Discussions.

229

which it really exists, viz., in the complication of its real context, is not too common, and there is no insult implied in doubting whether the champions of a new and exciting gospel have altogether acquired it. The same difficulty arises as to challenging the fundamental assumption of others. We say that, in the analysis of experience, we do far more than challenge assumptions; we exhibit in detail the limitations and confusions of the ideas under examination by the same process by which every hypothesis or proposition, it matters not whether assumption, axiom, principle, or induction, is made to show itself equal or unequal to the demands of experience. But though for science our method is the only one, for effective controversy it is undoubtedly too laborious; and we are not surprised that our circle of readers is limited.

It is more than time to conclude. My answer to the charge against me is, in brief, that there is not yet in this country any appreciable body of high-class socialistic literature, by which to test the view that, when purified and developed, Socialism will be Socialism still. My critics' references to the future for their evidence are too remarkable to escape notice. Nothing of all the practical changes to which Mr. Ball refers has any distinctive connection with Socialism. When the promised literature and the new policy are developed, it will be time to see, first, whether they are rational, and, secondly, whether they are socialistic. In the mean time, we claim that no principle is known except in its concrete development, and that the careful and persistent analysis of the developments is the only method by which principles can be established or refuted. And we are always ready for discussion, except when it seems unwelcome to those who invite us.

BERNARD BOSANQUET.

LONDON.

CONCLUDING NOTE.

I have no desire to extend or magnify controversy. Readers of my article must have realized that I was attacking false prophets of Socialism as much as, or even more than, their critic. The difference between Mr. Bosanquet and myself is partly a difference of emphasis, partly a difference in method of interpretation. I admit that the signs of Socialism are not altogether on my side of the controversy: my wish is father, perhaps, to my idea of Socialism, and I can only hope that the future may prove to be on my side rather than on that of my critic. That is also Mr. Bosanquet's hope,
although it is clearly not his expectation. He has the advantage of me in the present. He will, I am sure, not grudge to me any triumph the future may have in store for my view. It is to the future, at any rate, that I desire to adjourn the present controversy. And the readers of this JOURNAL, however much I may have taxed their patience, will at any rate recognize the service I have done them in drawing Mr. Bosanquet into the field of discussion. That is the only excuse I can offer for the polemical form into which I threw what was meant for a philosophical contribution towards the understanding of Collectivist tendencies. At the same time I indulged the privilege of a philosopher in putting the idea of Collectivism at its best, but φύσιν ἔχει πράξει λέξεως ἢττον ἀληθείας ἐφάπτεσθαι.

SIDNEY BALL.

"THE MORAL ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM."

I do not desire to take any part in this interesting discussion, in which I find myself, in the main, in agreement with Mr. Ball. But there is one small point on which I should be glad to be enlightened. Mr. Brocklehurst (p. 94) disclaims the rôle of prophet, and thinks that it is wiser "to give no response to those who demand cut-and-dried schemes of the new social state." I think so, too; and I am glad to find that, so far as my experience goes, most of the leading exponents of Socialism in this country concur with this attitude. What I do not understand is the possibility of combining this position with a definite belief in the socialistic ideal as opposed to all others. My own view is that, in all probability, it will be found desirable, in the near future, to introduce a considerably greater amount of collective control in various directions than is at present exercised, while probably in some other directions a greater amount of individual freedom and a more general recognition of individual responsibility will be found desirable. I think it is possible to some extent to anticipate the nature of the provinces of social life within which these different lines of development are likely to occur; and, by means of this anticipation, it is possible, to a considerable extent, to help the development forward. Hence I might describe myself as a Socialist with respect to certain lines of development, and an Individualist with respect to others; and in both cases with the reservation that, after the