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 are not answer. The modern commentator asks questions that Plato did not entertain. In every case 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) from introspection, (b) meditation, (c) absolute meditation. More explicitly, it should be treated first in its most obvious phase, 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, etc. 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 treats the object back to itself, having stripped it as a totality. "Absolute Meditation" means self-meditation. 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 natures 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, says his dialogue has only the production in the minds of his countrymen. His questions therefore proceeded from his time; all speculation should be directed to the solution of the world before 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 opponent 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 Dr. Janet's version of Hegel's doctrine of the "Becoming." We hope that these acute statements will elicit, 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. They seem to us the most profound and comprehensible statement of the anti-spectacular standpoint as related to the pure simple. (From Philosophy, that we have seen. But for this very reason we are far from believing that the defects of the formalism which are more or less visible. We have endeavored to answer these queries with the same spirit of candor that animates the author.—Editor.)]

Mr. Editor of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy.

I should like to make some inquiries in regard to a position that I have taken in a Doctum of speculation, beginning "Being is the pure Simple," vol. 1, p. 231. 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 to a concrete thing, whose extension is unlimited and all-encompassing, 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 humility is non-man, and does not imply at all that Being is a thing or an opposition with itself. Since it would only say "Das Sein ist nichts." Since, then, I understand the abstract term corresponding to a (possible) concrete term, which is the logical contrariety of the concrete term correspond- ing to 'Being,' and since the logical contrariety of any term has no extension in common with that term, the concrete nothing is the term which is true of nothingness. I understand that, when you say 'Being has no content,' and 'Being is wholly undetermined,' what you mean is that 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 imprecise expressions. You are not put forward as arguments, however, but only as inquiries.

1. As concrete 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 white is a color, is the same as to say that the color is white, which 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 coexistent.

Since, then, you nevertheless say that the corresponding abstraction, 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, let us ask to be understood, 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 understand the term. If 'Being' were the abstraction corresponding to the term, "whose extension is unlimited, and whose comprehension is null," 'Being' would then signify 'Existence,' (not the German 'Sein,' but 'Dasein,' sometimes called existent 'Being,' the word it would signify 'determined Being,' and not pure Being. If Being is taken in this sense, it is not equivalent to Nothing, 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, what is the process of abstraction do you get beyond this most general predicate of acausal trans-"Nocturnal"? We answer, by the simple process of analysis, let us try: in the most general predicate, which is determined by the term 'Being,' or 'existence,' for all things in the Universe are determined beings—we have an explicit two-foldness, a composite nature—which allows of a further analysis into pure Being and determination. Now, pure Being, considered apart from any 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 (b) it is sufficient to remark that we did not use the term 'Nothing' for nothingness, in the place referred to, but used the term 'Nothing,' "Nocturnal," 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 vacuum.

Hence it seems to us that the process of analysis which refection 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 void, has two forms: pur Be 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 adjoins 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 generic universe, which it has neglected. For it has arrived at that which is self-contradictory. To solve the pure simple 'in thought' is to cancel it "by" severing it in thought, we seize it as the negation of the determined, and by so doing we place it in opposition, and thereby destroy 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-qualification, or self-related negation. So long as analysis persists in disregarding the mediation here involved, it can set up this pure immediate for the ultimum. But so soon as it takes it in its truth it allows its mediation to appear, and we learn the synthetic result, which, in the same 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 mediations somewhat imply, likewise, the simple as the ultimate element upon which determination takes effect. Thus we cannot deny the simple utterly, or can we posit it ultimately by itself; it is too 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-related, which, when isolated, becomes empty self-synthesis, or self-related, 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, the relation to a beyond, or what we call the reflective property, is the substratum 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
Nominalism vs. Realism.

Being, and this collapse still farther 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, instead of the general, we 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 these 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.

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 £100); hence follows what is and what is not materially exclusive, and not coextensive.

(c) The assertion of the identity of Being and Nothing, [argued?] 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 “notus socius”—in short, that individual things compose the universe, and that these are real and true in themselves. On the contrary, we must hold that true abstractions must be self-determining entities, and that abstractions, for these are always dependent someways, and are separated from their true selves. (See chapter VIII. of our Introduction to Philosophy.)

and, also chapter X. of The Universal.)

That which abides in the process of origin and decay, which things are always undergoing, is the generic; the generic is the total comprehension, the true samadhi, or the Universal, and its identity is always preserved, while the mere “things,” which have self-containment, are only in the process of origin and decay. The loss of the identity of the things is the very process that manifests the identity of the total.

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

The “hundred dollars” 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 Nothing, as before explained.

2. You say, in effect,

Being has no determination;

Now, it certainly appears that the contrary conclusion follows from this premise, namely: that it is not nothingness. I suppose that you have suppressed your premises, and that you neglect the modification of the language, and the difference upon the ordinary use of the language. Strictly, to say that an abstraction is not determined, would mean that it may be this or any other abstraction; and, that, is the abstract word by which it is known, and has one of a variety of meanings. Whether is ordinarly and by the phrase, however, is that the object of the corresponding-concrete term is understood to be determined by a certain pair of mutually contradictory predicates, or universally true of that concrete. Now, it is true to say that nothingness is undetermined in respect to humanity, or that being is not determined by itself, only in the latter of the two cases: to wit: that 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. Furthermore, in the other sense, we should imply that the abstractions themselves were vague; but that being, for example, has no precise meaning. In the only true sense of such a predicate, the premise is, in the one case, that “Animal, simply, is undetermined,” and in the other, that “All animals are not men,” and what follows is, in the one case, that “not any animal differs from a man,” and in the other, that “not any animal differs from any other thing.” This amounts merely to saying that there is nothing from which every being differs, or that a nothing is an identity. These correct conclusions do not in the least imply that animality is humanity, or that being is nothingness. To reach the latter conclusion, 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 “inanimality, in the sense intended, 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 fall into these ambiguities, or, if not, which is 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 parallelised 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. 253,) we said, “Thus, if Being is not having validity in and by itself, without determination, it becomes a pure void, in nowise different from nothing, for difference is determination; and (N. B.) Neither Being nor nothing possess it.” The ground of their identity is stated to be the lack of determinations in so-called as well as in Being.

Again, determination may be qualitative as well as quantitative, and, in the former respect, animality is a predicate derived 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 we were correct, it is clear that “humanity is not determined in respect to animality.” We must also 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 the things contradict themselves, but that the total preserves itself in its negation. They therefore would consider everyone who stakes his faith on the immediate to contradict himself, but that the philosopher who has 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 affirmativeness, 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 Brahman, 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 are merely assert of it of finite things.

5. Finally, I would inquire whether, in your opinion, the maxim of (ordinary) logic referring 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 whatever.

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 discourses the insufficiency of abstract identity and difference, and comes to their assistance with manifold saving clauses. The speculative insight holds, too, like reflection, that negation belongs to things, but, seen, 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 independent, 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."
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 note that Leonardo himself painted the head of the Saviour at Castelazor, 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 endures and elevates 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 Ambrosian library, a drawing incontestably executed by Leonardo, upon blush 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 with nature, evidently with a view to the head of Christ on the Supper. Pure, regular features, smooth skin down to the left side, the eyes cast down, the mouth half opened, the taut ensemble brought into the most ravishing 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 exhausting this premise at the same time expressing sublimity, independence, power, the might of godhead, is one which even the most gifted earthly pencil might well fail and hard to solve. If this youthful physiognomy which belongs 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 vivid arrangement. At the work reviewed included. The pages from which we quote will answer all purposes.—Ednor.]

Since the death of Hegel in 1831, his philosophy has been making a slow but regular progress into the world at large. In Germany it is spoken of as having a right wing, a left wing, and a centre; its disciples are very numerous and one counts with equal different philosophers as Roscher, H. J. Fischer, Erman, T. H. Fichte, Strauss, Feuerbach, and their numerous followers. Sometimes when one hears who constitute a wing of the Hegelian school, one is reminded of the fides a non principle of naming, rather than of misnaming things. But Hegelianism has, as we said, made its way into other countries. In France we have the Abbe's work, partly translated and partly analyzed;* by Professor Bérand;* “Essai sur la dialectique dans Platon et dans Hegel,” by Paul Janet, Membre de L'Institut, professor à la Faculté des lettres of Paris.—Paris, (Ladrange), 1860.

---

*The Secret of Hegel,” by James Hutchinson Stirring. We must not forget to mention a translation of Schlegel's History of Philosophy—a work drawn principally from Hegel's labors—by our American Professor Seccle; 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 in every textbook on philosophy, in every general Cyclopaedia, 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 declare him confounding the plenitude 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, Mill, and even some of the English defenders of Hegelianism admit this. Hegel holds, say some, that God is a becoming—other say 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, is Hegel's philosophy, is likewise the foremost 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. Bédard 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 pernicious production. Another thinks that his Philosophy of History is immoral, and a third values extravagantly his Philosophy of Religion. But the one who values his Logic knows how to value all his labor. The History of Philosophy is the work that impresses us most with the unparalleled wealth of his thoughts; 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 fall in showing the greater depth of modern thought. While we are admiring the depth and clarity of Pythagoras, we are astonished and delighted to find the great thought of the Sceptics, 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 generation of spirit, and he who would get an insight into the speculative thinkers of whatever time, must labor to see more 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 intrinsically only to those eyes which have gazed long upon them after shutting out the glaring sunlight of the senses.

Those who criticize a philosophy must imply a philosophical method of their own, and thus measure themselves while they measure others. A literary man who criticizes 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 Befrinnung des Menschen, (which opposed Idealism is pushed to its downfall), in order to show that
has modified this order (that of Wolf) 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. 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 synthesis, shows the sound 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 preface to the "Logik" and "The Phänomenologie des Geistes") to expound that form by what he considers the true method—that of his object, itself. The objective method is to be drawn 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, never finding, and never arriving 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-relations, 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 on 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 concludes: "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 German 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 Beginnings; 2d, the dialectical deduction of the Becoming, and 3d, the term Dialectics.

II. The Beginnings—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 Beginnings should presuppose nothing;
(b) Pure Being presupposes nothing;
(c) Hence Pure Being is the Beginning.

This syllogism he shows to be inconclusive, and for these 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 knowing.
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 movement rather than in a single instant or external experience." Approximating to what Hegel calls immediate knowing, it is therefore not to be wondered at that M. Janet finds Hegel contradicts himself by holding Pure Being to be the beginning, and afterwards affirming mediation in knowing. Mr. James says (page 317), "In the order of knowing it is the mediator 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, 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," "acts," "logos," &c.) is the first in the order of existence. In fact, M. Janet praises Plato and Aristotle for the great step they took at the end of their volume, and thereby gives the idea 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 generation of the term Philosophy to its preliminary stages, 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 the beginning of philosophy proper. But M. Janet criticizes 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 certainty of the senses. He shows how consciousness 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 determines 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 negation of the point of view, is, in the logic of Hegel, only an excision or stimulus, which somehow determines spirit to find a third somewhat in which it can be either positive or negative. He is not able to make a procedure at all. He sees the two opposite, and thinks that Hegel empirically builds out a concept which implies both, and substitutes it for them. M. Janet thinks (p. 326) that Hegel has exaggerated the difficulties of conceiving the identity of Being and nothing. (p. 326) If the identity of Being and nothing can be neither expressed nor defined, if they are 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 contradictions, but only one term which I have falsely called Being in the theses, but which is in reality only non-being without restriction—the pure void." He quotes from Kuno Fischer (p. 349) the following remarks applicable here:

"If non-being were in reality the pure void as it is ordinarily taken, non-being would express the same void a second time; but it would then be the pure void, i.e., the absence of the void, or the negation of the negation of the void." (And again from his "Logik der Vernunft und des Daseins," p. 312.) It is Hegel who is being contradicted, not Kant; for thought vanishes in the immanent repose of Being. But as Being comes only from the dialectic of thought, it contradicts itself in destroying thought. Consequently thought manifests itself as the negation of Being—that is to say, as Nothing. The non-being (logical) is not the total suppression of Being—the pure void—it is the metaphysical negation of Being; it excludes non-being as a being, and hence as a thought, as a positive, but it is the dialectical negative of itself. Being, as positive, as a thought, as a negative, as a determination, as a thought that manifests itself at first as Being, and in that 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 markedly dialectical and partly psychological—but 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 nothing as concepts. This Hegelian thought on this point is not widely different from that of Garglias, 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-negation. But as it is wholly undetermined, and has no content, it is pure thought or absolute negation. As such it is the negation by itself or the negation of itself, and hence its own opposite and Being. Thus the simple falls out of self-contradiction into duality, and this negation becomes simple if we attempt to hold it as another, or give it any validity by itself. Thus if Being is posited as having validity in itself and by itself without determination, (omnia determinata est negatio), It becomes a pure void in nothing different from thought, for determination is negation, and neither Being nor nothing possesses it. We have then in the validity of the nothing? A negative is a relative, as a negative by itself is a negative related to a self-canceling. Thus Being and nothing, posited objectively as having validity, prove dissolving forms and pass over into each other. Being is a ceasing and nothing is a beginning, and these are the two forms of Becoming. The Becoming is not considered, if it is considered, proves itself inadequate like everything else.

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 shall simply stand by and accept the result, without fear that the true will not appear in the end. The negative turned against itself makes chance itself; it is only when the subjective reflection tries to save it by hypotheses and reconstructions that a merely negative result is obtained.

"(Page 360): "In Spinoza the development of Being is geometric; in the System of Hegel it is organic; but we might have tempted him to use their words, and it is impossible to say, unless it was the deep-seated national predilection for epigrammatic statements. This distinction means nothing less (in the mouth of its original author) than what we have already given as the true nature of the conception of Wallis and Hegel's methods; but M. Janet goes beyond since, forgotten his earlier statements."

(Page 360) 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 something absolutely superior to mine, in whom the identity between subject and object, the intelligibility 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 fallacy. 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 the higher. M. Janet says in effect: "Who proves that the disinterestedness as God is the highest, and why cannot I conceive a higher?" Judging from his attempts
Paul Janet and Hegel.

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
binds" is his own culture, his own self;
"Du gleichst dem Geist den du begreifst,
nicht wahr?" said the World-spirit to Faust.
He asks (p. 374): "When did the "pure
act", commence?" From Eternity; it al-
ways commences, and is always complete,
says Hegel. "According to Hegel, God
is made from nothing, by means of the
World." Instead of this, Hegel holds that
God is self-created, and the world etern-
ally created by him (the Eternally-beg-
gotten Son). "What need has God of Na-
ture?" God is Spirit; hence conscious;
hence he makes himself an object to him-
selves; in this act be creates nature; hence
Nature is His reflection. (p. 385): "The
Absolute in Hegel is spirit infinitely con-
dition 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 Pan-
theist. But these things are not more
dogmas with Hegel; they appear as the
logical results of the most logical of sys-
tems. "But in Plato, God is a Reason in
activity, a living thought." M. Janet men-
tions this to show Plato's superiority; he
thinks that it is absurd for Hegel to attri-
butate thinking to God, but thinks the same
thing to be a great merit in Plato. (P.
392): "Behold the Platonic deduc-
"for 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 con-
sequently could not be. Hence, if it ex-
ists, 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.
passes 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 affirm-
atively; sometimes he uses only the par-
tial movement and draws negative conclu-
sions.

How much better M. Janet's book might
have been—we may be allowed to remark
in conclusion—had he possessed the earn-
est spirit of such men as Verra and Hför-
son Stirling! Stulated by his title, we
had hoped to find a book that would
kindle a zeal for the study of the profound-
est philosophical subject, as treated by the
profoundest of thinkers.