# III.—MR. BRADLEY ON TRUTH AND REALITY.[1]

By C. D. Broad.

Within the narrow limits of a review it is hardly possible to do justice to the work of so important a thinker as Mr. Bradley, and the Editor of Mind has kindly suggested that my notice of *Essays on Truth and Reality* should take the form of an article.

The present volume consists mainly of reprinted papers, but there is some hitherto unpublished matter in it, and the whole—apart from its intrinsic importance—should be of great help to the reader of *Appearance and Reality*, many points in which it explains and amplifies. It seems rather a pity that Mr. Bradley should have devoted so much space to the discussion of Pragmatism, though one can hardly wonder, seeing that its chief stock-in-trade —in England, at any rate—consisted of attacks on himself. But fashions, in philosophy as elsewhere, quickly change; the latest mode is now imported from Paris and not from America; and Mr. Bradley's criticisms, though acute and deadly, do but tear up the cast-off garments of yesteryear. There are however many points where this book comes in contact with other really important contemporary philosophic views, *e.g.*, in the criticisms of Mr. Russell's theory of judgment and of some notions used by him in his *Principles of Mathematics*, in the question, "What is the Real Julius Cæsar?" and in the discussions on Prof. James's *Radical Empiricism*.

I do not propose to criticise the book chapter by chapter, but to try and make my discussion a continuous whole, as the work itself in the main is. In the Introduction we are told that everything is in the end subordinate to the Good in the sense of "what contents". Truth, in particular, is what satisfies the intellect, and what is contradictory is false because it fails to satisfy the intellect. It seems to me that here there is some danger of the error into which Mr. Bradley

[1] *Essays on Truth and Reality*. F. H. Bradley. Pp. xvi., 480. Clarendon Press.

finds the Pragmatist to fall about humanity. Whose intellect precisely is to be satisfied? No doubt he means that only truth can in the long run satisfy the intellect; in the meanwhile surely some minds rest satisfied with what is false. It hardly seems to me that we can say that contradictions are false *because* they fail to satisfy the intellect, the only way to support this would be to make the satisfaction of the intellect a part of the definition of truth. This is not what we actually do mean by it, though we must certainly assume to avoid scepticism that nothing but truth will permanently satisfy it. But this seems clearly a synthetic proposition.

Anything that really satisfies any one is *pro tanto* good in itself. And, if a man really is satisfied with anything, there is nothing which from the outside has any claim against this thing. The two statements (*a*) that all that really satisfies any one is *pro tanto* good, and (*b*) that nothing outside has any claim against any genuine satisfaction, seem to me to need a good deal of amplification. Suppose a man gets genuine satisfaction from pulling the wings off flies. For the satisfaction to be genuinely unmixed he must of course have no moral scruples; and I can see that, if this be so, our adverse judgment on his satisfaction, if we make it, will and should leave him unmoved. In this sense his satisfaction is invulnerable from without if it be complete within. But, on the other hand, it seems to me that my adverse judgment which he justifiably refuses to accept is none the less true: and, if so, how can we admit that his satisfaction is *pro tanto* good? I suppose that Mr. Bradley's contention would be that it is at any rate better that a bad man should be satisfied with a bad satisfaction than that he should be unsatisfied in this bad desire: that in fact, putting the feelings of the flies and of other people out of consideration, the state of the man who wants to and does pull the wings off flies is better than that of the same man prevented from doing so. I admit that it is difficult to decide on such a point, but at least the conclusion does not seem obvious.

However this may be, Mr. Bradley justly says that no side of our life is either wholly good or the whole good: so you can never set up one side of life as an end and make all the others means to it. The importance of this conclusion to us is in its application to the relation between philosophy and ethics and religion. I do not think I agree with all that Mr. Bradley says in this connexion, though the difference may be mainly one of emphasis. His position is that ethics and religion can only dictate how much time we shall give

to philosophy, and not how we shall philosophise. They can only speak indirectly by saying to the intellect: "Are you really satisfied whilst we are not?" So far I agree. But I hardly think that Mr. Bradley emphasises enough the other side of the picture. He says that ethics and religion need not give up their positions if philosophy conflicts with them, and he constantly insists on the folly of dropping ethical and religious convictions from a craven fear of inconsistency. He is thus enabled to make a delightful *ad hominem* retort to William James (p. 132), but I think a rather one-sided impression is produced. In the first place the intellect has at least the correlative right to say to ethics and religion: "Are *you* really satisfied while I am not?" This of course Mr. Bradley would not deny: but it seems to me that the question from intellect to the other sides of our nature is a much more serious one than the corresponding question from them to it. What fails to satisfy our intellects cannot—we must assume—be real, but what fails to satisfy our desires and aspirations surely may be. Would religion and ethics really be satisfied, and would the former retain its consolatory aspect, if they once recognised and faced their intellectual incoherence?[1]

A negative answer to this question is quite compatible with Mr. Bradley's warning against making any one side of our nature a means to any other. It is quite certainly absurd to make all sides of our nature subordinate to mere truth-seeking, but this is compatible with the view that what fails to satisfy our intellect cannot be ultimately real, whilst what fails to satisfy the other sides of our nature very well may be.

I hasten to add in fairness that Mr. Bradley does not think that there is any ultimate conflict between intellect and the other sides of our nature, and that his doctrine that no truth is quite true is here relevant. I understand his position here to be as follows: Coherence is the test of truth; but then no truth can be quite true, and therefore the mere fact of discovering inconsistency in any particular region is of no *special* importance. You can be sure beforehand that it will be there, and the only question of importance is the degree of it. And apparently one test of degree of coherence is the extent to which our nature as a whole is satisfied. The beliefs of ethics and religion satisfy a great part of our nature very fully, and therefore they must have a high degree

[1] I must not be taken in what follows either to assert or to deny that there is a fundamental inconsistency in ethics and religion. For Mr. Bradley there is, and must be, and I am merely choosing this as an example without pronouncing on the facts.

of coherence and of truth, though we know that—like everything else—they are neither quite consistent nor quite true. Their mere incoherence is no special reason for dropping them; the degree of satisfaction that they offer is a reason for ascribing a high degree of truth to them.

To consider the validity of this contention we must come to closer grips with Mr. Bradley's theories of truth and coherence. These theories, on the face of them, seem to involve three different applications of coherence. In the first place, the ultimate standard of truth is always coherence, and, judged by this standard, truth as a whole condemns itself. Secondly, granted that no judgment is quite true or quite false, still there are degrees of truth, and these are correlated with (perhaps—I am not sure—identical with) degrees of coherence. Finally, it would seem that, whilst coherence or the lack of it may be recognised immediately, there is also a test for its degree in extent of satisfaction. For instance, I can see directly that the judgment that $2 + 2 = 4$ has a very high degree of coherence, and that Charles I. died in his bed has a very low one, without referring to the satisfaction that these beliefs give to my nature as a whole; whilst, in spite of the fact that I can see in this sense that the beliefs of religion are inconsistent, I am to suppose that they really have a very high degree of coherence because they satisfy so much of my nature so fully.

We will leave the first point for the present, and pass to the other two. I am not clear as to the relation between the amount of incoherence discovered by the intellect and the degree of coherence to which a certain degree of general satisfaction points. Clearly they can conflict. As far as concerns the incoherence that the intellect can discover arithmetic would seem to be much more coherent than religion; yet I take it that Mr. Bradley would consider religion much truer than arithmetic. Yet, on the other hand, I understand that the degree of truth ultimately depends only on the degree of *intellectual* coherence, and that general satisfaction is only a test in as far as we know somehow that it is an indication of a high degree of this kind of coherence, in spite of the dissatisfaction that the intellect directly feels. But surely the intellect may be expected to know its own business best: and it is rash to use this external test as a ground for saying that something really must have a high degree of coherence of the kind that would satisfy the intellect, when the intellect itself positively finds great incoherence. The sort of coherence that can plausibly be taken as the measure of truth is that of a logically consistent and

inclusive system of propositions. Again, our desires and aspirations may be for things whose existence is incompatible with such a system ; and, if so, they can be called incoherent. But there is nothing *logically* incoherent in the existence of desires and aspirations which are incoherent in this secondary sense ; and therefore there is no reason, on the coherence theory of truth, to suppose that our desires may not be such an incoherent system. Hence, if the intellect positively pronounces that they are, no argument that says that, if this be so, a very important side of our nature will be unsatisfied, gives any reason for ascribing a high degree of truth and reality to what would satisfy this side of our nature. Of course the "inclusiveness" aspect of the coherence theory involves that we must not omit to take account of any side of our nature as a fact, but it is quite open to us to recognise (*a*) the existence of a number of desires and aspirations as existent facts, and (*b*) the further fact that they are desires and aspirations for logically inconsistent objects, whilst (*c*) they are, as facts, coherent in the sense of being connected by intelligible laws with each other and with the rest of the universe.

Nothing that I have said here appears to be affected by the point made by Mr. Bradley that incoherence may show itself, not in explicit contradiction, but by mere felt uneasiness. No doubt it may ; but it is only that felt uneasiness which, when made ideal and explicit, appears as *logical* incoherence that can plausibly be taken as relevant to degree of truth, and not that which, when made explicit, appears as mere frustrated desire or aspiration, other than the desire for truth.

Let us now return to another very important point which is still connected with the present subject. It may be said that, since no judgment can be quite true, all must disclose theoretical inconsistency somewhere, and therefore we need never in particular cases trouble about this, but need only concern ourselves with the degree of coherence ; and for this we need some new test like the satisfaction of our whole nature. To this I would make the preliminary replies (*a*) that the intellect itself can in many cases judge not merely of the fact but also in a measure of the relative degree of coherence ; and (*b*) that, if for us men some other test be often needed, still, for the reasons that I have offered, the satisfaction of our whole nature does not seem to be a very trustworthy one, especially when it conflicts with a positive pronouncement of the intellect. But much more fundamental issues are here involved.

Coherence may be the sole ultimate criterion both of truth and of truths, as I understand Mr. Bradley to hold; but still there is a great difference in the condemnation of all truth and the assertion that there are degrees of truth; and, presumably, there will be a different use of the principle of coherence for these two purposes. Judgments can become truer by supplementation of matter of the same kind, but no amount of supplementation will make any judgment quite true. And again there are some judgments so true as to be intellectually incapable of further improvement. We shall see what these are later. Superficially there are two inconsistencies in Mr. Bradley's book on this point. (*a*) He insists that there is nothing merely ideal or imaginary, that every idea qualifies some sphere of reality. But what sphere, on his view, does the notion of complete truth qualify? It is not a quality of any judgment, for no judgment is quite true. Nor is it a quality of judgments as supplemented by the other aspects of reality which they err by ignoring; for truth belongs to the world of the ideal, and the supplemented judgments have passed beyond truth. Yet I suppose there must be an idea of the completely true, or we could hardly deny that anything is completely true. (*b*) In arguing against the notion of absolutely certain judgments of perception and memory Mr. Bradley says that, by refusing to assume that they are true, we do not assume that they are all false; for this would lead to scepticism. But of course, in a sense, this is exactly what he does assume about all judgments; and yet he does not end in scepticism. But I quite recognise that these two criticisms, as they stand, are external and formal, and that they need an elaboration that will perhaps end in their overthrow. For instance, to the second I suppose that Mr. Bradley would answer: We should certainly be led to scepticism if we assumed that all judgments were false in your sense, who believe in absolute truth and falsehood: but then I do not believe that any judgment is false in this sense." And, in the first, I feel that there is at least an ambiguity about qualification to which I shall return. But these two objections do at least suggest the question whether the same thing precisely is meant by truth and falsehood when we say that no judgment is quite true or false, and when we say that judgments have degrees of truth. There is of course no formal incompatibility between the two statements, even if truth and falsehood mean the same in both, but at least the question whether perhaps they mean something different is worth discussing.

Let us then consider the two questions: Why and in what

sense are no judgments quite true or false? and In what sense are there degrees of truth and falsehood?

Mr. Bradley discusses much more fully why no judgment can be quite true than why none can be quite false. As far as I can see the reason why no judgment can be quite false is because all ideas qualify reality. It is also said that, in all judgments, we qualify reality by an idea. But I confess that I am far from clear as to what is meant by qualification, and whether it is supposed to have the same meaning in all judgments. Take the two judgments: Queen Anne is dead, and, Reality is an harmonious system; both of which Mr. Bradley would admit to have a considerable degree of truth. I can see that, in the second, I assert that reality has the quality of harmony; and here harmony seems to qualify reality in precisely the same sense as, in the first, deadness qualifies Queen Anne. But the judgment that is grammatically about Queen Anne actually, we are told, asserts the qualification of reality by an idea. But what is the idea? Either qualification is used in a different sense, or the idea which is asserted to qualify reality is not that which explicitly appears in the judgment; for reality is certainly not dead in the sense in which it is harmonious. The same obvious point can be raised in connexion with Mr. Bradley's doctrine of the imaginary. An imaginary idea is one that does not qualify one sphere but does qualify another; and, of course, all spheres are contained in reality. Hence no imaginary idea, at any rate, can qualify reality as a whole in the same sense in which that of harmony does; for a quality of only a part of a whole cannot in the same sense be a quality of the whole. Hence, when we say that, in all judgments, reality is qualified by an idea, we cannot possibly mean the same thing by qualification in the case of all judgments.

What meaning then can we give to the statement that all ideas qualify reality? There are three obvious meanings that can be given to it. (1) Taking ideas as universals, we might say that universals are contained as elements in reality. This is obvious for any one who accepts such a view of universals as Mr. Bradley criticises in Mr. Russell; but, of course, Mr. Bradley does not accept this view, and so the present meaning cannot be his. (2) Taking ideas again as universals, it might mean that all universals have instances, which, of course, are elements in reality. I know that Mr. Bradley objects to the notion of universals and instances, but I can best express to myself by this phraseology a part of what he seems to me to mean by the statement that there are no mere ideas. We have already rejected an alternative

suggestion, which we must just notice here for the sake of completeness—*viz.*, that reality is an instance of all universals. (3) But ideas further, in Mr. Bradley's phraseology, have a psychical side. He will not allow us indeed to say that ideas are awarenesses of universals; but, in the phraseology of universals, a third meaning might be given to the statement that all ideas qualify reality, *viz.*, that there are no universals that do not enter into some psychical state which is an awareness of them, though not an instance of them. Mr. Bradley may be right in his rejection of the two notions of instances of universals and of awareness of them; but, at any rate, two different notions which, in my mind, correspond to these two expressions seem to be involved in his phrases about the "divorce of existence and content" and the "what working loose from the that". Generally these phrases seem to refer to the distinction between an idea as a psychical state and as a predicate; but, at other times, they seem to correspond to the distinction between a predicate and a whole given in feeling or perception which, on intellectual analysis, is found to have that predicate. Two different notions seem to be present, and I cannot collect from Mr. Bradley a satisfactory account of their distinctions.

It will repay us to discuss this matter a little more fully; and Mr. Bradley provides us with material in his criticisms of Mr. Russell about our knowledge of universals. Mr. Bradley's doctrine appears to be as follows. My idea of a triangle in general is a particular existent. (Here I imagine there will be no dispute.) But I ignore or exclude the particularity as irrelevant: I use the instance whilst ignoring that it is an instance; and, whilst aware of the plurality of instances, I hold that their differences can be neglected. But the basis of my negation of the relevance of the difference is not the positive awareness of a universal: it is not an object, but is something in the object that repels all else in it that conflicts with reference elsewhere, and is felt to answer to a recognised employment and name. There is much in this that I do not follow. Apparently we have a particular state of mind whose object is a particular triangle: neither the state of mind nor the object can be used as a predicate, but it seems that a part of the object can repel other parts that prevent the whole being used as a predicate. But can they? In the ordinary sense of parts, the parts of my object when it is a particular triangle are its angles and sides; which of these prevents it being used as a predicate, and which of them repels these parts and allows it to be used as a predicate? I fail to see that a particular triangular

object or any part of it ever can be used as a predicate, and, *a fortiori*, that such a use can be helped or hindered by the action of any of its parts.

Unless I have totally misunderstood here, it seems to me that parts are being used in the same sense as other people use universals. No doubt, if my particular object is red and equiangular, it is possible to say that it is its redness and equiangularity that prevent it from being predicated of other triangles which may be blue and scalene. But, in the first place, these are already qualities and not parts of my object, and, in the second, even when my object is blue and scalene, it cannot be used as a predicate either of itself or of other blue and scalene triangles. And I do not see how the reference to feeling and language help us here. When I apply or withhold the name "just" from an action it is perfectly true that I may not be able to point to what is common to the cases where I apply it and absent from the cases where I withhold it. But this only seems to show that I can have a feeling of the presence or absence of a universal, and can, by anticipation, give it a name which I apply when I have the feeling of presence and withhold when I have that of absence. The feeling warns me of the presence or absence of what I already recognise, by giving it a general name, to be a predicate or universal; and this universal may, so far as I can see, by attention and analysis become an object for me. It is possible indeed, though I am not at all sure, that, even after the universal has been discovered, a necessary condition for its becoming an object to us is that some particular instance of it shall be present to the mind; but this is as far as I can go in Mr. Bradley's direction here.

Having now discussed the ambiguity in the phrase 'qualification of reality,' and suggested and tried to defend some possible meanings of the statement that all ideas qualify reality, we can return to the question whether any judgment can be quite true or quite false. The result of our distinctions seems to me to be that there is no reason why some judgments should not be quite false. If all ideas qualify reality, still, we have now seen, the most that this can mean for the present purpose is that all ideas qualify some part of reality. Hence, if I assert that an idea qualifies reality as a whole, when it really only qualifies some part of it, or if I assert that it qualifies some region of reality when really it only qualifies another, it will be no objection to the entire falsity of my judgments to say that, at any rate, the idea, like all others, does in a certain sense qualify reality. Whether we shall have to modify this view when we come

to consider why no judgment can be quite true remains to be seen; but we can see at once that there is no *direct* logical connexion between the two doctrines that no judgment is quite true and that no judgment is quite false.

Let us now consider why and in what sense no judgment can be quite true. Let us note at the outset that this is wholly different from the statement that no judgment can be *known* to be quite true. Mr. Bradley devotes a good deal of space to refuting doctrines which imply that some judgments, *e g.* those of memory and perception, can be known to be quite true. In the main I think he is here successful, and I shall return to some of his arguments later. Of course, if such doctrines were true, his own would be false; but their refutation, as he is well aware, does not prove his own doctrine. This he rests on positive arguments. The main contention seems to be as follows: (*a*) All judgments ultimately take the form Reality is so-and-so, which Mr. Bradley writes R*a*. (*b*) Consider two different judgments R*a* and R*b*; since these differ *a* and *b* will be different predicates. Hence (*c*) if R*a* means $R \equiv a$ and R*b* means $R \equiv b$, there is a contradiction at once. But, if not, then (*d*) your real assertion must be R($x$)*a* and R($y$)*b*, where $x$ and $y$ are conditions. Apart from these conditions the judgments are not true. But (*e*) a judgment that is only true subject to an implicit condition is not itself true. Finally (*f*) it is no use for you to answer that you have merely not troubled to make the conditions explicit; for the fact is that you cannot in any case make them all explicit. Let us consider this argument carefully.

I have already said that all judgments do not seem to me to ascribe predicates to reality, but, at best, to parts of reality, a very different thing. And this seems to be involved in Mr. Bradley's own arguments about the imaginary. But Mr. Bradley has an argument in support of his own views which we must now notice. No limited subject, he says, is real. In fact you can put the objection to judgments in a way that mainly concerns this point. They are false (1) because they take the subject too narrowly and leave out conditions; and (2) because, when the conditions are put in, the subject approaches nearer and nearer to reality as a whole, and this is not what we originally meant to judge about. So the question whether all judgments really take the form R*a* or whether there can be partial subjects leads us to the question of conditions.

I think that there is a good deal of ambiguity in the notion of conditions. In one sense you can say that a partial sub-

ject like Queen Anne is conditioned just because it is a part of the universe. Without her the universe would be different, and she is related in various ways, certainly to many things, and, perhaps, to everything in the universe. But when you say that a judgment is true subject to a condition, I take it that you mean it is false unless something else is true. I understand one part of Mr. Bradley's doctrine to be that, because all partial subjects are conditioned in the first sense, therefore all judgments about them are subject to conditions in the second. Now can I ever (*a*) make a true judgment, and (*b*) know that it is true, unless I know the conditions which must be fulfilled if it is to be true? All categorical propositions are, no doubt, also antecedents in some hypothetical propositions; but we can hardly maintain that the *knowledge* of their consequents in these hypothetical propositions can be relevant to the *truth* of the antecedents. Again the mere fact that all categoricals are also antecedents in hypotheticals can be no reason for thinking them false, unless we believe that all hypothetical propositions have false antecedents, which seems, at best, groundless. Thus the fact that all categoricals are antecedents in hypotheticals, and the fact that we are not acquainted with all the consequents, seem to be no reason for thinking that we can never happen to make a true judgment.

Are there any reasons for thinking that we can never *know* that any particular judgment is true? This might be asserted on two different grounds. (1) It might be argued that we can never have a rationally justifiable certainty in any judgment which as a matter of fact implies others, unless we are aware of all that it implies. Or (2) it might be said that the unknown conditions are liable to change, and therefore any judgment that ignores them will, whilst retaining the same form, be sometimes true and sometimes false, and therefore always uncertain. The first argument is plausible—especially on the coherence theory of truth—and I am not going to quarrel with it at present. The second is by no means clear, because the notion of a changing condition is far from satisfactory.

But, before I enter into this matter, I would suggest that there is a whole set of judgments to which this objection, whatever form it ultimately takes, can be directly seen not to apply. This set includes, among much else, all pure mathematics. $2 + 2 = 4$ is undoubtedly conditioned in the sense that it implies other propositions, so that, if these be false, it will be false. But it seems to me that we can be certain (in the same way perhaps as Mr. Bradley is certain

that a term cannot be diverse from itself) that all these conditions are, in every possible sense of the word changeless. Hence our belief in such propositions need suffer no diminution from any fear that their unknown conditions may change (whatever that may mean). I suppose that Mr. Bradley's answer would be that any such notion must involve the view that the entities with which these propositions deal are related merely by "and" to the rest of reality, and that this is impossible. But I do not see that this follows, and I do not believe it to be true. I seem to be able to see that such things as 2 and 4 cannot change, and yet that their relations to changeable collections of two and four things are not mere "and" relations. But I shall return to the question of external relations later.

Another set of propositions which seem at first sight to be unaffected by the present objection is singular propositions about existents; like Queen Anne is dead, or I have toothache now. If various conditions had not been fulfilled Queen Anne would not be dead and I should not have toothache now. But it would seem that no change of conditions that can possibly happen in the future could make Queen Anne alive again or alter the fact that I have toothache now. To this however Mr. Bradley would have no difficulty in answering. He would ask: What precisely do you mean by "Queen Anne" and "I" and "now"? All that they can mean for thought must be universal; and can you deny that conditions might arise under which a person who answered exactly to your description of Queen Anne should be alive in the future, or a person answering precisely to your description of yourself should not have toothache at another (and intellectually indistinguishable) now?

I shall have something to say about designation later; in the meanwhile, what is meant precisely by truth changing with change of conditions? The condition of one judgment is, strictly speaking, always other propositions, and of course these cannot really change with respect to truth or falsehood. What is meant is this. My conditioned judgment may be stated in the form S is P, but its real form may be S is P at $t_1$. Now the truth of S is P at $t_1$ is of course compatible with the falsity of S is P at $t_2$. This fact is what is expressed by saying that the *judgment* S is P is sometimes true and sometimes false; it really means that the *function* S is P at $t$ gives true propositions for some constant values of the variable $t$ and false ones for others. When S is known to be the kind of thing which, as we say, changes in time the natural interpretation of the incomplete form S is P is

'S is P at $t$ is true for all values of $t$,' or S is always P; and this is false if *e.g.* S is P at $t_2$ be false. It is now easy to see what the change of truth through a change of condition means. S is P at $t$ may imply, for all values of $t$, R is Q at $t$, but R is Q at $t$ may be false for some values of $t$; then S is P at $t$ will be false for some values of $t$, or, as we loosely say, S is P will sometimes be false. What is the upshot of all this? Not, so far as I can see, that no judgment of the form S is always P can possibly be true, but, at worst that, if S is P at $t$ always implies other propositional functions of the form R is Q at $t$, and these are unknown, there is a chance of error in asserting that S is always P, because it may be false that R is always Q. Thus this argument does not seem to me to be relevant to the possibility of the complete *truth* of any judgment; nor to the possibility of practical certainty of the truth of a large class of *universal* judgments; nor, finally to the possibility of practical certainty of the truth of such judgments as S is sometimes P.

But, in all this, I have perforce neglected another side of Mr. Bradley's doctrine, because I cannot discuss everything at once. To it I now pass. This is the assertion that, for a true judgment the conditions must go into the subject. This has two consequences: ultimately we are left with no partial subjects; and further, since all the conditions never can go into the subject, no judgment is quite true. The doctrine has two sides. The conditions must not only go into the subject, but they must be there explicitly. Judgments that claim to be about partial subjects err in both respects, but judgments which, in the ordinary sense of qualification, qualify reality as a whole only err in the second. Thus, as Mr. Bradley says somewhere, such a judgment as Reality is an harmonious experience is so true as to be *intellectually* incorrigible. We can see from what has gone before why it is that the conditions must become explicit. A universal judgment whose truth depends on that of others which are not explicitly known but are known to be variable in the sense discussed above, need not indeed be false, but will always be uncertain till we have these conditions explicitly before us. But this does not explain either (1) why and in what sense the conditions must go into the subject, and therefore why partial subjects must expand at all; or (2) why, if they do expand, they must do so till they become the whole universe. Suppose we start by judging that S is P. We may then go on to reflect that this is only so if Q is also R. And, it may be maintained that, when we have done this, we cannot be

sure that S is P independently of an assurance that R is Q. But, even if we do maintain this, our partial subject S has not altered, but we have two connected judgments each about partial subjects, *viz.*, P and R, not a single one with a new subject. And the whole notion of conditions essentially involves partial subjects. If a partial subject always becomes something else the moment we learn that it is conditioned, then what precisely is conditioned? The most then that seems to be proved is that some judgments about partial subjects will not be certain unless we can make other judgments about other partial subjects; not that our original partial subject has expanded whilst still remaining one. Suppose this expansion to go on without limit, then we shall still not reach a single judgment with reality as subject, but a system of connected judgments about all the partial subjects in reality. And none of the members of this system would be false, though it might be that, until you know the whole system, you cannot be certain of any part of it.

But is even this amount of expansion necessary? Why, granted that some partial subjects must expand in Mr. Bradley's sense, or granted that you must, for certainty in any case, take in judgments about other partial subjects, must we assume that the partial subject must expand to the *whole* of reality, or that *all* partial subjects must be taken in? I imagine that this conclusion rests on the two doctrines (*a*) that everything is related to everything else, and (*b*) that there are no merely external relations. I think we may admit at once that, if you take relation widely, everything is related to everything else, and that there are no mere "and" relations. Again, I understand the doctrine of internal relations to be that to every relation there is a corresponding quality in the related terms. Now it will doubtless follow from these two propositions that every partial subject will have qualities corresponding to relations to every other partial subject in the universe. But what of this? (1) Mr. Bradley, like every one else, rejects the notion that a term can consist wholly of its relations. Hence, presumably, the qualities that every term has in virtue of its relations to everything else are only a part of its qualities. Even if then those qualities of partial subjects which depend on their relations can only be asserted of them when all other partial subjects are taken into account, still there would seem to be a residuum of judgments asserting qualities of partial subjects, which are not open to this objection. (2) But why should this expansion be necessary even for asserting of a partial subject those qualities that do depend on its re-

lations to other partial subjects? S may have qualities corresponding one to each of its relations to every other partial subject. Why then, in asserting the presence of a quality depending on any given relation, need we take into account any other partial subject but the one to which your given partial subject has the relation in question?

I expect the answer to both these questions will be that I am misrepresenting the doctrine of internal relations. For instance, one might argue as follows. Consider the other qualities, which, you allege, do not depend on relations to other terms. You must grant that, in the term, they will be related to all the qualities that do depend on relations to other terms. Hence, if you are in earnest with the doctrine of internal relations, you must admit that each of these qualities has itself qualities depending on its relations to each quality that itself depends on the relations of your term to each other term in the universe. So your judgments even about these qualities will need the same infinite expansion as those which are about qualities that directly depend on relations. I will leave to the reader the easy task of working out a reply on the same lines to (2). I would point out however that there is a different principle involved in the original argument and in the reply to the objection. The original argument said that you could not ascribe a quality to any subject without taking into account all others, because every *subject* has qualities depending on its relations to all others. The reply argues that you cannot ascribe a quality to any subject without taking into account all others, because every *quality* has qualities depending on its relations to every other term. I confess that I am not convinced by either argument, but it seems clear that one might be valid and the other not.

The fact is that I have the greatest difficulty in understanding what precisely is meant by the doctrine of internal relations; and this difficulty prevents me from forming any clear notions as to what follows from it. We are told that the doctrine of internal relations means that every relation makes a difference to its terms. I do not in the least understand what this means. It can hardly mean the tautological proposition that, if a term stands in a relation, something is true of it (*viz.* the fact that it stands in this relation) which would not be true of it if it did not stand in this relation. It seems to mean then that, if a term stands in a relation, something is true of it beside the fact that it stands in this relation which would not otherwise be true of it. And I really see no reason to believe this. Matters are

not made clearer to my mind by Mr. Bradley's controversy with Mr. Russell about identity and diversity. Mr. Russell says that it is a mere fact that terms are not diverse from themselves and that they are identical with themselves. Mr. Bradley performs an ideal experiment and finds that the diversity of a term from itself is unthinkable. He further argues that it is nonsense to talk of mere facts for thought, and that Mr. Russell's view can only mean that he never happens to have met a term that was diverse from itself. And all this is supposed to show that relations like diversity are internal. In this controversy there is, I think, a measure of merely verbal misunderstanding. When we say that it is a mere fact that terms are not diverse from themselves we mean (*a*) that we believe it to be true (probably on much the same grounds of intellectual experiment as Mr. Bradley's) and (*b*) that we can offer no reason for it. We do not mean that our certainty is based on induction. In a sense this judgment can be said to be founded on the natures of the terms; but this means that it is immediately evident as soon as we consider the terms involved in it, and that no amount of further favourable instances increases the evidence for it, as they would do if it were based on induction. No reference to qualities implied in terms by relations will help us here. In the first place, I do not suppose that Mr. Bradley could tell us what is the quality present in all terms which is a reason why they cannot be diverse from themselves; and, in the second, if he could point to such a quality, the incompatibility between this quality and the relation of diversity between terms that possess it would still be a mere fact in the present sense. Further, if you must have a reason why *e.g.* 2 is not diverse from 2, must you not equally need a reason why 2 is a number? The latter demand seems to me an absurd one, but I do not know whether it would seem equally absurd to Mr. Bradley.

This seems to be the most convenient place to consider Mr. Bradley's statement that it is nonsense to talk about mere facts for thought, and his objection to designation. He argues that brute facts exist, if anywhere, in feeling; that it is of the essence of thought to be ideal and to pass beyond mere feeling; and therefore to talk of mere facts that thought must accept is nonsense. But I think that a distinction is wanted here. There are at least two kinds of facts, which agree in some respects and differ in others; and one kind seems to me to satisfy thought and the other not to. Take the two statements: It is a mere fact that grass is green and not red, and, It is a mere fact that two con-

tradictory propositions cannot both be true. We call these both facts because we (*a*) believe them to be true, and (*b*) can give no reasons for them. But, describe it as you will, there is also a great difference between them. Facts of the first kind do in a sense leave the intellect unsatisfied; we do not feel that we understand the connexion between grass and green, or that our whole intellectual world would be overturned if we some day happened to meet with red grass. Facts of the second kind do seem to me to satisfy the intellect. When we say here that we cannot offer a reason we do not intend to express any kind of intellectual frustration. In as far as the intellect has an ideal it would appear to me not to be one that demands the abolition of all facts, but only of facts of the first kind. If only all facts of the first kind could be directly replaced by ones of the second, or could be shown to be deducible according to principles which are themselves facts of the second kind from premisses which are of that kind, I believe that the intellect would be satisfied. How far such a demand could be met will receive a few words of discussion directly, in connexion with another point in Mr. Bradley's theories. In the meanwhile I must try to answer the obvious criticism that any such view brings back self-evident truths, and ignores Mr. Bradley's demolition of these in favour of the coherence theory.

The alleged self-evident judgments which Mr. Bradley sets himself to demolish are those founded on perception and memory. His arguments here are very plausible. But we must remember that such judgments, however certain, deal with facts of the first kind *par excellence*. In the discussions on coherence it seems to me that the propositions involved in the very notion of a coherent system have been somewhat neglected. To take a very simple example: Is the judgment that coherence is the ultimate test of truth accepted simply because it is coherent with all other judgments? If so, have we not a vicious circle? Unless this judgment can be known to be true independent of its coherence with other judgments how will the fact of its coherence with them prove its truth? For, *until* we know that it is true, why should we think the members of a coherent system more likely to be true than those of an incoherent one? Again, is the judgment that a certain system is coherent true merely because it is coherent with the other members of the system? To answer this in the affirmative is to extend the notion of coherence from propositions of the same order to those of different orders, and even where such extensions are plausible—as this certainly does not seem to be—they must be viewed with the

utmost suspicion. To put another but closely related side of the question: A coherent system seems to be one whose members are related in accordance with logical principles. These principles are themselves, no doubt, members of the system; but, unless they satisfy the intellect *apart* from considerations of their coherence with the other members of the system, the fact that the system as a whole is coherent in accord with these principles will not make it satisfy the intellect. My conclusion is that the coherence theory cannot do without facts of the second kind, and that these really do satisfy the intellect apart from their coherence with other propositions.

Before leaving this subject I want to make two small points. (1) Mr. Russell argued that coherence will only work as a test for truth if you take it as coherence with propositions known to be true on other grounds. If you take in the imaginary, he said, you could make up equally consistent and more inclusive worlds in which what we now take to be true would appear as illusions explicable by some of the imagined propositions. My argument is that there must at any rate be independent knowledge of the fact and of the principles of coherence, and therefore an argument directed by Mr. Bradley against the independent knowledge of the truth of other members of the system would not affect me. But is Mr. Bradley's argument successful even as against Mr. Russell? It is that you must take in *all* that you can imagine, and that then your imaginary factors will cancel out, and, in the main, leave standing those propositions that Mr. Russell wants to accept on independent grounds. But how does Mr. Bradley know so much about the world of the imaginary as this *merely* on the coherence theory? Surely another possibility is that the propositions of memory and perception would cancel out with a selection of the imagined propositions, and leave the rest of the imaginary standing. If Mr. Bradley says that this might be, but is actually not so, then I am afraid we have come back to a mere fact. (2) In a footnote Mr. Bradley replies to Prof. Stout that one proposition cannot imply another without the probability of the former being increased. This is only true if we accept the notion of a probability to every proposition independent of its relation to others (what is called an *à priori* or antecedent probability); otherwise it is invalid. But this notion (*a*) seems scarcely compatible with exclusive insistence on coherence, and (*b*) involves the use of a principle of probability (*viz.*, that if $p$ implies $q$ and neither $p$'s nor $q$'s *à priori* probability is 0 then $p$'s is in-

creased) which, like all other *principles* of coherence, must be accepted on other grounds than that of coherence.

In connexion with facts I must say a word about the relation of feeling to thought. Mr. Bradley says that in philosophy it is useless to fall back on words like 'this,' 'mine,' 'now,' etc., and to ask any one to accept them as an explanation of anything. It is no use to say that we know what we mean by them when we use them, unless we can make this meaning explicit; and, of course, we cannot do this. Feeling, no doubt, has a certainty of its own, but you have no right to expect to carry this over unchanged into the world of judgment where you have definitely decided to leave feeling for explanation. This is closely connected with what I take to be Mr. Bradley's main ground for holding that no judgment can be quite true. We have indeed already described certain arguments dealing with partial subjects and conditions. These did not seem to me conclusive, and, it will be remembered, in the course of the discussion I said that conditions imply partial subjects just as much as partial subjects imply conditions. But this will leave Mr. Bradley unmoved because on his view *all* arguments about partial subjects, conditions, external and internal relations, etc., move in the world of the partially unreal. His arguments are meant to be just as fatal to conditions as to partial subjects. Such a line of argument, resting as it does on the principle that $p)—p\ .\ ) .—p$ is *formally* quite valid, and I only reject it because of difficulties that I find in its premisses. But, though this is Mr. Bradley's explicit argument, I do not think it is his main or most impressive reason for his conclusion. This seems to be contained in the following considerations. In a footnote to page 229 he says that, when you assert R*a*, R and *a* must differ; but then R, *a*, and the difference must fall in a wider R and qualify it. And the question is how this wider R is constituted, and no amount of judgment will tell you, for you will only get an infinite regress of R's. Again we are told that the inconsistency of judgment is that it starts with the unity of feeling and tries to make that unity ideal. But the conditions of the unity have now gone, and thought tries to fill them in ideally in order to avoid mere identity; yet it never can reconstruct the unity of feeling.

I think that Mr. Bradley holds that these considerations are identical with those which we have already discussed about partial subjects, internal relations, and conditions. But I doubt if they are. The latter moved wholly in the region of thought, the ones at present under discussion deal

with the inadequacy of thought to feeling. And, even on the strictest coherence theory, I do not see that this inadequacy need betray itself by an internal inconsistency in judgments. However this may be, I think I can see the difficulty that Mr. Bradley raises here, though I find it excessively hard to put it into satisfactory language. I shall try to discuss the difficulty that I feel in my own words, not because they are likely to be better than Mr. Bradley's, but because I am not quite sure whether I mean the same thing as he does.

Let me first remove some ambiguities. Knowledge is a very ambiguous term. In one sense the only way to get to know anything is to learn things about it. In another sense I must already know a thing before I can learn anything about it. There is no direct contradiction here. Knowledge in the second sense means acquaintance, and seems to correspond to a part at any rate of what Mr. Bradley means by feeling. And mere acquaintance, even if it ever actually exists, would not be called knowledge. Again we can say that we know a thing better the more we know about it. In this sense we might be said to know a thing perfectly if we were acquainted with it, and also knew 'all that there is to be known about it' (if this phrase may be allowed for the moment). Further, when we say that we know something about $x$, the form of the expression suggests (rightly or wrongly) that we know 'something' and that this something (let us call it a proposition) has a certain relation—'about'—to $x$, a thing with which we are acquainted. If this suggestion be right the question at once arises whether knowledge of propositions is the same thing as acquaintance with subjects. I think it is evident that it cannot be. We talk of understanding a proposition; now there is nothing corresponding to this in our acquaintance with subjects. Hence, even if we are acquainted with propositions in the same sense as with subjects, there would seem to be another relation to them which is also called knowledge, but which, to distinguish it from other uses of the word, may be called understanding. Finally all judgments involve universals. And it seems clear that here too mere acquaintance is not enough, you must understand your universals. This does not of course imply analysis and definition; it is only because some universals are understood without definition that others are understood by definition.

Let us apply these distinctions to the question under discussion. The reason why no appeal to such words as 'now,' 'this,' 'my,' etc., satisfies the intellect is not because the

notions involved are incommunicable. For, if this were all, each one of us at least, since we profess to know what we mean when we use these words, could satisfy his own intellect with these notions. The reason is that though the words stand for something what they are used to stand for is not a universal. One result of this of course is that we cannot communicate what they stand for, but the important result is that they stand for what cannot be understood even by each man for himself, just because it is a particular and not a universal or proposition. (It is of course no answer to this that such words *also* stand for universals, and that, in this sense, the notion is intelligible and communicable. For they are then ambiguous and are no longer names of particulars.) And I might put what I take to be Mr. Bradley's difficulty as follows. The intellect wants to understand Reality as a whole. But it can only understand such things as universals and propositions; and we know that Reality does not consist wholly of such things. I may add that the intellect would not be satisfied in this sense even if it could know reality perfectly in the sense of being acquainted with it and knowing all true propositions about it. For this is an attempt to fill a qualitative gap quantitatively. Moreover the notion of perfect knowledge in this sense is invalid, because the totality of all true propositions is a vicious one.

I hasten to say that this may very well not be what Mr. Bradley means. And, at any rate, the reference to reality as a whole does not seem to me essential. Let us take a perceived object and make as many judgments as we like about it; such as, This is red, this is triangular, etc. In a sense we are not going outside what we are acquainted with in perception, and, in a sense, we are continually getting to know it better as we make more and more judgments about it. Yet we know that we can never exhaust the 'this' by such a process. And this does not merely mean that the detail is infinite and that we cannot therefore in practice exhaust it; what is left is not merely a mass of more of the same kind as what is taken. When we analysed we wanted (*a*) to get what we can understand, and (*b*) to get nothing but what is already present in what we were acquainted with at the beginning; for it is *that* which we set out to understand. And the difficulty is that what we understand (the universals) was not *as such* present in what we were acquainted with; how then can we say that we end by understanding that very thing which we began by being acquainted with? The predicates discovered by thought are not parts that were present all along in what I am acquainted

with; rather it is related in a certain way to them, is an instance of them. So our attempt to analyse $x$ and understand it has only led us to a larger whole of which one element ($x$) remains unintelligible; and the other elements (the universals) are intelligible; whilst the constitution of this whole, as of all others, cannot be fully understood by thought. To put the last difficulty more explicibly. Suppose I am aware of a whole, and, as we say, analyse it into $a$, $b$, and a relation R. I judge the proposition $aRb$. Then either this does or does not contain all the same terms as the original whole. If not, how can I be said to understand that whole? But, if so, still the terms $a$ and $b$ and the relation R constitute a a different unity as forming the proposition $aRb$, and as forming the perceived whole, which is not a proposition. What I *started to understand was the perceived whole*; what I end by understanding (in so far as I can do this while the subject remains merely given) is the propositional whole.

I do not know whether I have really followed Mr. Bradley in all this. The difficulty to me seems to be that we want to understand everything as we can only understand universals, and that there are other things than universals. Our failure to reach this goal should not I think be expressed by saying that no judgment is quite true, when partial truth is ascribed to all propositions. The word in the one use has a totally different meaning from what it has in the other; *no* proposition whose subject is not a universal is *at all* true in the former sense, and no degree of truth in the latter sense brings it any nearer to being true in the former.

There are many other points in Mr. Bradley's book with which I should have liked to deal had space permitted. Especially should I have liked to consider the question of finite centres, which, at present, I doubt if I understand. It would be impertinent for me to praise a work whose author's name is a sufficient guarantee; but I ought to add one word of personal explanation. I have probably often misunderstood Mr. Bradley. I have been brought up in a different philosophic atmosphere, and I know how easy it is to take one's metaphysical prejudices as self-evident principles, I have done my best to avoid this, but I can hardly hope always to have succeeded.