connected with succession can be applied to it, for it is all at once and wholly what it is, 'with the unity of a single instant,' and succession is not of it but in it, for we are continually told that it is 'timeless.'

Things true of the world in its finite aspects, then, are not true of it in its infinite capacity. _Quâ_ finite and plural its accounts of itself to itself are different from what its account to itself _quâ_ infinite and one must be.

With this radical discrepancy between the absolute and the relative points of view, it seems to me that almost as great a bar to intimacy between the divine and the human breaks out in pantheism as that which we found in monarchical theism, and hoped that pantheism might not show. We humans are incurably rooted in the temporal point of view. The eternal's ways are utterly unlike our ways. 'Let us imitate the All,' said the original prospectus of that admirable Chicago quarterly called the 'Monist.' As if we could, either in thought or conduct! We are invincibly parts, let us talk as we will, and must always apprehend the absolute as if it were a foreign being. If what I mean by this is not wholly clear to you at this point, it ought to grow clearer as my lectures proceed.

LECTURE II

MONISTIC IDEALISM

Let me recall to you the programme which I indicated to you at our last meeting. After agreeing not to consider materialism in any shape, but to place ourselves straightway upon a more spiritualistic platform, I pointed out three kinds of spiritual philosophy between which we are asked to choose. The first way was that of the older dualistic theism, with ourselves represented as a secondary order of substances created by God. We found that this allowed of a degree of intimacy with the creative principle inferior to that implied in the pantheistic belief that we are substantially one with it, and that the divine is therefore the most intimate of all our possessions, heart of our heart, in fact. But we saw that this pantheistic belief could be held in two forms, a monistic form which I called philosophy of the absolute, and a pluralistic form which I called radical empiricism, the former conceiving that the divine exists authentically only when the world is experienced all at once in its absolute totality, whereas radical empiricism allows that the absolute sum-total of things may never be actually experienced or realized in that shape at all, and that a disseminated, distributed, or incompletely unified appearance is the only form that reality may yet have achieved.

I may contrast the monistic and pluralistic forms in question as the 'all-form' and the 'each-form.' At the end of the last hour I animadverted on the fact that the all-form is so radically different from the each-form, which is our human form of experiencing the world, that the philosophy of the absolute, so far as insight and understanding go, leaves us almost as much outside of the divine being as dualistic theism does. I believe that radical empiricism, on the contrary, holding to the each-form, and making of God only one of the caches, affords the higher degree of intimacy. The general thesis of these lectures I said would be a defence of the pluralistic against the monistic view. Think of the universe as existing solely in the each-form, and you will have on the whole a more reasonable and satisfactory idea of it than if you insist on the all-form being necessary. The rest of my lectures will do little more than make this thesis more concrete, and I hope more persuasive.

It is curious how little countenance radical pluralism has ever had from philosophers. Whether materialistically or spiritualistically minded, philosophers have always aimed at cleaning up the litter with which the world apparently is filled. They have substituted economical and orderly conceptions for the first sensible tangle; and whether these were morally elevated or only intellectually neat they were at any rate always aesthetically pure and definite, and aimed at ascribing to the world something clean and intellectual in the way of inner structure. As compared with all these rationalizing pictures, the pluralistic empiricism which I profess offers but a sorry appearance. It is a turbid, muddled, gothic sort of an affair, without a sweeping outline and with little pictorial nobility. Those of you who are accustomed to the classical constructions of reality may be excused if your first reaction upon it be absolute contempt--a shrug of the shoulders as if such

ideas were unworthy of explicit refutation. But one must have lived some time with a system to appreciate its merits. Perhaps a little more familiarity may mitigate your first surprise at such a programme as I offer.

First, one word more than what I said last time about the relative foreignness of the divine principle in the philosophy of the absolute. Those of you who have read the last two chapters of Mr. Bradley's wonderful book, 'Appearance and reality,' will remember what an elaborately foreign aspect *his* absolute is finally made to assume. It is neither intelligence nor will, neither a self nor a collection of selves, neither truthful, good, nor beautiful, as we understand these terms. It is, in short, a metaphysical monster, all that we are permitted to say of it being that whatever it is, it is at any rate *worth* more (worth more to itself, that is) than if any eulogistic adjectives of ours applied to it. It is us, and all other appearances, but none of us *as such*, for in it we are all 'transmuted,' and its own as-suchness is of another denomination altogether.

Spinoza was the first great absolutist, and the impossibility of being intimate with *his* God is universally recognized. *Quatenus infinitus est* he is other than what he is *quatenus humanam mentem constituit*. Spinoza's philosophy has been rightly said to be worked by the word *quatenus*. Conjunctions, prepositions, and adverbs play indeed the vital part in all philosophies; and in contemporary idealism the words 'as' and 'quâ' bear the burden of reconciling metaphysical unity with phenomenal diversity. Quâ absolute the world is one and perfect, quâ relative it is many and faulty, yet it is identically the self-same world--instead of talking of it as many facts, we call it one fact in many aspects.

As absolute, then, or *sub specie eternitatis*, or *quatenus infinitus est*, the world repels our sympathy because it has no history. *As such*, the absolute neither acts nor suffers, nor loves nor hates; it has no needs, desires, or aspirations, no failures or successes, friends or enemies, victories or defeats. All such things pertain to the world quâ relative, in which our finite experiences lie, and whose vicissitudes alone have power to arouse our interest. What boots it to tell me that the absolute way is the true way, and to exhort me, as Emerson says, to lift mine eye up to its style, and manners of the sky, if the feat is impossible by definition? I am finite once for all, and all the categories of my sympathy are knit up with the finite world *as such*, and with things that have a history. 'Aus dieser erde quellen meine freuden, und ihre sonne scheinet meinen leiden.' I have neither eyes nor ears nor heart nor mind for anything of an opposite description, and the stagnant felicity of the absolute's own perfection moves me as little as I move it. If we were *readers* only of the cosmic novel, things would be different: we should then share the author's point of view and recognize villains to be as essential as heroes in the plot. But we are not the readers but the very personages of the world-drama. In your own eyes each of you here is its hero, and the villains are your respective friends or enemies. The tale which the absolute reader finds so perfect, we spoil for one another through our several vital identifications with the destinies of the particular personages involved.

The doctrine on which the absolutists lay most stress is the absolute's 'timeless' character. For pluralists, on the other hand, time remains as real as anything, and nothing in the universe is great or static or eternal enough not to have some history. But the world that each of us feels most intimately at home with is that of beings with histories that play into our history, whom we can help in their vicissitudes even as they help us in ours. This satisfaction the absolute denies us; we can neither help nor hinder it, for it stands outside of history. It surely is a merit in a philosophy to make the very life we lead seem real and earnest. Pluralism, in exorcising the absolute, exorcises the great de-realizer of the only life we are at home in, and thus redeems the nature of reality from essential foreignness. Every end, reason, motive, object of desire or aversion, ground of sorrow or joy that we feel is in the world of finite multifariousness, for only in that world does anything really happen, only there do events come to pass.

In one sense this is a far-fetched and rather childish objection, for so much of the history of the finite is as formidably foreign to us as the static absolute can possibly be--in fact that entity derives its own foreignness largely from the bad character of the finite which it simultaneously is--that this sentimental reason for preferring the pluralistic view seems small.[1] I shall return to the subject in my final lecture, and meanwhile, with your permission, I will say no more about this objection. The more so as the necessary foreignness of the

absolute is cancelled emotionally by its attribute of *totality*, which is universally considered to carry the further attribute of *perfection* in its train. 'Philosophy,' says a recent american philosopher, 'is humanity's hold on totality,' and there is no doubt that most of us find that the bare notion of an absolute all-one is inspiring. 'I yielded myself to the perfect whole,' writes Emerson; and where can you find a more mind-dilating object? A certain loyalty is called forth by the idea; even if not proved actual, it must be believed in somehow. Only an enemy of philosophy can speak lightly of it. Rationalism starts from the idea of such a whole and builds downward. Movement and change are absorbed into its immutability as forms of mere appearance. When you accept this beatific vision of what *is*, in contrast with what *goes on*, you feel as if you had fulfilled an intellectual duty. 'Reality is not in its truest nature a process,' Mr. McTaggart tells us, 'but a stable and timeless state.'[2] 'The true knowledge of God begins,' Hegel writes, 'when we know that things as they immediately are have no truth.'[3] 'The consummation of the infinite aim,' he says elsewhere, 'consists merely in removing the illusion which makes it seem yet unaccomplished. Good and absolute goodness is eternally accomplishing itself in the world: and the result is that it needs not wait upon *us*, but is already ... accomplished. It is an illusion under which we live. ... In the course of its process the Idea makes itself that illusion, by setting an antithesis to confront it, and its action consists in getting rid of the illusion which it has created.'[4]

But abstract emotional appeals of any kind sound amateurish in the business that concerns us. Impressionistic philosophizing, like impressionistic watchmaking or land-surveying, is intolerable to experts. Serious discussion of the alternative before us forces me, therefore, to become more technical. The great *claim* of the philosophy of the absolute is that the absolute is no hypothesis, but a presupposition implicated in all thinking, and needing only a little effort of analysis to be seen as a logical necessity. I will therefore take it in this more rigorous character and see whether its claim is in effect so coercive.

It has seemed coercive to an enormous number of contemporaneous thinkers. Professor Henry Jones thus describes the range and influence of it upon the social and political life of the present time:[5] 'For many years adherents of this way of thought have deeply interested the british public by their writings. Almost more important than their writings is the fact that they have occupied philosophical chairs in almost every university in the kingdom. Even the professional critics of idealism are for the most part idealists--after a fashion. And when they are not, they are as a rule more occupied with the refutation of idealism than with the construction of a better theory. It follows from their position of academic authority, were it from nothing else, that idealism exercises an influence not easily measured upon the youth of the nation--upon those, that is, who from the educational opportunities they enjoy may naturally be expected to become the leaders of the nation's thought and practice.... Difficult as it is to measure the forces ... it is hardly to be denied that the power exercised by Bentham and the utilitarian school has, for better or for worse, passed into the hands of the idealists.... "The Rhine has flowed into the Thames" is the warning note rung out by Mr. Hobhouse. Carlyle introduced it, bringing it as far as Chelsea. Then Jowett and Thomas Hill Green, and William Wallace and Lewis Nettleship, and Arnold Toynbee and David Eitchie--to mention only those teachers whose voices now are silent--guided the waters into those upper reaches known locally as the Isis. John and Edward Caird brought them up the Clyde, Hutchison Stirling up the Firth of Forth. They have passed up the Mersey and up the Severn and Dee and Don. They pollute the bay of St. Andrews and swell the waters of the Cam, and have somehow crept overland into Birmingham. The stream of german idealism has been diffused over the academical world of Great Britain. The disaster is universal.'

Evidently if weight of authority were all, the truth of absolutism would be thus decided. But let us first pass in review the general style of argumentation of that philosophy.

As I read it, its favorite way of meeting pluralism and empiricism is by a *reductio ad absurdum* framed somewhat as follows: You contend, it says to the pluralist, that things, though in some respects connected, are in other respects independent, so that they are not members of one all-inclusive individual fact. Well, your position is absurd on either point. For admit in fact the slightest modicum of independence, and you find (if you will only think accurately) that you have to admit more and more of it, until at last nothing but an absolute chaos, or the proved impossibility of any connexion whatever between the parts of the universe,

remains upon your hands. Admit, on the other hand, the most incipient minimum of relation between any two things, and again you can't stop until you see that the absolute unity of all things is implied.

If we take the latter *reductio ad absurdum* first, we find a good example of it in Lotze's well-known proof of monism from the fact of interaction between finite things. Suppose, Lotze says in effect, and for simplicity's sake I have to paraphrase him, for his own words are too long to quote--many distinct beings _a, b, c_, etc., to exist independently of each other: _can a in that case ever act on b_?

What is it to act? Is it not to exert an influence? Does the influence detach itself from *a* and find _b_? If so, it is a third fact, and the problem is not how *a* acts, but how its 'influence' acts on *b*. By another influence perhaps? And how in the end does the chain of influences find *b* rather than *c* unless *b* is somehow prefigured in them already? And when they have found *b*, how do they make *b* respond, if *b* has nothing in common with them? Why don't they go right through _b_? The change in *b* is a *response*, due to _b_'s capacity for taking account of _a_'s influence, and that again seems to prove that _b_'s nature is somehow fitted to _a_'s nature in advance. *A* and *b*, in short, are not really as distinct as we at first supposed them, not separated by a void. Were this so they would be mutually impenetrable, or at least mutually irrelevant. They would form two universes each living by itself, making no difference to each other, taking no account of each other, much as the universe of your day dreams takes no account of mine. They must therefore belong together beforehand, be co-implicated already, their natures must have an inborn mutual reference each to each.

Lotze's own solution runs as follows: The multiple independent things supposed cannot be real in that shape, but all of them, if reciprocal action is to be possible between them, must be regarded as parts of a single real being, M. The pluralism with which our view began has to give place to a monism; and the 'transeunt' interaction, being unintelligible as such, is to be understood as an immanent operation.[6]

The words 'immanent operation' seem here to mean that the single real being M, of which *a* and *b* are members, is the only thing that changes, and that when it changes, it changes inwardly and all over at once. When part *a* in it changes, consequently, part *b* must also change, but without the whole M changing this would not occur.

A pretty argument, but a purely verbal one, as I apprehend it. *Call* your *a* and *b* distinct, they can't interact; *call* them one, they can. For taken abstractly and without qualification the words 'distinct' and 'independent' suggest only disconnection. If this be the only property of your *a* and *b* (and it is the only property your words imply), then of course, since you can't deduce their mutual influence from *it*, you can find no ground of its occurring between them. Your bare word 'separate,' contradicting your bare word 'joined,' seems to exclude connexion.

Lotze's remedy for the impossibility thus verbally found is to change the first word. If, instead of calling *a* and *b* independent, we now call them 'interdependent,' 'united,' or 'one,' he says, *these* words do not contradict any sort of mutual influence that may be proposed. If *a* and *b* are 'one,' and the one changes, *a* and *b* of course must co-ordinately change. What under the old name they couldn't do, they now have license to do under the new name.

But I ask you whether giving the name of 'one' to the former 'many' makes us really understand the modus operandi of interaction any better. We have now given verbal permission to the many to change all together, if they can; we have removed a verbal impossibility and substituted a verbal possibility, but the new name, with the possibility it suggests, tells us nothing of the actual process by which real things that are one can and do change at all. In point of fact abstract oneness as such _doesn't_ change, neither has it parts--any more than abstract independence as such interacts. But then neither abstract oneness nor abstract independence _exists_; only concrete real things exist, which add to these properties the other properties which they possess, to make up what we call their total nature. To construe any one of their abstract names as *making their total nature impossible* is a misuse of the function of naming. The real way of rescue from the abstract consequences of

one name is not to fly to an opposite name, equally abstract, but rather to correct the first name by qualifying adjectives that restore some concreteness to the case. Don't take your 'independence' *simpliciter*, as Lotze does, take it *secundum quid*. Only when we know what the process of interaction literally and concretely *consists* in can we tell whether beings independent *in definite respects*, distinct, for example, in origin, separate in place, different in kind, etc., can or cannot interact.

The treating of a name as excluding from the fact named what the name's definition fails positively to include, is what I call 'vicious intellectualism.' Later I shall have more to say about this intellectualism, but that Lotze's argument is tainted by it I hardly think we can deny. As well might you contend (to use an instance from Sigwart) that a person whom you have once called an 'equestrian' is thereby forever made unable to walk on his own feet.

I almost feel as if I should apologize for criticising such subtle arguments in rapid lectures of this kind. The criticisms have to be as abstract as the arguments, and in exposing their unreality, take on such an unreal sound themselves that a hearer not nursed in the intellectualist atmosphere knows not which of them to accuse. But _le vin est versé, il faut le boire_, and I must cite a couple more instances before I stop.

If we are empiricists and go from parts to wholes, we believe that beings may first exist and feed so to speak on their own existence, and then secondarily become known to one another. But philosophers of the absolute tell us that such independence of being from being known would, if once admitted, disintegrate the universe beyond all hope of mending. The argument is one of Professor Royce's proofs that the only alternative we have is to choose the complete disunion of all things or their complete union in the absolute One.

Take, for instance, the proverb 'a cat may look at a king' and adopt the realistic view that the king's being is independent of the cat's witnessing. This assumption, which amounts to saying that it need make no essential difference to the royal object whether the feline subject cognizes him or not, that the cat may look away from him or may even be annihilated, and the king remain unchanged,--this assumption, I say, is considered by my ingenious colleague to lead to the absurd practical consequence that the two beings *can* never later acquire any possible linkages or connexions, but must remain eternally as if in different worlds. For suppose any connexion whatever to ensue, this connexion would simply be a third being additional to the cat and the king, which would itself have to be linked to both by additional links before it could connect them, and so on *ad infinitum*, the argument, you see, being the same as Lotze's about how _a_'s influence does its influencing when it influences *b*.

In Royce's own words, if the king can be without the cat knowing him, then king and cat 'can have no common features, no ties, no true relations; they are separated, each from the other, by absolutely impassable chasms. They can never come to get either ties or community of nature; they are not in the same space, nor in the same time, nor in the same natural or spiritual order.'[7] They form in short two unrelated universes,--which is the *reductio ad absurdum* required.

To escape this preposterous state of things we must accordingly revoke the original hypothesis. The king and the cat are not indifferent to each other in the way supposed. But if not in that way, then in no way, for connexion in that way carries connexion in other ways; so that, pursuing the reverse line of reasoning, we end with the absolute itself as the smallest fact that can exist. Cat and king are co-involved, they are a single fact in two names, they can never have been absent from each other, and they are both equally co-implicated with all the other facts of which the universe consists.

Professor Royce's proof that whoso admits the cat's witnessing the king at all must thereupon admit the integral absolute, may be briefly put as follows:--

First, to know the king, the cat must intend *that* king, must somehow pass over and lay hold of him individually and specifically. The cat's idea, in short, must transcend the cat's own separate mind and

somehow include the king, for were the king utterly outside and independent of the cat, the cat's pure other, the beast's mind could touch the king in no wise. This makes the cat much less distinct from the king than we had at first naïvely supposed. There must be some prior continuity between them, which continuity Royce interprets idealistically as meaning a higher mind that owns them both as objects, and owning them can also own any relation, such as the supposed witnessing, that may obtain between them. Taken purely pluralistically, neither of them can own any part of a *between*, because, so taken, each is supposed shut up to itself: the fact of a *between* thus commits us to a higher knower.

But the higher knower that knows the two beings we start with proves to be the same knower that knows everything else. For assume any third being, the queen, say, and as the cat knew the king, so let the king know his queen, and let this second knowledge, by the same reasoning, require a higher knower as its presupposition. That knower of the king's knowing must, it is now contended, be the same higher knower that was required for the cat's knowing; for if you suppose otherwise, you have no longer the *same king*. This may not seem immediately obvious, but if you follow the intellectualistic logic employed in all these reasonings, I don't see how you can escape the admission. If it be true that the independent or indifferent cannot be related, for the abstract words 'independent' or 'indifferent' as such imply no relation, then it is just as true that the king known by the cat cannot be the king that knows the queen, for taken merely 'as such,' the abstract term 'what the cat knows' and the abstract term 'what knows the queen' are logically distinct. The king thus logically breaks into two kings, with nothing to connect them, until a higher knower is introduced to recognize them as the self-same king concerned in any previous acts of knowledge which he may have brought about. This he can do because he possesses all the terms as his own objects and can treat them as he will. Add any fourth or fifth term, and you get a like result, and so on, until at last an all-owning knower, otherwise called the absolute, is reached. The co-implicated 'through-and-through' world of monism thus stands proved by irrefutable logic, and all pluralism appears as absurd.

The reasoning is pleasing from its ingenuity, and it is almost a pity that so straight a bridge from abstract logic to concrete fact should not bear our weight. To have the alternative forced upon us of admitting either finite things each cut off from all relation with its environment, or else of accepting the integral absolute with no environment and all relations packed within itself, would be too delicious a simplification. But the purely verbal character of the operation is undisguised. Because the *names* of finite things and their relations are disjoined, it doesn't follow that the realities named need a *deus ex machina* from on high to conjoin them. The same things disjoined in one respect *appear* as conjoined in another. Naming the disjunction doesn't debar us from also naming the conjunction in a later modifying statement, for the two are absolutely co-ordinate elements in the finite tissue of experience. When at Athens it was found self-contradictory that a boy could be both tall and short (tall namely in respect of a child, short in respect of a man), the absolute had not yet been thought of, but it might just as well have been invoked by Socrates as by Lotze or Royce, as a relief from his peculiar intellectualistic difficulty.

Everywhere we find rationalists using the same kind of reasoning. The primal whole which is their vision must be there not only as a fact but as a logical necessity. It must be the minimum that can exist--either that absolute whole is there, or there is absolutely nothing. The logical proof alleged of the irrationality of supposing otherwise, is that you can deny the whole only in words that implicitly assert it. If you say 'parts,' of *what* are they parts? If you call them a 'many,' that very word unifies them. If you suppose them unrelated in any particular respect, that 'respect' connects them; and so on. In short you fall into hopeless contradiction. You must stay either at one extreme or the other.[8] 'Partly this and partly that,' partly rational, for instance, and partly irrational, is no admissible description of the world. If rationality be in it at all, it must be in it throughout; if irrationality be in it anywhere, that also must pervade it throughout. It must be wholly rational or wholly irrational, pure universe or pure multiverse or nulliverse; and reduced to this violent alternative, no one's choice ought long to remain doubtful. The individual absolute, with its parts co-implicated through and through, so that there is nothing in any part by which any other part can remain inwardly unaffected, is the only rational supposition. Connexions of an external sort, by which the many became merely continuous instead of being consubstantial, would be an irrational supposition.

Mr. Bradley is the pattern champion of this philosophy *in extremis*, as one might call it, for he shows an intolerance to pluralism so extreme that I fancy few of his readers have been able fully to share it. His reasoning exemplifies everywhere what I call the vice of intellectualism, for abstract terms are used by him as positively excluding all that their definition fails to include. Some Greek sophists could deny that we may say that man is good, for man, they said, means only man, and good means only good, and the word *is* can't be construed to identify such disparate meanings. Mr. Bradley revels in the same type of argument. No adjective can rationally qualify a substantive, he thinks, for if distinct from the substantive, it can't be united with it; and if not distinct, there is only one thing there, and nothing left to unite. Our whole pluralistic procedure in using subjects and predicates as we do is fundamentally irrational, an example of the desperation of our finite intellectual estate, infected and undermined as that is by the separatist discursive forms which are our only categories, but which absolute reality must somehow absorb into its unity and overcome.

Readers of 'Appearance and reality' will remember how Mr. Bradley suffers from a difficulty identical with that to which Lotze and Royce fall a prey--how shall an influence influence? how shall a relation relate? Any conjunctive relation between two phenomenal experiences *a* and *b* must, in the intellectualist philosophy of these authors, be itself a third entity; and as such, instead of bridging the one original chasm, it can only create two smaller chasms, each to be freshly bridged. Instead of hooking *a* to *b*, it needs itself to be hooked by a fresh relation _r'_ to *a* and by another _r"_ to *b*. These new relations are but two more entities which themselves require to be hitched in turn by four still newer relations--so behold the vertiginous *regressus ad infinitum* in full career.

Since a *regressus ad infinitum* is deemed absurd, the notion that relations come 'between' their terms must be given up. No mere external go-between can logically connect. What occurs must be more intimate. The hooking must be a penetration, a possession. The relation must *involve* the terms, each term must involve *it*, and merging thus their being in it, they must somehow merge their being in each other, tho, as they seem still phenomenally so separate, we can never conceive exactly how it is that they are inwardly one. The absolute, however, must be supposed able to perform the unifying feat in his own inscrutable fashion.

In old times, whenever a philosopher was assailed for some particularly tough absurdity in his system, he was wont to parry the attack by the argument from the divine omnipotence. 'Do you mean to limit God's power?' he would reply: 'do you mean to say that God could not, if he would, do this or that?' This retort was supposed to close the mouths of all objectors of properly decorous mind. The functions of the bradleian absolute are in this particular identical with those of the theistic God. Suppositions treated as too absurd to pass muster in the finite world which we inhabit, the absolute must be able to make good 'somehow' in his ineffable way. First we hear Mr. Bradley convicting things of absurdity; next, calling on the absolute to vouch for them _quand même_. Invoked for no other duty, that duty it must and shall perform.

The strangest discontinuity of our world of appearance with the supposed world of absolute reality is asserted both by Bradley and by Royce; and both writers, the latter with great ingenuity, seek to soften the violence of the jolt. But it remains violent all the same, and is felt to be so by most readers. Whoever feels the violence strongly sees as on a diagram in just what the peculiarity of all this philosophy of the absolute consists. First, there is a healthy faith that the world must be rational and self-consistent. 'All science, all real knowledge, all experience presuppose,' as Mr. Ritchie writes, 'a coherent universe.' Next, we find a loyal clinging to the rationalist belief that sense-data and their associations are incoherent, and that only in substituting a conceptual order for their order can truth be found. Third, the substituted conceptions are treated intellectualistically, that is as mutually exclusive and discontinuous, so that the first innocent continuity of the flow of sense-experience is shattered for us without any higher conceptual continuity taking its place. Finally, since this broken state of things is intolerable, the absolute *deus ex machina* is called on to mend it in his own way, since we cannot mend it in ours.

Any other picture than this of post-kantian absolutism I am unable to frame. I see the intellectualistic criticism destroying the immediately given coherence of the phenomenal world, but unable to make its own conceptual

substitutes cohere, and I see the resort to the absolute for a coherence of a higher type. The situation has dramatic liveliness, but it is inwardly incoherent throughout, and the question inevitably comes up whether a mistake may not somewhere have crept in in the process that has brought it about. May not the remedy lie rather in revising the intellectualist criticism than in first adopting it and then trying to undo its consequences by an arbitrary act of faith in an unintelligible agent. May not the flux of sensible experience itself contain a rationality that has been overlooked, so that the real remedy would consist in harking back to it more intelligently, and not in advancing in the opposite direction away from it and even away beyond the intellectualist criticism that disintegrates it, to the pseudo-rationality of the supposed absolute point of view. I myself believe that this is the real way to keep rationality in the world, and that the traditional rationalism has always been facing in the wrong direction. I hope in the end to make you share, or at any rate respect, this belief, but there is much to talk of before we get to that point.

I employed the word 'violent' just now in describing the dramatic situation in which it pleases the philosophy of the absolute to make its camp. I don't see how any one can help being struck in absolutist writings by that curious tendency to fly to violent extremes of which I have already said a word. The universe must be rational; well and good; but *how* rational? in what sense of that eulogistic but ambiguous word?--this would seem to be the next point to bring up. There are surely degrees in rationality that might be discriminated and described. Things can be consistent or coherent in very diverse ways. But no more in its conception of rationality than in its conception of relations can the monistic mind suffer the notion of more or less. Rationality is one and indivisible: if not rational thus indivisibly, the universe must be completely irrational, and no shadings or mixtures or compromises can obtain. Mr. McTaggart writes, in discussing the notion of a mixture: 'The two principles, of rationality and irrationality, to which the universe is then referred, will have to be absolutely separate and independent. For if there were any common unity to which they should be referred, it would be that unity and not its two manifestations which would be the ultimate explanation ... and the theory, having thus become monistic,'[9] would resolve itself into the same alternative once more: is the single principle rational through and through or not?

'Can a plurality of reals be possible?' asks Mr. Bradley, and answers, 'No, impossible.' For it would mean a number of beings not dependent on each other, and this independence their plurality would contradict. For to be 'many' is to be related, the word having no meaning unless the units are somehow taken together, and it is impossible to take them in a sort of unreal void, so they must belong to a larger reality, and so carry the essence of the units beyond their proper selves, into a whole which possesses unity and is a larger system.[10] Either absolute independence or absolute mutual dependence--this, then, is the only alternative allowed by these thinkers. Of course 'independence,' if absolute, would be preposterous, so the only conclusion allowable is that, in Ritchie's words, 'every single event is ultimately related to every other, and determined by the whole to which it belongs.' The whole complete block-universe through-and-through, therefore, or no universe at all!

Professor Taylor is so _naïf_ in this habit of thinking only in extremes that he charges the pluralists with cutting the ground from under their own feet in not consistently following it themselves. What pluralists say is that a universe really connected loosely, after the pattern of our daily experience, is possible, and that for certain reasons it is the hypothesis to be preferred. What Professor Taylor thinks they naturally must or should say is that any other sort of universe is logically impossible, and that a totality of things interrelated like the world of the monists is not an hypothesis that can be seriously thought out at all.[11]

Meanwhile no sensible pluralist ever flies or wants to fly to this dogmatic extreme.

If chance is spoken of as an ingredient of the universe, absolutists interpret it to mean that double sevens are as likely to be thrown out of a dice box as double sixes are. If free-will is spoken of, that must mean that an english general is as likely to eat his prisoners to-day as a Maori chief was a hundred years ago. It is as likely--I am using Mr. McTaggart's examples--that a majority of Londoners will burn themselves alive to-morrow as that they will partake of food, as likely that I shall be hanged for brushing my hair as for committing a murder,[12] and so forth, through various suppositions that no indeterminist ever sees real

reason to make.

This habit of thinking only in the most violent extremes reminds me of what Mr. Wells says of the current objections to socialism, in his wonderful little book, 'New worlds for old.' The commonest vice of the human mind is its disposition to see everything as yes or no, as black or white, its incapacity for discrimination of intermediate shades. So the critics agree to some hard and fast impossible definition of socialism, and extract absurdities from it as a conjurer gets rabbits from a hat. Socialism abolishes property, abolishes the family, and the rest. The method, Mr. Wells continues, is always the same: It is to assume that whatever the socialist postulates as desirable is wanted without limit of qualification,--for socialist read pluralist and the parallel holds good,--it is to imagine that whatever proposal is made by him is to be carried out by uncontrolled monomaniacs, and so to make a picture of the socialist dream which can be presented to the simple-minded person in doubt--'This is socialism'--or pluralism, as the case may be. 'Surely!--SURELY! you don't want _this!_'

How often have I been replied to, when expressing doubts of the logical necessity of the absolute, of flying to the opposite extreme: 'But surely, SURELY there must be *some* connexion among things!' As if I must necessarily be an uncontrolled monomanic insanely denying any connexion whatever. The whole question revolves in very truth about the word 'some.' Radical empiricism and pluralism stand out for the legitimacy of the notion of _some_: each part of the world is in some ways connected, in some other ways not connected with its other parts, and the ways can be discriminated, for many of them are obvious, and their differences are obvious to view. Absolutism, on its side, seems to hold that 'some' is a category ruinously infected with self-contradictoriness, and that the only categories inwardly consistent and therefore pertinent to reality are 'all' and 'none.'

The question runs into the still more general one with which Mr. Bradley and later writers of the monistic school have made us abundantly familiar--the question, namely, whether all the relations with other things, possible to a being, are pre-included in its intrinsic nature and enter into its essence, or whether, in respect to some of these relations, it can *be* without reference to them, and, if it ever does enter into them, do so adventitiously and as it were by an after-thought. This is the great question as to whether 'external' relations can exist. They seem to, undoubtedly. My manuscript, for example, is 'on' the desk. The relation of being 'on' doesn't seem to implicate or involve in any way the inner meaning of the manuscript or the inner structure of the desk--these objects engage in it only by their outsides, it seems only a temporary accident in their respective histories. Moreover, the 'on' fails to appear to our senses as one of those unintelligible 'betweens' that have to be separately hooked on the terms they pretend to connect. All this innocent sense-appearance, however, we are told, cannot pass muster in the eyes of reason. It is a tissue of self-contradiction which only the complete absorption of the desk and the manuscript into the higher unity of a more absolute reality can overcome.

The reasoning by which this conclusion is supported is too subtle and complicated to be properly dealt with in a public lecture, and you will thank me for not inviting you to consider it at all.[13] I feel the more free to pass it by now as I think that the cursory account of the absolutistic attitude which I have already given is sufficient for our present purpose, and that my own verdict on the philosophy of the absolute as 'not proven'--please observe that I go no farther now--need not be backed by argument at every special point. Flanking operations are less costly and in some ways more effective than frontal attacks. Possibly you will yourselves think after hearing my remaining lectures that the alternative of an universe absolutely rational or absolutely irrational is forced and strained, and that a *via media* exists which some of you may agree with me is to be preferred. *Some* rationality certainly does characterize our universe; and, weighing one kind with another, we may deem that the incomplete kinds that appear are on the whole as acceptable as the through-and-through sort of rationality on which the monistic systematizers insist.

All the said systematizers who have written since Hegel have owed their inspiration largely to him. Even when they have found no use for his particular triadic dialectic, they have drawn confidence and courage from

his authoritative and conquering tone. I have said nothing about Hegel in this lecture, so I must repair the omission in the next.

LECTURE III

HEGEL AND HIS METHOD

Directly or indirectly, that strange and powerful genius Hegel has done more to strengthen idealistic pantheism in thoughtful circles than all other influences put together. I must talk a little about him before drawing my final conclusions about the cogency of the arguments for the absolute. In no philosophy is the fact that a philosopher's vision and the technique he uses in proof of it are two different things more palpably evident than in Hegel. The vision in his case was that of a world in which reason holds all things in solution and accounts for all the irrationality that superficially appears by taking it up as a 'moment' into itself. This vision was so intense in Hegel, and the tone of authority with which he spoke from out of the midst of it was so weighty, that the impression he made has never been effaced. Once dilated to the scale of the master's eye, the disciples' sight could not contract to any lesser prospect. The technique which Hegel used to prove his vision was the so-called dialectic method, but here his fortune has been quite contrary. Hardly a recent disciple has felt his particular applications of the method to be satisfactory. Many have let them drop entirely, treating them rather as a sort of provisional stop-gap, symbolic of what might some day prove possible of execution, but having no literal cogency or value now. Yet these very same disciples hold to the vision itself as a revelation that can never pass away. The case is curious and worthy of our study.

It is still more curious in that these same disciples, altho they are usually willing to abandon any particular instance of the dialectic method to its critics, are unshakably sure that in some shape the dialectic method is the key to truth. What, then, is the dialectic method? It is itself a part of the hegelian vision or intuition, and a part that finds the strongest echo in empiricism and common sense. Great injustice is done to Hegel by treating him as primarily a reasoner. He is in reality a naïvely observant man, only beset with a perverse preference for the use of technical and logical jargon. He plants himself in the empirical flux of things and gets the impression of what happens. His mind is in very truth _impressionistic_; and his thought, when once you put yourself at the animating centre of it, is the easiest thing in the world to catch the pulse of and to follow.

Any author is easy if you can catch the centre of his vision. From the centre in Hegel come those towering sentences of his that are comparable only to Luther's, as where, speaking of the ontological proof of God's existence from the concept of him as the *ens perfectissimum* to which no attribute can be lacking, he says: 'It would be strange if the Notion, the very heart of the mind, or, in a word, the concrete totality we call God, were not rich enough to embrace so poor a category as Being, the very poorest and most abstract of all--for nothing can be more insignificant than Being.' But if Hegel's central thought is easy to catch, his abominable habits of speech make his application of it to details exceedingly difficult to follow. His passion for the slipshod in the way of sentences, his unprincipled playing fast and loose with terms; his dreadful vocabulary, calling what completes a thing its 'negation,' for example; his systematic refusal to let you know whether he is talking logic or physics or psychology, his whole deliberately adopted policy of ambiguity and vagueness, in short: all these things make his present-day readers wish to tear their hair--or his--out in desperation. Like Byron's corsair, he has left a name 'to other times, linked with one virtue and a thousand crimes.'

The virtue was the vision, which was really in two parts. The first part was that reason is all-inclusive, the second was that things are 'dialectic.' Let me say a word about this second part of Hegel's vision.

The impression that any _naïf_ person gets who plants himself innocently in the flux of things is that things are off their balance. Whatever equilibriums our finite experiences attain to are but provisional. Martinique volcanoes shatter our wordsworthian equilibrium with nature. Accidents, either moral, mental, or physical, break up the slowly built-up equilibriums men reach in family life and in their civic and professional relations.