V.—THE DIALECTICAL METHOD. (III.)

(*Conclusion.*)

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II. Let us now address ourselves to the contention that there is another kind of change in the method of the dialectic, a change from dependence upon contradiction into absolute indifference to contradiction. Mr. McTaggart says that the difference is greatest between the method employed at the very beginning of the process and the method employed at its end. In the categories of Being, neither the thesis nor the antithesis "is in any respect more advanced than the other, and neither of them can be said to be more closely connected than the other with the synthesis, in which both of them alike find their explanation and reconciliation. But when we come to Essence the matter is changed. Here the transition from thesis to antithesis is still indeed from positive to negative, but it is more than merely this. The antithesis is not merely complementary to the thesis, but is a correction of it. It is consequently more concrete and true than the thesis, and represents a real advance. And the transition to the synthesis is not now made so much from the comparison of the other two terms as from the antithesis alone. For the antithesis does not now merely oppose a contrary defect to the original defect of the thesis. It corrects, to some degree, that original mistake, and therefore has—to use the Hegelian phraseology—"the truth" of the thesis more or less within itself. As the action of the synthesis is to reconcile the thesis and the antithesis it can only be deduced from the comparison of the two. But if the antithesis has—as it has in Essence—the thesis as part of its own significance, it will present the whole of the data which the synthesis requires, and it will not be necessary to recur to the thesis, before the step to the synthesis is taken.

"But although the reconciliation can be inferred from the second term, apart from the first, a reconciliation is still necessary. For, while the antithesis is an advance upon the thesis, it is also opposed to it. It is not simply a completion

of it, but also a denial, though a denial which is already an approximation to union. This element of opposition and negation tends to disappear in the categories of the Notion. As these approach the end of the whole process, the steps are indeed discriminated from one another, but they can scarcely be said to be in opposition. For we have now arrived at a consciousness more or less explicit that in each category all that have gone before are summed up, and all that are to come after are contained implicitly. 'The movement of the Notion is, after all to be looked on only as a kind of play. The other which it sets up is in reality not another.' And, as a consequence, the third term merely completes the second without correcting one-sidedness in it, in the same way as the second term merely expands and completes the first. As this type is realised, in fact, the distinctions of the three terms gradually lose their meaning. There is no longer an opposition produced between two terms and mediated by a third. Each term is a direct advance on the other before it. The object of the process is not now to make the one-sided complete, but the implicit explicit. For we have reached a stage when each side carries in it already more or less consciousness of that unity of the whole which is the synthesis, and requires development rather than refutation."¹

A few pages farther on, we read: "We may draw several important conclusions with regard to the general nature of the dialectic, from the manner in which the form changes as it advances towards completion. The first of these is one which we may fairly attribute to Hegel himself, since it is evident from the way in which he deals with the categories, although it is not explicitly noticed by him. This is the subordinate place held by negation in the whole process. We have already observed that the importance of the negation in the dialectic is by no means primary. In the first place Hegel's Logic is very far from resting, as is supposed by some critics, on the violation of the law of contradiction. It rather rests on the impossibility of violating that law, and on the necessity of finding, for every contradiction, a reconciliation in which it vanishes. And not only is the idea of negation destined always to vanish in the synthesis, but even its temporary introduction is an accident, though an inevitable accident. . . . But this can now be carried still further. Not only is the presence of negation in the dialectic a mere accident, though a necessary one, of the gradual

completion of the idea. We are now led to consider it as an accident which is necessary indeed in the lower stages of the dialectic, but which is gradually eliminated in proportion as we proceed further."¹

I have quoted thus largely in order that the issue may be clearly defined. My aim is not so much to controvert the expositor, but to expound his author and mine. But here, as in so many other instances, exposition is most effectively accomplished by a refutation of a counter-exposition. As every affirmation is also a negation, it is often well that what one denies should be brought clearly before consciousness, in order that what one affirms may be the more significant. As I understand Hegel, he affirms exactly what his commentator denies; and to understand the affirmation, it is well to understand the denial also.

It is my purpose to prove that in respect of the relation in opposition between the thesis and the antithesis, and in respect of the dialectical efficiency of the negative, there is really no change in Hegel's Logic from the very first triad to the very last. In order to do this, I shall attack the problem of the method of the initial triad, believing that a complete exhibition of the method there employed will be in itself a complete refutation of Mr. McTaggart's position.

As we enter upon this problem, we must recall what has been said about the double character of some of the categories, and about the so-called reconciliation of contradictories.² The true view of the movement, even in the categories of Being, is that the true dialectical negative of any thesis is not the abstract antithesis of that thesis, but it is the so-called synthesis of that thesis with the abstract antithesis; so that, if we are going to count steps, we may say that in one very important sense the dialectical movement is not triadic,³ although, of course, if we consider the two aspects of the negative as two distinct steps in the process; that is, if we consider as one step the viewing of the negative as abstractly negative and as another step the viewing of it as concretely positive, we do have a triadic movement. But this whole matter of counting steps is a senseless procedure, an external reflexion; and the witticisms based upon it only show the shallowness of the views of the wits.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 184.

² See January number of *MIND*, pp. 57-60.

³ See III., 333, 834 (843-344), where Hegel shows that the movement may be considered tetradic or dyadic as well as triadic; but all such enumeration is "superficial and external".

Hegel's own testimony on this point is decisive. "It" (i.e., the negation of any concept) "is a new concept, but one higher and richer than the preceding; for it has become richer by the negation or opposite of that concept. It thus contains its predecessor and more too, and is the unity of that predecessor and its opposite."¹ This is what he says in the Introduction to the *Greater Logic*. He says the same thing at the very end of this work,² where, having traversed the long road that leads from pure Being to the Absolute Idea, he reviews the course that has been accomplished, and pays particular attention to the method that has achieved the result. There he devotes some eight or ten pages to the full treatment of the relation between thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, or, as he there calls them, "the first," "the second," and "the third"; and he looks at this relation from many points of view. I cannot quote the whole passage, although any one who wishes to understand the method thoroughly should make himself perfectly familiar with what is there said. All I can do here is to quote in part: "The second" (i.e., the antithesis), "which has thus arisen, is accordingly the negative of the first; and, to take anticipatory account of what follows, it is the first negative. The immediate" (i.e., the thesis) "has, on this negative side, perished in its other; but that other is essentially not the empty negative, Naught, which is taken for the usual result of dialectic; but it is the other of the first, the negative of the immediate."³ Thus it is determined as the *mediate*—in short, contains within itself the determination of the first" (i.e., of the thesis). "The first is hence essentially *preserved* and *kept* in its other. To keep fast hold of the positive in its own negative, in the content of the presupposition, in the result—this is the most important thing in the knowledge that belongs to the stage of reason. . . . What is, accordingly, now present is the mediated, which at first, or when likewise taken immediately, is also a simple category; for since the first has perished in it, only the second is present. Now, because the first is also contained in the second, and the second is the truth of the first, this unity can be expressed as a proposition, in which the immediate is put as subject, and the mediate as its predicate. . . . The second category, the negative or mediate, is, further, likewise the *mediating* category. At first it can be taken as a

¹ I., 39 (41).² III., 328 (338), *seq.*³ The thought would be better expressed by the use of hyphens: "the other-of-the-first, the negative-of-the-immediate," and below. "the negative-of-the-positive".

simple category; but viewed as it is in its truth, it is a relation or an essential relation. For it is, indeed, the negative, but the negative of the positive, and includes the positive within itself. It is thus the other, not of something to which it is indifferent,—for then it would not be an other, nor would it be a relation or an essential relation,—but it is the other *by virtue of itself* (*an sich*), the *other-of-another*. Therefore it includes *its own* other in itself, and is, accordingly, as this contradiction, *the explicitly posited dialectic of its own self*. . . . The second, as contrasted with the first, is itself the determinate, *i.e.*, is distinction or essential relation. The dialectical moment in it consists, hence, in positing the unity that is contained in it. If, therefore, the negative, the determinate, *e.g.*, essential relation and judgment and all the categories that come under the second moment” (*i.e.*, appear as antithesis), “do not themselves, taken in their independence, already appear as contradiction and as dialectical, it is due to a mere defect of the thinking faculty, which does not bring its thoughts together. For the materials,” adequate for the recognition of contradiction, “the opposite categories *in one relation*, are already explicitly posited, and present for thought. Formal thought, however, makes identity a law, and lets the contradictory content that it has before it be degraded into the sphere of presentative consciousness, into space and time; and there the contradictory is maintained in the reciprocal *externality* of coexistence or succession, and thus does not appear to consciousness to be in mutual contact. In its dealing with this content, formal thought lays down the definite principle that contradiction is not thinkable. In fact, however, the thinking of contradiction is the essential factor in conception. Even formal thought actually thinks contradiction; only, while thinking it, it refuses to recognise it, turns from it, and in that just-quoted principle betakes itself to abstract negation.

“The negativity just considered constitutes the critical point in the movement of the concept. It is the simple point of negative self-reference, the innermost fountain of all activity, of vital and spiritual self-movement, the dialectical soul that everything true has in it, and by which alone it is a truth.”¹

To bring out all the wealth of meaning that lies stored up in these cryptic utterances would take more pages than are at my disposal. But it requires no great space, and certainly no great penetration, to repeat some things that are

¹ III., 330-332 (340-342).

said by Hegel in the passage I have partly cited. The central thought of it all is this: *When we have reached any antithesis, we do not need to wait for a synthesis in order to reconcile that antithesis with its thesis; but the antithesis itself, viewed as speculative logic views it and not as abstract, make-believe, but impossible thought would view it, is already a synthesis of the thesis with the opposite of the thesis.*

In other words, the antithesis has two significations; or rather it may be regarded from two points of view. Looked at from one point of view, it is merely an abstract opposite of its thesis, having no *intimate* relation to it, living as a quarrelsome neighbour *beside* it, *separated* from it by an insurmountable wall of partition, through which only its oburgations can find passage. The law of identity keeps it bound down fast on its own side of the fence; the law of contradiction forbids its trespassing on its neighbour's premises; while the law of the excluded middle says that there is no fence between them. And thus this point of view opens before us a scene that is—illusion; “vanity of vanities, all is vanity”. So we must betake ourselves to the other point of view, and see whether that will not display before us a substantive reality.

From this second point of view, the antithesis is no longer a virago living next door to the thesis, but is the indispensable, all-absorbing, husband-sublating wife, “the joy of its bosom, the plague of its life”. The non-existent wall of separation no longer separates; it unites. The husband is seen to be only a member of a family, and the wife is the family.

But illustrations and all like aids to comprehension are only external. The matter must be understood in its native logical truth; and it seems to me that this truth is capable of being understood, and even of being expressed in language that is no more figurative than all languages must be. Let us try.

The negative of anything, as merely presentatively before consciousness (*als vorgestellt*), may appear to that consciousness with all suggestion of its intrinsic essential relation to its positive suppressed; only, one is tempted in such a case to appropriate Prof. James' happy word “sciousness,” as a more faithful designation of such a mythical consciousness. When, for instance, I present to myself the image-idea of Naught, I may seem to have a mere vacuum as the only object before my consciousness, a vacuum which explicitly excludes the content of Being, and therefore has no Being in it. But this is a mere seeming. Because

if it is a merely presented Naught and not a thought Naught, not a conceived Naught, then it is not Naught *to me*, and therefore the presentation of it to me is not consummated. The desired result is achieved only when I *think* what is proffered, as being Naught; and to think it as Naught is to think it as negative of Being, as Non-Being; that is, Being must be *present as rejected* within the thought that thinks Naught. I must think what-it-is-not, and think Naught as *not* what-it-is-not. Naught is, then, the synthesis, in thought, of Being and rejection or negation, a synthesis of elements which, if they could exist out of such synthesis, would be pure Being and pure denial or abstract pure Naught. It takes, thus, only a little psychological reflexion to see that the thought of the negative is, as a matter of fact, always a thought that includes its positive as a moment within it; and it takes but a little logical reflexion to see that it must be so. The thought of the negative is, therefore, not a dead self-identity, but is a *synthetic unity, with the positive that it negates as a distinction partly constitutive of it*; whereas the thought of the so-called positive is never achievable except as merely a part-thought within the organic whole of a negative thought. But such a negative thought is not merely negative; in denying the positive, it not only posits itself but it also posits as a factor within itself the positive which it itself denies.

Now, even when "common-sense" rises to the height from which it can see that the positive is only a part-thought, it makes the mistake of supposing that the negative is only another part-thought, along with which the positive part-thought makes a whole by external juxtaposition. It is perhaps Hegel's greatest merit to have seen the insufficiency and utter inadequacy of any such supposition, and to have made this his insight the instrument for the reconstruction of the science of logic, for the rescue of dialectic from the fate of being a mere capricious iconoclast, and for making it the constructive principle of philosophy, seeing that it was the constructive and not the destructive principle of thought. He saw that what is only positive does not exist, except as a merely apprehended but not yet comprehended member in a concrete whole; he saw that what is only negative does not exist except as a whole not recognised as a whole; and he saw that what in truth really exists, and what alone exists, is the negative whole of thought, which, because negative, has distinctions; which, because a whole, has the distinctions within it and not without; and which, because not negating something outside of it

or an independent other, is truly positive. As already shown, this positive-negative whole, has, as its organic constitutive factors, the positive and negation. The factors, regarded in themselves, in abstraction from the whole in which alone they have being, are pure, *i.e.*, abstract Being and abstract negativity or pure Naught. But so regarded, they cannot be *thought*, and what cannot be thought cannot be logical; and so long as they are not thought, they have no dialectical character belonging to them. They get dialectical character only when they are taken up into thought; that is, when they cease to be mere unsubstantial ghosts, mere make-believes which are not, and become real thoughts that are. The dialectical movement is the change from what they are not and never were and never could be, but were supposed to be, to what they really are. Dialectic is the nullifying of a nullity that parades itself in the guise of an entity; but this nullity is not cancelled out of consideration. The abstractions that are shown by dialectic to be nonentities are shown to be such, only in being shown to be real organic factors in the one thing that can with any propriety be called real, that is, in negative-positive thought, or self-consciousness.

Now it is for the reason that the dialectical negative is thus negative because what it negates is *within* it,—it is for this reason that Hegel calls it “the other by virtue of itself, the other-of-another” (“das Andere an sich selbst, das Andere eines Andern”). It does not owe its otherness to the mere accident of being arbitrarily and externally contrasted with something to which it is indifferent, but it is an other because it has *in itself, as its own moment*, its other, by virtue of which it has the characteristic of otherness. It is itself the other-of-another, not what may be regarded as an other—of something independent.

Having thus shown what is the true logical view of the relation between the antithesis and the thesis, let us see whether this relation does not hold in the very first triad. As has already been shown, the first triad is not abstract Being, abstract Naught, and Becoming. But it is Being which has its reality *only in its negation*; which negation, *being concrete*, is the synthetic unity of Being and its opposite, Naught; in other words, that negation is Becoming. The thought or category, Becoming, is just the same thought as Non-Being when Non-Being is *thought*, and is not merely an imaged abstraction. As Hegel says, “in Non-Being the relation to Being is contained; it is both Being and the negation of Being expressed in one word; Naught, as it

is in Becoming".¹ Since it is thus a dialectical negative, which is richer than its thesis, including, as it does, both its thesis and the opposite of that thesis, it is "just as positive as it is negative"; and when thought of as positive we call it Becoming.

It would not be difficult to show that in any other so-called triad in the categories of Being, the antithesis, when thought, that is, when dialectical and not abstract, is already the synthesis. Take for instance the Finite, the false Infinite, and the true Infinite. The false Infinite is not really the antithesis in thought of the Finite; it is only by an unrealisable abstraction that the false Infinite has any being. To negate the Finite in thought one must think it as a moment in the Infinite; the Infinite cannot exclude it; hence the Infinite cannot be, in real thought, a false Infinite. And, again, the Finite cannot be thought except as a moment in the thought of the Infinite. Of course a finite thing may be discovered to consciousness by presentation without the presentation of the Infinite, for the Infinite cannot be presented at all. But this finite thing can be thought as finite, only as a distinction within a thought that thinks what the Finite is not, *viz.*, the Infinite.

But this relation between thesis and synthetic antithesis in these early categories is exactly the relation that exists in the categories of Conception (*Begriff*). Let us take Concept, Judgment, Syllogism, as example of the later triads. A negation of what usually passes for a concept is a judgment; that is, you cannot in thought negate such a concept without *ipso facto* judging. Nor can you ever judge without *ipso facto* negating such a concept. That is to say, unless the so-called subject and the so-called predicate are kept distinct, kept in the negative reciprocity of distinction, there is no judgment. But if this distinction is a *bare* negation, a mutual exclusion, there is no judgment either. The so-called subject and the so-called predicate are not in external juxtaposition. The true logical subject²—not the so-called logical subject—includes the predicate while denying it, that is, while distinguishing it from itself. As Mr. Bosanquet says, "Subject and Predicate in the actual judgment are really distinct, as a real identity from or in its differences". "You cannot affirm *without introducing a distinction or reference* into the content of the affirmation;

¹ I., 74 (79).

² The true logical subject in "synthetic judgments" is the all-inclusive unity of the distinctions named in the subject and predicate, and in "analytic judgments" it is the unity analysed.

and yet such distinction or reference, *being part of what is affirmed, and not a relation between what is affirmed and something else*, cannot, it would seem, be the essence of the affirmation."¹ The subject, the all-inclusive unity of distinctions, is the *negative* unity of these distinctions, not their dead identity. But because that negative is thus a mediating unity, in which the so-called subject and the so-called predicate of the "synthetic judgment" are brought together, it is the syllogism. To recapitulate, the negative of the concept, as explained above, is judgment; this negative of the concept regarded as positive, because not negative of something external to it, is the syllogism. Now the reader who has followed this very brief exhibition of the dialectic of Concept, Judgment, and Syllogism, will see that the method is exactly the same as that employed in the triad, Being, Naught, and Becoming.

We can now see what becomes of Mr. McTaggart's contention that the negative is only a necessary accident in the dialectical process, tending to disappear in the higher categories. We may traverse this contention in two ways. We may say truly that negation, far from being a necessary accident in the dialectical process, never appears in it—*meaning here by negation what Mr. McTaggart means by it*; for the dialectical process is never "from one extreme to another extreme equally one-sided".² And we may also say that negation is not an accident tending to disappear, because it is the very life of the process, and appears in the fulness of its power only when it has brought all things under its feet, as the All-in-All of the Absolute Idea.

It happens that abstract understanding puts over against the thesis some other would-be category, now in the relation of contradictory opposition, now of contrary opposition, now of subcontrary opposition; and what disappears in the higher categories is the particular definite way the abstract understanding has of relating a lower abstract antithesis with its thesis; and what takes its place is some other particular way. But what is permanent through all such changes on the part of abstract understanding, is the one way that dialectic has of advancing by negation from a lower category to the higher, in which alone the lower has being. "That by which the Concept accomplishes its self-advancement is the aforesaid negative that it has in it. This constitutes the truly dialectical feature."³

¹ Bosanquet's *Logic*, I., 82. The italics are mine, to emphasise what is here pertinent.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 134.

³ I., 40 (43).

What we have already said will throw light upon another vexed question that concerns the nature of the dialectic. Is its method analytic or synthetic? Is the first category a box within which the others are all contained, or is it a grain of sand to which the others are added to make a heap? If this second form of putting the question fairly represents what is meant by the first form, the answer must be that it is neither analytic nor synthetic; for such analysis and synthesis are nothing but mere partition and aggregation. But if by analysis is meant the bringing to explicit consciousness (*Setzung*) of what a category is in itself (*an sich*), and if by synthesis is meant the enrichment of a category by another which is not an externally indifferent other, then the answer must be that the process is both analytic and synthetic. For in an organism, analysis and synthesis are not inverse processes, but are the same process. And by this I mean something different from what Mr. Bradley and Mr. Bosanquet mean when they say that there is no analysis without synthesis, and no synthesis without analysis. For what they mean is that a thought-whole does not crumble to pieces under the operation of analysis, but that the act of analysis can be performed and the result of analysis can be recognised as an analysis, only when in the same act these analytic elements are ideally held together in the whole, from the ideal disintegration of which they have arisen; and that an intellectual synthesis can take place and be recognised as synthesis, only when the synthetic result is not a homogeneous whole, but the distinctions unified are still kept distinct. All this is true *even in the ideal partition and aggregation of spaced objects conceived merely as mutually external*. Now what I mean by the co-operation, or rather by the identity, of analysis and synthesis is something very different from this. One cannot analyse the conception one has of any member in an organic whole without finding in that conception the conception of the other members and of the whole within which they are members; and this gives the analytic character to the operation. But at the same time these other members are truly *others*, and the whole is more than the part; and this gives the synthetic character to the operation.

Let us hear what the great dialectician himself says on this subject: "This is what Plato demanded of knowledge, that it should consider things in themselves, in their absolute-ness; that is, partly, in their universality; but also, partly, that one should not stray away from them, and should comprehend them, not in their environments, instances, and

external contrasts, but that one should keep them alone before one's thoughts and bring to consciousness what is immanent in them. The method of absolute knowledge is in so far *analytic*. The fact that this method finds the further determination of its initial universal entirely in this universal alone, is the absolute objectivity of the conception,—and the method is the assurance of this objectivity. It is, however, just as much *synthetic*, since its object, determined in its immediacy as simple universal, shows itself as an *other*, by the very determinateness which it has in its immediacy and universality. This relation to a different something—a relation which constitutes the object in itself—is, however, not the same thing as is meant by synthesis in finite knowledge. Already by its quite as analytic character of being a relation *within a conception*, it is thoroughly distinguished from this latter synthetic procedure. This moment of *original self-diremption (des Urtheils)*—a moment as synthetic as it is analytic—by which this initial universal obtains out of itself its determination of being its own other, is to be called the dialectical moment.”¹

Let me give an illustration of Hegel's meaning by using what, at first, seems not to admit of serving as such. What is the relation of a plane triangle to the space outside of it? Of course, if merely looked at, the triangle is seen to be outside of the space that is outside of it. Considered as mutually external, neither can by analysis be derived from the other. But instead of merely looking at the triangle, *think it*, that is, bring it under conception, and proceed to examine logically the concept you have of it. Logically, the concept of it is the concept of a plane-figure-bounded-by-three-straight-lines. That is to say, we find as an element held logically within the organic unity of the concept “triangle,” the concept “line”. Now examine this concept “line”—again avoid merely looking at it in a passive gaze—and you will find that it is the concept of limit-between-two-surfaces. That is, the concept “surface” is an element held logically within the organic unity of the concept “line”. Again, examining this concept “surface,” you will find that it is the concept of limit-between-two-solids; so that, here again, we find that the concept “solid” is included as an element logically within the concept “surface”. Thus we find that the tridimensional space, circumjacent to a plane triangle, is an *analytic element* in the very concept of that triangle. But it is no less true that this tridimensional space is the *inclusive*

¹ III., 326 (835-836).

concept, in which the concept of the triangle in its turn is an element ; that is, this tridimensional space, when thought, is *synthetically* related to the triangle, having the triangle as an analytic element within it. We do not, and cannot, think tridimensional space as an element in a quadridimensional space. We think it as a moment in the concept of one or more of its dimensions, and think it as the total concept including its dimensions as its moments. The analysis of the concept of a dimension gives tridimensional space as a distinction within it, but this distinction is at the same time the synthesis of this dimension with the other dimensions. But such synthesis and such analysis are not juxtaposition of mutually external pieces and partition into mutually external segments. The analysis is the recognition of the distinctions as moments within an organic unity ; the synthesis is the recognition of each distinction as itself *the whole within which all other distinctions, themselves wholes including it, are included*. No distinction is an ultimate distinction incapable of analysis. Think it as an ultimate distinction, and, behold, in that very thought it becomes a synthetic whole subsuming under it that whole in which you try to consider it as an ultimate element. *In conception, then, subsumption is reciprocal*. The thought-movement,—that is, the dialectic,—by which we go from a distinction within a unity up to that unity, is a movement outwards, which at the same time is not a movement outwards, but a permanent abiding within the point of departure. “Dialectic is the *movement outwards, that remains within*, a movement in which the one-sidedness and limitation of the categories of the understanding shows itself to be what in reality it is, namely, its negation.”¹ An analysis of a concept as it is in itself, which results in a synthesis of it with a true other ; a synthesis of a concept with its other, which is not an absolutely independent other, but is an other within that concept—this is the dialectical process, this is the dialectical method, which, beginning with a seemingly poor, ultimate, unanalysable concept, reaches the richest concept “without introducing any element from without”.² “Every new step of the *process outward out of self*, that is, of *further determination*, is also a *process within self*.”³

¹ *Encyclopædia*, § 81, Werke, vi., 152. Prof. Wallace's translation, “indwelling tendency outwards,” of Hegel's “das immanente Ausgehen” not only robs the sentence of its strong paradoxical flavour, but fails to express the vital thought that Hegel expressed in the original.

² I., 39 (41).

³ III., 339 (349).

In closing this examination of Hegel's dialectical method, there are two remarks I wish to make. One of them is that the relation of Hegel's negative to the negative of formal logic is often misstated. It is not true that formal logic deals with a negative that is absolute, with a contradiction that cannot be gainsaid; while speculative logic deals with a negative that is relative, with a contradiction that has no backbone and can be bullied into retraction. The truth is, that the dialectical negative is the only negative that can be thought, and it is an absolute negative. We often make ourselves believe that denial can be a relegation of the denied into another universe than our own, or at least that it can be the expression of the logical non-existence for us of what is denied. And we more often make ourselves believe that contradictions cannot but logically annihilate each other. It is one of Hegel's good offices to philosophy to have pointed out that a negative thought not only *can*, but *must*, be absolute, while no negation can be "bare," and that contradictions are not only thinkable, but that where there is thought, there is contradiction—however, a contradiction *transcended*. The contradictories of formal logic are abstractions, good enough in their own place; but the law of contradiction is not a law of *active* thought; it is merely the law that expresses the relation that exists between two organic elements in thought, when we insist on not regarding their organic character. It is the law that controls the external relation of objects of presentative consciousness, when thought as presented; it is not a law that controls the relation of objects of intellectual consciousness, when thought as intellectual and timeless. In so far as any man thinks, and not merely passively "takes it in," he has transcended the law of contradiction and is under the law of dialectic.

The second remark is, that it follows as a consequence of the *analytic* character of dialectical synthesis, that there is no *external necessity* in the world of thought, in the eternal world that lies behind the world of time and space and is the ground of that temporal and spatial order. In the logical universe, every distinction is itself the whole by virtue of the fact that the other distinctions are logically within it. Every distinction is a monad, a whole logical universe within itself, entirely self-active, knowing no restraint or compulsion from an independent, external source; for everything that is other than it, is an other *in* and *for* it. But that other *in* and *for* it is not a *dependent* element in the sense that it for its part looks outside of itself for its ground of being. As

it is a logical element, it is likewise itself the whole, in its turn subsuming what subsumed it.

How many wholes, then, are there? There is one whole, and there are many wholes; for the hard and fast line of difference that runs between "one" and "many" is a line that can be drawn only when dealing with elements that are thought under the relation of mutual externality. The logical universe can, therefore, with no more propriety be called a monistic universe than a pluralistic one; nor, on the other hand, is there any more propriety in calling it pluralistic than in calling it monistic, except in the polemical interest of denying an asserted one-sided monism. Neither a pluralism with no real logical unity, nor a monism with no self-active distinctions, is compatible with the laws of thought. And those who read Hegel's monism into a system in which there is no liberty except the one *single* liberty of the one *single* whole, make Hegel do violence to the fundamental law of the totality of each logical distinction, a law which he himself made central within his system. The truth is neither a Spinozism in which the distinctions disappear, nor an idealistic monism¹ in which the distinctions are efficiently operated by a free comprehending unity, not an atheistic pluralism¹ in which there is no logical ground of interrelation between the distinctions. Mere monism and mere pluralism are transcended in the view that emphasises the logical necessity of the free distinctions, and the synthetic as well as analytic character of each of these distinctions. In fine, the truth is neither an absolute *One* at the expense of the *Many*, nor the separately independent *Many* at the expense of the harmonising unity of the *One*; but it is the *unity* of the *One* and the *Many*, a logically free *One* of the logically free *Many*, which are themselves, each, the *One*.

And it is just here that logic makes room for ethics. For ethics is possible only when there is interrelation between free self-active centres of consciousness, each recognising itself and others as members of one commonwealth of souls, in which each has rights and duties.² Each has rights, be-

¹ I do not mean to imply that all idealism is monistic or that all pluralism is atheistic; all I say is that there is a kind of idealism that is monistic, and a kind of pluralism that is atheistic; and of both I say that they are logically inadequate.

² I wish here to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Howison of the University of California for the great help I have received from him on this point,—as indeed on very many others brought out in this series of papers,—although the use I have made of this truth is not such as he would greatly approve, denying as he does any ethical value to Monism.

cause each is the end toward which all work ; each has duties, because each works toward accomplishing the end of others. Each has rights, because each is the synthetic unity within which the others function as moments ; each has duties, because each functions as a moment within the unity of the several others. No logic that does not provide for such a relation between self-active members of a system is ethical ; no ethics that does not provide an intellectual and dialectical basis for such a community is logical. And as the Hegelian ethics rests upon the dialectic, and as the Hegelian dialectic provides satisfactorily for ethics, the charge often made that Hegel merely asserts freedom for the individual without vindicating it, is seen to be baseless. The Hegelian dialectic is adequate to all scientific needs—ethical needs among others—because all scientific needs are but expressions of dialectical necessity ; but the Hegelian dialectic that is adequate, is the *Hegelian* dialectic, not the *pseudo-Hegelian* dialectic, which occupies and concerns the critics. Of course in claiming adequacy for the Hegelian dialectic I do not claim that it is the last word in philosophy, or that as Hegel worked it out it is inerrant. All that is meant is that this insight into the fundamental relation of the One and the Many is the insight that solves the true problem of present-day thought, the problem of making an ethical world intelligible and an intelligible world ethical.