

Volume IV.
Number 4.

July, 1895.

Whole
Number 22.

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

THE ABSOLUTE AND THE TIME-PROCESS.

I.

THERE are, I think, clear indications that the reign of Agnosticism is almost over. That phase of thought, which is based upon the fundamental contradiction that we know the Absolute to be unknowable, has drawn its main support from a rejection of the preconceptions of traditional theology and an affirmation of the validity of the scientific view of the world as under the dominion of inviolable law. Agnosticism, however, has itself been the victim of a preconception, the preconception that the scientific view of the world is ultimate, or at least that it is the ultimate view of which man, or man at the present stage of his knowledge, alone is capable. It is therefore a hopeful sign that there has recently been so much speculation upon the nature of that Absolute which Agnosticism declares to be unknowable. Such discussions as those of Mr. McTaggart on "Time and the Hegelian Dialectic,"¹ with the criticisms which they have called forth, and, above all, the publication of Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, show that she who was "of old called the Queen of the Sciences," still exercises her fascination over men's minds.

Mr. Bradley, if I rightly understand him, starts from the conviction that the world must be a self-consistent Unity, and must therefore somehow be the reconciliation of all the contradictions which beset our various ways of viewing the world. He is unable to accept as ultimate the self-contradic-

¹ *Mind*, vol. ii, N S. 490-504; vol. iii, 190-207.