradley calls individuation. In the case where the middle was given we still had to join the extremities into an individual whole, so here, unless the process were one process we could get no conclusion. The process is one, or individual, because there is an identity of content which runs right through it, and which joins the final result to the initial starting point. It would seem then that Bradley means to substitute experiment and individuation for the given middle of our first examples. Our next task is to examine the middle process in more detail.

3. All instances of inferring we are told are either examples of analysis or synthesis. Once this is established we are told that these are both aspects of one process. It would, I think, be acknowledged by all those who still believe we think, that thought is either analytic or synthetic. Consequently what we wish to establish is the much more debatable point that all inference involves both analysis and synthesis interpreted as different sides of the same process. We will see how analysis and synthesis are both sides of the same process by taking each in turn.

Analysis shows itself to be synthesis in the following way. In an analysis where, for example, the human being walking towards me (X) is analysed into man, white, six feet tall, John, (Xabcd) the result comes to us as separate. But they are separate and distinguishable because of a common identity, in this case the aspect of our experience we recognize as human being. The same human being is a man, is white, is six feet tall, and is John. And since all these elements are related to a common centre they must also stand in some relation to each other. But this relation, in this example of subject and attribute, did not exist before the act of analysis, and has in fact resulted from it. In this way the analysis has shown itself to be synthesis.

Let us take the famous example 'matter is extended'. Here we draw out by means of analysis what is already 'in' the subject of the judgement, but, because of the act of analysis, the notion of extension now stands in a new relation to that of matter, a relation which was non-existent before this act. Thus analysis is said to be the synthesis of the whole which it divides. The different elements we 'draw out' or detect because of the very fact that they are elements of that which we began, and so bear a relation to each other, shows that synthesis is at work, for the relation of the elements is new and depends on the analysis.

Again all synthesis involves analysis. This is perhaps easier to see. Suppose we have A - B, B - C and from this we go on to produce A - B - C. We now have A - B - C related within a visible whole, and a whole which is articulated by its constituent members. And yet, as

members of this whole, they did not exist until the synthesis, yet once the synthesis existed the whole was at the same time analysed.

To take the perennial example 'matter is heavy'. Here we have matter and heavy combined by a synthetic activity into 'matter is heavy'. But at the same time the new idea is better articulated more carefully analysed than either the single ideas of matter or heaviness. This synthesis is said to be the analysis of the whole which it constructs.

Bradley does not mean by these reflections to attempt to obscure the differences in the operations, and he lists three special diversities. In the first place the given material is different, secondly the product is not the same, and thirdly, the operation of which we are conscious differs in each case. We will say something on each of these points, not so much as to illustrate the differences between analysis and synthesis for these are presumably easily understood, but in an endeavour to clarify the relation between them.

(a) In analysis we do not go beyond the explicit whole which is given to us as a starting place. For this reason we can say that analysis is the internal synthesis of a datum. Thus in our example of the analysis of a perception of a human being we did not go beyond the analysis of the perception. In synthesis on the other hand, the whole is not given but made, and so we go beyond the original datum. Our act in this case is the analysis of a whole which is implied and unseen. Thus in analysis we operate upon an explicit whole, and proceed to its invisible inside. In synthesis we begin with an organic element, or

elements, not seen to be such; and passing beyond each to what is outside, so bring out the invisible totality that comprehends them.<sup>1</sup>

(b) The starting place in each case is different and so is the result. This is clear from the examples we have already used, and we may summarize this point by saying that in analysis, which is the inward synthesis of the datum, the unseen internal aspects become clear; while in synthesis, on the other hand, we have the analysis of an implicit whole beyond the datum, in which the datum becomes explicit as a constituent element, bound by interrelation to one or more elements likewise constituent. Thus in the example 'matter is heavy' the datum matter and heavy are seen as elements in an implicit whole which is beyond each of them yet includes both, and in which they both become explicit elements bound by relations to the 'heaviness of matter'.

(c) In each we are conscious of different sides of the operation. In analysis we do not keep sight of the synthesis, and in synthesis we do not keep the analysis in view. In analysis the given becomes the continuity of fresh discretions, while in synthesis it becomes one single entity in a new seen continuity. In analysis though we ignore the continuity and in synthesis we forget 'the once helpless discretion' of the datum.

In analysis, Bradley continues, we use a function of plurality in unity, in synthesis we use a function of unity in plurality; and in each case we are not conscious of the function. In the result of the first we throw away the continuity with which we work; and emphasize

---

1. P.L. p. 471.

only the differences which were formerly latent. In the result of the second we ignore the original differences and emphasize that continuity. In both analysis and synthesis what is used is not seen.

The realization that both analysis and synthesis involve each other should help to clarify the notion, of which we made mention in the chapter on modality,<sup>1</sup> that knowledge does not begin with either principles or sense data, but is a process of advance from what is dimly apprehended to a more explicit realization of this apprehension, or as Bradley puts it 'knowledge advances from the abstract to the concrete'.<sup>2</sup> 'The confused whole...which comes before our senses and pours out its riches' is at first only imperfectly distilled by thought, and yields but a 'thin and scanty result'.<sup>3</sup> It is only as we begin to penetrate to principles that our intellectual results spread over the field and serve to unite the mass of detail -- and at the same time to make the details more articulate. Thus in becoming more abstract, in the sense of thinking more, we at the same time become more concrete.

This can be seen from simple as well as complex examples. Take a simple judgement of perception such as 'this is a tree'. Such a judgement is at best a most imperfect expression of the perception. The judgement of a man who knows something of trees will be more exact, e.g., he may say 'this tree is a maple'; while that of the expert will be even more profound. The latter two judgements differ from the first in the sense that the perception has now been integrated into an intellectual

---

1. See supra pp. 127 et seq.

2. P.L. p. 474.

3. P.L. p. 474.

system which means that the judgements on the nature of the perceptions are more profound, exhaustive, or to use the idealists' word concrete. Thus thought is said to advance from the abstract to the concrete by means of the double process of analysis and synthesis.

We have seen that analysis and synthesis are both sides of one process, and it will follow from this that an increase of one will result in an increase of the other. The more deeply we analyse our given, the deeper you make its unity, and the more elements that are joined by synthesis, so much the greater is the detail and more full the differentiation of that totality. A moment's consideration of the example of the tree will bear this out. The more we analyse the perception of the tree examining the shape of its leaves and the texture of its wood, the more complex the datum becomes; again the more elements we are able to bring to bear on the perception, that is, the fact that it is a tree, hardwood, and the like, the more we are able to relate it to the rest of our knowledge, and the greater is the detail and differentiation of the unity.

This, as we have said, is the notion of the concrete as opposed to the abstract universal. Unlike the axiom of extension and intension of formal logic, it does not hold that the less a thing becomes the farther it goes, and the more it contains the narrower it becomes. Rather it is held that knowledge advances by means of analysis and synthesis from the abstract, the discrete, the particular, to what is less abstract, less discrete, and less particular; and the relative concreteness of a universal depends on the extent to which it is a member of a system of

knowledge. It can be seen that if thought proceeds in this way system must be more than a linking of a number of clear explicit judgments. Many criticisms of the coherence theory of truth seem to assume that system means the building up of a kind of stationary pattern out of a number of clear and distinct ideas, rather than looking on system as something which is at first ill-defined but nonetheless a whole, which becomes more explicit as thought proceeds.

Yet the double process of analysis and synthesis is not adequate for a complete idea of inference, for even logic must assume that the rational is individual, and that individuality is truth. This is not as well known as Bosanquet's statement that 'For logic, at all events, it is a postulate that "the truth is the whole"<sup>1</sup>'. This statement occurring on the second page of his logic has certainly occasioned at least its share of ridicule, but Bradley's version is not found until nearly page five hundred and the reader having read this far is perhaps better disposed to try and find out what it means.

Bradley's version is in two sections (1) the rational is individual, and (2) individuality is truth. The first of these is merely a way of indicating the intellect's demand for coherence, of 'getting all the facts and getting them straight'. This demand was noticed by Kant, and there seems little to object to in it. The fact that so many people are willing to accept coherence as a test for truth seems to indicate this is a general belief, and the unwillingness to accept discrepant possibilities seems to be a law of thinking.

---

1. Bosanquet, Logic p. 2.

On the other hand, the acceptance of the belief that the individual is true is not nearly so generally approved, and the reason is clear. 'No doubt we seek coherence and consistency' it will be said 'but obviously truth does not consist in this individuality'. 'Truth is correspondence with fact, and one fact is worth a hundred theories.' We have already given the notion of fact a certain amount of attention, and will do so in the future, but even if we admit the above criticism at its face value it is not as damaging as it seems. Even if what makes true statements true is correspondence with fact, we still hope that these relations of correspondence will be coherent. It is the idea of system, however, interpreted as an organic whole as opposed to a static coherence of facts which is the goal of our thought, 'and to sight of this perfection we have been conducted'.

The remainder of this chapter on 'The Final Essence of Reasoning' goes on to develop this thought in a manner which in some ways is more Hegelian than anything in Appearance and Reality, and in a manner which contradicts at least in spirit much of what he was to say in later chapters. Here he portrays with sympathy the Hegelian ideal of thought, later he is to pour scorn on a cheap and easy monism. He begins his portrayal of the goal of thought by outlining a defect common to both analysis and synthesis, and then claims it is possible for us to see this defect only because we have a dim apprehension of what it is that thought seeks.

Analysis has a two-fold defect. In the first place, the datum with which it begins is not single, but limited, and so is in part defined by relations which are not altogether intrinsic to its nature, or by

relations which are external if this word is not interpreted as bearing no relation to the datum. This means that the unity of our datum is at best artificial and any attempt at analysis cannot be regarded as a self-development of the datum. We will have to examine this notion of self-development more carefully in the next chapter, but we can see in a rough way from the examples of inference which we have already given, what this term means.

In the example of the analysis of the perception of a human being, the analysis was restricted to a certain part of our visual field. Thus the analysis was bound by limits which could not be justified by the actual process of analysis, and this is what Bradley means when he says the datum is externally related to its environment. That is, not that in a more complete view of things the datum would be seen to be unconnected, but in order to begin the analysis it must be taken in anything but its ultimate nature.

The second defect of analysis is in the result which fails to analyse the datum completely. This is so for the datum, characterized as it is by its external relations 'and so impregnated with a foreign principle'<sup>1</sup> is made up of unstable elements. Thus because A which we analyse into A (bcd) is not pure A, then the results bcd themselves tend to fall apart and never to reach anything simple. We saw one aspect of this point in the chapter on judgement where we saw that it was always possible to go beyond any datum, and ask why and how.<sup>2</sup> 'It is ruined

---

1. P.L. p. 487.

2. See supra p. 97.

throughout by externality. The elements are inwardly alien to themselves, and from without they each are alien to the other and to their common origin. The analysis in the end is hence not synthesis, if that means self-relation.<sup>1</sup>

This is all, perhaps, rather difficult, but we will see it in a better perspective when we deal with his metaphysics, for the inability of analysis so to realize its aim is the germ of the argument a contin-gentia mundi for the Absolute.

Synthesis reveals a similar lack of self-development, for we start with one element and add on another, and though we argue through an identity nonetheless there is an arbitrary element in what we choose to add, and 'To the original element this stranger does not seem a part of itself, but a foreign arrival and importation.'<sup>2</sup> In this sense the synthesis is not a true analysis.

Again, there is a deficiency in the result, for while the differences are united at a single point, in another sense they are forced on the identity. 'Instead of moving freely from one to the rest, you are compelled to pass through a machinery of steps, which seem to have no vital connection with the elements you bring together.'<sup>3</sup> In a word the synthesis has a mechanical rather than an organic union of the elements. In the latter union there would be a living point which would withdraw into itself the life of its members, and would flow 'forth into a body it would feel as its own.'<sup>4</sup> As it is synthesis is like the

---

1. P.I. p. 488.  
2. ibid.  
3. ibid.  
4. ibid.

axle of a wheel where the spokes are driven in.

No doubt this language may not appear to be very scientific, and undoubtedly it is analogical. But when we point to its unscientific character we should ask ourselves whether we have not some artificial and abstract scheme in mind, and perhaps we would then see that Bradley's analogy at least has the merit of comparing living functions with each other. For most assuredly thought as represented by models of reasoning bears the same relation to thinking as does a skeleton with tickets on it, to a living body.<sup>1</sup>

Both analysis and synthesis then suffer from the defect of externality and we are led to ask what we want, for to perceive imperfection we must have some glimpse of what is at least less perfect. The satisfaction of thought would be found in a way of thinking in which the whole of reality was a system of its differences immanent in each difference. In this way the constant 'why' which is the spur of thought would disappear, for each element would contain the 'answer' implicitly. 'In this whole the analysis of any one element would, by nothing but the self-development of that element, produce the totality.'<sup>2</sup> Synthesis again would have no external element 'but would be the movement of the whole within its own body'. Synthesis would be the natural expansion of the starting point and the process would not cease till, 'the whole being embraced, it had naught left against it, but its conscious system'. Then, the elements knowing themselves in the whole and so self conscious in one

---

1. See Appendix II, p. 78, where this example is used to illustrate another abstract and imperfect analysis of elements in experience.  
2. P.I. p. 489.

another, 'and the whole so finding in its recognized self-development the unmixed enjoyment of its completed nature, nothing alien or foreign would trouble the harmony'. 'It would all have vanished in that perfected activity which is the rest of the absolute.' <sup>1</sup>

Bradley does not say we are ever actually so satisfied. And before the reader dismisses the above description as 'mystical nonsense' he is asked to remember that if the true account of inference is self-development of the object then the above account is surely not so obscure as it might at first seem. However, the analysis of self-development must be left until the next chapter.

4. We have now one task left in our examination of the theory of reasoning of the first edition, and this is the question of the validity of inference. When we approach this discussion we find ourselves back in the familiar world of facts and their corresponding ideas, far from the sibilant fission of a self-explaining Absolute with its flowering of analysis through synthesis and synthesis through analysis. Indeed we are so far away from it that the concluding parts of our third section might not as well have been written for all the effect they have on our discussion here. This is not to say that Bradley actually contradicts himself for he did not say that the ideal of thought is ever realized, but we can at least say that there is a great difference in emphasis between the chapter on 'The Final Essence of Reasoning' and the ones which follow it.

The question then is how or why is inferring valid, and the background of this question is the realistic scheme of the world, and

---

1. P.L. p. 553.

given this background the question can be taken to mean two things. First of all how do I know my conclusion follows from my premises, and secondly, how do I know my conclusion corresponds to reality, and that the process of thought represents anything real. We will take each question in turn.

Every inference as we know falls into three parts, and our problem now is the justification for the datum taking the conclusion as part of itself. Our problem can be put in this way, the conclusion must be something new, if there were nothing fresh there would be no inference. But if there is something new then the given has been changed through the mind's operation. There then follows a paragraph which can only be quoted. 'We unblushingly assert that the consequence follows; but we know that it follows since we know who has dragged it. We protest that C is the property of A. How else, when our hands first stole it and then secretly placed it in the house? And the doubt that now rises, and the suspicion that points at us, all start from this ground. If it is you, they murmur, who have made the conclusion, then it cannot be true that you also have found it.' This is the problem then, if nothing is altered then there is no inference, but if we do alter anything then the inference is vicious, and we admit that we have in fact been active.

The solution to this problem is the antithesis, at least in spirit, of the Hegelian description of the ideal of thought, or of the self-development of the object. We are to meet the above dilemma by a 'saving distinction'. As we are not dealing with the real validity of

our reasoning process, but only with its correctness as a logical transition, then we can regard our reasoning as simply a change in our way of knowing. That is the reasoning is mine and represents a change in myself, and my act conditions not the consequence of the reasoning but the knowledge of the consequence. Though the function of concluding depends on the intellect, the content concluded may be 'wholly unhelped and un-<sup>1</sup> touched'.

I suppose such a theory might be tolerable on a kind of naively realistic basis, but we must point out, even before dealing with the theory of the second edition, that it is incompatible with what he has said about analysis and synthesis being the analysis and synthesis of the datum. The idea that we work around a content and do nothing to it seems incompatible with what he has said of modality, and is quite clearly one of those places in the Principles which horrified Bosanquet. It is, however, an illustration that our example of the stepping stones across the stream was an apt description of most of the first theory of inference, for inference is here regarded as merely the way I happen to get to a new fact, and has nothing to do with the facts themselves.

The second question as to how I know my conclusion corresponds to reality and is valid of fact all through its process is more difficult. How do we know, given that truth is the ideal counterpart of fact, that the process of our reasoning is true? If the datum appropriates new material, and if the material is not in some way part of the real datum

---

1. P.L. p. 555.

then the result of our reasoning would be false. Yet on the other hand, if the conclusion is given at the start then there is no inference. This would seem to imply that for reasoning to be true, then the process of our thought would have to represent a change in the actual world.

Thus in the example  $A - B, B - C, \text{ therefore } A - B - C$  we say that  $A - C$  is appropriated by our datum  $A - B$  and  $B - C$ . Yet if  $A - B - C$  is not true of reality at the beginning of our thought then it will not be true afterwards. But if  $A - B - C$  is given we would then have no inference at all. This would seem to have the result that if there is inference then it cannot represent any process which corresponds to reality. This conclusion certainly accords with our common notions and Bradley reinforces it with the following consideration. There are many mental acts which I do or do not do as I please, for example, comparison, distinction and abstraction. 'But is it possible that whenever I happen to be pleased, the things have somehow changed harmoniously?'<sup>1</sup> Even if, on an extreme idealist view we admit that reality is the work of a reasoning mind, how could we possibly conclude that my reasoning represents reality. 'How can we suppose that each trivial argument, every wretched illustration that we may have used in these discussions, provided it be only free from flaw, must have its direct counterpart in the nature of things?'<sup>2</sup>

The reader would probably agree, unless he had taken our chapter on modality very seriously,<sup>3</sup> that there is no reason to suppose there

---

1. P.I. p. 581.

2. P.I. p. 582.

3. Especially the discussion on Bradley's rejection of floating ideas, pp. 123 et seq.

is any process in reality which corresponds to inference. Bradley again emphasizes the view of reality which went with his attempt to save the categorical judgement, and contends that to hold any notion of self-development requires a complete reversal in our ideas about reality; and while these ideas of reality may be false, nevertheless logic must work within their framework. Furthermore it seems to be implied that logic cannot re-arrange this framework because even if metaphysics presents us with a truer one it is not one in which finite thought would recognize its own activities. In the background of idealist thought we might put this by saying that even if Kant's world of the understanding is metaphysically unsound, and Hegel's world of reason is the only true account of reality, still this latter bears no relation to the (unsound metaphysically) world in which we think.

Except for a system of metaphysics we must keep to our common ideas about reality, and in logic we must conclude that our process of thought is foreign to reality, and falls outside of it in our mental world.<sup>1</sup> We might have arrived at this conclusion earlier by considering that judgement and inference are discursive and work with ideas. Ideas, he maintains are not phenomenon, they are not real and they cannot exist. Furthermore, they are universal and this means that no idea and operation which works with these ideas can possibly represent the flow of events. Bradley goes on to reinforce this by stating that the real is separated from the mental by an insuperable barrier for we cannot exhibit in our mental experiment 'that enormous detail of sensuous con-

---

1. This illustrates the reason for our example of the stepping-stones.

text, that cloud of particulars which enfolds the meeting of actual events'<sup>1</sup>  
Even if we say that we have the essential meaning we are only emphasizing,  
not criticizing, his point. It is just because we do have the essence  
that we have not got a copy of the facts. 'If reality is the chain of  
facts that happen, then the essence is a creature which lives only in the  
thought which has begotten it. It could not be real and it cannot be  
true.'<sup>2</sup>

The first edition ends with the famous passage which so aroused  
the ire of Bosanquet, a passage which is Bradley's judgement on Hegelian  
idealism, a judgement which may have been modified but was never retracted.

'It may come from a failure in my metaphysics, or from a weak-  
ness of the flesh which continues to blind me, but the notion that exist-  
ence could be the same as understanding strikes as cold and ghost-  
like as the dreariest materialism. That the glory of this world in the  
end is appearance leaves the world more glorious, if we feel it is a show  
of some fuller splendour; but the sensuous curtain is a deception and a  
cheat, if it hides some colourless movement of atoms, some spectral woof  
of impalpable abstractions, or unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.  
Though dragged to such conclusions we cannot embrace them. Our prin-  
ciples may be true but they are not reality. They no more make the  
Whole which commands our devotion, than some shredded dissection of  
human tatters is that warm and breathing beauty of flesh which our hearts  
found delightful.'<sup>3</sup>

---

1. P.I. p. 585.  
2. P.I. p. 586.  
3. P.I. p. 591.

Chapter VI

INFERENCE II

'We must view the Reality in its unbroken connexion with finite centres. We must take it as, within and with these centres, making itself an object to itself and carrying out them and itself at once ideally and practically. The activity of the process is throughout the undivided activity of the Reality and of the centre in one. There is in the end no "between", nor any external relation. The striving of one side or the other merely for itself is impossible, and to seek to verify such a striving, for instance in selfishness or its opposite, is futile. And in knowledge the impression by the object, and the will to experiment in fact with the object or to grasp it ideally, all belong to the single activity at once of myself and the whole Universe.'

Bradley.

The Principles of Logic were published in 1883, two years later in 1885 Bosanquet published Knowledge and Reality 'A Criticism of Mr. F. H. Bradley's "Principles of Logic"'. While there is no doubt that this book had a great influence on the notes and 'Terminal Essays' of the second edition of the Principles, it is difficult to ascertain how seriously he took Bosanquet's criticism in so far as his metaphysics is concerned. So far as I can determine Bosanquet's book had very little influence on Appearance and Reality which is, I suppose, Bradley's most important work. For this reason we will not deal at any length with the details of the second theory of inference. We can say, however, that after Bosanquet's criticism he was at least unable to maintain the empiricist and dualistic elements which played such a strong part in the first edition of the Principles.

We may illustrate this change as well as the general nature of Bosanquet's criticism by considering a problem which we have referred to

at different times, but which we have not discussed in detail; and this is the question of the relation of judgement to inference. We shall see that the question involves us in problems concerning the given, and so we will be able to clarify the discussions on immediate experience and modality.

The problem which faces us is this. In the first theory, which assumed there were facts which could be represented by judgement, inference played a subsidiary role, for it was only in judgement that thought came close to reality. Now if it is true that judgements reflect or reproduce reality, it is important that they should not derive their significance from other intellectual operations, operations which are admitted to have little connection with reality, as then judgements would be distorted by these operations and not represent reality. Thus in the first theory judgement specifies the given for us, and does not depend on inference.

In the notes and Terminal Essays of the second edition of the Principles all this is changed. Judgement is said to be dependent on inference, as is inference on judgement. That is, judgement derives its meaning and significance from the system of which it is a part; a system which is not composed of a series of ideas inside my head, but of ideas which are as much the nature of the things thought of as the thought. This has the result that the given is not reflected in pure judgement, for thought is the development of the given itself. The system is not a priori and then prescribed to the given in the Kantian sense, for the given, as we have seen, is not a formless rushing

of sensa, but something which has form and meaning, and the system which gives meaning to judgement is a progressive development of this given. Here we have the notion of self-development which we have mentioned, and which was implicit in a great deal of Bradley's first theory, but which becomes explicit here.

When these points are worked out we will see that we are confronted with a theory which, if we do not investigate its metaphysical consequences, is more consistent than the former. In some ways, it is perhaps less interesting than the earlier one, for Bradley has given up his attempt to build a coherence theory of truth on a correspondence basis, and produces a theory which is susceptible to the most extreme idealist interpretation; but which in itself does not represent any very original point of view.

In this chapter we have four main tasks. First a discussion of the relation of judgement and inference and a study of the consequences for the theory of the datum which this involves. Next a consideration of Bosanquet's criticism of the first edition of the Principles. Thirdly, we will present the theory of inference as found in the second edition, a presentation which will endeavour to clarify the notions of self-development and of system. And finally, in order to clarify the relation of coherence and fact we shall examine coherence as a test for truth.

1. At first sight it would seem clear that judgement is not an inference. No doubt we could admit that a great deal of judgement actually involves inference, as for example in all those judgements which

are the conclusion of an inference, but this in itself would not show judgement to be an inference. The reason we distinguish judgement and inference is that judgement seems to represent facts, while an inference always has a 'must' about it. Judgement expresses what is, whether we can see any reason why the judgement should be the case; while an inference always involves a reason. S is a fact and as a fact is P, this is a judgement; S for a reason must be P this is an inference.

Even in the first edition Bradley debated this question,<sup>1</sup> but insisted that the distinction had to stand; and the reason, to repeat, is that he wanted a firm contact with the world which could be expressed in singular categorical judgements. He discusses the question in the following way. We have seen that all inference involves synthesis and analysis, but he then argues that although judgement also possesses these two aspects this does not mean that judgement is a kind of reasoning.

All judgement, that is, necessarily contains a relation between the two elements of the judgement, but every relation presupposes a unity in which the related elements subsist. This would seem to be true no matter how 'unreal' one supposed relation to be, for even if all relations are imposed by a mind or are just simply 'our way of looking at things' nonetheless when we do order our experience in a particular way, what we order must have some sort of unity which allows it to be so arranged. But this difficulty only arises on an extremely subjectivist interpretation of Kant's work, and without this background it is not difficult to see that when we distinguish and affirm a relation, this

---

1. e.g. P.L. pp. 437-440.

relation presupposes what it has been distinguished from. For this reason, a judgement, in so far as it is an analysis of the whole to which the elements belong, creates new relations between the distinguished elements. All judgement then which is an analysis of the given is also synthesis. Now if all judgement involves both of these functions do they not then also necessitate reasoning? This would seem to be the case because inference, as we have seen, resolves into the same elements as judgement. Of course this conclusion does not follow if there are two different sorts of intellectual activities each of which involves analysis and synthesis. Bradley does not put the matter in quite this way but it would seem to be one method of expressing what he wishes to say. Subsequently he says that the distinction cannot be broken down, because to take the example of a judgement of perception, there is no datum here in the sense there is for inference.<sup>1</sup>

This is not difficult to follow after our discussions of judgement and modality. Inference works only with ideas while judgement works with facts. Judgements are the stepping stones across the stream while inference is the process by which we get from stone to stone. 'We needs must begin our voyage of reasoning by working on something which is felt and not thought. The alteration of this original material, which makes it first an object for the intellect, is thus not yet inference, because the start has not been made from an ideal content.'<sup>2</sup>

Under Bosanquet's criticism Bradley retracted this belief, and while he continued to believe that mere judgement is not ostensibly mediated, asserted that mere judgement is something which does not exist. 'It

---

1. See Chapter II, pp. 36-37.

2. P.I. p. 480.

is never anything but our abstraction mistaken for fact; while inference, on its side, adds no more than the development and explication of an aspect which in judgement, however hidden, is always essential.<sup>1</sup>

The doctrine of the second edition holds (1) that all judgement affirms of reality, and (2) in every judgement we have the assertion that reality is such that S is P. In the chapter on modality we have already seen in what sense even hypothetical judgements refer to reality,<sup>2</sup> and now we have only to see that if all judgement is an articulation of the nature of reality then the problem for judgement will be the relation between the subject and the predicate in reality. In a judgement we affirm that the reality which appears to us as S also appears to us as P, or as Bradley puts it 'Reality is such that S is P'. Yet once we recognize this much in thought -- and this we do when we realize that we are always affirming of reality -- and so make it clear that S passing beyond itself becomes P, we have inference. This is only a rather formal way of putting that it is possible to ignore the bond between S and P which is reality, and to the extent to which we do this we have mere judgement, but 'Not only do you leave out the condition on and by which S is P, but you omit even to entertain the idea of there being any conditions to leave out'.<sup>3</sup> Thus a mere judgement is an abstraction and depends upon the system which gives it meaning, and which is itself a growing differentiation of content which becomes more explicit by analysis and synthesis in their search for individuality.

- 
1. P.L. p. 623.
  2. See Chapter IV, pp. 125-127.
  3. P.L. p. 624.

2. In this section we are to discuss some of Bosanquet's criticisms of the first edition of Bradley's Principles. We have, at different times, for example in the chapter on modality, outlined some of these. Generally speaking, they are of those parts of Bradley's work which show 'peculiarities which he apparently shares with reactionary logic'<sup>1</sup> and tend towards dualism. Any hint of a discrete fact or an independent judgement, any suspicion of a mere unaffirmed idea were sure to draw the fire of the meticulous Bosanquet who is, at least in criticism, the consistent Hegelian.<sup>2</sup> The three points we need notice here concern Bradley's criticism of the syllogism, his ideas of construction and ideal experiment, and the number of terms in an inference.

2a. Bosanquet thinks the criticism of the syllogism is justified, but maintains that within the category of subject and attribute the syllogism lays down the true course of thought. The major premise really contributes to an argument as it lays down a rule with a mark,<sup>3</sup> and whatever has this mark is inferred to come under this rule. He proceeds to make the interesting point that subsumption, even though it is not as the syllogism suggests, the essence of all argument, is constantly emerging even outside the category of subject and attribute. Thus the process of interpretation is subsumptive, and any argument we like can be taken as what he calls a second class argument in a subsumptive sense. Such arguments are very common and comprise all those we think or calculate under direction, and because of authority, as well as much that we infer owing to habit. This means that most of our reasoning is in fact subsumptive, and that it is very like the syllogism suggested it was.

---

1. K&R p. VII.

2. See Mure 'An Introduction to Hegel' pp. XIV-XVI and pp.163-4. for a discussion of Bosanquet's relation to Hegel

3. See Appendix III, p. 79 et seq.

It is only in creative thought where things are thought through without authority that we have an explicit exhibition of ground and principle. In the second class argument the ground and principle is there, but it is not explicit in the sense that the reasoner is conscious of it.

2b. It will be remembered that Bradley's theory of reasoning held the final stage of inference to be a perception of a new relation or quality in the construction we had prepared out of the data for our ideal experiment. Bosanquet insists that all these stages do not express phases in the inference, but 'only <sup>1</sup>incomplete and imperfect stages of the final intuition itself'.

That is, the important thing is the perception of the real implication, and the time this takes, or the steps we perform to do this, are not essential to the inference. The perception of the necessary relation of attributes is the essence of inference, and we get this the best way we can. Bosanquet claims that in this respect he is re-emphasizing Aristotle's theory of reasoning. 'When we ask whether a connexion is a fact, or whether a thing without qualification is, we are really <sup>2</sup>asking whether the connexion or the thing has a middle.' In this passage Aristotle means more than the middle in a syllogism, but proximate cause: 'for the "middle" here is precisely the cause we seek in all <sup>3</sup>our enquiries'. The nature of the fact, he continues and the reason for the fact are identical. In reasoning, then, it is this principle which we seek to grasp, and it does not matter how we become aware of it. Perhaps it may be suggested by a comparison of a hundred instances, or

---

1. K&R p. 287.

2. Analytica Posteriora II, 90a.

3. ibid.

if one is lucky, or perhaps wise, a single instance might give one the required connection.

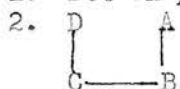
We can see that Bradley's notion of data and experiment are a natural component of his theory of the singular categorical judgement which was supposed to report fact, and the realistic scheme which was its concomitant. If there are facts which bear no relation to inference then inference is personal and tries to arrive at facts. Once however we believe that the essence of inference is the grasping of a rational principle which is an element in a system of implications, then such notions as experiment are relevant only in so far as they are elements in this grasping. The reason these processes were not irrelevant in the first theory was, as we have said, that inference being less real, was essentially a personal thing, and a process for getting at discrete facts which could be represented in judgement.

2c. Finally we have the question of the number of terms in an inference. Bradley it will be remembered insisted that the limit was psychological not logical, and gave the geographical instance to illustrate his point.<sup>1</sup> Bosanquet contends that there can only be three terms in an inference as any process of reasoning must have a middle, and consequently every step in reasoning is a conclusion.

<sup>2</sup>  
In the geographical example, it was only by apparently deferring any attempt to draw a conclusion till C D is in position that we can avoid the question of determining the diagonal from A to C. But the position of C is a conclusion which keeps separate the element A, which

---

1. See Chapter V , p. 136.



will be retained in the conclusion, and the element C, which will not be kept. C is ten miles south and ten miles west of A; by taking D ten miles north of C, we omit, for D, the ten miles south of A which is an attribute of C, and are left with the ten miles west of A. All these steps are elements in the inference and the perception of the figure is not a perception which is performed prior to the inference, but goes on as the inference progresses. Furthermore the stages are dictated by the nature of the final inference. That is, in our example, if it is the relation of D to A which interests us, then what we retain and what we drop in our reasoning will be dictated by this end.

'The three terms of an inference are, in the last resort, simply the data, their principle of unity, and the special application of that principle which a given interest dictates.'<sup>1</sup> Bradley in the notes to the chapter in which the geographical example is used, gives qualified assent to Bosanquet's criticism. 'My statement here was wrong in forgetting that the necessary establishment of each link, one at a time, itself is inference.' So far he is in agreement with his critic. 'On the other side I was right in insisting that in the final conclusion there is an inference from the whole construction without regard to the number of terms contained in that.'<sup>2</sup> This really comes to the same thing as the perception of the principle linking the whole together is the result of smaller inferences.

3. We have seen that judgement depends on inference as much as inference on judgement, and we have also outlined some of the more im-

---

1. K&R p. 308.  
2. P.L. p. 261.

portant of Bosanquet's criticisms of the first edition of the Principles. We will now endeavour to make some of these points more explicit by considering the questions which have been in the background in this chapter, that is the ideas of self-development and data.

The notion of the self-development of an object may seem to have a suspicious shadow of the esoteric about it, yet it seems only a technical way of expressing what we would all admit to be true if we could get rid of preconceptions. One of the best examples of this doctrine is Bosanquet's instance of a barrister who opens his case not with a chain of syllogisms, but with an exposition which reads more like a description than an argument; 'and it is only as we enter further into the proposed construction that we observe it to be in fact the development of a subject, intended to introduce us to a scheme of consequences which, if we accept the initial description we shall be unable to deny.'<sup>1</sup> Thus when we say that inference is the ideal self-development of an object we are emphasizing that truth must be more than our truth, and we are giving the correct version of the impetus behind the correspondence theory's insistence that we must accept the 'control of the object'. 'Truth, to be true, must be true of something, and this something is not truth. This obvious view I endorse, but to ascertain its proper meaning is not easy.'<sup>2</sup> In so far as we can ascertain its proper meaning the above statement means that a judgement is true, not because it corresponds to a fact, but because it is part of a system which is the development of the actual nature of the object. In our example of the

---

1. Implication and Linear Inference, Macmillan & Co., London 1920, p. 105.  
2. T&R p. 325.

dots on a page which we recognize as a fugue, the first impression is clarified and made more explicit, but it is the nature of the fugue which becomes explicit, not an idea in my head. This is why analysis and synthesis are said to be the analysis and synthesis of the datum. If the thought of an object is as much of, in the sense of pertaining to, the object, then a development in thought will be a development of reality.

This notion may seem to contradict Bradley's third mark of inference which is that we want to find something new in inference. Yet we avoid this conclusion because, while a truth may be the result of the development of an object, it is possible that the object may be developed in such a way that it is for no other mind, and has never in time existed before. But because I bring, as it were, truth into being, this does not mean I make it. 'The doctrine that this or that man, or set of men, can make truth, is in the end false and even monstrous.'<sup>1</sup> Thus our problem as to how inference can be at once self-development and discovery is solved by the notion of agency. We bring truth into being, and in this sense inference results in something new, but what we bring into being is the true nature of what we think about.

If Bradley had been an unqualified idealist he would undoubtedly have laid more stress on the activity of reality in judgement and inference. But because he would not say that reality was a rational system, or at least that it was not only a rational system, he was reticent about discussing what we can call the objective dynamic of thought.

---

1. T&R p. 338.

That is, if there is one reality, and all thinking is real, then it might be possible to write logic as the development of reality. This, of course, was Hegel's plan, and is also the reason he held that logic and metaphysics were the same study. Bradley, on the other hand, because he was unwilling to accept this identification tried to keep logic for the study of finite thinking, and leave to metaphysics the larger questions of the activity of the real.

4. For the time being, however, we will leave these larger questions, and endeavour to make the discussion of these chapters on logic more concrete by examining coherence as a test of truth. That is, we will leave aside, so far as we are able, the question of the nature of truth, and endeavour to show that coherence is the only test of truth which can be used.

We will begin with the question of independent facts. We have seen why there are no facts independent of a system. But we will try to make this point more explicit by considering the question from a slightly different point of view, and asking whether it might not be necessary to assume the existence of independent facts in order that there might be knowledge at all.

Thus it is argued by some people that unless we assume infallible judgements of fact, knowledge can have nothing on which to stand. C. I. Lewis, for example, says '...it is absolutely requisite that some at least of the set of statements possess a degree of credibility antecedent to and independently of the remainder of those in question, and derivable from the relation of them to direct experience'.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Lewis, An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation, Open Court, 1946.

'Direct experience' presumably means a judgement of sense. The question then becomes 'are independent judgements of sense necessary for knowledge'.

What we must attempt to decide is whether or not all facts are capable of being relegated to the world of error. Must we assume that there are judgements of perception which must qualify the real world, as they purport to qualify it? This seems to be a fair statement of the issue. Lewis must mean that there are facts which in principle are not capable of being falsified by a system; for, he would say, the system depends on the facts.

Bradley begins his analysis of this position by making a distinction. We must always remember the difference between my world, and my experience, and the world in general. It is one thing to say that there are truths which are necessary and incorrigible as far as my personal experience goes; and another to say that they are true absolutely. We will begin by examining whether there are truths which are essential for my personal experience. Bradley reiterates that we depend on the sense world for the material of our knowledge, and agrees that without it our knowledge could not begin. To this world we must come, not only for new matter, but to maintain and confirm the old. He also holds that this world cannot be completely chaotic, for if it were my intelligence could not exist. Nor must we imagine that we could correct all our judgements of perception. 'I cannot, that is, imagine the world of my experience to be so modified that in the end none of these facts should be left stand-

ing.<sup>1</sup> But this is not the real issue; the problem before us is to determine whether there are judgements of sense that are infallible.

The doctrine that there must be an infallible fact on which we build knowledge is due to a misleading metaphor. It is argued that knowledge must be compared to a house. We may go on adding to it, but only so long as the foundations remain. If there were no foundations there could be no house; if there were no infallible starting points there could be no knowledge. This metaphor, Bradley claims, is 'ruinously inapplicable'.<sup>2</sup> The foundation is only provisional, although to begin knowledge I am forced to take it as absolute. But it does not follow that because some judgements are taken as infallible in order that I may begin knowledge, that knowledge continues to rest on them. It is not true to say that if my starting points are later shown to be false, then the whole of knowledge comes crashing down.

'My experience is solid, not so far as it is a superstructure, but so far as, in short, it is a system.'<sup>3</sup> Because we cannot accept bare conjunction, we attempt to secure a world as coherent and comprehensive as possible. The reason, as Kant says, seeks to achieve the systematization of knowledge, a unity which will not be a mere aggregation of parts.<sup>4</sup> In order to achieve this end, we must not only reflect, but must have perpetual recourse to the materials of sense. We must continually return to this source, both to deepen the matter which is old, and increase it by what is new. It is not then a case of starting with certain facts, and building on top of them. The process is much more fluid.

---

1. T&R p. 209.

2. ibid p.210.

3. T&R p. 210.

4. See the Critique of Pure Reason A 644, 645.

There is a continuous process going on between the mind and its sense objects. We accept facts, we examine them, and some we reject. For to accept them all would be to annihilate all possibility of an ordered world. The changeability of secondary qualities, for example, has received classic expression in the works of Locke. Surely nothing could be clearer than the statement that the acceptance as given, of secondary qualities, would lead to chaos.

Once, however, it is admitted that secondary qualities have a special nature dependent on the observer, it is difficult to maintain that the qualities of things must be independent of perception. We cannot accept all perceptions, and the test we actually use is whether they contribute to the order of my experience. Distance may make a great difference to the perceived height of an object, and we must continually go back to experience, and re-examine our own thoughts, before we can determine what we may choose to call the 'real' height of the building. Euphranor, in Berkeley's fourth Dialogue, concludes an argument with the following question: 'Is it not plain, therefore, that neither the castle, the planet nor the cloud, which you see here, are the real ones which you suppose to exist at a distance?'. And while we may not accept Berkeley's terminology, he has brought out the point that, so far at least as our individual perception goes, it is system which makes these facts which we can accept. And because the mind has been active in determining the facts which we accept, it follows that the so-called independent facts are partly mental, and as partly mental they cannot be considered as entirely non-mental.

We have found that thinking demands the identity of the content

in our mind and the one outside.<sup>1</sup> The consequences of this position are stated in this way by Bosanquet: 'Physical or spatial objects are just as we know them, and truly have the characters which our knowledge (so far as it is knowledge, i.e., so far as it is consistent with itself and with experience)<sup>2</sup> attributes to them'. Bradley's contention is that we cannot accept any fact or perception as true unless it contributes to our world order. And our world order is part of the whole of reality. The more coherent our world is, the more it contains of the character of ultimate reality. Facts are true only so long as they contribute to this order.

It does not follow from this that I shall reject all truths gained from perception. Without some of my facts of perception, I would not know how to order my knowledge. It is essential, that is, that some facts be continually accepted in order for it to remain my world. But it does not follow from this that there are facts which are absolutely and necessarily true.

Bradley continues the discussion by asking why we do take certain facts of observation as practically certain. He finds that they are accepted just so far as they are not taken in their own right. Their validity is due to a certain person's perceiving them under certain conditions. And this person must have a certain intellectual order which allows him to accept the fact. Again, this observed fact must contribute to our world order, or at least not completely upset it, before we can accept it.

Now has this answered Lewis? It will be remembered he argued

---

1. See Chapter III, p. 89 et seq.  
2. Bosanquet Logic p. 311.

that unless there were facts which derived their credibility before the system was started, there could be no knowledge at all. To this Bradley might well answer that before there could be any facts as isolated, there would have to be an individual with an intellectual system. This individual, it is quite correct, must accept certain facts as true in order to begin his system. But it does not follow from this that if these starting points are subsequently rejected the whole of knowledge will collapse. It does not collapse because knowledge is not a mechanical structure like a house; it is a system which continually modifies and rejects facts, including, perhaps, the ones from which it started.

Bosanquet has put this conception into the following words:

'Knowledge is not like a house built on a foundation which is previously laid, and is able to remain after the house is fallen; it is more like a planetary system with no relation to anything outside itself, and determined in the motion and position of every element by the conjoint influence of the whole'<sup>1</sup>.

The examination of another objection against the coherence theory may help to clarify it. Bertrand Russell and Bradley had a long argument over the death of a Bishop who evidently died quite respectably in bed. According to coherence, said Russell, we might just as well say his lordship was hanged. The fact, according to Russell, is isolated, and as an isolated fact it carries no evidence with it, so we can accept it or reject it. Bradley agrees that there are innumerable cases where we cannot distinguish between fact and fancy on the merely internal evidence. If we did not know very much about the animal world there would be no contradiction in asserting that unicorns exist in North Africa. Within the

---

1. Bosanquet, K&R p. 331.

limits of the idea of a unicorn there is no visible discrepancy in that idea, nor in the idea of the Bishop's being hanged. But this is not Bradley's criterion. The question to be asked is what happens to my real world if I accept the unicorn, or the Bishop's being hanged. Clearly, it may not make any difference at all. The point is this: what would happen if I constructed my world on the principle that I could accept mere fancy as fact. Would such a world be coherent and comprehensive?

Bradley insists that it would not be, for it runs counter to the principles by which my ordered world is constructed. These principles are: 'To take memory as in general trustworthy, where I have no special reason for doubt, and to take the testimony of those persons, whom I suppose to view the world as I view it, as being true, apart from special reason on the other side...'<sup>1</sup>

Russell, in The Monistic Theory of Truth, says that the coherence theory presupposes a 'usual' meaning of truth and falsehood in constructing its coherent whole. Whatever Russell means precisely, we can see that this criticism evidently applies to Bradley. Bradley seems to have argued that I cannot accept the Bishop's being hanged, because, while it may not make any difference to my known world order, if I accepted it I would be accepting something which is fancy. But Russell seems to be asking how do we know it is fancy? It might be argued that if I do not start with correspondence with fact, my imagination could construct a more orderly world than one which has any relation to the world of fact. Thus C. I. Lewis argues that the only reason coherence strikes us as plausible is because we are such poor liars, 'and are fairly certain to

---

1. T&R p. 213.

become entangled in inconsistencies sooner or later, once we depart from the truth. A sufficiently magnificent liar, however, or one who was given time and patiently followed a few simple rules of logic, could eventually present us that any number of systems, as comprehensive as you please, and all of them including falsehoods'<sup>1</sup>.

This criticism displays a misunderstanding of what Bradley at any rate means by comprehensive.<sup>2</sup> The idea of system demands the inclusion of all possible material. 'Not only must you include everything to be gained from immediate experience and perception, but you must be ready to act on the same principle as regards to fancy. But this means you cannot contain yourself within the limits of this or that fancied world, as suits your pleasure or private convenience.'<sup>3</sup> This consideration ruins the type of argument used by Lewis. The fancied arrangement has against it any opposite one which I could imagine, and the whole world of perception. These contrary fancies will balance each other, and what will be left to outweigh the world as perceived? A system which Lewis calls comprehensive is not comprehensive in Bradley's sense. For Lewis neglected to say what becomes of the world as perceived in the fancied arrangement.

Suppose, and Bradley will not admit the supposition, that we could gain a vision of a comprehensive world, which would be superior in wealth and detail to our own. If this were possible, then Bradley would alter his criterion. But he would reject what we might call the psychological basis of Lewis' Criticism. He would claim that we are unable to imagine a

---

1. Lewis, loc.cit.

2. For a discussion of the metaphysical implications of the introduction of the criterion of comprehensiveness see Chapter VIII, pp. 268-269.

3. T&R Loc.cit. p. 214.

more coherent world than our own, since he maintains that the imagination as regards quantity is deceptive. In short, he thinks Lewis' 'sufficiently magnificent liar' is an impossibility.

If, however, our liar was a possibility, Bradley would change his criterion to read this way: 'The truth is that which enables us to order more coherently and comprehensively the data supplied by immediate experience and the intuitive judgements of perception'<sup>1</sup>. But this is only conditional on the possibility of a richer and more coherent imaginary world's being constructed. It would seem that Lewis would have to show how such a world is possible. His magnificent liar must take account of immediate experience, and perception; and these, coupled with an imagination which is deceptive in its resources, make his task seem impossible.

But we are still not finished. It may be said that we reject this imaginary hypothesis because of given absolute fact. Bradley himself says the 'contrast between the world of "fact" and of fancy will hold good'<sup>2</sup>. Have we not in effect admitted Russell's criticism that we presuppose a more usual meaning of truth in order to build the coherence of the world? This is not the case. Although we have abandoned our imaginary system because it did not include the world as perceived, it does not follow that this world as perceived is given in absolute and independent facts.

Furthermore, with regard to this world as perceived, it must be remembered that our power is limited. As we have seen, Bradley believes that we cannot add to this world at discretion and at my pleasure. 'Hence to speak broadly, the material is given and compulsory, and the production of

---

1. T&R loc. cit. p. 215.

2. ibid

what is contrary is out of my power.<sup>1</sup> However, this does not mean that what is given are facts in Russell's sense.

In answer then to both Lewis and Russell, Bradley contends that what is fundamental is system. Yet this does not mean that what is given in immediate experience is created entirely by the system. Facts are the result of the process of interaction between perception and judgement. Some of these facts I must accept as absolute, although this does not mean that in the end they are necessary. To say that they are 'there' in any sense as a fundamental starting point is to misconceive the nature of thought.

It is possible, Bradley admits, that if we were to go beyond a certain starting point in modifying my known world, it might be a superior world, but it would no longer be a world for me. It is true that, so far as individuals are concerned, there is a fundamental element which, if abolished, would do away with our known world. But this still does not prove that this necessary element is an infallible judgement of perception. For the character of this supposedly infallible fact might, in the light of a more comprehensive system, need correction, and apart from that correction be classed as error. In other words, the upholder of infallible facts is arguing from the supposed necessity of his individual existence. But because certain judgements of perception may be necessary for the continuance of individual existence, they do not possess any more than a relative infallibility. 'Am I to urge that a world in which my personal identity has been ended or suspended has ceased to be a world altogether? Apart from such an argument (which I cannot use)

---

1. T&R p. 215.

I seem condemned to the result that all sense-judgements are fallible.'<sup>1</sup>

Bradley is not suggesting that facts are not actual, and that judgements are not true in a sense which is sufficient for their purpose. As Bosanquet says, coherence does not attempt to reduce facts to mere ideas; but it does attempt to show that as realities we cannot stop at the arbitrary points which we have adopted. The mind has had a great deal to do with facts, and will have more to do with them in the future. 'As they stand, they are a selection out of reality for everyday use, carelessly handed down or obscured, clipped, worn, their interconnection neglected.'<sup>2</sup>

To illustrate these points we will take three examples.

First let us look at a judgement of history. Now admittedly this type of example favours a coherence theory, but it may make the view clearer before we go on to examine less favourable ones. Suppose we take the fact that Charles I died on the scaffold. First we must ask why I, as an individual who knows little of history, assert the above fact to be true. Probably because I have read it in a book or heard it said in class. My standard then for judging that Charles was executed is far from being the actual fact. The fact which we use as a standard is a statement selected by us, or for us, out of the huge web of knowledge which is the historian's. But we cannot say that the truth of the fact depends on the fact that it is written in a book. In other words, the question is why does the historian say it is true?

Even for the historian there are no simple and independent facts waiting to be discovered. His facts depend for being discovered and

---

1. T&R p. 217.

2. Bosanquet Logic p. 285.

warranted on an enormous constructive work of criticism starting from present experience, and working through vast amounts of testimony and evidence all of which is instrumental to the view of facts which give the highest degree of coherence to the system so constructed.

A critic may say that this is all very well, but it is only a description of how we arrive at facts which were there all the time, no matter how hard to get at. But if we say this we must remember that the facts are never found, as Bosanquet says 'simple of themselves'... 'the working standard which determines them, is not themselves, but.....immense critical construction. Accounts of eye-witnesses, e.g. are nothing but material; and, as a rule, very contradictory material'.<sup>1</sup>

The facts of history then, are not simply 'there'. They are bits of reality which are mediated to us by an immense amount of mental construction. And while we can separate the fact from this mental construction, they cannot as simple and isolated be used as a first-hand standard of truth. We may select certain results of the historians' work and make them standards of truth for certain purposes -- e.g., for an examination -- but this is an artificial extract.

But our critic will still not be satisfied. All you have done he will say is to describe how a historian actually arrives at results. No matter how much you wish to obscure the question, the fact that Charles I died on the scaffold is only true if in fact he did so die. It seems to me this involves the fallacy of post hoc ergo propter hoc. That is, because we use correspondence as a test of truth after we have decided what is true, it does not follow that it is true because it corresponds.

---

1. Bosanquet Logic p. 287.

If an historical statement is true then there will be a fact to correspond to it. But it is not true because it corresponds, for the supposed isolated fact to which the judgement is supposed to correspond depends for its isolation on a mental system. Connectedness is of the essence of things of all types. 'Abstraction from connectedness involves the omission of an essential factor in the fact considered.'<sup>1</sup>

Now if we take another example it may clarify what we have said about historical judgements.

Suppose we take the example of a simple measurement. Why do I say 'this book is 10 inches across'? Presumably because I have taken a ruler and measured it. And why do I say it is true? Some would say because it is 10 inches across. But how, apart from a system of knowledge, can some thing be 10 inches in width? Bosanquet put the matter quite succinctly when he said: 'I only contend that the moment we begin to speak about precision we have quantity, when we have quantity we have a unit, where we have a unit we have a standard, and where we have a standard we become dependent upon a system of knowledge which endows this standard with all that constitutes its precision'<sup>2</sup>. If it is said that this may all be very true but we cannot escape from the hard reality that what makes the statement about the book true is the fact that it is 10 inches across, I would agree. But it is only 10 inches because it is judged to be so. If the standard has meaning only in relation to a system of knowledge, it is surely an abstraction of the essential feature to say it is 10 inches in itself. In other words, we have argued from the concrete situation which involves

---

1. Whitehead, A. N. Modes of Thought p. 13, Macmillan, New York 1938.  
2. Bosanquet, K&R p. 331.

the system of knowledge in which inches mean something, to an abstraction from that situation. We have then gone on to argue that this abstraction is more concrete, more real, than the situation from which we started.

We are forced to admit then that a system of knowledge is essential for a judgement of measurement. In ordinary measurement we do use correspondence within the system as a test, just as we use the historian's facts as tests for examinations, but any such judgements presuppose the system of knowledge which gives it meaning.

It is, furthermore, a commonplace that once we go to what is loosely called higher knowledge, we are beyond what we usually term fact. The full significance of Charles' execution is much greater than the immediate aspect of the event. I have not emphasized this aspect of knowledge to any extent, because there seems to be general agreement in regard to it. Once we go beyond the immediate, it is obvious we must order our knowledge coherently. In a science such as physics, for example, we are beyond what we choose to call fact, and if so, it is clear our standard cannot be fact. Yet, it will be said, the point is that the physicist starts his work to explain given and presented fact, and in the end his system is tested by correspondence with these independent facts. As a last example, I will endeavour to show that it is false to suppose that such a system starts from independent facts, and returns to them as a standard.

Every scientific system is an abstraction from what is given. It is, as Whitehead says, 'an ideally isolated system';<sup>1</sup> a system, that

---

1. Whitehead Science and the Modern World p. 58. Cambridge 1946.

is, which is isolated within the universe. This means that there are truths respecting this system which require reference 'only to the remainder of things by way of a uniform systematic scheme of relationships. Thus the conception of an isolated system is not the conception of substantial independence from the remainder of things, but of freedom from causal contingent dependence upon detailed items within the rest of the universe'.<sup>1</sup>

If we take an example of this we may see what the above entails and its consequences for truth. The dominant science of the seventeenth century was physics, which is an attempt to discover the nature of the physical world. The answer to the old question of what the world was made of was answered by the seventeenth century in the following way: It is 'a succession of instantaneous configurations of matter'.<sup>2</sup> This is the essence of the mechanistic theory of nature. The great forces of nature, such as gravitation, were entirely determined by the configurations of masses, and these configurations determined their own changes.

The scheme justified itself by the pragmatic test, and science achieved great success. And yet the scheme is unbelievable. It is, as Whitehead says, 'framed in terms of high abstractions'.<sup>3</sup> These abstractions, such as matter which is 'soundless, scentless, colourless',<sup>4</sup> must not be mistaken for the concrete environment which in its totality we cannot define.

---

1. Whitehead Science and the Modern World p. 58. Cambridge 1946.

2. *ibid* p. 63.

3. *ibid* p. 58.

4. *ibid*

As a physical scheme the unguarded Newtonian doctrines survived for three hundred years. Today we have pointer-reading and relativity. Whitehead says such a scheme is a wider field of abstraction 'which will stand nearer to the complete concreteness of our intuitive experience'<sup>1</sup>. But the point is, it is still an abstraction which is used to explain abstractions; and abstractions depend for their being on the knowing mind. It is surely difficult to hold that the 'facts' discovered in the Michelson-Morley experiment, which finally upset the Newtonian scheme, are in any sense 'there' independent of a mind.

Newton's physics was not comprehensive, and as a system which was an abstraction from connectedness it only explained those abstractions. But we cannot say it was false; a scientific scheme 'is unguarded. Its truth is limited by unexpressed presuppositions; and as time goes on we discover some of these limitations. The simple-minded use of the notions "right or wrong" is one of the chief obstacles to the progress of understanding'<sup>2</sup>.

From our three examples we can see that correspondence with independent fact cannot be the test of truth, for there are no absolute facts. Every fact as isolated depends on a mind, and is an abstraction from connectedness. The only test of truth is coherence, and coherence demands the inclusion of all possible material. We cannot spin out imaginary worlds which have no relation to what is given, but we must not take the illogical step of saying that what is given is independent fact.

---

1. Whitehead Science and the Modern World p. 63. Cambridge 1946.  
2. Whitehead Modes of Thought p. 14

Our given, solid, and immediate world is plastic, it is not something fixed to which knowledge must correspond. 'It is just as likely that it may have to yield to Science or Speculation as they may have to yield to it. Nothing in the whole field is a fixture to which all other elements have to correspond. Nothing is certain except that the whole should be coherent.'<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Bosanquet Logic p. 294.

Chapter VII

APPEARANCE AND REALITY

'(Bradley) does not wish to go outside the "intellectual world" as a whole; but wishes for a reality or totality in which the discursive intellectual world "should be suppressed as such". I do not quite know what he means....'

Bosanquet in 1886.

In the preceding chapter we have examined the two editions of the Principles of Logic and the development in the doctrines of the one to the other almost as though they were published closely together. But the first edition was published in 1883, while the second did not appear until 1922. The years between these dates saw the publication of Appearance and Reality in 1893, and the Essays on Truth and Reality in 1914. This suggests at least the possibility that the works in between the two editions will not presuppose the doctrines of the first edition; although this possibility will be weighed against the knowledge that Bosanquet's criticism which had so much to do with the formulation of the second edition was made in 1885. We find, though, that the view of thought presented in Appearance is much closer to the first than to the second edition, as thinking is held to be essentially judgement, rather than an inference which involves the self-development of the object. Thinking is still regarded as primarily about an already given reality. These questions, however, will be dealt with in more detail in the second part of this chapter, and are only mentioned here to warn the reader that the conclusions reached at the end of the last chapter are not to be presupposed as the basis for the argument of the present one.

The problem here is whether or not the ideal of thought which was outlined in the chapter on inference is a description of the nature of reality, or merely of our thinking. This problem will involve us in complex questions as to the nature of appearance and the relation of thought to reality. We will divide the discussion into three sections. In the first we will provide a background for Bradley's argument for the existence of the Absolute by considering the ontological and cosmological arguments. In the second we will consider Bradley's argument as it is presented in Appearance for, the existence of, and the character of, the Absolute. Thirdly we will deal in detail with some of the key points of the second section.

1. Our first task is to provide a background for Bradley's own proof for the existence of the Absolute by considering the ontological and cosmological arguments. Both of these arguments, whatever else they may or may not be, are attempts to state in a rational way a ground for believing in God or the Absolute. I am aware that to speak of God or the Absolute might be taken as displaying an intolerable ignorance of the progress of modern theology, because all enlightened people and advanced thinkers nowadays know that the liberals went much too far in identifying the God of Abraham with the Absolute of Hegel. This may be true, I do not know, but all the above sentence is meant to indicate is that neither argument attempts to prove the existence of the God of Abraham, and even if both arguments were valid they would still only give us an unconditioned which could be called indifferently God or the Absolute. We are not,

that is, so much concerned with the character of our result, but with the way the result is attained.

Historically the first explicit formulation of the ontological argument is found in Anselm, although in a less well-defined form it goes back to Plato. Aquinas gave the cosmological proof its definitive form, and the Thomists claim that this argument as well is derived from Plato, which is not so apparent as in the former case. Before we consider these arguments in detail we can indicate in a general way some of the differences between them.

The ontological argument takes its stand upon personal experience and claims that if we understand what certain aspects of our experience really are, we would see that they necessitate the existence of God. Many would dissent from this general way of putting the argument and assert that the proof moves from concept to existence, but this as we will see below, is not the case. The cosmological argument, on the other hand, purports to be wholly scientific in the sense that it examines nature, and claims to show that the implications of the finite lead to a belief in a first cause. In a certain sense this argument can be called a posteriori as it depends on nature, while in a way the other argument is a priori in the sense that it does not so involve nature.

Kant showed that the cosmological argument depended on the ontological,<sup>1</sup> and this seems to be true even if we reject Kant's own under-

1. First Critique p. A591-B619, 'Although experience is what first gives occasion to this enquiry, it is the transcendental concept which in all such endeavours marks out the goal that reason has set itself to attain, and which is indeed its sole guide in its efforts to achieve that goal'.

standing of the causal axiom. But if this is so then the 'scientific' character of the cosmological argument vanishes, and all its present day refinements must be so much embroidery which tries to disguise this fact. The point in brief, is that the cosmological argument only shows us there is a God if we already know there is one, and we only know there is one, at least in a philosophical sense, if we accept the ontological argument. The cosmological argument left to itself does not 'go' anywhere. <sup>1</sup>

When we put Bradley's metaphysics against this background we can understand them better. In Ethical Studies his belief in the concrete universal was to some extent the same as Hegel's, although we pointed out that the presence of the ideal element in his morality, did introduce a difference. But still the dualistic or realistic elements were largely implicit in his work. These elements became explicit in the first edition of the Principles, and we saw that the conclusion of this book was that no cheap and easy monism could stand before an enquiry into logic. It was with these dualistic hesitations that he wrote Appearance and Reality. Now a dualism of any sort interferes with the notion of one concrete reality, and if you say that the dualism is in fact overcome in an Absolute, it will be important to show how the element other

---

1. Yet when we have said this, it should not mean that the cosmological argument and its methods are of no value. Thomism was called by Archbishop Temple 'the most complete map ever drawn', (Quoted in William Temple by Iremonger, O.U.P. 1948 p. 476) and a present day writer has said that the rejection of the ontological argument was perhaps the only mistake Aquinas ever made. (Cassidy, J.V.L. The Christian in Philosophy, N.Y. 1951.)

Thus while a consideration of nature may not lead us to God, nonetheless the attempt at careful systematic analysis of our common experience which is involved in the attempt, seems to be a useful corrective against any kind of idealism which would 'spiritualize' the common world out of existence.

than thought implies the Absolute. In the Principles we saw how thought could only be satisfied in a coherent whole, and in Appearance Bradley will have to show how feeling also implies the Absolute. It is, I think, for reasons such as this that Bradley's argument for the Absolute is based on the nature of the world around us, and not the experience of the whole within us.

We will now endeavour to clarify this discussion by a more detailed analysis of the ontological argument. The first problem which concerns us in discussing the ontological argument is the way it moves, that is, does it try to pass from a concept or idea of God to his existence, as many including Aquinas have held, or is it the formal articulation of an experience common to all human beings. The latter interpretation is the true analysis, but we shall begin by examining the false one as in the process of its rejection the true notion will become more apparent.

In the Proslogion Anselm states his famous argument. The fool has said in his heart there is no God. Now why is he a fool? Because, says Anselm, to deny that God exists he must understand the meaning of God, and part of the meaning of God is that he exists. By God we mean 'that which nothing greater can be conceived'. The fool in doubting this must understand its meaning; but it is certain that 'that which nothing greater can be conceived' -- which we may call proposition 'A' - 'non potest esse in intellectu solo' ('B'); for if it were so it could also be thought 'cogitari esse in re' ('C'). He then argues that because 'B' plus 'C' is greater than 'B' alone, it follows that we cannot think 'A' without thinking it as existing, and this existence is 'thou O Lord our God'.

The only way the fool can say there is no God is to attach either no sense, or the wrong sense, to the word God. It is irrelevant to say we can attach any meaning we like to the sign 'God', as the question is whether there is at least one of our thoughts which implies as part of its meaning the existence of its object. It must be admitted that put this way the argument sounds rather abstract and formal, and gives little indication of the devotional and personal character of Anselm's writing; still it is the essential argument qua argument and it cannot be too much of a misinterpretation, that is, stated as a formal argument, for this is the way Aquinas understood it. He holds that we pass from the idea of a perfect being to its existence. His argument runs as follows: 'granted that everyone understands that by this name God is signified something than which nothing greater can be thought nevertheless, it does not therefore follow that what the name signifies exists actually, but only that it exists mentally. Nor can it be argued that it actually exists, unless it be admitted that there actually exists something than which nothing greater can be thought; and this precisely is not admitted by those who hold that God does not exist.'<sup>1</sup> From this it can be seen that he holds that the argument is an attempt to extract existence from a concept. This argument is quite sound if this formal way of looking at the argument is correct. It appears though, that the interpretation of Bonaventure<sup>2</sup> is nearer to Anselm's own view of his argument. This interpretation would hold that the argument is not an attempt to infer the existence of God from a concept, but is a formal assertion of the

---

1. Summa Theologica Q2, Art. 2., Obj. 2.

2. The information on Bonaventure is derived from The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure, Gilson, E., especially the third chapter 'The Evidence for God's Existence'.

knowledge of God which every man is said to possess. Thus A. E. Taylor says that the real object of the argument is to 'find a definition of God such that when the definition is substituted for the definiendum, the definition that there is one, and only one God will be seen to be self evident'<sup>1</sup>. It is clear that such an interpretation is based on the assumption that at least some men have a knowledge of God, and that the necessity of his being is somehow reflected in their thought. When the definition 'that than which nothing greater can be thought' is substituted for the virtual or clouded knowledge of God, then the existence of God will be seen to be a fact. It may be too much to say that the object of the argument 'is to demonstrate not that God exists but that all rational beings believe in his existence'<sup>2</sup>, but such an interpretation at least errs, if it does, in the right direction.

On this interpretation, then, the reasoning consists in clarification and the removal of obstacles to belief in an object already vaguely known. With this the Thomists cry subjectivism, and substitute the cosmological argument which is safe and sure and not built on the vagaries of personal experience.<sup>3</sup>

1. From art. 'Theism' in Hastings' Dictionary of Religion and Ethics.

2. Casserly, J. V. L. op. cit.

3. It is held that the examination of personal experience, and the basing of an argument upon it 'opens a door to self-deception, and, as St. Thomas Aquinas remarked in another connection, merely invites the derision of the infidels...emotional conversions may easily be followed by emotional reactions, and it does not appear that either the conversion or the reaction possesses genuine evidential value'. (Hawkins, D.J.B., The Essentials of Theism p. 6.) 'The point seems to be that genuine religious experience is a flowering consequent upon the long cultivation of the spiritual life in dry places and presupposing a prosaic rational conviction that God exists. It appears....that we shall be faithful to the facts of religion if we look for its possible justification in a plain and honest process of reasoning.' (ibid. p. 9. my italics.)

It is not difficult to sympathize with the danger which the author is calling attention to. The question, though, is not whether it is dangerous or not, but whether there is any other basis for arguing for a belief in God. As we see from the text it would seem that every argument presupposes the ontological and this presupposes personal experience

There is no doubt that there is an attractive character about the cosmological argument which Kant expressed by saying that it was natural and the most convincing not only for common sense but even for speculative understanding'.<sup>1</sup> This naturalness stems, I think, from the evident desire of those who use the argument to be sure that there is no glossing over of the brute facts of everyday experience, coupled with the belief that the mind is determined by its objects. This last point does not of course apply to Kant.

The only trouble with all this 'healthy' speculation is that it is manifestly invalid. The proof has been termed a contingetia mundi, and in all its different forms it purports to begin with the world of existence and rise to the unconditioned by means of the principle of causality. Now if God's relation to the world is that of cause to effect then we can in fact get to God by means of the causal principle. But we cannot define causality as including divine action, because this begs the question, and if our definition does not include this activity then we cannot argue for the existence of God. It does not seem that God's activity can be made an instance of causality or of anything else, although rules in the finite order may be used to understand God's activity,<sup>2</sup> but this is something quite different.

The ontological argument attempts to show that the experience from which it begins is a common one. The dim penumbral awareness of

- 
1. First Critique A 604 - B 632
  2. See Farmer, A. Finite and Infinite, Dacre Press 1943, p. 7 et seq, and Kant First Critique A603-B631; A620-B648.

the unity of all things, and the stubborn belief that in the articulation of this experience we are engaged in an activity of supreme importance is the experience and its implications which the ontological argument seeks to make clear. We do not need to conclude with Anselm that the result of our reasoning will be 'thou O Lord our God', for we can use it to show that being, or the object of metaphysics, is a real notion, and so show that metaphysics is a rational enquiry.<sup>1</sup>

Another way of expressing this experience is to say that unless thought and being are in some sense one, then our enquiry into the nature of the world had as well not begin. If we look at this unity in a 'quite general way' says Hegel we will find that it is the presupposition of the ontological proof for the existence of God. 'Anselm... neglecting any such conjunction as occurs in finite things, has with good reason pronounced that only to be perfect which exists not merely in a subjective, but also in an objective mode.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus we may say that for Hegel in so far as the Notion or Absolute is undifferentiated as object the ontological argument is valid. But because, while it is correct to say that Notion and object are implicitly the same, it is also equally valid to say that they are different. This is so because the Notion like finite thought has its moment of subjectivity when the object is considered as an object.

---

1. Collingwood, R. G., An Essay on Philosophical Method.

'(The ontological argument) remained the foundation of every (successive) philosophy until Kant, whose attempt to refute it - perhaps the only occasion on which any one has rejected it who really understood what it meant - was rightly regarded by his successors as a symptom of that false subjectivism and consequent scepticism from which, in spite of heroic efforts, he never wholly freed himself. With Hegel's rejection of subjective idealism, The Ontological Proof took its place once more among the accepted principles of modern philosophy, and it has never again been seriously criticized.' p. 126.

2. Ency. 193.

So if we ask in the categories of our everyday thought, the thought which assumes the existence of floating ideas and which Kant calls the thought of the understanding, whether or not Hegel accepts the proof, no answer can be given. It is because he believes that we are not confined to the use of these categories that he can hold that it is possible to agree with both Anselm and his critic, Gaunilo.<sup>1</sup> He claims that Anselm was correct in so far as he asserted that objectivity must be. But the fault of his argument, as Gaunilo saw, was that the unity that was enunciated as the supreme perfection is presupposed. 'This identity, abstract as it thus appears, between the two categories may be at once met and opposed by their diversity; and this was the very answer given to Anselm long ago.'<sup>2</sup>

In so far, then, as the ontological argument asserts that objectivity is part of the Notion it is true; but in so far as the Notion

- 
1. Gaunilo argues that Anselm assumed that 'id quo nihil maius cogitari potest' exists at least in the intellect of the fool. But he says, what does it mean to say that God exists in intellectu? It may only mean that the fool understands the meaning of the proposition, and we understand the meaning of many statements we know to be false. To make the argument valid, it ought to be shown that the fool cannot understand what the theist means without also seeing that this assertion is true. Furthermore he continues, anticipating part of Kant's argument by some 700 years, we have no adequate positive conception of God. God he affirms is greater than all which can be conceived. It is true that Kant was also concerned with how the idea could be thought as necessary, but Gaunilo is at least on the same lines when he claims that the idea itself is unthinkable, even although Kant included necessity within the idea. If we wish to insist that the Insipiens is not thinking of the unconditioned at all, then we must say that Gaunilo did not anticipate Kant, but it seems that 'that which is greater than anything which can be thought', which is Gaunilo's formula for God, and the unconditioned are not so dissimilar.
  2. Ency. par. 193.

is more than immediate being or object it is not true. Hegel, then affirms that the experience which is the basis of the argument is something we begin with, and is a reality which controls our thinking and which thinking seeks to express. He himself says that the argument is one latent in every unsophisticated mind, and it recurs in every philosophy 'even against its wish and without its knowledge'.

We may also notice that if Hegel is correct in affirming that the ontological proof shows that the existence of God is objectivity -- the being of the Notion as object for subject -- it will follow that any scepticism about the ultimate nature of things or particular problems will be impossible, for the demands of thought which find their satisfaction in the ideal of reason, have been shown to tell us something about the nature of reality and not merely about ourselves.

We may now ask whether or not Bradley accepts the argument. The answer is in the affirmative, but as we will see in a moment he does not, as did Hegel, make it a fundamental principle of his philosophy, and he was unwilling to accept Hegel's version of the proof. The main source of Bradley's difficulties with the Hegelian analysis and use of the proof are his views on the nature of feeling. This question will be dealt with in more detail in the next section and here we will only indicate the difficulty. For Hegel, as we have seen, the ultimate reality is the Notion which is Spirit, and he also held that even the world of sense when properly understood could be seen to be a manifestation of the activities of Spirit. Bradley, on the other hand, does not believe that the world of sense is a manifestation of Spirit, but of an Absolute which is an experience in which

both thought and feeling are present. This is a profound difference and has far reaching consequences for Bradley's philosophy. For the present, however, we will analyse his arguments on the ontological proof in detail.

In Appearance and Reality there are two discussions of the argument, one in the chapter entitled 'The General Nature of Reality' and the other in 'Degrees of Truth and Reality'. It is difficult on reading these two chapters to come to any conclusion as to the impression Bradley means to leave with the reader. First of all he emphasizes that the idea of perfection is a mere idea -- but even in saying this he shows that he does not accept Kant's theory that we have no such idea, furthermore he insists that all ideas qualify reality. Thus he rejects the Kantian contentions that we have no idea of perfection and that ideas float. This means as we saw that reality cannot be viewed merely as my actual world, and that all ideas qualify reality. In these two points, then, he is arguing against the Kantian position, but we must now see that he does not accept Hegel's use of the argument.

He says, as we have seen, that there is no doubt that we have the idea of perfection, and claims that the ontological proof seeks to establish the fact of the reality from the idea; or to put the matter the other way around, unless perfection existed, we could not have any idea of it. We can see from this that although he does not agree with the basis of the Kantian rejection of the argument, he does seem to accept Kant's interpretation of what the proof is trying to do -- that is, to infer existence from an idea. We shall see below, however, that this is not an adequate interpretation of his whole view on the

matter.

To show that the idea of perfection does not prove the existence of its object he argues that if an idea has been composed and manufactured of elements from more than one source, then the result of the manufacture need not as a whole exist outside my thought. Even if it were admitted that perfection were not real we might have the idea of it, and deny that 'practical perfection' were real. 'For the perfection that is real might simply be theoretical. It might mean system so far as system is mere theoretical harmony and does not imply pleasure.'<sup>1</sup> The element of pleasure may be obtained from elsewhere and added to this valid idea. But this addition may be 'incongruous, incompatible, and really if we knew it, contradictory.'<sup>2</sup> The ontological argument he concludes cannot prove the existence of practical perfection.

If all this is only to say that the world we experience is not perfect it could hardly be called tendentious; and given the context of the chapter this may be all he is saying. But even so it is very difficult to know just what he means by practical perfection. He seems to be saying 'practical perfection is not a predicate', and argues from this that the ontological argument is invalid.

On the other occasion where he examines the proof he begins by adumbrating the distinction between finite existence and reality, and says that all ideas refer 'more or less vaguely' to reality. This clearly has consequences for the ontological argument, as it means that it starts from

---

1. A&R p. 132.

2. ibid.

an idea which somehow qualifies reality. The principle of the argument, he says, is that reality being a whole, each side, that is, of idea and existence, is incomplete without the other. In thought reality is partially expressed, and because it is only a partial expression it suggests the other element implied in it which is reality appearing as existence. Bradley characterizes as 'irrefragable' the principle that given one side of a connected whole, you go from this to the other side.

If we return for a moment to the question of how the proof moves we will see that he is here assuming the second interpretation. That is, he assumes that the one reality is somehow in the individual's mind, just as Bonaventure held that God was already in the mind of man. Thus the arguer is not trying to pass from an idea to an existence, but is trying to give expression to something which is greater than he and expresses itself as both idea and existence. In short Bradley is assuming the 'connected whole'.

If we contrast this statement that we may pass from one side of a connected whole to another with the previous one that practical as opposed to theoretical perfection does not exist, we may think that Bradley is contradicting himself. But the difficulty is not so crude. For while he characterizes the principle upon which the proof is based as irrefragable, he says that the proof itself fails because it insists that its idea of perfection including existence qualifies the real 'as such'. That is, while he admits that all ideas qualify reality,<sup>1</sup> it does not mean that every imperfect and untrue thought is true. Similarly while our proposition 'that which is perfect' qualifies reality, it

---

1. See Chapter IV, pp. 123 et seq.

does not mean that perfect reality exists. Consequently, Bradley is, at least on the surface, consistent. The ontological proof should, he says, be only one way of insisting that any arrangement of ideas existing in my head must qualify the absolute reality.

In the next paragraph, however, he agrees with the person who will point out that the proof does not apply to every finite matter. 'It is used of the Absolute, and if confined to that, will surely be legitimate. We are bound I think to admit this claim.'<sup>1</sup> The idea of the Absolute must include existence to complete itself. However, it is not the idea as such which includes existence. No idea, as an idea, can 'reach reality', for as an idea it can never include feeling or 'practical perfection'. 'Reality is concrete, while the truest truth must still be more or less abstract. Or, he says, we can put the same thing in another way by objecting to the form of the argument. The separation postulated in the premise, is destroyed by the conclusion; and hence the premise itself could not have been true. That is, if the ontological argument, however we interpret it, demonstrates the reality of an absolute reality, a reality which includes all there is including existence, then the separation which was postulated between the idea of the Absolute as an idea and existence is untrue because they are not in fact so separated. But this objection, we are told, will disappear when we recognize the 'genuine character' of the process. 'This consists in the correction by the Whole of an attempted isolation on the part of its members.'<sup>2</sup>

---

1. A&R p. 351 (my italics)  
2. ibid.

Hegel is obviously the progenitor of some of this, but Bradley cannot, as did Hegel, affirm both sides of the contradiction; that is, that the argument is valid as a demonstration of the Notion or Absolute as object, but not in its diversity.<sup>1</sup> One could say that Bradley would like to insist as Hegel did that the Notion must include objectivity, meaning, as we have seen, the unity of thought and reality; but the significant difference between the two is that Bradley holds the Absolute is feeling and that the ultimate reality is not of a dialectical nature, or at least if it is we cannot know this. This last statement means that it cannot be said to have any moment of objectivity as distinct from any other functional part which thought could adumbrate by means of the ontological argument; and in so far as Bradley does accept the argument he is in fact overlooking the fact of the diversity of thought and existence 'which was the very answer given to Anselm long ago'.<sup>2</sup> For Hegel, the unity is assumed as a principle to be justified by subsequent speculation, for Bradley it is assumed, but continues to the end a kind of act of faith. Again, because the Absolute is not thought, is at least part of the reason that the ultimate reality cannot be known to be, if it is, dialectical. The dialectic for Hegel is a movement of the rational which is the real, but Bradley's Absolute, being supra-rational -- a feeling experience -- precludes the possibility that the most careful analysis of thought will reveal the complete nature of reality. Yet, on the other hand, he does hold that by thought we are enabled to ascertain the nature of reality.<sup>3</sup>

Here we have an example which meets the reader of Bradley

- 
1. That is, in so far as thought and being are in the realm of essence. See Appendix IV.
  2. See p. 202.
  3. See Section 2, p. 206 et seq.

again and again. Briefly it is this. When he says that no idea can 'reach reality'; does he mean that reality is inaccessible to thought, or that reality, although more than thought, can be known. Against such an interpretation we must contrast the strain in Bradley which emphasizes that we do have an adequate idea of the Absolute, that reality is 'in principle' such that it can be known, and as quoted before he says that the ontological argument when applied to the Absolute 'will surely be legitimate'.

These difficulties can be considered to stem from his attempt to hold against Kant that we know reality, while denying the basis of Hegel's certainty of this -- that the rational is the real.

With this background we can now outline Bradley's proof for the Absolute. This is based on the nature of the world, but presupposes the ontological argument interpreted in the metaphysical sense which we have just outlined. This does not mean, as the reader will by now have gathered, that he places much emphasis on the argument, but that when pressed he admits its validity 'when used of the Absolute'.

2. In the first place what is the Absolute? We have already, at different times, given certain of its characteristics. We can say that it is not Kant's thing-in-itself, nor Hegel's Idea; but from Hegel he does derive the idea that there is one reality appearing in and through appearances. Appearance, that is, is not to be looked on as a kind of veil which hides reality, but as reality in an imperfect form; or, perhaps, imperfectly interpreted.<sup>1</sup> Whatever we experience,

---

1. See infra Chapter VIII, pp. 254-255.

feel, see, think, or touch is in a sense real, but its place or function under the gaze of eternity is beyond our ken. The notion that there is one better 'arrangement' of appearance in reality is the Absolute. We will now detail some of Bradley's argument for this position.

The first book of Appearance and Reality deals with the nature of appearance. Without warning or orientation, the reader 'is plunged into a vortex of dialectic, directed at the loosening of every anchor by which he may have hitherto attached himself'<sup>1</sup>. Without any knowledge of Bradley's metaphysics the reader naturally assumes that appearance is illusory. We may know that appearance is the process of the transcendence of existence by content, but to read that it is appearance suggests 'unreality'.

It is only when we reach the second part of the book that the situation becomes clearer, for here we find that appearance is not illusion, but a degree of reality. It is only then that we discover that what is rejected as appearance is not mere non-entity. It is one thing to say that our appearances may be a 'beggary show', but quite another to say they are non-existent. 'What appears, for that sole reason most indubitably is; and there is no possibility of conjuring its being away from it.'<sup>2</sup> And to say that something exists, and yet that it is not real would be meaningless. He insists that reality must own and not be less than appearance. This, however, is all we know about reality.

At the outset of an enquiry concerning greater knowledge of the

- 
1. Muirhead, J. H. The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy. London, Allen and Unwin, 1931.
  2. A&R p. 114.

real, we may be met with a thorough-going scepticism. We cannot have knowledge of first principles, it might be said, and even if we could, we would not know we had it. What is denied is the existence of a criterion.

Bradley meets this challenge to metaphysics in the following way. If there were no absolute criterion, how would we be able to say anything at all about appearance? Throughout all of the first book of Appearance, including the chapters we have examined, Bradley was proceeding on the principle that the self-contradictory would not be real. But this is to have an absolute criterion. We cannot be indifferent when presented with statements about reality. If we think at all in order to discriminate between truth and falsity, we find we cannot accept open self-contradiction. As we know, the intellect rejects as self-contradictory any bare conjunction of different, and the only way this contradiction can be avoided is by bringing different elements together in a mutually implicative system. It then follows that the intellect cannot accept as real any system which does not exhibit this complete identity in difference.

Bradley believes that this criterion is proved absolute by the fact that, either in attempting to deny it, or even in attempting to doubt it, we tacitly assume its validity. For example, it might be said that the criterion could not be absolute because it had been developed by experience. If we set aside the obvious objection to such a statement, which is the lack of any sort of proof put forward to show that because a thing has been developed it could not be absolute, we find that the doubt

when understood destroys itself. For knowledge of experience rests throughout on the application of such a criterion of non-contradiction as an absolute test. If such a criterion were not absolute, then the critic's own knowledge of experience falls. Bradley concludes from analysis of this example that 'the doubt is seen, when we reflect, to be founded on what it endeavours to question'.<sup>1</sup> That is, the critic's knowledge of experience is built up by the use of the criterion, and it is, therefore, impossible to use such knowledge against the criterion itself.

In every day thinking it is possible for the intellect to accept contradiction. When, however, we are engaged on a professedly intellectual enquiry, the habits of every day thought cannot be accepted. Philosophy must look upon a bare conjunction as an implicit problem. This is the reason why a metaphysical dualism stirs the mind with apprehensions that all cannot be well. A metaphysical dualism presents us with two factors which are ultimate, and cannot find any ground of union in a system beyond themselves. In other words, it is a bare unmediated conjunction which thought cannot accept.

It is found, then, that we possess an absolute criterion. And any other criterion we may have for judgement is subordinate to this one, for they must all be subject to the law of non-contradiction.

It might be said that such a criterion gives us no real knowledge. If we think at all, our thinking must not contradict itself, but for knowledge about any matter we require more than bare negation. The mere

---

1. A&R p. 128.

absence of contradiction in the real is no positive knowledge about the real itself.

Any such argument is based on the possibility of bare negation, which is no possibility at all. There must be some positive ground for the negation of a predicate. Consequently, if I say that the real does not contradict itself, I am not making a statement about nothing. In fact, I am saying that the real has a positive aspect which removes the possibility of contradiction. If this were not so, I could not make any negative judgement.

This objection, however, may be stated in another form. The criterion itself is no doubt positive; but for our knowledge, and in effect, it is merely negative. 'The criterion is a basis, which serves as the foundation of denial; but, since this basis cannot be exposed, we are but able to stand on it and unable to see it.'<sup>1</sup> Bradley admits that such an objection is plausible, if by the nature of reality we mean its whole nature. But he denies that his standard gives no positive knowledge about reality. If the standard exists, and rejects inconsistency, surely we must have some positive knowledge.

If our standard denies inconsistency, then, as we have said, the positive ground upon which this negative judgement rests must be the assertion of consistency. Reality then possesses a positive character, but so far this character is determined only as that which excludes contradiction.

It is, however, possible to say more. We have already seen that

---

1. AGR p. 128.

all appearance must belong to reality. For whatever appears is, and cannot fall outside the real. If we combine this with our criterion we find that everything that appears is somehow real in such a way that it is self-consistent. 'The character of the real is to possess everything phenomenal in harmonious form.'<sup>1</sup> The mass of phenomenal diversity must somehow be a unity and self-consistent; for it cannot be elsewhere<sup>2</sup> than reality, and reality excludes discord.

The real then is one in the sense that it embraces all differences in an inclusive harmony. We must now examine the meaning of this oneness; and ask whether our abstract outline of the real can be made more concrete.

When it is said that the real is one system, is it meant that it possesses diversity as an adjective; or, is its consistency an attribute of independent reals? In short, is a plurality of reals possible? Such a plurality would mean a number of beings not dependent on each other. On the one hand, they would possess phenomenal diversity, otherwise they would be nothing. And on the other, they would have to be free from external disturbances and from inner discrepancy.

The main point of Bradley's argument against this is as follows: if there are independent reals they must be related, if only by identity and difference. But such relations would have to be 'merely external', otherwise the relations would affect the terms. But as 'merely external' relations are ruled out, there can be no independent reals. Also, if internal relations hold anywhere, they must hold everywhere. It is impossible

---

1. A&R p. 125

2. 'elsewhere' is Bradley's own word.

to hold to a plurality of reals without the use of relations, and any such situation is self-discrepant -- the one thing the real may not be.

We are now in the position to say the following about reality. Everything phenomenal must be somehow real; and the Absolute must be at least as rich as the relative. And further, the Absolute is not many, but one real. 'The universe is one in this sense, that its differences exist harmoniously within one whole, beyond which there is nothing.'<sup>1</sup> This is formal and abstract; is it possible to say anything more concrete about the nature of the system?

Bradley's answer is an emphatic yes. Experience is the matter which fills up the empty outline. 'We perceive on reflection, that to be real, or even barely to exist, must be to fall within sentience. Sentient<sup>2</sup> experience, in short, is reality, and what is not this is not real.'<sup>2</sup> There is no being or fact outside of what is 'commonly called psychical existence'. Bradley is here using psychical in the sense of pertaining to animation or life, not merely mental existence. Feeling, thought and volition are all parts of psychical phenomena.

The speed at which this conclusion has been reached is enough to overwhelm the reader. Bradley, at least, admits that it is a 'very serious step', but that the test of its truth lies at hand. We are to take anything that could possibly be called a fact, and judge whether or not it consists in sentient experience. When all perception and feeling have been removed from the fact, it becomes impossible to speak of it; every fragment of its

---

1. A&R p. 127.

2. ibid.

matter, and every aspect of its being, is relative to this source.

When the experiment is made strictly, Bradley believes that we can conceive of nothing but the experienced....'I am driven to the conclusion that experience is reality'<sup>1</sup>.

Such an argument could not fail to invite an obvious criticism. Let us admit, it may be said, that experience is reality, it is surely a breach of the most elementary logic to say that all reality is experience. An examination of this argument may serve to clarify Bradley's views.

Dr. Ewing has argued in the following way:

'.....it is a fact that we can ascribe to existent objects no characteristic or relation of which it is not true, either that it has been experienced itself by us, or that it is definable in terms of characteristics or relations which have been thus experienced (though I should add, objects may really, for anything we can tell, possess millions of such unexperienced characteristics). But it does not follow from this either that physical objects are themselves of the nature of experience or that all physical objects are experienced.'<sup>2</sup>

Such an argument is so obvious that one immediately suspects that there may be more to Bradley's side of the argument than at first appears. Bradley, as I have remarked before, may be wrong on many points, but a thinker of his depth and clarity does not make such elementary mistakes.

If we examine Bradley's work with any care, we find that he has considered and discussed Dr. Ewing's objection. In the first place we should notice that he is explicit about the physical world existing quite independently of individual perceivers. 'A mountain is, whether I happen

---

1. A&R p. 127.

2. Ewing, A. C. Idealism. Methuen & Co., London, 1934.

to perceive it or not.<sup>1</sup> While I do not suggest that anyone holds that Bradley maintains the opposite of such a position, we should, nevertheless, be clear in regard to this possibility.

Dr. Ewing's criticism has two points. First of all he does not believe that Bradley has produced any evidence to show that all physical objects are of the nature of experience; nor, secondly, that any proof has been brought forward to show that all physical objects are experienced.

Experience, we remember, is much the same 'as given and presented fact', and such facts are always part of a feeling-whole. Every physical object that is ever experienced must be part of this feeling-whole. If we accept the dialectic of relation and quality, we must admit that there can be no merely external relations. And if we admit this, we must agree that physical nature will be conditioned by our experience of it. If this is the case, we are forced to conclude that physical objects, at least as experienced by us, are of the nature of experience.

It may be objected that our last statement is to admit that Ewing has a valid argument against Bradley. Clearly, if we accept the fact that we condition physical objects, then physical objects as conditioned will be conditioned. But what has Bradley said about the qualities of physical objects which are not experienced, or even about the objects themselves? The answer to this question brings us to a consideration of Ewing's second point.

---

1. AGR p. 243.

Objects we are told may contain 'millions of such unexperienced characteristics'. If Dr. Ewing means that Bradley holds that all experience is the experience of finite centres,<sup>1</sup> he is attacking a position that Bradley rejects. 'A margin of experience, not the experience of any finite centre, we shall find cannot be called impossible.'<sup>2</sup> But such experience could not be placed in nature. And here I think we arrive at the crux of the matter. The very concept of nature is an abstraction from experience. It results from a division in experience and is upheld by the use of relation and quality. In fact, there cannot in reality be any physical nature at all for apart from finite souls there could be no physical nature.

In other words, the whole basis of such an argument against Bradley is based on the assumption of an independent continuing physical nature. Such a nature Bradley believes is only an abstraction, and has no being apart from finite centres. It is an abstraction which would depend for its existence on the possibility of external relations, it would be an existence quite independent of some parts of its constituents. With the rejection of external relations and independent reals comes the rejection of an independent nature. It is foolish, then, on this theory to talk about what it would be like apart from finite centres.

Thus whatever we may think of Bradley's argument, we are forced to admit that he is not guilty of making the elementary error of converting an A proposition.<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. A finite centre is not necessarily a self, it is anywhere experience takes place. '...everything or (all but everything) comes in finite centres of immediate feeling'. A&R p. 416.
  2. A&R p. 243.
  3. That is, he has not converted the proposition 'all experience is real' into 'all reality is experience'.

Bradley insists that in asserting that sentient experience is reality, he is not endorsing the common error of dividing the percipient subject from the universe. As we know, the notion that the subject could be independent is incompatible both with the theory of immediate experience and his doctrine of relations. The former maintains that experience is a whole in which divisions are made, and the latter holds that 'merely external' relations are impossible.

His conclusions so far are this. The absolute is one system, and its contents are nothing but sentient experience. 'It will hence be a single and all-inclusive experience, which embraces every partial diversity in concord. For it cannot be less than appearance, and hence no feeling or thought, of any kind, can fall outside its limits.'<sup>1</sup> Even if it is more than any feeling or thought which we know of, it must still be of the same nature. It cannot be in any other region than that of sentience. Any such suggestion is impossible on Bradley's theory. For if reality is experience, then the unexperienced would have to fall outside the orbit of reality, and be externally related to it.

Reality, Bradley attempts to show, must satisfy our whole being. All our wants for life and truth, beauty and goodness must all find satisfaction in it. While his proof of this is very interesting, it does not concern us here. We know that reality must somehow be experience, and be one. Every element of the universe, sensation, feeling, thought and will must be included within one comprehensive sentience. 'And the question which now occurs is whether really we have a positive idea of such sentience. Do we at all know what we mean when we say that it is actual?'<sup>2</sup>

---

1. A&R p. 129.  
2. A&R p. 140.

The answer to this question turns on the meaning of 'knowing'. We cannot construct absolute life in its detail, nor can we have a positive experience of its nature. But we can obtain some idea of what the Absolute is like from elements within our own experience. Such an idea will differ enormously from the fact, for in order to know the Absolute as it is, 'we should have to be, and then we should not exist'. But the main features of the Absolute are within our own experience, and their combination is, in the abstract, quite intelligible.

The first source of such knowledge is in feeling or immediate presentation. There is a whole in which there is diversity, but which is not parted by relations. This type of immediate experience was discussed in the second chapter, and there is no need to labour the point here. All we need notice here is that such an experience serves to indicate the general idea of a total experience, where will and thought and feeling may be one. For the absolute is not merely an intellectual system. 'It (is) an experience overriding every species of oneness, and throughout it is at once intuition and feeling and will.'<sup>1</sup> And so an experience of a finite centre may give us an indication of its nature.

The second source of such knowledge is the relational form of thought which points everywhere to a unity. 'It implies a substantial totality beyond relations and above them, a whole endeavouring to realize itself in their detail.'<sup>2</sup>

If we gather these experiences into one, they supply us with a

---

1. A&R p. 200.  
2. ibid p. 141.

positive idea. We gain from them the idea of a unity which transcends, yet contains, every manifold appearance. These examples supply not an experience, but an abstract idea, an idea we make by abstracting given elements. 'We can form the general idea of an absolute experience in which phenomenal distinctions are merged, a whole become immediate at a higher stage without losing any richness.'

2. In the last section of this chapter we obtained an idea of the historical background for any argument for the Absolute, as well as an indication of the nature of Bradley's argument for the one reality, and of the character of this reality. Here we are to examine some of the difficulties which are inherent in Bradley's arguments, and this will be done in three parts. First we will consider the nature of thought from a more metaphysical point of view than has been our practice in former chapters. Then we will discuss the question of how thought can know reality. Thirdly we will elaborate on this problem by discussing Bradley's view of contradiction.

2a. All thinking we are told in Appearance is judging, and judgement is the predication of an ideal content of reality. Thus thought is said to be predicative and relational, and so the theory of thought which is presented here is much closer to the first than the second edition of the Principles. Thought is said to live in the distinction between the what and the that, and thinking is declared to be the predication of universals of existence. In no judgement could the subject and the predicate be the same because one element is a 'thing' and the other an

---

1. ASR p. 141.

2. See Appendix III. pp. 105-108.

unreality. This unreality attempts to articulate the given in a system, and to transcend the distinction between existence and content. This is another way of stating that thought is always seeking to analyse and synthesize the given in an attempt to clarify its notion of reality, which, we must remember is not hidden but appears, and thus to achieve a system in which there would be no further why or how.

We are now faced with the question as to whether or not the estrangement of these two factors is itself the work of finite thinkers' thought. Is it merely because we think that reality always seems to elude thought, or is there something in the nature of reality which results in thought and existence appearing as two distinct principles? The answer seems to be that ideality, which is Bradley's term for the transcendence of existence by content is not something outside of facts, or imported into them, or imposed as a sort of layer above them, and that it is wrong to talk as if facts when left alone, were in no sense ideal, for 'facts which are not ideal, and show no looseness of content from existence, seem<sup>1</sup> hardly actual'.

Is this description of ideality meant to apply to all appearance, or only to 'fact as given'? If it applies to all appearance then there is an objective dynamic in Bradley very much after the manner of Hegel: but if it is only that it changes in our hands, the ideality might be necessary but only for subjects thinking.

It seems that Bradley intended that ideality should be looked on as objective, for he says 'the ideality of the given finite is not manufactured by thought, but thought itself is its development and product'.<sup>2</sup> Or,

---

1. A&R p. 146.

2. ibid (my italics).

again, at the end of Appearance he says that while all thinking is relational, not all relations are the work of thought. It might be argued that while it is true that ideality produces thought we have no right to ascribe to Bradley this Hegelian sort of objective dynamic, and in support of this view it might be pointed out that in the quotation above he speaks of the 'given finite', and in the next sentence says that 'the essential nature of the finite is that everywhere, as it presents itself, its character should slide beyond the limits of its existence'. I admit that this is a difficulty, but if Bradley means only that the character of a given fact possesses these characteristics, then what characteristics are possessed by that which is not known, and how could we know it? I shall discuss this below, but for the time being I think we may take it that Bradley meant that all appearance, whether known or not, was in contradiction. Indeed, if he did not mean this, how could he call the finite appearance? That is, if it is only our thinking in a quality relational way that breaks up the unity of the felt reality, why are, for example, space and time in which we think, called appearance? <sup>1</sup>

This dynamic, then, is not the work of thought, for while thought is involved in ideality it is only one aspect of it, not its source. Thinking, as we saw, was the attempt to close the gap made by the activity of ideality, and it seeks to do this by pushing the self transcendence of the finite to its uttermost -- that is, it seeks to evolve a system of content which would be a complete reflection in thought of reality. But because thought can never perfectly articulate the given, and because there is always a part of reality beyond its system, thought is forced to recognize its own im-

---

1. ASR Chapter IV.

perfection; it is forced to realize that it can never include the that, that it cannot get beyond mere ideas and arrive at reality. If thought ceased to be relational and discursive it would cease to be thought, and so Bradley says that the truth belongs to existence, but as such it does not exist -- that it shows a dissection but never an actual life.

Bradley would thus seem to be committed to holding the following position. Ideality is an aspect of all appearance whether it is being thought about or not; but truth can only result from subjective activities, or briefly, reality produces thought, but thinking produces truth. In so far as we think of thought as ideality we have the objective dynamic of Hegel, in so far as we think of it as judgement and truth we have the Kantian idea<sup>1</sup> of thought being essentially an activity of subjects.

This consideration also reflects on his idea of system. Thought seeks to articulate in a coherent and comprehensive manner the nature of an inconsistent given. In doing this, in seeking to give to reality a character in which it can rest, is thought showing forth the nature of reality in an ideal form, or is it, in the manner of a Kantian idea, thinking this way because this is the way we have to think if we are to think at all? Bradley would say that the former alternative is the correct one, and so he calls truth 'an ideal expression of the universe', but as we shall see below there are difficulties in this view.

First of all when Bradley speaks of truth as belonging to existence, what does existence mean? If it means the extended world of space and time, it is difficult to reconcile this with the view that there are

---

1. Which is, of course, shared by almost everyone else, but see page 3.

degrees of reality; that is, if the world of understanding with its either-or is here intended, and truth is said to be about this world, then how could there be degrees of truth? A judgement would have to be either true or false. For, certainly, as far as the understanding is concerned, modality applies to thinking, not to things. But, on the other hand, if he does not mean the world of space and time, what does he mean? He cannot intend that existence means ideality, because part of ideality is thought, and while it does not follow necessarily from this that thought exists, to avoid saying this last Bradley would have to say that existence means that part of ideality which produces thought, but is itself not thought. And what does this mean? It could mean feeling, but it is clear that we think about more than feeling, unless to paraphrase Hegel, we look on the world as a petrified feeling -- but this is to stretch things a bit, and even if Bradley did mean this, it does not escape the difficulty.

We can see this if we consider the question of how thought knows reality. That is, in so far as thought is confined to quality-relational thinking, how can it know the unconditioned?

Thought is confronted with a datum -- something it thinks about, and it tries to make this datum intelligible. Now the intellect cannot do this completely, because it is confined to quality-relational, predicative thinking. If it did ever succeed in making the datum completely intelligible it would have a ground identical with its predicates, and there would be no more thought. Yet still thought has this ideal of rendering the datum completely intelligible and of overcoming contradictions.

Is this ideal, a mere ideal -- a regulative idea -- or is it the very meaning of actuality? And here again we can find two answers in Bradley.

In the chapter on 'Degrees of Truth and Reality' where Bradley discusses the real as shown and embodied in appearances, one derives the impression that the ideal is actual, not merely as an ideal, but that the ideal is realized. This is not surprising, for he says in a footnote 'I may mention that in this chapter I am, perhaps even more than elsewhere, indebted to Hegel'<sup>1</sup>. This realized ideal would be a whole which 'would be a self-evident analysis and synthesis of the intellect itself, by itself. Synthesis here...has become self-completion and analysis...is self-explication. And the question how or why the many are one and the one many here loses its meaning. There is no why or how beside the self-evident process, and towards its own differences this whole is at once their how and their why, their being, substance and system, their reason, ground and principle of diversity in unity'<sup>2</sup>. This is in fact identical with Hegel's conception. Again not counting the notes, Appearance ends with 'outside of spirit there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and, the more that anything is spiritual, so much the more is it veritably real'<sup>3</sup>.

Yet this cannot be so for feeling is not spirit, and so we are faced with the other position that the ideal is a mere ideal, a reality which would satisfy the intellect, but which, because of both the nature of the intellect and the nature of feeling, cannot be satisfied. Thinking has no

- 
1. Chapter XXIV.
  2. A&R p. 507 (Appendix Note A)
  3. A&R p. 489.

moment of immediacy, it is discursive and relational, and so it cannot be a principle of diversity in unity. To satisfy the ideal of thought we should have to adopt, as we have seen, a way of thinking 'in which the whole of reality was a system of its differences immanent in each difference'<sup>1</sup>. But if thought ever achieved this goal it would have to combine those characteristics which pertain only to feeling; only in feeling is there a knowing and being in one; Bradley has distinguished thought from this, and in so doing has excluded thought from the Absolute which is to satisfy thought.

2b. Bradley is not unaware that this presents a difficulty for his system, and in Appearance we find him arguing that because the goal of thought is not thought, he is not committed to holding the thing-in-itself. Here he is at his brilliant and witty best arguing as an Hegelian. He repeats the argument that if the thing-in-itself is unknowable it must be prepared to deserve the name. 'But, if it were not knowable, we could not know that such a thing ever existed. It would be much as if we said "Since all my faculties are totally confined to my garden, I cannot tell if the roses next door are in flower"... If the theory really were true, then it must be impossible.'<sup>2</sup>

We may make two remarks about this, one of a general nature, and the other with special reference to Bradley. The criticism implies that the thing-in-itself was first posited and then talked about, but is it not rather the case that, for Kant at any rate, it is what one is forced to ac-

---

1. See Chapter V pp. 154-156.  
2. A&R p. lll.

cept because of the nature of knowledge. 'Knowledge being of this nature, then there is more to reality than I can know.' The limitation is on the side of knowledge, rather than reality. To use Bradley's garden, it is that we are short sighted and cannot see over the wall, but having enough sense to realize this we do not deny the garden on the other side -- although we don't pretend to be able to prove its existence. The second remark is that whatever merits Bradley's arguments would have on the lips of an Hegelian, they are not consistent with his own views. That is, Hegel had a ground for what he said about the thing-in-itself, and provided a kind of substitute, but Bradley does not do the same. If Bradley rejects the intuitive understanding,<sup>1</sup> how can he hold that his arguments for the Absolute, or against the thing-in-itself, have any import? Hegel's arguments, whether we like them or not, at least are consistent and make sense. It is difficult to be sure about Bradley's.

We can see this by looking at the chapter on thought and reality where he examines the 'erroneous idea that if reality is more than thought,<sup>2</sup> thought itself cannot say so'. To deny the thing-in-itself is not to assert that only thought exists. The question we must examine is how Bradley knows that the goal of thought, which will not be thought can yet be thought about. His discussion is complicated because he is trying to argue against both Kant and Hegel. He seeks to show, on the one hand, that because all reality is not thought, it does not mean that reality cannot be an object of thought; and on the other that this object is not the thing in itself. We shall briefly recapitulate the anti-Hegelian arguments before going on to examine those directed against Kant.

---

1. See P.I. p. 594, where he mentions Schopenhauer's theory of 'intellectual perception'.  
2. A&R p. 147.

If, in asserting reality to fall within thought 'you mean that in reality there is nothing but thought your position is untenable'. To show this he makes a distinction between reflecting and judging. Such a distinction is only compatible on the Kantian view that mere supposing is possible, and that judgement is only predicative -- so he uses Kant against Hegel. However, he makes the distinction, and then asks us to 'Reflect upon any judgement as long as you please, operate on the subject of it to any extent which you desire, but then (when you have finished) make an actual judgement'. When this is done you will find that beyond the content of your thought there is a subject which will for ever be a something which is not an actual idea, 'something which makes such a difference to your thinking that without it you have not even thought completely'.

The idea of a perfect thought which agreed perfectly with its reality is -- Bradley said in this context -- unmeaning. The argument is that as judgement is necessary for thought (having just gone to some trouble to say we can reflect without judging) and as the absence of any difference necessitates the absence of thinking, then granted there is such a difference the subject must for ever be beyond the predicated content. The whole basis of this argument is that thought, being relational and discursive, cannot contain feeling. '...feeling belongs to perfect thought, or it does not. If it does not, there is one side of existence beyond thought. But if it does belong, then thought is different from thought discursive and relational. To make it include immediate experience, its character must be transformed. It must cease to predicate, it must get

- 
1. See Chapter IV, p. 121 et seq.
  2. A&R p. 149.
  3. ibid.

beyond mere relations, it must reach something other than truth. Thought in a word must have been absorbed into a fuller experience. Now such an experience may be called thought, if you choose to use that word. But if any one else prefers another term, such as feeling or will, he will be equally justified.<sup>1</sup>

Having thus disposed of Hegel by means of Kant, he then turns his guns on the Critical philosophy. 'It might be argued that the connection of thought and fact in the Absolute is the thing-in-itself, and that it makes thought know what is essentially unknowable.'<sup>2</sup> In the pages that follow Bradley fails to provide very much of an answer to this argument.

First he argues that the Absolute does not exist apart from thought in its discursive form. Here the ground has already been shifted, and instead of thought being merely relational, the idea of the objective dynamic, reality working in and through thought, begins to appear. The Absolute, he then says, includes thought and feeling in an harmonious union, and the nature of this union is suggested to us by immediate experience, which is a unity of feeling and knowing.

Now this in itself is not satisfactory, and a few pages later he comes to grips with the problem and produces a kind of answer. We know that the only thing which would satisfy thought would be a non-relational individual whole, and because reality itself is not thought but feeling this whole must be of a sentient character; but, then, how can thought desire this 'foreign perfection'? Bradley's answer is that because thought

---

1. A&R p. 151.  
2. ibid p. 152.

desires it, it cannot be foreign. 'Thought desires for its content the character which makes reality. These features, if realized would destroy mere thought; and hence they are an other beyond thought. But thought, nevertheless, can desire them, because its content has them already in an incomplete form.'

This is a good try, but it really will not do, because it assumes that the Absolute can be apprehended in 'vague generality' -- 'In principle' -- if not in detail. But can it? Surely the answer is no, at least not on the Kantian view of thought, that thinking is 'about' objects. From immediate experience, we are supposed to get a glimpse of the nature of the ultimate reality. But how can immediate experience be knowledge, feeling as known must be an object, if it is not an object then thought must be more than relational and discursive, or else feeling is not known.<sup>2</sup> Bradley would ask why it should be different, and if we allow this as regards finite feeling, then we must say that the Absolute cannot be like finite feeling, because the absolute is not a union of thought and feeling, qua thought and feeling, but an experience in which thought has committed suicide, and in which feeling is absorbed into a higher unity -- it is a new experience, something which is different from anything we can know or experience.

We can put it this way. If thought reflecting on immediate experience tells us of the nature of reality, then either thought is intuitive, or it does not tell us of the character of reality. For, in the first place, feeling as known must be an object for quality relational thinking,

---

1. AGR p. 159.  
2. See Chapter II.

if it were not an object for such thought, then thought would be more than ideal. But if we continue to insist that thought is only ideal then immediate experience can only be known as an object. If it is known as an object it must be capable of being completely characterized in terms of qualities and relations, for if this is not the case then the part which is not susceptible to the determinations of thought must be the thing-in-itself. (Nor can we say that feeling thinks, because for thinking ideality is necessary.)

How then does Bradley hold his belief in the Absolute? The answer is that to be able to call Appearance contradictory we must know what Absolute reality is like. The criterion by which we judge appearances is that absolute reality is such that it does not contradict itself. This is proved absolute by the fact that in attempting to deny it or even to doubt it, we accept its validity<sup>1</sup>.

But, valid for what? We can ask again whether this is not much closer to one of Kant's ideas -- a description of what ought to be but which we cannot know is -- than an attempt to characterize the unconditioned. Bradley intends it to be the latter, but because thought cannot include feeling, and because it is confined to quality-relational thinking, we cannot know reality as it is, but only what it is like. But surely this will not do. If thinking is confined to thinking about something, then as Kant took some pains to point out, thought does not possess a real use. In fact Bradley's Absolute is no more comprehensible than the thing in itself, it is only an 'ought to be', and whether it in fact is, we have no way of determining.

---

1. See supra pp. 211-212.

2c. We can elaborate this point in a slightly different way if we examine some of Bradley's extremely complicated views on contradiction. I do not propose to examine these in much detail for, as Dr. Broad, in one of his few accurate comments on Bradley, has said, the dialectic in Appearance is tiresome. The only question I would ask is whether contradiction is the work of thought or, as in Hegel, is it an objective constituent of the nature of things. If it is the first then the fact that finite thought finds contradictions does not say anything about the Absolute, it only shows that the impetus to systematize is an ideal along Kantian lines. But even if, on the other hand, appearance is itself discrepant, then how can thought, confined to quality-relational thinking, know the sort of Absolute which would overcome and unify what is not the work of thought?

In Note A of Appearance, on 'Contradiction and the Contrary', Bradley first of all states that he does not find it necessary to distinguish between the two. This is because he rejects the view of the law of contradiction which makes the distinction between what could never be united and what might be but is not. The law does not forbid diversity, for if it did there could be no thought. Thus the law does not express a tautology, for all thought involves synthesis and analysis. As for Hegel, thought is here treated as analytic for it manifests forth the nature of reality, and as synthetic in its attempt to reconstitute a more satisfactory whole. Thus there is no contradiction in the usual sense because given sufficient ground, any two qualities may be seen to be compatible. Contradiction is defined in the following way. 'A thing cannot without internal

distinction be two different things, and differences cannot belong to the same thing in the same point unless there is diversity. The appearance of such union may be fact, but it is for thought a contradiction.<sup>1</sup>

It would seem from this that facts are to be taken as possessing the 'matter' of contradiction or as being potentially contradictory, but without thought are not contradictory. This is confirmed when we read a few pages later that things are not contrary because they are opposite -- 'for things by themselves are not opposite'. 'Things are self-contrary when, and just so far as, they appear as bare conjunctions, when in order to think them you would have to predicate differences without an internal ground of connection and distinction.'<sup>2</sup> That is, thought demands to go with a ground and a reason, it seeks to connect diversities in a system, and so it might seem that Bradley is consistent so far. Contradiction we might say only appears when thought attempts to take the given as given, without finding the ground necessary for uniting these contraries in an harmonious system. But if this is so why does Bradley repeatedly say that the given reality is inconsistent? If thought is about an other, why is it said that the other is inconsistent?

He goes on to say that contraries are in a sense made, but what makes them? Thought or ideality? If, as we decided ideality is objective, then it might be supposed that it produces contradictions, then contradiction is objective; and as though to substantiate this he says that 'contradictions exist (sic) so far as internal distinction seems impossible, only so far as

---

1. ASR Note A, p. 501.  
2. ibid Note A, p. 505.

the diversities are attached to one unyielding point assumed, tacitly or expressly, to be incapable of internal diversity or external complement... where we find contradiction, there is something unlimited and untrue which invites us to transcend it'.<sup>1</sup> This seems to imply that appearances qua appearances are contradictory, and indeed if it was not so, how could anything be called 'appearance'; that is as opposed to merely our thinking about appearance. But even if contradictions do exist objectively how can quality relational thinking, with no moment of intuition, hope to know in what manner the objective contradictions of appearance are reconciled in the absolute? And if, as was said before, they are no more than the contradictions of our thinking, then the ideal of system has no claim on reality.

We may sum up this long chapter in the following way. We began by pointing out that we were faced with the question of whether or not the ideal of thought was real or not. Thought as we saw from the Principles demanded a whole, and so we began by examining what sort of arguments could be used to demonstrate the reality of this whole. These we found were either of a cosmological or an ontological type, but that the former depended on the latter for any validity it might possess. We then outlined Hegel's use of the ontological argument as an expression of the unity of thought and being and Bradley's difficulties with this interpretation. We then went on to outline Bradley's theory of the nature of appearance and reality, and his argument for the existence of the Absolute.

In the second section we dealt in detail with the question of the

---

1. A&R p. 505.

nature of thought, and asked whether there was a kind of objective dynamic in Bradley's theory. Next we dealt with the question of whether or not reality could be known, and lastly we examined this problem in more detail by considering his theory of contradiction.

Appendix IV

HEGEL AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF REALITY

Some of the points in this chapter may be clarified if we consider Hegel's criticism of Kant's rejection of metaphysics and some of his own positive ideas.

Hegel commends Kant for his distinction between understanding and reason, although he accuses him of using a psychological method in making this distinction. Furthermore he claims that Kant did not properly deduce the categories, and that he misrepresented the role of reason. We will take each point in turn.

Kant's philosophy may be said to revolve round the distinction between objective and subjective. To objectivity is given the element of universality in experience, i.e. to the categories themselves. Yet the final outcome of the critical philosophy is to ascribe subjectivity to the 'ensemble' (as Hegel calls it) of experience resulting from the combination of sense and the categories; for the ensemble is set over against the truly objective, the thing in itself.

Hegel claims that Kant 'as is well known' did not put himself to much trouble in deducing the categories.<sup>1</sup> Their ground is supposed to lie in the transcendental unity of apperception, the 'I as I', which reduces the manifold of sense and imagination to a unity by means of categories. The question then arises as to how these categories are to be found and justified. Kant believed that they were found in the classification of judgements, and as judging is the same as to think an object, the various modes of judgement provide the categories of thought. Thus, if we ask Kant where and how formal logic derived its forms of judgement as necessary, that is, as more than an empirical classification, he has no answer. Yet this is the vital point, for if thought is to be capable of proving anything at all, if logic is to insist on the necessity of proof 'and if it proposes to teach the theory of demonstration, its first care should be to give a reason for its own subject-matter, and to see that it is necessary'.<sup>2</sup> In this Hegel is surely right, whatever may be said in defence of a theory of categories, Kant has not shown his own system to be necessary.

Again, Hegel criticizes Kant's theory of the categories as only subjective, although necessary for us. The latter's view had the merit in Hegel's eyes, that it was an accurate description of the tendency of all thought in its attempt to understand the world. All such attempts, he says, consist in the taking of the positive reality of the world, and 'crushing and pounding it', or, in a word, 'idealizing' it. This is only an extra-

- 
1. Hegel, I think, means that the results of Kant's efforts made it appear as though the deduction had not cost Kant much effort; because biographically the statement is wrong.
  2. Ency. 42.

vagant way of arguing Kant's point that the many must be brought under concepts to be thought. Yet to regard the categories only 'as a part of ourselves must seem very odd to the natural mind'. It is not that Hegel means to assert that they are given in sensation, Hume and Kant had established this, but he is arguing that because such categories as cause and effect, unity, and the like are properties of thought, it does not necessarily follow that they must be merely ours, and not characteristics of the objects as well. Kant held that they did not so apply because the categories have no valid application to the unconditioned. Hegel on the other hand says that the thing-in-itself is the most knowable of all things. This is so because it is a construct of thought, and this being the case the categories can be seen as expressing the nature of things as they are. The sole exception to this is the Absolute -- the categories cannot define it, rather it partially defines itself through them.

Hegel argues against the thing-in-itself along the following lines. The idea expresses the notion of objectivity when we leave out all that consciousness makes of it, all its emotional aspects, and all specific thoughts of it. But this leaves the utter abstraction of total emptiness. The thing-in-itself is in itself a product of thought. The negative characteristic which this abstract identity receives is also one of Kant's categories. 'Hence we can only read with surprise the perpetual remark that we do not know the thing-in-itself. On the contrary there is nothing we can know so easily.'<sup>1</sup>

Now it is important to grasp the above whether we agree with it or not, for Bradley accepted the letter of these arguments, but not their spirit. For Kant the categories although objective for us are separated by an impassable gulf from the thing-in-itself as it exists apart from knowledge; Hegel rejecting this idea held that thought expressed the essential nature of the thing. Not, of course, the thoughts 'inside my head', for thought in Hegel means a great deal more than this. It is thought which constitutes what a thing is, and what things are, is thought. Kant held that a belief in the thing-in-itself was necessary, because, among other reasons, he believed in a world which would continue whether or not there were human beings with the forms of intuition and the categories, and the thing-in-itself is one theory as to the nature of this world. Hegel says that Kant was correct in calling the phenomenal world phenomenal, but not because there is a thing-in-itself hiding behind appearances, but because the things of which we have direct consciousness are merely phenomenal, 'not for us only, but in their own nature'.<sup>2</sup> In and through all phenomena is 'the universal divine Idea' and this alone has permanence, and perfect reality. The essential point is that because thought in the end has no other, there can be no thing-in-itself.

- 
1. Ency. 44.
  2. Ency. 45.

As I pointed out above, we must remember that my thought qua mine, is not all that is meant by thought. When it is said that thought has no other, it does not mean that for me there is nothing but thought -- quite obviously there is -- Hegel was not a maniac. But even my thought as mine can try to overcome the otherness of sense and the abstractions of the understanding in order to introduce order and coherence. This brings us to two points, the nature of dialectic, and intuitive understanding.

Kant was quite right in examining the question as to how far the forms of thought were capable of leading to truth. 'Unfortunately there soon creeps in the misconception of already knowing before you know -- the error of refusing to enter the water until you have learned to swim...this scrutiny (is) ipso facto a cognition.'<sup>1</sup> The forms of thought are thus at once the object of thought, and the action of that object. Because of this Hegel says they examine themselves, they determine their own limits and point out their own defects. This action of thought is called dialectic.

Here we must again remind ourselves that thought is more than finite individuals thinking, and that our thought is only part of the attempt of the Notion to reconstitute its own identity: 'for these thousand years the same Architect has directed the work: and the Architect is the one living Mind whose nature is to think, to bring to self-consciousness what it is, and so to reach a higher stage of its own being.'<sup>2</sup>

Hegel uses the story of the Fall to illustrate the 'wonderful division of the Spirit against itself', the division which has, as one of its results, the thinking of finite individuals. In its instinctive and natural state, spiritual life wears the garb of innocence and 'confiding simplicity': but the very essence of the spirit implies that this innocence must be absorbed into something higher; it is distinguished from natural life by the fact that the former continues a mere stream of tendency, while spirit 'sunders itself to self-realization'. This severed life has in its turn to be suppressed, and the spirit by its own act has to win its way back to concord again. 'The final concord then is spiritual; that is, the principle of restoration is found in thought, and thought only. The hand that inflicts the wound is also the hand that heals it.'<sup>3</sup>

Thus Adam and Eve were at first in a state of innocency, but having sought knowledge created an opposition between their former state and their latter. The former state could only be restored by using that which had caused the fall, knowledge, to overcome the division it had created. 'The harmoniousness of childhood is a gift from the hand of nature: the second harmony must spring from the labour and culture of the spirit.'<sup>4</sup> Hegel's view differs from the Catholic conception of the fall in that he believes that it is wrong to think of the first stage as the right state, or that the fall came from solicitation from outside. Original sin is not

---

1. Ency. 41.  
2. ibid. 13.  
3. ibid. 24.  
4. ibid.

the result of the action of the first man, but it is inherent in the very nature of the spirit of man to be evil, to be divided against itself, to act as though it were only a child of nature.

Mind then, from the point of view both of the individual and the Idea, seeks to reconstitute its own shattered harmony, to find rest and peace in a new harmony which is higher than the first as it contains all the elements of the disruption.

The dialectic is this disruption and healing of Spirit. Wherever there is movement or life, wherever anything is carried into effect in the world, there dialectic is at work. 'By Dialectic is meant the indwelling tendency outwards by which the one-sidedness and limitation of the predicates of the understanding is seen in its true light, and shown to be the negation of them.'<sup>1</sup> Thus dialectic is the life and soul of all progress in knowledge, it is the dynamic which gives immanent connection and necessity to logical science -- as well as to anything else.

The only reason we can know all this is because we have intuitive thought. Thought for Kant was discursive and relational with no moment of intuition. For Hegel thought has its moment of immediacy. This we should expect from a man who held that thought had no other. If thought had no moment of immediacy it would not be capable of using anything but abstract universals. This will be made clearer when we examine the idea of immediacy, but first we shall see how Hegel revised Kant's theory of reason.

Reason for Kant is the faculty of the unconditioned, but its only valid use, when it is not being logically employed, is negative. The truths of experience refer always to definite facts, and so can give to reason no positive content. Hegel held that Kant was right as far as he went; and he expresses this negative use of reason in the following way: 'the battle of reason is the struggle to break up the rigidity to which the understanding has reduced everything'.<sup>2</sup> Kant was thus right in emphasizing the finite character of all conditions of the understanding, and in calling these appearance, but was wrong in limiting reason to this negative use, to this 'negative self-identity'. The real as infinite is not a stepping stone beyond the understanding, but absorbs the finite into its own nature. Again Kant restored the idea 'to its proper dignity' as a thing distinct from abstract analytic determinations or from purely sensible conceptions; but again he never got beyond its negative aspect 'as what ought to be and is not'.

Curiosity, or a natural propensity of the mind impels us, according to Kant, to try to examine the object of reason, the thing-in-

---

1. Ency. 81.  
2. ibid. 32.

itself; but we cannot do this as we have only the finite categories. In his examination of the attempt to apply the categories to the unconditioned Kant again did not proceed sufficiently far. In the antinomies, for example, it was wrong to emphasize the negative result only. An antinomy, for Kant, arises when two opposite propositions are maintained about the same object, and in such a way that each of them has to be maintained with equal necessity. Kant concluded from this that the objects of these statements cannot be known, because anything said about it can be contradicted with a proposition of equal validity. The contradiction attaches not to the thing, but only to reason in trying to comprehend it.

The Kantian antinomies, says Hegel, are an important part of the critical philosophy, for they were chiefly responsible for the downfall of the previous metaphysics. To introduce the idea that contradiction in the world of reason is inevitable was to make one of the most important steps in modern philosophy. Yet the solution to the problems thus raised was as trivial as the questions were important. The answer was to deny that reason was knowing at all. The motive for this solution was 'an excess of tenderness for the world'. 'The blemish of contradiction, it seems, could not be allowed to mar the essence of the world: but there could be no objection to attaching it to thinking reason, to the essence of the mind.'<sup>1</sup> But this attributing of contradiction to the mind alone is without foundation, it is only a dogma that reason and not the world is the seat of contradiction. It is the world itself which is contradictory. This may perhaps be clearer if we examine some further observations on the antinomies.

Kant arrived at the view that there were four antinomies by borrowing from his scheme of the categories. But a deeper study of the antinomies, 'or, rather into the dialectical nature of Reason shows.... that every concept is a unity of opposed moments, which could therefore be asserted in the shape of an antinomy'.<sup>2</sup> This means, in its positive aspect, that every actual thing is a co-existence of opposed elements. Consequently, Hegel says, that to know anything is to know it as a concrete unity of opposed determinations.

The antinomies, then, do not show that we cannot know the objects of reason, but rather that these objects are themselves contradictory. This all ties in with Hegel's view, that the essence of things is thought, and because of this there is no thinking that is not knowing, no matter how contradictory it may be. Hegel in fact does what Kant was afraid to do, he puts the categories of modality back in the world, and not merely in individuals' thinking.

The true solution of the antinomies is to recognize that the opposed determinations are contradictory and necessary to the same subject,

---

1. Ency. 48.

2. L.L. 205.

and that each cannot be valid by itself in its one-sidedness, but also that they 'have their truth only in their transcendence, in the unity of their concept'.<sup>1</sup> 'Each of the two opposed sides contains its other in itself, and neither can be thought of without the other; and thus it follows that, taken alone, neither determination has truth, but only their unity. This is the true and dialectical consideration of them, and the true result.'<sup>2</sup>

With this we can see the movement of the dialectic, with its thesis-antithesis-synthesis. Neither the thesis nor the antithesis are destroyed, but remain as moments both in our thought and in the Idea. If we go back to our discussion of the immediate and mediate we will be able to link up our former discussion with the results we have so far reached.

In the critical philosophy we have seen that thought is relational and abstract, an 'invincible mode of abstract universality or formal identity', and is thus set over against truth which is the concrete unity of thought and sense. The extreme theory on the opposite side is the intuitional. This theory holds that we can experience the infinite and true, but we cannot think it, as the categories immediately pervert it into finite and conditioned knowledge, and so we distort the truth into untruth.

The theory then argues that because we do in fact experience God and truth, this experience must be knowledge of an immediate and intuitive type. We do not need to examine Hegel's criticism of this point of view in detail, but only notice the result. He accepts the fact that we do have intuitive knowledge, and this, in the metaphysical sphere consists in knowing that 'the Infinite, the Eternal, the God which is in our idea, really is, or, it asserts that in our consciousness there is immediately and inseparably bound up with this idea the certainty of its actual being'.<sup>3</sup> This certainty was the basis of the ontological proof for God's existence which is an attempt to articulate an experience, or as we should put it in the present context, to mediate the immediate.

The factor of immediacy is not, however, confined solely to metaphysical thinking, but is found in all thought. This can be seen from a consideration of our own thinking. It is a common experience that truths which we know to be the result of a complicated and highly mediated train of thought, present themselves immediately and without effort to the mind of a man who is familiar with his subject. 'The facility we attain in any sort of knowledge, art, or technical expertness, consists in having the particular knowledge or kind of action present in our mind in

- 
1. I.L. 205.
  2. ibid 211.
  3. Ency. 64.

any case that occurs, even, we may say, immediate in our very limbs, in an outgoing activity.'<sup>1</sup> In all these cases the immediacy does not exclude mediation, but rather presupposes it. Again, in existence we find the same thing. The seed of the parents are immediate and initial existences so far as the child is concerned. But though the seed and the parents are thus immediate, they are in their turn generated; and the child, without prejudice to the mediation of its existence, is, as it exists, immediate. Or again, the fact that I am in Edinburgh is mediated by my having made the journey here.

Immediate knowledge affirms the unity of being and the Idea, and in so far as it does this it does rightly. But it is in error when it does not see that the unity of the distinct terms is not solely a purely immediate unity, that is, a unity which is indeterminate and empty, but that the one term is shown to have truth only as mediated through the other. The aspect of mediation is involved in the very immediacy of intuition, and it is only the understanding which takes the terms as absolutely independent and as representing a fixed line of distinction, thus drawing 'upon its own head the hopeless task of reconciling them'.<sup>2</sup> The asserted incompatibility of the two is again a mere assumption, an unexamined dogma.

The second sections of each of Hegel's logics is called the doctrine of essence, and is a discussion of 'the intrinsic and self-affirming unity of immediacy and intuition'. With a few remarks on this we shall have returned to a consideration of dialectic.

When we say essence, we mean to distinguish something from what is immediately given -- for Hegel being represents the immediate. The point of view of essence can best be described by the word 'reflection'. The term is borrowed in the first instance from the sort of experience of a light hitting a mirror, and being thrown back from it. Here we have the immediate fact of the light shining on the mirror, and the mediated reflection. When we reflect upon an object we desire to know it as mediated, not as it first presents itself. That is, as we say, we want to know things as they really are, not as they seem to be, the image of being is thus conceived of as a rind or curtain behind which essence hides.

But this metaphor is not completely accurate, because the immediacy is present in the mediation. We say, for example, that the important thing in a man is what he is, not how he behaves. This is correct if we mean that his actions should not be taken at face value -- i.e. in their immediacy -- but only as explained by his inner self. But it should be remembered that this inner self shows itself in actions as they appear in outward reality. We see from this example that immediacy is not destroyed but 'only laid aside and at the same time preserved. Thus to say that Caesar was in Gaul, only denies the immediacy of the event, but not his sojourn in Gaul altogether.'<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Ency. 64.
  2. ibid. 70.
  3. ibid. 112.

If we tie all these ideas up we get some idea of the dialectic. Being or immediacy has as its antithesis essence or mediation, and these have their synthesis in the notion or absolute idea. Here thought has become identical with its object neither mediate nor immediate, but both.. '....it must be of itself that the divine thought thinks...and its thinking is a thinking on thinking'.<sup>1</sup> In all phases of the dialectic, an imperfect realization of this overall picture is achieved,

We must always remember that my thinking qua my thinking is only part of this process. The self-diremption of Spirit, which takes place as the dialectic, constitutes the nature of the world.

We may also notice that for Hegel the distinction between analytic and synthetic, the a priori and a posteriori cannot be absolute. In effect he only makes explicit what was implicit in Kant. Kant's famous  $7 + 5 = 12$  is only superficially synthetic according to Hegel. The synthesis is analytical in nature, for the connection between the units is quite artificial, as nothing is introduced which is not already at hand. All judgements, he means by this, are the synthesis by analysis of the nature of reality. This may be clearer if we consider the fate of the distinction between a priori and a posteriori.  $7 + 5 = 12$  is said to take place a priori, because counting is not a determination of sensation, but of pure intuition. But it is also a posteriori as the abstraction of pure intuition had to be made from the determination of sense. Similarly the a posteriori has its moment of a priority. 'The determinations of feeling, in the shape of impulse, tendency, and so forth, contains the moment of a priority as much as space and time.'<sup>2</sup> Thus as immediacy implies mediacy, so analysis implies synthesis, and the a priori the a posteriori.

In summing up then we may say that Hegel gives thought its intuitive aspect, and puts modality into the world. This allows him to hold that thought has a real as opposed to a merely discursive function, as well as to insist that the contradictions thought discovers are not confined to thought but are part of the very being of things. Bradley, as we have seen tried to accept Hegel's criticisms of Kant, while rejecting the basis upon which Hegel made them.

---

1. Aristotle Meta. 1074 b 33.  
2. L.L. 223.

Chapter VIII

TRUTH

'In commonlife truth means the agreement of an object with our conception of it. We thus presuppose an object to which our conceptions must conform. In the philosophical sense of the word, on the other hand, truth may be described in general abstract terms, as the agreement of a thought content with itself.'

Hegel.

We have now come to the end of our enquiry and our task here is to crystallize the preceding discussions into the doctrine of truth. We will show how the dualistic element which we found implicit even in his ethical theory, and became explicit in the Principles of Logic, was never overcome, and that while, partly on account of Bosanquet's criticism, he rejected the correspondence theory of truth, nonetheless his theory is not Hegelian. We will undertake this discussion in four parts, beginning with a discussion of Kant's explicit theory of truth as correspondence, and then, by considering his doctrine of the Ideas of Reason, show how a certain version of the coherence theory finds its roots in Kant. Next we will examine Hegel's theory that truth belongs to the object and is a value. Bradley's own theory will be our next concern, and we will show how it partakes of both Kantian and Hegelian elements. Lastly we will try to show that while the letter of Bradley's philosophy is at times obscure, nonetheless the spirit or motive which led to these difficulties was one from beginning to end.

1. In the Critique of Pure Reason Kant says that the nominal definition of truth as 'the agreement of knowledge with its object, is assumed as granted'.<sup>1</sup> He then goes on to say that a general criterion

---

1. First Critique A 58 - B 83.

of truth is impossible, because the content or matter of knowledge is always different, and a criterion to cover these different relations between concept and matter would have to be either so general as to be useless, or, if specific, then wrong. So he says 'as regards knowledge in respect of its mere form (leaving aside all content), it is evident that logic, in so far as it expounds the universal and necessary rules of the understanding, must in these rules furnish criteria of truth. Whatever contradicts these rules is false. For the understanding would thereby be made to contradict its own general rules of thought, and so to contradict itself. These criteria, however, concern only the form of truth, that is, of thought in general; and in so far they are quite correct, but are not by themselves sufficient. For although our knowledge may be in complete accordance with logical demands, that is, may not contradict itself, it is still possible it may be in contradiction with its object. The purely logical criterion of truth, namely, the agreement of knowledge with the general and formal laws of the understanding and reason, is a conditio sine qua non, and is therefore the negative condition of all truth.'

If we take this at its face value it means that truth can only be applied where there is sense involved, for without sense there is no knowledge, and in fact he says 'we must first, independently of logic, obtain reliable information, only then are we in a position to enquire, in accordance with logical laws, into the use of this information and its connection in a coherent whole'.<sup>2</sup> Reliable knowledge means, I suppose, knowledge which is the result of the co-operation of sense and the understanding. It also

---

1. First Critique A 59 - B 84.  
2. ibid A 60 - B 85.

means that while morals, aesthetics and religion may be objective, they are not true. Truth for Kant would seem to be something which can only be spoken of in connection with the propositions of the understanding.

In the sections where Kant speaks of 'truth' he is concerned with outlining his theories on the distinction of formal and transcendental logic, but what we need notice here is that if all knowledge is the result of the co-operation of sense and understanding, then, a proposition of the understanding will, if true, exhibit a correspondence between object and concept, but this relationship is a result and not the ground of the statement's being true. That is, any object to which knowledge can be said to correspond is itself the result of a transcendental synthesis, and only because of this can we experience it and use it as an object to test propositions of the understanding. It is not, that is, a simple matter of saying the mind reproduces or reflects an external world, for this world -- although objective, has received its form from mind. This means that the facts, which are expressed in the 'reliable information' that is to be gathered before formal logic can have anything to work with, are the result of a process of concept and sense. A fact is a fact only because we have made it so.

There are two points to be noticed here; because in a sense facts are made this does not mean, in the first place, that a fact is arbitrary or unreal, nor, secondly, that all facts are so conditioned; it might be argued, that is, that once we had the objective world of phenomena that 'inside' this world there could be facts which were independent of mind.

The first point brings up the question of objectivity. There are a great many theories about this question varying from the assertion that it does not exist to the view that it consists in the self knowledge of reality. It is only if we have the empiricist's view of objectivity that we can say that a theory which involves mind in the construction of the world necessitates the arbitrary. The empiricist view finds truth in the outer world -- in the object -- and says that what cannot be shown to be part of this world is not real. Kant's concern was with the necessary and the universal, and because he could not find this in sense he sought it in the mind. Therefore, for Kant, at least, to say that the phenomenal world is constructed on the demands of the understanding is not to involve us in subjectivity.

It might be argued that as there is more to thought than the securing of the objective world, then there may be facts in that world which are not mind dependent. It might be claimed that this is what Kant meant to call attention to in his distinction between judgements of perception and judgements of experience. The former 'require no pure concepts of the understanding, but only the logical connexion of perception in a thinking subject'<sup>1</sup>. The example given of this sort of judgement might be taken as an example of a fact independent of mind. But even the statement 'when the sun shines on the stone it grows warm' involves the categories to the extent that the awareness indicated by the statement would not be possible without them. This means that no matter how arbitrary a fact may seem to be, for it to be a fact at all involves it in the system of the judgements of the understanding.

---

1. Kant, Prolegomena.

Kant, as we have said, distinguished between reason and understanding. The former orders, by means of principles, that order which the understanding has secured by means of rules. What we wish to do now is to develop the idealist interpretation of this relationship, admitting that this may be to stress one aspect of Kant unduly. That is, what follows is not meant to be put forward as the only interpretation of Kant, but to indicate a view which can certainly be found in his writings.

It is reason's demand for the unconditioned which reveals the distinction between phenomena and noumena, thus showing the limits of the empirical world. It follows from this that we have ideal standards above the categories, standards which reduce to a unity or system the manifold knowledge of the understanding. The idealist interpretation of these ideas is that they are as necessary for experience as the categories. That is, if there is no system save from the ideas, then the categories employed as a system which render experience possible, depend for their systematic employment on reason's demand for unity. On this interpretation it is not the case that we must think systematically only if we are going to reason, but rather that experience and the employment of understanding are possible only because reason demands system. Nothing can exist or be conceived save as fitted into a system which gives it meaning and decides as to its truth.

This interpretation is certainly at least a possible one, and is borne out especially in the chapter on the regulative employment of the ideas. 'The law of reason which requires us to seek for (this) unity, is

a necessary law since without it we should have no reason at all, and without reason no coherent employment of the understanding, and in the absence of this no sufficient criterion of empirical truth... Reason...<sup>1</sup> does not here beg but command.'

In this way the germs of one interpretation of the coherence theory of truth may be found in Kant. Knowledge and truth require system and unity. The demands of reason are responsible for the type of experience we possess, and fact as well as truth rest on this demand. The standards of reason are involved in experience, even if they themselves are not experienced, and truth, no matter how we may conceive its nature, will thus ultimately rest on reason's own demands. The reason for a true statement in experience having an object corresponding to it, is because it itself has been formed under reason's desire for unity, - a desire which finds expression not in a vain plea, but in a command.

2. In Hegel we have the first explicit exposition of the coherence theory of truth, although as we have seen certain aspects of it are already implicit in Kant. Truth for Hegel belongs to the object, and is a value. We will say something about each of these points.

Hegel's discussion of truth is begun under the heading of the Notion in General. This idea combines Aristotle's idea of God and the transcendental unity of apperception. The Notion is the third term of the triad which has being and essence as its thesis and antithesis.<sup>2</sup> In a

---

1. First Critique A 653 - B 681.  
2. See Appendix IV. pp. 242-243.

sense being and essence are the moments of the becoming of the Notion, but the Notion is also their foundation and truth, in the sense that it is their identity in which they are 'submerged and are contained', it is both their ground and end. The unity which constitutes the Notion is the transcendental unity of apperception and this was one of the 'profoundest and most correct discoveries of the Critique of Reason'. In distinguishing between the subjective and objective order Kant was led to differentiate the subjective order of consciousness and the 'unity of ideation'. The principle of an objective determination of ideas was derived from the transcendental unity of apperception. The categories which are these objective determinations so determine the given manifold that it is reduced to the unity of consciousness. This represents to some extent what Hegel meant by the unity of the Notion -- it is that by which something is object, and not merely a determination of sense, intuition, or mere idea. This objective unity is the self-unity of the Ego. To be an object is to have been 'appropriated' 'penetrated' and 'reduced' into the form of the Ego. The Notion then is the unity of self-consciousness, a unity which is responsible for the being of objects, and which incorporates the objects into itself. 'Consequently its (i.e. the object's) objectivity is nothing else than the nature of self-consciousness, and has no other moments or determinations than the Ego itself.'

Kant's idea of the transcendental unity of apperception had, however, 'many defects' and so cannot stand as an adequate representation of

---

1. L.L. II, 219.

the Notion. Its main fault is the ultimate subjectivity of the objects of the Notion, for the objects of the Notion in Kant are in the end only appearance. The truth which consists in the unity of the object and Notion is not reality. Thus 'it will always remain a matter for astonishment' that Kant said that the Notion is and always remains separate from reality, and especially so as he had seen the possibility of the unity of sense and thought in the Idea. Hegel's task is to show how the Notion forms in and out of itself that reality 'which has vanished into it'.<sup>1</sup>

We need examine how he achieves this only in so far as truth is concerned, but even this is no easy task. Kant's definition of truth as the correspondence of knowledge with its object is 'a definition which is of great and even of the highest value'.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, however, Kant insisted that Reason is not capable of apprehending things in themselves, and that truth lies outside the Notion. Kant should have said that such a reason which cannot establish a correspondence between itself and its object (the thing in itself) is an untrue idea. If truth is to be applied only to propositions verifiable in sense, how can his views on reason be justified; or, even more generally, on Kant's own view of thought what sort of thinking is the Critical Philosophy? Hegel then adds for good measure that 'equally untrue are things-in-themselves which do not correspond to the Notion of reason, a Notion which does not correspond with reality, and a reality which does not correspond with the Notion.'<sup>3</sup> It is difficult to imagine a more trenchant and apt criticism.

- 
1. L.L. II, 226.
  2. L.L. II, 227.
  3. L.L. II, 228.

The reason Kant's definition is valuable is that it sums up Hegel's own view of truth as self-accordance -- the accordance of anything with its real nature or notion is its truth, the more closely it approximates its notion the truer it is. He expounds this by criticizing Kant's discussion of a criterion of truth outlined in the previous section. This argument against a criterion of truth 'appears very convincing', but the argument forgets what it is supposed to be talking about. It would be absurd to ask for a criterion for the content of cognition; - 'but according to the definition, it is not the content which constitutes truth, but its correspondence with the Notion'<sup>1</sup>. The sort of content of which Kant is speaking is notionless and essenceless -- that is, if it had not been brought under the categories it cannot be anything, although it may be, and it is impossible to ask for the criterion of truth of such an entity, 'but for the opposite reason, namely because lacking Notion, it is not the requisite correspondence, and cannot be anything but what belongs to truthless opinion.'<sup>2</sup>

Here we come to the point that truth was a value. This can be put most simply by saying that the notion of anything is its good, and this notion is only realized in self-consciousness, and so to the degree a thing is true, i.e. accords with its notion, to this same degree it is good, and so truth is said to be a value.

Now for Hegel value is self-consciousness. This is because anything fulfils its notion to the degree in which it is conscious of its

---

1. L.I. II, 228.

2. L.I. II, 228.

true nature; and in so realizing its end it achieves value. This does not mean that there is a self standing in abstract isolation over against a world of objects and that Hegel wishes us to ignore the latter and study only the former. This would be to adopt the harsh standpoint of the understanding with its either-or. The self and the world are correlative. I am what I am because of the world I live in. By studying a certain kind of world, and living in it as my environment, I develop my mind in a certain way. And conversely the world is the world of my mind: I see in it what I am able to see, and understand it to the degree to which my powers enable me to do so, and thus I determine my world as it determines me. Thus an abstract psychology which would study mind irrespective of what it owes to the world is as unphilosophical as the ontology which would study 'being' regardless of its debt to any and every mind. Self-consciousness includes the world, science and history and has as its end the only completely intelligible object -- itself.

'....The true object is not concealed behind the ostensible as behind a veil. Had it been so, the elaboration of the veil could but make its density deeper, and religion or science would be the prison-house of the self-frustrated mind whose very effort to see the world only resulted in its enclosure within a thicker and thicker crust of illusion. But the true object is not

our great roof, its gilt carving and groinings

Under yon spider-webs lying.

It is the mind itself. And thus the external world is not a veil between it and its objects, but a picture of itself, drawn to aid its own self-

vision; a picture which as it grows firmer and harder, takes surface and polish and steadiness, becomes the Mirror of the Mind; and all the detail visible in it is seen by the mind to be the reflection of its own force.<sup>1</sup> In so far as this self-consciousness is achieved, there value is realized.

This has the result that genuine knowledge, which is distinct from the merely correct knowledge of the understanding, can begin only where Kant said knowledge must end -- that is with the Ideas of Reason. For Kant the highest type of knowledge is found in natural science; the insight of genius, and the inspiration of the artist give us knowledge only in so far as they can be brought under the categories of the understanding and so treated scientifically. This knowledge is a detached consciousness of an object in which the subject finds not itself but an independent and alien thing, a thing which behaves according to universal and necessary, but merely mechanical laws. Similarly our knowledge of the empirical self is just as much a detached phenomenal object as anything else.

Nor is Kant's moral philosophy an exception to this. The knowledge of what we ought to do, if indeed it can be called knowledge, is not knowledge of the nature of the good will; man only thinks himself as free,

---

1. Collingwood, R. G. Speculum Mentis, Oxford 1924, p. 313.

This should be compared with the following statement of Bradley's in the Essays, but it should also be remembered that Bradley's Absolute is not Mind. 'There is a world of appearance and there is a sensuous curtain, and to seek to deny the presence of this or to identify it with reality is mistaken. But for the truth I come back always to that doctrine of Hegel, that "there is nothing behind the curtain other than that which is in front of it". For what is in front of it is the Absolute that is at once one with the knower and behind him.' TUR p. 218.

he cannot know this. If we do claim to have knowledge in this and similar matters we fall into a dialectic which is mere sophistry.

For Hegel on the other hand, aesthetic, religious and moral experience are closer to true knowledge than is positive science; and in the Notion, if not in individual systems, we find the concrete self-conscious dialectic of Spirit. This dialectic alone is fully genuine knowledge and its categories are par excellence the categories of the Notion.

This is an outline of the Notion and truth. It may become clearer if we expand it by examining Hegel's theory of the Idea, which is a development of Kant's. For the latter the Idea set a standard or goal, which was never realized, and which is only regulative and gives no positive knowledge because no object corresponding to it can be found. For Hegel this is just what makes the Idea actual, if it possessed the untrue phenomenon of the world it would only be appearance. He adds though, that Kant himself exempted morality from the above: 'nothing could be more harmful or less worthy of a philosopher than the vulgar appeal to an experience which is asserted to conflict with an Idea.'<sup>1</sup> The Idea, for Hegel, is the 'adequate Notion: objective truth, or the truth as such.'<sup>2</sup> If anything has truth it has it through its Idea, or has truth only in so far as it is Idea. Notion, as Hegel frequently points out, is often used for mere idea, or even image, and while Kant in using it to describe the notion of reason is nearer the mark in regarding it as the notion of the unconditioned, it is still not what Hegel means by the Idea. The Idea is the union of the Notion with object-

---

1. Quoted by Hegel L.I. II p. 396

2. L.I. II p. 395.

ivity. It 'must not merely be considered as a good which must be approached while it still remains a kind of beyond: it must be held that whatever is actual is only in so far as it contains and expresses the Idea. The object, and the objective and subjective world, not merely ought to conform to the Idea, but are themselves the conformity of Notion and reality: that reality which does not correspond to the Notion is mere appearance, or that subjective, contingent, capricious activity which is not the truth.'

The Idea is thus the union of Notion and Reality and finite things are finite only to the degree to which they do not possess the reality of their notion in themselves, but require something further for that end, or conversely, in so far as they are presupposed as objects to which their notion is applied as an external criterion. The fact that actual things do not correspond to the Idea is the side of their finitude and untruth. In so far as anything is anything it must correspond to some degree to its notion. The Idea is that unity which every dialectical synthesis is -- whether of finite or infinite, identity and difference, or ideal and real. Here we have an explicit statement of the doctrine of degrees of reality and truth. A degree of reality is at the same time a degree of truth, and a degree of truth a degree of reality. It is important to keep this last in mind when one reads, as one often does, that the coherence theory is a theory of the coherence of propositions.

This gives us at least a preliminary insight into Hegel's view of truth. The Absolute Idea as the reasonable notion is reality which co-

---

1. L.I. II, p. 396.

incides with itself. It is a thinking and a knowing. 'As self-containing individual, or rather person, Absolute Idea may be called a self-knowing; as self-constituting it may be called a self-thinking.'

We have now at least some notion of Hegel's theory of truth, as that which belongs to the object to the degree to which it is real, and is also value or good which is self-consciousness. There are two points I wish to emphasize in this. First, the coherence theory is not a theory as to how finite thought by constructing a static system of judgements arrives at truth. Such a theory would be one of mere consistency or even compatibility, and the theory involves a great deal more than such relations of propositions in an individual's thought. Secondly that the introduction of value does not lead to wild emotionalism, it does not undermine science for Hegel is careful to point out that the understanding is in its own proper use unemotional.

To illustrate this first point I shall criticize some passages in Kemp Smith's Commentary on Kant. 'The fundamental thesis' he says of the coherence theory of truth 'finds explicit formulation in Kant's doctrine of the judgement; the doctrine, that awareness is identical with the act of judging, and that judgement is always complex, involving both factual and interpretive elements.'<sup>2</sup> And again, 'Principles are never self-evident, and yet principles are indispensable. Such was Kant's unwavering conviction as regards the fundamental postulates alike of knowledge and of conduct.... This is only another way of stating that Kant is the real founder of the Coherence theory of truth.'<sup>3</sup>

---

1. Mure, Commentary p. 292.

2. Kemp Smith *op.cit.* p. XXXVIII.

3. *ibid.* p. 36.

I do not think this is the central tenet of the coherence theory of truth, because the above is more concerned with describing how we, as finite individual thinkers, arrive at truth, rather than a description of the nature of truth itself. The fundamental tenet of the coherence theory of truth is much more the unity of thought and being, and that, in thinking in the manner which Kemp Smith so brilliantly epitomises, truth is achieved, not solely because finite thinkers think this way, but because the one reality working in and through appearances appears as this finite thought and judgement. That is, the only criticism of the above is the ascription of the phrase 'the fundamental thesis' to what is only the epistemological aspect of the coherence theory. I do not mean to suggest that Professor Kemp Smith thinks that the activity of the one reality can be ignored in a coherence theory of truth, but the unwary reader might easily be misled by his language. Truth is not a whole of mutually consistent propositions, it is the 'genuineness' of one spiritual activity of knowing, 'whose knowing is self-knowing. The whole, which truth is, is the totality of phases in that self knowing-activity which...is the subject's self-diremption and reunion with itself.'<sup>1</sup> Truth is one coherence because Spirit is one in all phases of its activities. Thus the aim of finite thought is not the linking of judgements in a static system, but to achieve the individuality of Mind fully conscious of itself.

This brings us to the distinction between the 'correctness' of thinking of understanding, and the 'genuine' nature of the thought of reason. For the understanding truth is the correspondence of external things with

---

1. Mure, Introduction p. 169.

my conceptions. These are correct conceptions held by me, the individual person. 'Truth is at first taken to mean that I know how something is. This is truth, however, only in reference to consciousness; it is formal truth, bare correctness.'<sup>1</sup> This is the level of scientific thinking, which is properly non-emotional, and non-evaluative. Although as we pointed out in dealing with Kant, this does not mean that the object is an object without mind.

Contrasted with this correctness, we have reason's thinking which finds truth in the deeper sense as that which constitutes the nature of anything -- 'in the identity between objectivity and the notion'. 'It is in this deeper sense that we speak of a true state, or of a true work of art. These objects are true, if they are what they ought to be, i.e. if their reality corresponds to their notion....to be untrue means much the same as to be bad.'<sup>2</sup> The difficulty which this sort of theory raises in the mind of the reader is that this view leaves the way open to emotionalism and arbitrary subjectivity. If what is true is good, and what is good is true, and if this good is knowledge of value which is self-consciousness, how on earth are we to avoid an extravagant emotional subjectivity?

I'm not sure what this last phrase means, but if it means thinking which takes no awareness of feeling then Hegel's theory is condemned. He quite consciously means us to take feeling and everything else in the consciousness of a person to be a partial embodiment of truth. And against the objector, once we have passed the thinking of the understanding with its

---

1. Ency. 213.  
2. ibid.

object world, what is one to think about if what one thinks about is in no way part of one's self? For Hegel one is to develop all that one experiences, conscious that in doing this that Spirit is achieving a degree of reality, and so of truth; at the same time aware of the humbling fact that no thought is capable of embodying all the truth.

We have at different times mentioned that Bradley's theory of thought as it was presented in the first edition of the Principles was partly motivated by a distrust of the relativism which was the result of a consistent Hegelianism.<sup>1</sup> We are now in a better position to see why Bradley tried to save the singular categorical judgement. If we accept Hegel's theory of truth we are forced to believe that every thought is somehow true, and it is not difficult to interpret Hegel's position as the most relativistic rather than the most absolute of all theories.<sup>2</sup> But this question leads us to consider Bradley's own doctrine of the nature of truth.

3. In attempting to outline Bradley's theory of truth we must ask whether it is essentially Kantian, in the way that Kemp Smith described the coherence theory, or if it is Hegelian. Is truth, that is, self-developing system, or is it the result of finite thinkers' attempts to think in a systematic fashion? The latter of these would make out that Bradley's theory was Kantian and it might be argued in the following way.

In the first place while the Absolute shows itself as truth, it itself is not truth but a sentient experience. Therefore coherence cannot

---

1. See Chapter III, p. 88.

2. I do not think that this was Hegel's own view, but it is at least a plausible interpretation of the consequences of his work.

mean the coherence of Spirit with itself. We find this recognized in Bradley's work for in it coherence appears as the way in which thinking approximates to the character of reality, not to reality itself. This means that as the Absolute is not thought, and truth concerns only thought which is found only in appearance, Bradley's theory is 'epistemological' rather than metaphysical. That is, he is more concerned with finite thought qua individual's thinking, than was Hegel. This leads him to introduce the criterion of comprehensiveness, which as we shall see below could only be useful to finite thought; and, the fact that he did introduce this criterion would show his theory does not mean the coherence of reality with itself.

The more Hegelian interpretation, on the other hand, would stress that, although the Absolute is not thought, nevertheless, any and every appearance including thought is part of the activity of the absolute. The real, in so far as it is thought is ideal, and ideality, as an objective dynamic results from the work of the one reality. 'Truth' he says<sup>1</sup> is the whole universe realizing itself in one aspect,<sup>1</sup> and again, 'My real personal self which orders my world is in truth inseparably one with the Universe. Behind me the absolute reality works through and in union with myself.....'<sup>2</sup> On this view thought is an expression of the real which finds expression in, and as, the finite thought of individual thinkers, and truth is self-developing system.

First I shall emphasize the Kantian interpretation which ends

---

1. T&R p. 116.

2. ibid. p. 218.

by making Bradley's theory impossible, as it exposes it to certain obvious and fundamental criticisms. Nevertheless in pursuing this interpretation we are not indulging in an arbitrary distortion of Bradley's theories, for it is quite consonant with much of what he says.

We shall begin the exposition of this strain in Bradley's thought by considering Bradley's theory as an attempt to incorporate a theory of degrees of truth and reality into a system which leaves room only for thinking at the level of the understanding. That is, the Absolute is not thought, not a predicative process; yet thought, without losing this character, must try to embody the character of absolute reality. This interpretation would also stress that there is little mention of how the Absolute works in and through appearances. The whole emphasis, even in the chapter on 'Degrees of Truth and Reality' in Appearance, is concerned with how finite thinkers are to achieve truth.

In this chapter XXIV of Appearance he lays down the principle that all judgements are conditional. That is, because of his view on feeling, the subject and the predicate can never be the other; this means that all judgements hold because of what Kant called the 'unknown-X'. Any attempt to include this X, only leads to another judgement which again fails to include its subject, and so on. As we have already seen no system of thought no matter how wide can include that which it is about -- only in the Absolute are thought and feeling found in a unity. This means that no judgement is able to escape the possibility that it will be modified in

---

1. See Chapter VII. p. 225.

the Absolute.<sup>1</sup> The complement that reality would make remains unknown, and while it remains unknown we cannot tell how it would alter the predicate -- 'we really always have asserted subject to, and at the mercy of, the unknown',<sup>2</sup> all judgements are therefore conditional.

With the statement that all judgements are conditional we have arrived at 'the meeting ground of error and truth'. For some purposes our knowledge may be taken as wholly true or wholly false. That is most of our every day thinking is at the level of the understanding with its either-or, true or false; but for metaphysical purposes this will not do for 'truth and error, measured by the absolute, must each be subject always to degree'. That is, in so far as error says anything,<sup>3</sup> it is making a statement which refers to the real, and in so far as it does this, belongs to that real, and so is part of the nature of the real, and will be involved in the Absolute's synthesis by analysis of itself. Bradley then goes on to expand this.

Truth and error 'measured' by the Absolute, must each be subject always to degree. 'Our judgements, in a word, can never reach as far as perfect truth, and must be content merely to enjoy more or less of Validity...

---

1. 'We may put this otherwise by laying down that the categorical judgement must be false. The subject and the predicate, in the end cannot either be the other. If however we stop short of this goal, our judgement has failed to reach truth; while if we attained it, the terms and their relation would have ceased. And hence all our judgements, to be true, must become conditional. The predicate, that is, does not hold unless by the help of something else, and this "something else" cannot be stated, so as to fall inside even a new conditional predicate.'

A&R pp. 319-320.

2. ibid 320.

3. cf. Chapter IV. PP. 121 et seq.

the less or more they actually possess the character and type of absolute truth and reality. They can take the place of the Real to various extents, because containing in themselves less or more of its nature.<sup>1</sup> In some ways this is just a working out, at a level close to sense, the implications of Hegel's position. A truth is true as it contains in itself the character of reality, and accords with its notion. Our truths are the 'representatives' of this reality 'worse or better, in proportion as they present us with truth affected by greater or less derangement ... truths are true according as it would take less or more to convert them into Reality'.<sup>2</sup> Yet even here the exponent of the Kantian viewpoint could point out that if we do not know the 'unknown-X', then the Absolute is used as a kind of external criterion in the same manner as Kant's ideas point to what ought to be and are not; and it would also be pointed out that Bradley himself speaks of 'measuring' appearances, and claims only validity for our judgements.

This could also be strengthened by referring to 'Note A' on 'Contradiction and the Contrary' where he first describes the complete synthesis by analysis of the Absolute in terms of Hegel, and then says he cannot verify the solution. He has been discussing the difficulty that any synthesis which serves as the ground for analysis 'becomes for the intellect a fresh element, and it calls for synthesis in a fresh point of unity'. The remedy, he says, might be in a whole 'which would be a self-evident analysis and synthesis of the intellect itself by itself. Synthesis here has ceased to be mere synthesis and has become self-completion, and analysis,

---

1. AGR p. 321.  
2. ibid.

no longer mere analysis, is self-explication.' Yet in the next paragraph we find the following: 'if all we find were in the end such a self-evident and self-complete whole, containing in itself as constituent process the detail of the Universe, so far as I see the intellect would receive satisfaction in full. But for myself, unable to verify a solution of this kind, connexions in the end must remain in part mere synthesis, the putting together of differences external to one another and to that which couples them'<sup>1</sup>.

It would seem then that the Kantian interpretation has much to commend it. Before questioning this we should be clearer as to the character of the Absolute to which truth stands as a representative. The Absolute which is the perfection of truth and reality in a feeling unity is a 'positive, self-subsisting individuality'<sup>2</sup>. To say that this individuality is positive is to do more than assert the mere absence of 'discord and dissipation'. This is so for two reasons: in the first place no mere negation is possible, and in the second, what is denied is predicated of the Absolute. As for the first, the idea of affirmative being supports the denial of discrepancy and unrest. Without such an idea we could not claim that the Absolute was harmonious and peaceful, i.e. non-discrepant. This Being, in its strictest sense is not definable, 'it will be the same as the most general sense of experience .. it is immediate and at a level below distinctions'<sup>3</sup>. In this general sense of experience, being underlies the idea of individuality. This is Hegelian in the sense that being is best

---

1. AGR pp. 507-508. See Chapter VII, pp. 233 et seq.  
2. AGR p. 321.  
3. AGR p. 215.

illustrated by immediate experience, but to identify it with such experience is not. However, this point was discussed in the second chapter.

The second point was that individuality is partly determined by what it excludes. The aspect of diversity belongs to the individual, and is 'affectively contained' in it. If this were not so identity would be a mere A is A. Diversity is excluded only in so far as it attempts to be something by itself, and to maintain isolation. That is, so long as it refuses to be incorporated in a system, '...the individual is the return<sup>1</sup> of the apparent opposite with all its wealth into a richer whole'. We do not know how this comes about 'in detail' but we gain a positive idea of this union from immediate experience, 'plus the idea of unknown qualities which come in to help' -- whatever that means precisely. Having thus achieved our positive idea of individuality we apply it to appearances, and find that only the Absolute is a true individual for 'incompleteness and unrest, and unsatisfied ideality, are the lot of the finite'.

The absolute individuality appears as truth, and as truth must exhibit the marks of 'internal harmony, or, again, the mark of expansion and all-inclusiveness'.<sup>2</sup> These two characteristics are diverse aspects of the single principle of individuality. The first means that individuality must be coherent and non-contradictory, the second that it must be all inclusive as otherwise it would have external relations and so be discrepant. 'Hence to be more or less true, and to be more or less real, is to be separated by an interval, smaller or greater, from all-inclusiveness or

---

1. AGR p. 215.  
2. ibid p. 321.

self-consistency.' In the Essays the former of these is called comprehensiveness, and the latter coherence.

In defence of the Kantian interpretation we could ask why the criterion of comprehensiveness is introduced, and the answer would seem to be that Bradley is interested in the epistemological problem, rather than the metaphysical one. He is trying to outline how an individual thinker arrives at truth, independently of the consciousness that all thinking is the work of reality. We have already examined the type of argument the criterion of comprehensiveness was meant to combat,<sup>1</sup> and the fact that Bradley thought it worth while to combat the argument might be said to show that he himself was essentially concerned with degrees of truth, in abstraction from degrees of reality. That is, the upholder of the Kantian interpretation might now argue that the fact Bradley took such pains to argue against these criticisms shows that by coherence he did not mean the coherence of reality with itself, and was primarily concerned with the finite constructions of systems. This might be taken to show that he was not satisfied with the doctrine of degrees as a working test for truth,<sup>2</sup> and so evolved the theory of comprehensiveness, which from a metaphysical point of view is redundant because it adds nothing to the notion of coherence. For if coherence means the coherence of reality with itself and did not mean all reality, then the self-accordance of the Notion

---

1. See Chapter VI. pp. 179-192.

2. Church, R. W. in Bradley's Dialectic, Allen and Unwin, 1942, pp.157-160, argues that we cannot avail ourselves to the Absolute as a criterion of truth. And while his arguments are not conclusive they do present a difficulty of which Bradley was most probably aware, and so introduce the criterion of comprehensiveness.

with itself would surely be impossible. For in such a case, either reality would not perfectly accord with its Notion, or else part of reality, or better one reality would so accord, and another reality would not; but this would necessitate independent and externally related reals which Bradley rejects. Thus metaphysically speaking comprehensiveness adds nothing to the idea of coherence.

If, on the other hand, one concentrates on the attempt of a finite thinker to achieve truth, comprehensiveness does serve a useful purpose, and with its aid we overcome the 'magnificent liar'<sup>1</sup>, and this shows that Bradley was sceptical of the extent to which we could know that the real was active in thought, and this inclines us to interpret his theory as being much closer to Kant than Hegel.

On the other hand such an interpretation will not serve as an adequate representation of his thought, for we have the insistence even in the Principles that the universal is at least partly concrete, and that there is identity in difference. Again, as we shall outline in the next section he held that finite experience was self-transcending. And again there is the insistence that the goal of thought is not a static system but the individuality of the Absolute. Finally, in the Essays he is quite explicit that reality works in and through thought.

Mure sums up Bradley's position in the following way. 'Truth is system, and system is individuality. Yet while only thinking can be true, the only perfect individual is the Absolute, and Absolute Experience

---

1. See Chapter VI. loc.cit.

is not thought.<sup>1</sup> This is an accurate description of Bradley's final position, a position which can be portrayed as a tension resulting from the influence of Kant and Hegel. Yet when we put the results of our enquiry in this abstract way, they seem to reduce Bradley's work to a mere unreconciled series of contradictions, and such a result cannot do justice to the subtlety and depth of his thought, and so in the last section we will endeavour to show some of the motives which may have led to his final position, a position which is admittedly not unambiguous.

4. In Ethical Studies we see that Bradley quite definitely regards finite experience as self-transcending. The simplest way of explaining the meaning of this is to use the words describing faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews, 'an outreaching of the mind beyond that which it immediately possesses'. On the idealist interpretation this could serve as a description of all human experience. The doctrine of the concrete universal, of identity in difference, of the activity of the real in finite thought, are all ways of giving expression to this self-transcending character of finite experience. That is, if reality were completely other, if finite experience did not go beyond itself, then the doctrines of the abstract universal, abstract identity, and the uniqueness of every individual, in a word, the world of the understanding, would be the only true description of experience. But the idealists, and Bradley among them, held that such a world could not do justice to art, religion, ethics, or philosophy, and so they taught that my experience is more than merely mine -- in a word that it is self-transcending.

---

1. Mure, op. cit. p. 247.

Yet there are differences between Bradley's view of the self-transcendence of all finite experience and the usual idealist theory. This can be expressed by saying that for Hegel, and probably Bosanquet, finite experience is completely transcended in the Absolute. For Bradley, on the other hand, this final transcendence is, in a certain sense, not real. The difficulty in putting this more precisely is only an instance of the difficulty we have had in interpreting the status of Bradley's Absolute, or of the nature of the universal, or his final position on the relation of thought and reality. As we have seen, any interpretation which would make him an Hegelian or a Kantian, taken by itself, must be considered as a distortion of his thought; and what I should like to suggest in closing is that Bradley's philosophy is a very brilliant expression of Hegel's characterization of the religious consciousness. Hegel describes the religious consciousness as 'unglückliches Bewusstsein' -- the unhappy consciousness -- the alienated soul 'which is conscious of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being'.<sup>1</sup> The consciousness of self as particular and finite, and the consciousness of self as transcended.

In religion, says Hegel, the beyond assumes a definite form, and so it seems to be brought closer to the individual and is thus securely established; yet in so far as it assumes this fixed form it is opposed to the individual who remains a sensuous impervious unity 'with all the fixed resistance of what is actual'. This means that 'the hope of becoming one

---

1. Phenomenology p. 251.

therewith must remain a hope, i.e. without fulfilment, without present fruition; for between the hope and fulfilment there stands precisely the absolute contingency, or immovable indifference, which is involved in the very assumption of determinate shape and form, the basis and foundation of the hope<sup>1</sup>.

Bradley insists on keeping hold of both of the aspects of our experience which lead to this situation, and this is the source of all the difficulties in his philosophy. There are two ways in which the difficulties could have been avoided. Either, as Hegel did, he could have treated the unhappy consciousness as only a passing phase; or, as modern philosophy does, ignore the self-transcending character of experience. The first solution is only a solution if we believe that Hegel has shown that the empirical and sensuous is completely sublated in the dialectic; but the cry of every critic, responsible and otherwise, is that he has not shown this. This has the result, or it may be is partly the result of, Bradley's belief that philosophy was not the highest nor the most complete experience of reality. Hegel held that in philosophy we had an explicit and conscious insight in to the essence of every other sort of experience. For example, philosophy clarifies and contains the essence of the 'picture thinking' of religion. Bradley, on the other hand, held that every aspect of experience had in its own sphere a relative supremacy, and relative only against the Absolute, not philosophy. 'In philosophy we must not seek for an absolute satisfaction. Philosophy at its best is but an understanding of its object, and it is not an experience in which that object is contained

---

1. Phenomenology p. 257.

wholly and possessed.<sup>1</sup> Philosophy, he says, must seek to justify every side of human nature including itself. 'Like other things it has a place in that system where at once every place and no place is supreme. The mastery of that system in thought, however far we carry it, leaves philosophy still the servant of an order which it accepts and could never have made.'<sup>2</sup> And again, 'Philosophy like other things has a business of its own, and like other things it is bound, and it must be allowed, to go about its own business in its own way. Except within its own limits it claims no supremacy.....'<sup>3</sup> All experience seeks to grasp reality, but since that reality is not solely a rational dialectic, we cannot say that only in philosophy do we appreciate the nature of reality.

Thus while reasoning experience is not self-transcending in the Hegelian sense, to ignore the self-transcending character of experience is foolish. It may enable our enlightened thinkers to be clear, but it is a clarity purchased at too great a price -- the price is to ignore everything which cannot be dealt with in a clear way, which means most of experience. No doubt to philosophize about experience will be subjective in the sense that it will be the subject's experiencing which will provide the material for interpretation, but to give up thinking about human experience because it will not conform to the demands of the understanding may make philosophy amusing yet it robs it of importance.

- 
1. TCR p. 13.
  2. TCR p. 14.
  3. TCR p. 15. (my italics)

Bradley accepted neither alternative, he held both that experience was self-transcending, and that we could not appreciate what it meant to say it was completely transcended. His so-called 'scepticism' stems from the 'bitterness of soul-diremption', from the consciousness that the beyond is beyond, and from his consequent refusal to accept a cheap and easy monism and his anger with the shabby thinking which leads to it. His 'mysticism' results from his acknowledgement that there is a beyond. 'In various manners we find something higher, which supports and humbles, both chastens and transports us. And with certain persons, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is a principle way of thus experiencing the Deity. No one, probably, who has not felt this, however differently he might describe it, has ever cared much for metaphysics.'<sup>2</sup>

In this acknowledgement of the beyond he reminds us of Anselm. He differs from Bradley in the certainty which he attaches to his faith, yet the first chapter of the Proslogion has that same unhappiness, that same 'bitterness of soul-diremption' of which Bradley's work is such a magnificent expression. '...ubi et quomodo te quaerat, ubi et quomodo te inveniat. Domine, si hic non es, ubi te quaeram absentem? Si autem ubique es, cur non vides praesentem? Sed certe "lucem inaccessibilem". Et ubi est lux inaccessibilis? Aut quomodo accedam ad lucem inaccessibilem?'<sup>3</sup> It must not be thought that I am trying to turn Bradley into an orthodox Christian, it is only that we find in Anselm that same yearning we find in Bradley, a yearning which the latter at least held could only be cured by a false remedy.

- 
1. See supra Chapter VII.
  2. A&R p. 5.
  3. Proslogion Chapter I.

And so Bradley's 'scepticism' and his 'mysticism' are both necessary to his metaphysics -- one might go so far as to say to any metaphysics which does justice to experience. And not until 'poetry art and religion have ceased wholly to interest, or when they show no longer any tendency to struggle with ultimate problems and to come to an understanding with them', not until 'the sense of mystery and enchantment no longer draws the mind to wander aimlessly and to love it knows not what; when, in short, twilight has no charm'<sup>1</sup> will metaphysics be worthless. And until this time the work of Francis Herbert Bradley must, for all its imperfections, have an honoured place in the history of thought.

---

1. A&R p. 3.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXTS

Bradley, F. H. (in order of first edition).

Ethical Studies, second edition, Oxford 1927, reprinted 1935.

The Principles of Logic, second edition 1927, revised,  
with Commentary and Terminal Essays.

Appearance and Reality, second edition with Appendix,  
tenth impression, Oxford 1946.

Essays on Truth and Reality, Oxford 1914.

Collected Essays. Oxford 1935.

Hegel, G. W. F.

The Science of Logic, being the first part of the 'Encyclopaedia  
of the Philosophical Sciences'; translated by  
W. Wallace, second edition, Oxford 1892.

The Philosophy of Mind, being the third part of the  
'Encyclopaedia'; translated by W. Wallace,  
Oxford 1894.

The Science of Logic, translated by Johnston and Struthers,  
Allen and Unwin 1929.

The Philosophy of Right, translated by T. M. Knox, Oxford 1942.

The Phenomenology of Mind, translated by J. B. Baillie, revised  
edition, Allen and Unwin 1931.

Lectures on the History of Philosophy, translated by E. Haldane  
and F. Simson, Vol. III, Kegan Paul 1876.

Kant, I.

The Critique of Pure Reason, translated by N. K. Smith,  
Macmillan, second impression, reprinted 1950.

Kant, I. (contd.)

The Critique of Practical Reason, translated by T. K. Abbott,  
sixth edition, reprinted 1948.

The Critique of Judgement, translated by J. H. Bernard,  
Macmillan 1892.

Prolegomena, edited in English by P. Carus, Open Court 1947.

COMMENTARIES

Foster, M. B. The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel,  
Oxford 1935.

Mure, G. R. G. An Introduction to Hegel, first edition, reprinted  
Oxford 1948.

" " A Study of Hegel's Logic, Oxford 1950.

Paton, H. J. Kant's Metaphysics of Experience, Allen and Unwin 1936.

Smith, N. K. A Commentary to 'Kant's Critique of Pure Reason',  
Macmillan 1918.

Reyburn, H. A. The Ethical Theory of Hegel, Oxford 1921.

The following have also proved useful:

Blanshard, B. The Nature of Thought, Allen and Unwin, second im-  
pression 1948.

Bosanquet, B. Knowledge and Reality, Kegan Trench & Company, 1885.

Collingwood, H. G. The Idea of Nature, Oxford 1945.

" " The Principles of Art, Oxford 1938.

" " Speculum Mentis, Oxford, reprinted 1946.

Joachim, H. H. Logical Studies, Oxford 1948.

" " The Nature of Truth, second edition, Oxford 1939.

Muirhead, J. H. Bernard Bosanquet and His Friends, 'Letters illustrat-  
ing the sources and the development of his  
philosophical opinions'. Allen & Unwin 1935.