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THE JOURNAL

OF

SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY.

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No. 1.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

In entering upon a new volume it is proper that we should review our position and endeavor to state the central question more clearly. Not much good can be expected from reading what purports to be an answer to a question that no one has asked. The reader must have the question continually before him, if he would read the answer intelligently. It is very easy to illustrate this remark: let one read the commentaries of Plato and he will find many of the dialogues pronounced incomplete, because they end negatively. The modern commentator asks questions that Plato did not entertain. In one sense they are incomplete, but so are all of the dialogues if judged by the same standard. The full treatment of a subject should have three stages:—(a) immediateness, (b) mediation, (c) absolute mediation. More explicitly, it should be treated first in its most obvious phases, such, for example, as occur in the sensuous knowing. Then follows the treatment of the same object in its complication with other objects; its relations, pre-suppositions, consequences, &c. This is called the *reflective* stage, and our formal logic has carefully gathered up the "laws" that govern it. The final stage of an exhaustive scientific treatment traces the object back to itself, having grasped it as a totality. "Absolute Mediation" means *self-mediation*. Plato has not given us a single example of a systematic

combination of these three forms of treatment. The reason for this is found in the fact that the Grecian national culture had not advanced far into the reflective stage. A child of eight years in our time is more conscious of the abstract nature of the words he uses than the average adult Greek of Plato's time. Therefore Plato does not unfold the second stage so fully as a modern would do. Sometimes, too, his dialogue has for object the production in the minds of his countrymen of just that consciousness of the distinctions of reflection which we possess from childhood. His questions therefore proceeded from his time; all speculation should be directed to the solution of the world before us. Plato solved the problem of his time, and we must take his questions with their limitations or else mistake the purport of his answers. He arrives at the highest goal, but his details are not full enough to satisfy us; he solves by his dialectic only such forms as had begun to appear in that time. The two thousand years that intervene have brought out a host of others which demand solution likewise. Other speculative writers—especially those of modern times—do not often attempt exhaustiveness. They aim to express their *aperçu* in the clearest mode; hence they state their starting point, (which is some conviction resting on a distinction of reflection,) and then proceed to elevate them-

NOMINALISM versus REALISM.

[We print below some strictures upon the position assumed in our last number with reference to M. Janet's version of Hegel's doctrine of the "Becoming." We hope that these acute statements which have been written, for the most part, in the form of queries, will receive a careful reading, especially by those who have differed from our own views hitherto expressed. They seem to us the most profound and compendious statement of the anti-speculative standpoint as related to the Science of Pure Thought (*Prima Philosophia*), that we have seen. But for this very reason we are fain to believe that the defects of the formalism relied upon are all the more visible. We have endeavored to answer these queries with the same spirit of candor that animates their author.—Editor.]

Mr. Editor of the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*:

I should like to make some inquiries in regard to your meaning in the paragraph beginning "Being is the pure Simple," vol. i., p. 255.

I will begin by stating how much of it I already understand, as I believe. I understand that 'Being' and 'Nothing' as used by you, are two abstract, and not two general terms. That Being is the abstraction belonging in common and exclusively to the objects of the concrete term, whose extension is unlimited or all-embracing, and whose comprehension is null. I understand that you use Nothing, also, as an abstract term=nothingness; for otherwise to say that Being is Nothing, is like saying that humanity is non-man, and does not imply at all that Being is in any opposition with itself, since it would only say 'Das Sein ist nicht Seiendes,' not 'Sein ist nicht Sein.' By Nothing, then, I understand the abstract term corresponding to a (possible) concrete term, which is the logical contradictory of the concrete term corresponding to 'Being.' And since the logical contradictory of any term has no extension in common with that term, the concrete nothing is the term which has no extension. I understand, that, when you say 'Being has no content,' and 'Being is wholly undetermined,' you mean, simply, that its corresponding concrete has no logical comprehension; or, at least, that what you mean follows from this, and this, conversely, from what you mean.

I come now to what I do not understand, and I have some questions to ask, which I have endeavored so to state that all can see that the Hegelian is bound to answer them, for they simply ask what you mean, whether this or that; they simply ask you to be explicit upon points upon which you have used ambiguous expressions. They are not put forward as arguments, however, but only as inquiries.

1. Abstract terms, according to the doctrine of modern times, are only a device for expressing in another way the meaning of concrete terms. To say that whiteness inheres in an object, is the same as to say

that an object is white. To say that whiteness is a color, is the same as to say that the white is colored, and that this is implied in the very meanings of the words.

But, you will undoubtedly admit that there is a difference between a hundred dollars in my pocket, *Being* or *not Being*, and so in any other particular case. You, therefore, admit that there is nothing which is, which is also not. Therefore, it follows that *what is*, and *what is not*, are mutually exclusive and not coextensive.

Since, then, you nevertheless say that the corresponding abstractions, Being and Nothingness, are absolutely the same, (although you at the same time hold that it is not so, at all), it is plain that you find some other meaning in abstract terms than that which other logicians find. I would, therefore, ask what you mean by an abstraction, and how you propose to find out what is true of abstractions.

[Here we have stated, 1st, what our interrogator thinks he understands, in brief, as follows: (a) That Being and Nothing are two abstract, and not two general terms; (b) that Being belongs to the concrete term, whose extension is unlimited, and whose comprehension is null; (c) that Nothing means *nothingness*, and belongs to the concrete term, whose extension is null.]

At this point we will pause, in order to call attention to a vital misapprehension of the signification of Being, as we used the term. If Being were the abstraction corresponding to the concrete term, "whose extension is unlimited and whose comprehension is null," Being would then signify *existence*, (not the German "*Sein*," but "*Daseyn*," sometimes called *extant Being*), i.e. it would signify *determined Being*, and not *pure Being*. If Being is taken in this sense, it is not equivalent to *Nought*, and there is no support given to such an absurdity in any system of Philosophy

with which we are acquainted. Therefore, whatever is based on this assumption falls to the ground. But the question may be asked, "If the abstraction corresponding to the most general predicate of individual things is *existence*, by what process of abstraction do you get beyond this most general of predicates to a category transcending it?" We answer, by the simple process of *analysis*; let us try: in the most general predicate, which is *determined Being*, or *existence*—for all things in the Universe are determined beings—we have an evident two-foldness; (a composite nature,) which allows of a further analysis into pure Being and determination. Now, pure Being, considered apart from all determination, does not correspond to any concrete term, for the reason that *determination*, which alone renders such correspondence possible, has been separated from it by the analysis.

As regards the point (c) it is sufficient to remark that we did not use the term "Nothing" for nothingness, in the place referred to, but used the term "*Nought*," so as to avoid the ambiguity in the term Nothing, to-wit: the confusion arising from its being taken in the sense of no thing, as well as in the sense of the pure void. In analyzing "*determined Being*," we have two factors: one reduces to pure being, which is the pure void, while the other reduces to pure negation, which is likewise the pure void. Determination is negation, and if determination is isolated it has no substrate; while on the other hand all substrates, or substrate in general when isolated from determination, becomes pure vacuity.

Hence it seems to us that the process of analysis which reflection initiates, does not stop until it comes to the pure simple, which is the turning point where analysis becomes synthesis. Let us see how this synthesis manifests itself: our ultimate abstraction, the pure simple, has two forms, pure Being and pure negation; they coincide, in that they are the pure void. Neither can be determined, and hence neither can possess a distinction from the other. Analytic thought, which sunders the concrete, and never takes note of the

link which binds, must always arrive at the abstract simple as the net result of its dualizing process. But arrived at this point it is obliged to consider the *tertium quid*, the *genetic universal*, which it has neglected. For it has arrived at that which is self-contradictory. To seize the pure simple in thought is to cancel it; for by seizing it in thought, we seize it as the negation of the determined, and by so doing we place it in opposition, and thereby determine it. Moreover, it would, objectively considered, involve the same contradiction, for its distinction from existing things determines it likewise. Therefore, the *simple*, which is the limit of analysis, is only a point at which synthesis begins, and hence is a *moment* of a process of self-repulsion, or self-related negation. So long as analysis persists in disregarding the mediation here involved, it can set up this pure immediate for the *ultimatum*. But so soon as it takes it in its truth it allows its mediation to appear, and we learn the synthetic result, which, in its most abstract form, is "the becoming." This we shall also find in another mode of consideration: differentiation and distinguishing are forms of mediation; the simple is the limit at which mediation begins; it (mediation) cancels this limit by beginning; but all mediated somewhat imply, likewise, the simple as the ultimate element upon which determination takes effect. Thus we cannot deny the simple utterly, nor can we posit it affirmatively by itself; it is no sooner reached by analysis than it passes into synthesis. Again we see the same doctrine verified by seizing the two factors of our analysis in their reflective form, i.e. in their mediation: Being, as the substrate, is the form of identity or self-relation, which, when isolated, becomes empty self-relation, or self-relation in which the negativity of the relation has been left out; this gives a form that collapses into a void. Determination, as the other factor, is the relation to a beyond, or what we call the *relative proper*; it is the self-transcending element, and when isolated so that its relation remains within itself, it falls into the form of the self-related, which is that of substrate, or the form of

Being, and this collapses still further into the void, when we continue our demand for the simple; this void (or "hunger," as Boehme called it) is the same relativity that we found determination to be, when isolated, and thus we may follow these abstractions round and round until we find that they are organic phases of one process. Then we have found our synthesis, and have left those abstractions behind us.

We do not pretend to speak for "Hegelians;" we do not know that they would endorse our position. We give this as our own view, merely.

The first query which our interrogator offers contains the following points:

(a) Abstract terms are devices for expressing the meaning of concrete terms.

(b) Difference between a hundred dollars in his pocket being and not being (i.e. that the existence of a hundred dollars in his pocket makes a difference to his wealth) granted, it follows that what is and what is not are mutually exclusive, and not coextensive.

(c) The assertion of the identity of Being and Nothing, [nought?] and the simultaneous denial of it indicates some other meaning given to abstract terms than the one he finds.

With regard to the first point, (a), we are ready to say at once, that we could not hold such a doctrine and lay any claim to be speculative philosophers. Nor, indeed, could we consistently hold it and join the class of thinkers which belong to the stage of Reflection—such as the Positivists, the Kantists, the Hamiltonians, &c., &c.,—who agree that we know only phenomena, and hence agree that the immediate world is untrue in itself, and exists only through mediation. For it is evident that the doctrine enunciated by our querist implies that general terms as well as abstract terms are only "*status vocis*"—in short, that individual things compose the universe, and that these are valid and true in themselves. On the contrary, we must hold that true actualities must be self-determining totalities, and not mere *things*, for these are always dependent somewhats, and are separated from their true selves. (See chapter VIII. of our Introduction to Philosophy,

and, also, chapter X. on *The Universal*.) That which abides in the process of origination and decay, which *things* are always undergoing, is the generic; the generic is the total comprehension, the true actuality, or the Universal, and its identity is always preserved, while the mere "thing," which is not self-contained, loses its identity perpetually. The loss of the identity of the *thing*, is the very process that manifests the identity of the total.

Hence, to pre-suppose such a doctrine as formal logic pre-supposes, is to set up the doctrine of immediateness as the only true.

The "hundred dollar" illustration does not relate to the discussion, for the reason, that the question is not that of the identity of *existence* and *non-existence*, but of *pure Being* and *Nought*, as before explained.]

2. You say, in effect,

Being has no determination;

Ergo, It is nothing.

Now, it certainly appears that the contrary conclusion follows from this premise, namely: that it is not nothingness. I suppose that you have suppressed one of your premises, and that you mean to argue thus:

Indetermination in respect to any character, is the negation of that character;

Being is indeterminate in respect to every character;

Ergo, Being is negative of every character.

In short, you seem to imply that to abstract from a character, is to deny it. Is this the manner in which your argument is to be completed, or how else?

3. This suggests another question. You say that nothing has no determination. It is plain that it would not follow from this that Being is nothing, but only that Nothing is being, or rather that Any non-being is a being, thus reducing non-being (*nicht-seiende*) to an absurdity. This would be nothing new, (for Albertus Magnus quotes Avicenna to this effect,) and in my opinion would be perfectly true. *Non-ens*, or "the not being," is a self-contradictory expression. Still, though I thus see no monstrous consequences of saying that nothing has no determination, I see no proof at all that it is so. It might be said, indeed, that the things which are not have no characters in common, and that therefore *what is not* has no logical comprehension and Being—*not* no determination. I would ask, then, have you proved that nothing has no determination? Do not suppose that I am endeavoring to drive you into contradiction; for I understand Hegelians profess to be self-

contradictory. I only wish to ascertain whether they have an equal disregard for those logical maxims which relate to ambiguities.

4. You say, in effect,

Difference is determination,

Being has no determination;

Ergo, Being has no difference from nothing;

Ergo, Being is nothing.

It is incontestable that difference from anything is determination in respect to being or not being that thing. A monkey, in differing from a man, is determined (negatively) in respect to humanity. Difference, then, in any respect, is determination in that respect. This, I take it, is what you mean. Now let us parallel the above argument:

Difference in any respect is determination in that respect;

Animality, in general, is not determined in respect to humanity;

Ergo, Animality, in general, has no difference from humanity;

Ergo, Animality, in general, is humanity.

This is plainly sophistical. For to say that an abstraction, in general, is undetermined, has two different senses; one resulting from a strict analysis of the language, and the other reposing upon the ordinary use of language. Strictly, to say that an abstraction is undetermined, would mean that it may be this or may be that abstraction; that is, that the abstract word by which it is expressed may have any one of a variety of meanings. What is ordinarily meant by the phrase, however, is that the object of the corresponding concrete term is undetermined, so that neither of a certain pair of mutually contradictory predicates are *universally* true of that concrete. Now, it is true to say that animality is undetermined in respect to humanity, or that being is not determined at all, only in the latter of these senses, to-wit: that not every animal is a man, and not every animal is not a man, and (in the other case) that there is no predicate which can be truly affirmed or denied of all beings. For in the other sense, we should imply that the abstractions themselves were vague, and that being, for example, has no precise meaning. In the only true sense, therefore, the premise is, in the one case, that "Animal, simply, is undetermined," and in the other, that "*Ens* (*seiende*) is undetermined;" and what follows is, in the one case, that "not every animal differs from a man," and in the other, that "not every being differs from any nothing." This latter amounts merely to saying that there is nothing from which every being differs, or that a nothing is an absurdity. These correct conclusions do not in the least imply that animality is hu-

manity, or that being is nothingness. To reach the latter conclusions, it would be necessary (in the first place) to use the premises in the other and false sense; but even then, all that would be legitimately inferable would be that "humanity, in some sense, is animality," and that "being, in some sense, is nothing." Only by a second fallacy could it be concluded that animality, in the sense intended, is humanity, or that being, in the sense intended, is nothing. Now, I would inquire whether you inadvertently fell into these ambiguities, or, if not, wherein the force of your argumentation lies?

[The second point we are requested to answer is involved in the third and fourth, which charges to our account the following syllogism:

Difference is determination; being has no determination; *ergo*, being has no difference from nothing; *ergo*, being is nothing.

This is then paralleled with one in which animality and humanity are confounded; the cause of which is the following oversight: In the article under criticism, (vol. i. of the present Journal, p. 255,) we said, "Thus, if Being is posited as having validity in and by itself, without determination, it becomes a pure void, in nowise different from nought, for difference is determination, and [N. B.] neither Being nor nought possess it." The ground of their identity is stated to be the lack of determinations in nought as well as in Being.

Again, determination may be quantitative as well as qualitative, and, in the former respect, animality is distinguished from humanity; for to have more extension and less comprehension, certainly distinguishes one concept from another. Two is distinct from three, although contained in the latter. Hence, it is not quite correct to say that "animality, in general, is not determined in respect to humanity." Moreover, if it were correct, its converse "humanity is not determined in respect to animality," would also have to be true to make a case parallel to the one in which Being is asserted to be identical with nothing for the reason that neither is determined in any respect. Were animality and humanity neither determined in respect to the other, they certainly must be identical.

For these reasons, we cannot acknowledge that we "inadvertently fell into these ambiguities," or that we fell into them at all.

And we cannot see the basis of the assertion that "Hegelians profess to be self-contradictory." For they hold that finite things contradict themselves, but that the total preserves itself in its negation. They therefore would consider every one who stakes his faith on the immediate to contradict himself, but that the philosopher who holds only to the absolute mediation, escapes self-contradiction by not attempting to set up non-contradiction as the first principle of things. Hegelians may understand this as they please—to us it seems that the principle of identity is abstract, and only one side of the true principle. If we would comprehend the true principle of the universe, we must be able to seize identity and contradiction in one, and hence to annul both of them. He who comprehends self-determination must be able to do this. The self negates itself, and yet, for the reason that it is the self that does this, the deed is affirmative, and hence identity is the result. "The self says to itself, 'thus far shalt thou go, and no farther'; its reply is, 'I am already there; limiting myself.'" "When me they fly, I am the wings," says Brahma, and every true Infinite involves this negation, which is at the same time negation of negation or affirmation.

Hence, it seems to us improper to charge self-contradiction upon those who merely assert it of finite things.]

5. Finally, I would inquire whether, in your opinion, the maxims of (ordinary) logic relating to contradictions lack even a *prima facie* presumption in their favor? Whether the burden of proof is or is not upon the Hegelians to show that the assumption of their falsity is a more tenable position than the assumption of their truth? For in the present state of the question, it

seems to me more probable that subtle fallacies lurk in the Hegelian reasoning than that such fallacies lurk in all other reasoning whatsoever.

[In answer to the fifth query, we will state that we think the maxims of formal logic are *prima facie* true, for the *prima facie* mode of viewing always gives validity to the immediate phase of things. But Reflection discovers the insufficiency of abstract identity and difference, and comes to their assistance with manifold saving clauses. The speculative insight holds, too, like reflection, that mediation belongs to things, but sees, further, that all mediation is circular, and hence, that self-mediation is the "constant" under all variables.

The whole question of the validity of formal logic and of common sense vs. speculative philosophy, can be reduced to this: Do you believe that there are any finite or dependent beings? In other words, Are you a nominalist or a realist?

This is the gist of all philosophizing: If one holds that things are not interdependent, but that each is for itself, he will hold that general terms correspond to no object, and may get along with formal logic; and if he holds that he knows things directly in their essence, he needs no philosophy—common sense is sufficient.

But if he holds that any particular thing is dependent upon what lies beyond its immediate limits, he holds, virtually, that its true being lies beyond it, or, more precisely, that its immediate being is not identical with its total being, and hence, that it is in contradiction with itself, and is therefore *changeable, transitory, and evanescent*, regarded from the immediate point of view. But regarding the entire or total being (The Generic), we cannot call it changeable or contradictory, for that perpetually abides. It is the "Form of Eternity."

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INTRODUCTION TO THE OUTLINES OF A SYSTEM OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY;

OR,

ON THE IDEA OF SPECULATIVE PHYSICS AND THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF A SYSTEM OF THIS SCIENCE.

1799.

[Translated from the German of SCHELLING, by TOM DAVIDSON.]

I.

WHAT WE CALL NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IS A NECESSARY SCIENCE IN THE SYSTEM OF KNOWING.

The Intelligence is productive in two modes—that is, either blindly and unconsciously, or freely and consciously;—unconsciously productive in external intuition, consciously in the creation of an ideal world.

Philosophy removes this distinction by assuming the unconscious activity as originally identical, and, as it were, sprung from the same root with the conscious; this identity is by it directly proved in the case of an activity at once clearly conscious and unconscious, which manifests itself in the productions of genius, indirectly, outside of consciousness, in the products of Nature, so far as in them all, the most complete fusion of the Ideal with the Real is perceived.

Since philosophy assumes the unconscious, or, as it may likewise be termed, the real activity as identical with the conscious or ideal, its tendency will originally be to bring back everywhere the real to the

ideal—a process which gives birth to what is called Transcendental Philosophy. The regularity displayed in all the movements of Nature—for example, the sublime geometry which is exercised in the motions of the heavenly bodies—is not explained by saying that Nature is the most perfect geometry; but conversely, by saying that the most perfect geometry is what produces in Nature;—a mode of explanation whereby the Real itself is transported into the ideal world, and those motions are changed into intuitions, which take place only in ourselves, and to which nothing outside of us corresponds. Again, the fact that Nature, wherever it is left to itself, in every transition from a fluid to a solid state, produces, of its own accord, as it were, regular forms—which regularity, in the higher species of crystallization, namely, the organic, seems to become purpose even; or the fact that in the animal kingdom—that product of the blind forces of Nature—we see actions arise which are equal in regularity to those that take place with consciousness, and even external works of art, perfect in their kind;—all

almost be unable to tell what New Testament story this head would be welcome to.

We are here met and aided by the circumstance that connoisseurs assert, that Leonardo himself painted the head of the Saviour at Castellazzo, and ventured to do in another's work what he had not been willing to undertake in his own principal figure. As we have not the original before us, we must say of the copy that it agrees entirely with the conception which we form of a noble man whose breast is weighed down by poignant suffering of soul, which he has endeavored to allay by a familiar word, but has thereby only made matters worse instead of better.

By these processes of comparison, then, we have come sufficiently near the method of this extraordinary artist, such as he has clearly explained and demonstrated it in writings and pictures, and fortunately it is in our power to take a step still further in advance. There is, namely, preserved in

the Ambrosiana library, a drawing incontestably executed by Leonardo, upon bluish paper, with a little white and colored chalk. Of this the chevalier Vossi has executed the most accurate *fac-simile*, which is also before us. A noble youthful face, drawn from nature, evidently with a view to the head of Christ at the Supper. Pure, regular features, smooth hair, the head bent to the left side, the eyes cast down, the mouth half opened, the *tout ensemble* brought into the most marvellous harmony by a slight touch of sorrow. Here indeed we have only the man who does not conceal a suffering of soul, but the problem, how, without extinguishing this promise, at the same time to express sublimity, independence, power, the might of godhead, is one which even the most gifted earthly pencil might well find hard to solve. In this youthful physiognomy which hovers between Christ and John, we see the highest attempt to hold fast by nature when the supermundane is in question.

PAUL JANET AND HEGEL.*

[In the following article the passages quoted are turned into English, and the original French is omitted for the sake of brevity and lucid arrangement. As the work reviewed is accessible to most readers, a reference to the pages from which we quote will answer all purposes.—EDITOR.]

Since the death of Hegel in 1831, his philosophy has been making a slow but regular progress into the world at large. At home in Germany it is spoken of as having a right wing, a left wing, and a centre; its disciples are very numerous when one counts such widely different philosophers as Rosenkrantz, Michelet, Kuno Fischer, Erdmann, J. H. Fichte, Strauss, Feuerbach, and their numerous followers. Sometimes when one hears who constitute a "wing" of the Hegelian school, he is reminded of the "*lucus a non*" principle of naming, or rather of misnaming things. But Hegelianism has, as we said, made its way into other countries. In France we have the *Æsthetics* "partly translated and partly analyzed," by Professor Bérnard;

* "Essai sur la dialectique dans Platon et dans Hegel," par Paul Janet, Membre de L'Institut, professeur à la Faculté des lettres de Paris. (Ladrange,) 1860.

the logic of the small *Encyclopædia*, translated with copious notes, by Professor Vera, who has gone bravely on, with what seems with him to be a work of love, and given us the "Philosophy of Nature" and the "Philosophy of Spirit," and promises us the "Philosophy of Religion"—all accompanied with abundant introduction and commentary. We hear of others very much influenced by Hegel: M. Taine, for example, who writes brilliant essays. In English, too, we have a translation of the "Philosophy of History," (in Bohn's Library;) a kind of translation and analysis of the first part of the third volume of the *Logic*, (Sloman & Wallon, London, 1855); and an extensive and elaborate work on "The Secret of Hegel," by James Hutchison Stirling. We must not forget to mention a translation of Schwegler's *History of Philosophy*—a work drawn princi-

pally from Hegel's labors—by our American Professor Seelye; and also (just published) a translation of the same book by the author of the "Secret of Hegel." Articles treating of Hegel are to be found by the score—seek them in every text-book on philosophy, in every general *Cyclopædia*, and in numerous works written for or against German Philosophy. Some of these writers tell us in one breath that Hegel was a man of prodigious genius, and in the next they convict him of confounding the plainest of all common sense distinctions. Some of them find him the profoundest of all thinkers, while others cannot "make a word of sense out of him." There seems to be a general understanding in this country and England on one point: all agree that he was a Pantheist. Theodore Parker, Sir William Hamilton, Mansell, Morell, and even some of the English defenders of Hegelianism admit this. Hegel holds, say some, that God is a *becoming*; others say that he holds God to be *pure being*. These men are careful men apparently—but only *apparently*, for it must be confessed that if Hegel has written any books at all, they are, every one of them, devoted to the task of showing the inadequacy of such abstractions when made the highest principle of things.

The ripest product of the great German movement in philosophy, which took place at the beginning of this century, Hegel's philosophy is likewise the concrete system of thought the world has seen. This is coming to be the conviction of thinkers more and more every day as they get glimpses into particular provinces of his labor. Bérnard thinks the *Philosophy of Art* the most wonderful product of modern thinking, and speaks of the *Logic*—which he does not understand—as a futile and perishable production. Another thinks that his *Philosophy of History* is immortal, and a third values extravagantly his *Philosophy of Religion*. But the one who values his *Logic* knows how to value all his labors. The *History of Philosophy* is the work that impresses us most with the unparalleled wealth of his thought; he is able to descend through all history, and give to each philosopher a splendid thought

as the centre of his system, and yet never is obliged to confound different systems, or fail in showing the superior depth of modern thought. While we are admiring the depth and clearness of Pythagoras, we are surprised and delighted to find the great thought of Heraclitus; but Anaxagoras is a new surprise; the Sophists come before us bearing a world-historical significance, and Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle lead us successively to heights such as we had not dreamed attainable by any thinking.

But thought is no *immediate* function, like the process of breathing or sleeping, or fancy-making: it is the profoundest mediation of spirit, and he who would get an insight into the speculative thinkers of whatever time, must labor as no mere flesh and blood can labor, but only as spirit can labor: with agony and sweat of blood. A philosophy which should explain the great complex of the universe, could hardly be expected to be transparent to uncultured minds at the first glance. Thus it happens that many critics give us such discouraging reports upon their return from a short excursion into the true wonder-land of philosophy. The Eternal Verities are miraculous only to those eyes which have gazed long upon them after shutting out the glaring sunlight of the senses.

Those who criticise a philosophy must imply a philosophical method of their own, and thus measure themselves while they measure others. A literary man who criticises Goethe, or Shakespeare, or Homer, is very apt to lay himself bare to the shaft of the adversary. There are, however, in our time, a legion of writers who pass judgment as flippantly upon a system of the most comprehensive scope—and which they confess openly their inability to understand—as upon a mere opinion uttered in a "table-talk." Even some men of great reputation give currency to great errors. Sir William Hamilton, in his notes to Reid's *Philosophy of "Touch,"* once quoted the passage from the second part of Fichte's *Bestimmung des Menschen*, (wherein one-sided idealism is pushed to its downfall,) in order to show that

Fichte's Philosophy ended in Nihilism. The *Bestimmung des Menschen* was a mere popular writing in which Fichte adopted the Kantian style of exhibiting the refutation of sense and reflection, in order to rest all ultimate truth in the postulates of the Practical Reason. Accordingly he shows the practical results of his own system in the third part of the work in question, and enforces the soundest ethical views of life. He never thought of presenting his theoretical philosophy in that work. Thus, too, in Hamilton's refutation of Cousin and Schelling, he polemicalises against all "Doctrines of the Absolute," saying that *to think is to limit; hence to think God would be to determine or limit Him*; and hence is inferred the impossibility of thinking God as he truly is. This, of course, is not pushed to its results by his followers, for then its skeptical tendency would become obvious. Religion demands that we shall do the Will of God; this Will must, therefore, be known. But, again, Will is the realization or self-determination of one's nature—from it the character proceeds. Thus in knowing God's will we know his character or nature. If we cannot do this at all, no religion is possible; and in proportion as Religion is possible, the Knowledge of God is possible.

If it be said that the Absolute is unthinkable, in this assertion it is affirmed that all predicates or categories of thought are inapplicable to the Absolute, for to think is to predicate of some object, the categories of thought; and in so far as these categories apply, to that extent is the Absolute thinkable. Since *Existence* is a category of thought, it follows from this position that to predicate existence of the Absolute is impossible; "a questionable predicament" truly for the Absolute. According to this doctrine—that all thought is limitation—God is made Pure Being, or Pure Thought. This is also the result of Indian Pantheism, and of all Pantheism; this doctrine concerning the mere negative character of thought, in fact, underlies the Oriental tenet that consciousness is finitude. To be consistent, all Hamiltonians should become Brahmins, or, at least, join some sect of modern Spiritualists, and

thus embrace a religion that corresponds to their dogma. However, let us not be so unreasonably as to insist upon the removal of inconsistency—it is all the good they have.

After all this preliminary let us proceed at once to examine the work of Professor Paul Janet, which we have named at the head of our article: "*Essai sur la dialectique dans Platon et dans Hegel.*"

After considering the Dialectic of Plato in its various aspects, and finding that it rests on the principle of contradiction, M. Janet grapples Hegel, and makes, in order, the following points:

I. TERMINOLOGY.—He tells us that the great difficulty that lies in the way of comprehending German Philosophy is the abstract terminology employed, which is, in fact, mere scholasticism preserved and applied to modern problems. No nation of modern times, except the Germans, have preserved the scholastic form. He traces the obscurity of modern German philosophy to "Aristotle subtilized by the schools." This he contrasts with the "simple and natural philosophy of the Scotch." [This "simplicity" arises from the fact that the Scotch system holds that immediate sensuous knowing is valid. Of course this implies that they hold that the immediate existence of objects is a true existence—that whatever is, exists thus and so without any further grounds. This is the denial of all philosophy, for it utterly ignores any occasion whatever for it. But it is no less antagonistic to the "natural science" of the physicist: be, the physicist, finds the immediate object of the senses to be no permanent or true phase, but only a transitory one; the object is involved with other beings—even the remotest star—and changes when they change. It is force and matter (two very abstract categories) that are to him the permanent and true existence. But force and matter cannot be seen by the senses; they can only be thought.] Our author proceeds to trace the resemblance between Hegel and Wolff: both consider and analyze the pure concepts, beginning with Being. To M. Janet this resemblance goes for much, but he admits that "Hegel

has modified this order (that of Wolff) and rendered it more systematic." If one asks "*How more systematic?*" he will not find the answer. "The scholastic form is retained, but not the *thought*," we are told. That such statements are put forward, even in a book designed for mere surface-readers may well surprise us. That the mathematical method of Wolff or Spinoza—a method which proceeds by definitions and external comparison, holding meanwhile to the principle of contradiction—that such a method should be confounded with that of Hegel which proceeds dialectically, i. e. through the internal movement of the categories to their contradiction or limit, shows the student of philosophy at once that we are dealing with a *litterateur*, and not with a philosopher. So far from retaining the form of Wolff it is the great object of Hegel (see his long prefaces to the "*Logik*" and the "*Phänomenologie des Geistes*") to supplant that form by what he considers the true method—that of the *objective, itself*. The objective method is to be distinguished from the arbitrary method of external reflection which selects its point of view somewhere outside of the object considered, and proceeds to draw relations and comparisons which, however edifying, do not give us any exhaustive knowledge. It is also to be distinguished from the method of mere empirical observation which collects without discrimination a mass of characteristics, accidental and necessary, and never arrives at a vivifying soul that unites and subordinates the multiplicity. The objective method seizes somewhat in its definition and traces it through all the phases which necessarily unfold when the object is placed in the form of *relation to itself*. An object which cannot survive the process of self-relation, perishes, i. e. it leads to a more concrete object which is better able to endure. This method, as we shall presently see, is attributed to Plato by M. Janet.

The only resemblance that remains to be noted between the scholastics and Hegel is this: they both treat of subtle distinctions in thought, while our modern "common

sense" system goes only so far as to distinguish very general and obvious differences. This is a questionable merit, and the less ado made about it by such as take pride in it, the better for them.

Our author continues: "The principal difficulty of the system of Kant is our ignorance of the ancient systems of logic. The Critique of Pure Reason is modelled on the scholastic system." Could we have a more conclusive refutation of this than the fact that the great professors of the ancient systems grossly misunderstand Kant, and even our essayist himself mistakes the whole purport of the same! Hear him contrast Kant with Hegel: "Kant sees in Being only the form of Thought, while Hegel sees in Thought only the form of Being." This he says is the great difference between the Germans and French, interpreting it to mean: "that the former pursues the route of deduction, and the latter that of experience"!

He wishes to consider Hegel under three heads: 1st, The Beginning; 2d, the dialectical deduction of the Becoming, and 3d, the term Dialectic.

II. THE BEGINNING.—According to M. Janet, Hegel must have used this syllogism in order to find the proper category with which to commence the Logic.

(a) The Beginning should presuppose nothing;

(b) Pure Being presupposes nothing;

(c) Hence Pure Being is the Beginning.

This syllogism he shows to be inconclusive: for there are two beginnings, (a) in the order of knowledge, (b) in the order of existence. Are they the same? He answers: "No, the thinking being—because it thinks—knows itself before it knows the being which it thinks." Subject and object being identical in that act, M. Janet in effect says, "it thinks itself before it thinks itself"—an argument that the scholastics would hardly have been guilty of! The beginning is really made, he says, with internal or external *experience*. He quotes (page 316) from Hegel a passage asserting that *mediation* is essential to knowing. This he construes to mean that "the determined or concrete (the world of experience) is the essential condition of know-

ing!" Through his misapprehension of the term "mediation," we are prepared for all the errors that follow, for "mediation in knowing" means with Hegel that it involves a *process*, and hence can be true only in the form of a system. The "internal and external experience" appertains to what Hegel calls immediate knowing. It is therefore not to be wondered at that M. Janet thinks Hegel contradicts himself by holding Pure Being to be the Beginning, and afterwards affirming mediation to be necessary. He says (page 317), "In the order of knowing it is the mediation which is necessarily first, while in the order of existence the immediate is the commencement." Such a remark shows him to be still laboring on the first problem of Philosophy, and without any light, for no *Speculative* Philosopher (like Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz, or Hegel) ever held that Pure Being—or the immediate—is the first in the order of existence, but rather that God or Spirit (self-thinking, "pure act," *Noûs*, "Logos," &c.) is the first in the order of existence. In fact, M. Janet praises Plato and Aristotle for this very thing at the end of his volume, and thereby exhibits the unconsciousness of his procedure. Again, "The pure thought is the end of philosophy, and not its beginning." If he means by this that the culture of consciousness ends in arriving at pure thought or philosophy, we have no objection to offer, except to the limiting of the application of the term Philosophy to its preliminary stage, which is called the Phenomenology of Spirit. The arrival at pure thought marks the beginning of the use of terms in a universal sense, and hence is the beginning of philosophy proper. But M. Janet criticises the distinction made by Hegel between Phenomenology and Psychology, and instances Maine de Biran as one who writes Psychology in the sense Hegel would write Phenomenology. But M. Biran merely manipulates certain unexplained phenomena,—like the Will, for example—in order to derive categories like force, cause, &c. But Hegel shows in his Phenomenology the dialectical unfolding of consciousness through all its phases, starting from the

immediate certitude of the senses. He shows how certitude becomes knowledge of truth, and wherein it differs from it. But M. Janet (p. 324) thinks that Hegel's system, beginning in empirical Psychology, climbs to pure thought, "and then draws up the ladder after it."

III. THE BECOMING.—We are told by the author that consciousness, determining itself as Being, determines itself as a being, and not as *the* being. If this be so we cannot think *pure being* at all. Such an assertion amounts to denying the universal character of the Ego. If the position stated were true, we could think neither being nor any other object.

On page 332, he says, "This contradiction (of Being and non-being) which in the ordinary logic would be the negative of the *posited notion*, is, in the logic of Hegel, only an excitant or stimulus, which somehow determines spirit to find a third somewhat in which it finds the other conciliated." He is not able to see any procedure at all. He sees the two opposites, and thinks that Hegel empirically hunts out a concept which implies both, and substitutes it for them. M. Janet thinks (pp. 336-7) that Hegel has exaggerated the difficulties of conceiving the identity of Being and nought. (p. 338) "If the difference of Being and nought can be neither expressed nor defined, if they are as identical as different—if, in short, the idea of Being is only the idea of the pure void, I will say, not merely that Being transforms itself into Nothing, or passes into its contrary; I will say that there are not two contraries, but only one term which I have falsely called Being in the thesis, but which is in reality only Non-being without restriction—the pure zero." He quotes from Kuno Fischer (p. 340) the following remarks applicable here:

"If Being were in reality the pure void as it is ordinarily taken, Non-being would not express the same void a second time; but it would then be the non-void, i. e. the abhorrence of the void, or the immanent contradiction of the void."—(and again from his "Logik und Metaphysik" II. § 29): "The logical Being contradicts itself; for thought vanishes in the immovable repose of Being. But as Being comes only from thought (for it is the act of thought), it contradicts thus itself in destroying thought. Consequently thought manifests

itself as the negation of Being—that is to say, as *Non-being*. The Non-being (logical) is not the total suppression of Being—the pure zero—it is not the mathematical opposition of Being to itself as a negative opposed to a positive, but it is the dialectical negative of itself, the immanent contradiction of Being. Being contradicts itself, hence is Non-being, and in the concept of Non-being, thought discovers the immanent contradiction of Being—thought manifests itself at first as Being, and in turn the logical Being manifests itself as Non-being; thought can hence say, "I am the Being which is not."

"Such," continues our author, "is the deduction of M. Fischer. It seems to me very much inferior in clearness to that of Hegel." How he could say this is very mysterious when we find him denying all validity to Hegel's demonstration. Although Fischer's explanation is mixed—partly dialectical and partly psychological—yet, as an explanation, it is correct. But as psychology should not be dragged into Logic, which is the evolution of the forms of pure thinking, we must hold strictly to the dialectic if we would see the "Becoming." The psychological explanation gets no further than the relation of Being and nought as concepts. The Hegelian thought on this point is not widely different from that of Gorgias, as given us by Sextus Empiricus, nor from that of Plato in the Sophist. Let us attempt it here:

Being is the pure simple; as such it is considered under the form of self-relation. But as it is wholly undetermined, and has no content, it is pure nought or absolute negation. As such it is the negation by itself or the negation of itself, and hence its own opposite or Being. Thus the simple falls through self-opposition into duality, and this again becomes simple if we attempt to hold it asunder, or give it any validity by itself. Thus if Being is posited as having validity in and by itself without determination, (*omnis determinatio est negatio*), it becomes a pure void in nowise different from nought, for difference is determination, and neither Being nor nought possess it. What is the validity of the nought? A negative is a relative, and a negative by itself is a negative related to itself, which is a self-cancelling. Thus Being and nought, posited objectively as having validity, prove dissolving forms and

pass over into each other. Being is a *ceasing* and nought is a *beginning*, and these are the two forms of *Becoming*. The Becoming, dialectically considered, proves itself inadequate likewise.

IV. THE DIALECTIC.—To consider an object dialectically we have merely to give it universal validity; if it contradicts itself then, we are not in anywise concerned for the result; we will simply stand by and accept the result, without fear that the true will not appear in the end. The negative turned against itself makes short work of itself; it is only when the subjective reflection tries to save it by hypotheses and reservations that a merely negative result is obtained.

(Page 369): "In Spinozism the development of Being is Geometric; in the System of Hegel it is organic." What could have tempted him to use these words, it is impossible to say, unless it was the deep-seated national proclivity for epigrammatic statements. This distinction means nothing less (in the mouth of its original author) than what we have already given as the true difference between Wolff's and Hegel's methods; but M. Janet has long since forgotten his earlier statements. (Page 369) He says, "Hegel's method is a faithful expression of the movement of nature," from which he thinks Hegel derived it empirically!

On page 372 he asks: "Who proves to us that the dialectic stops at Spirit as its last term? Why can I not conceive a spirit absolutely superior to mine, in whom the identity between subject and object, the intelligible and intelligence would be more perfect than it is with this great Philosopher [Hegel]? * * * * In fact, every philosopher is a man, and so far forth is full of obscurity and feebleness." Spirit is the last term in philosophy for the reason that it stands in complete self-relation, and hence contains its antithesis within itself; if it could stand in opposition to anything else, then it would contain a contradiction, and be capable of transition into a higher. M. Janet asks in effect: "Who proves that the dialectic stops at God as the highest, and why cannot I conceive a higher?" Judging from his attempt

at understanding Hegel, however, he is not in a fair way to conceive "a spirit in whom the identity between subject and object" is more perfect than in Hegel. "What hinders" is his own culture, his own self; "*Du gleichst dem Geist den du begreifst, nicht mir*," said the World-spirit to Faust.

He asks, (p. 374): "When did the 'pure act' commence?" From Eternity; it always commences, and is always complete, says Hegel. "According to Hegel, God is made from nought, by means of the World." Instead of this, Hegel holds that God is self-created, and the world eternally created by him (the Eternally-begotten Son). "What need has God of Nature?" God is Spirit; hence conscious; hence he makes himself an object to himself; in this act he creates nature; hence Nature is His reflection. (P. 386): "The Absolute in Hegel is spirit only on condition that it thinks, and thinks itself; hence it is not essentially Spirit, but only accidentally." To "think itself" is to be conscious, and, without this, God would have no personality; and hence if Hegel were to hold any other doctrine than the one attributed to him, he would be a Pantheist. But these things are not mere dogmas with Hegel; they appear as the logical results of the most logical of systems. "But in Plato, God is a Reason in activity, a living thought." M. Janet mentions this to show Plato's superiority; he thinks that it is absurd for Hegel to attri-

bute *thinking* to God, but thinks the same thing to be a great merit in Plato. (P. 392): "Behold the Platonic deduction [or dialectic]: being given a pure idea, he shows that this idea, if it were *all alone*, [i. e. made universal, or placed in self-relation, or posited as valid for itself,] would be contradictory of itself, and consequently could not be. Hence, if it exists, it is on condition that it mingles with another idea. Take, for example, the multiple: by itself, it loses itself in the indiscernible, for it would be impossible without unity." This would do very well for a description of the Dialectic in Hegel if he would lay more stress on the positive side of the result. Not merely does the "pure idea mingle with another"—i. e. pass over to its opposite—but it *returns* into itself by the continuation of its own movement, and thereby reaches a concrete stage. Plato sometimes uses this complete dialectical movement, and ends affirmatively; sometimes he uses only the partial movement and draws negative conclusions.

How much better M. Janet's book might have been—we may be allowed to remark in conclusion—had he possessed the earnest spirit of such men as Vera and Hutchison Stirling! Stimulated by its title, we had hoped to find a book that would kindle a zeal for the study of the profoundest philosophical subject, as treated by the profoundest of thinkers.

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