se propose, sans doute, en essayant de constituer une *algèbre* de la logique, d'arriver à un résultat analogue. Mais il est facile de se rendre compte que les points fondamentaux des méthodes mises en avant dans ce but, sont loin de rencontrer un assentiment universel. Il vaudrait donc la peine de discuter au préalable si le problème dont il s'agit est réellement possible, ou si, de fait, on ne poursuit pas une chimère.

La logique est la science du langage, en tant que celui-ci est employé pour le raisonnement. Mais chaque peuple a sa langue, dont le génie diffère, et ce qui n'est pas prouvé, c'est qu'on puisse faire rentrer sans coup de force, sous un formulaire unique et suffisamment simple, les innombrables nuances de la pensée, dont la différence ne se traduit même souvent que par de simples changements de ton.

Qui s'est donné la peine de lire le texte grec des *Analytiques* ne peut méconnaître que la logique d'Aristote est admirablement calquée sur la langue hellène, tandis qu'il est clair qu'elle ne se prête qu'assez imparfaitement aux langues modernes. Ainsi, par exemple, comme, dans la forme canonique d'Aristote, le prédicat s'énonce avant le sujet, l'ordre des figures et des prémisses est, chez lui, tout simple et naturel. Il suffit au contraire de faire en français le premier syllogisme en *Barbara* venu pour sentir qu'il est vicieux de commencer le raisonnement par l'énoncé du moyen, et qu'on devrait intervertir l'ordre des prémisses.

Si M. Peirce était un hellène, je tiens pour assuré qu'il n'eût point adopté ni les notations qu'il propose, ni les significations qu'il leur donne. Personne, d'un autre côté, ne niera que les tentatives de réforme de la logique ancienne excitent depuis longtemps un intérêt sérieux en Angleterre, tandis qu'elles ne trouvent que peu d'accueil en Allemagne et rencontrent en France une défaveur encore plus grande. Il est facile de donner comme explication, le génie divers des trois peuples voisins; mais ne s'agit-il point, surtout et au fond, de la différence de leurs langues?

PAUL TANNERY.

M. Guyau. — VERS D'UN PHILOSOPHE. — 1 vol. Paris, Germer Baillière 1881.

Ce titre est-il pour recommander le livre auprès des philosophes et l'excuser auprès des poètes? Ou bien a-t-il l'intention inverse, qui serait aussi vraisemblable? Peu importe : car il suffit de l'ouvrir pour constater qu'il mérite d'être également bien accueilli des uns et des autres. Nous en avons fini avec cette ombrageuse critique, jadis en honneur, qui enfermait le talent dans des catégories, comme les métiers. Il n'y a plus de jurandes, ni de maîtrises, ni de corporations closes dans le domaine du beau et du vrai; et les philosophes ont le droit de faire des vers, quand ils sont poètes, comme les poètes d'avoir une philosophie quand ils sont penseurs. J'imagine que si Platon, le

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The phenomena in question cannot, at present, be explained by natural selection, and the view that they are due to the direct action of the conditions of life, or to polarity, is also inadequate; and at present we have no explanation of them.

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