

LIEBIG AND METAPHYSICS.

He went in for the severe study of what at that time was called philosophy, that is, he listened to the lectures on metaphysics and philosophy in general of the then great Schelling. Now, let me give you the words of Liebig on that period of his life. He says: "I myself studied for some time in a university, where the greatest philosophers and metaphysicians of the century carried the studying youth away to admiration and imitation. Who could at that time resist the infection? I, too, have lived and participated in this period, so rich in words and ideas, so poor in true knowledge and solid studies; it has robbed me of two precious years of my life. I cannot describe the terror and dismay which I felt when I awoke from this giddy dream to consciousness. How many most gifted and talented men have I seen perish in this vertigo, how many wails about life objects completely missed have I been obliged to hear afterwards." Thus he spoke in his work on the study of the natural sciences, which was published at Brunswick in 1840. Now, in order that you may be able to comprehend what this kind of philosophy was, and to understand more fully the position from which he had to emancipate himself, even at that early time of his life, I will quote to you a very few passages, and I will make them as short as possible, compatible with illustrations, from one of Schelling's works, from the periodical for speculative physics—mark the term "Speculative Physics." I will quote the following passage: "Nature strives in the dynamical sphere necessarily to absolute indifference; not by magnetism nor by electricity is represented the totality of the dynamical process, but only by the chemical process. With the third dimension of the product the two other dimensions are opposed. In nature itself there is one and inseparable, which is separated for the purpose of speculation." That is almost enough, but I will give you another passage which will be more striking because of the contrary itself being known to you. Here he says of the composition of water: "Water contains just the same as iron, but in absolute indifference as yonder in relative indifference, carbon and nitrogen, and thus all true polarity of the earth is reduced to an original south and north which are fixed in the magnet." Now, in order that you may believe that he did not merely speak of an admixture or impurity of carbon or nitrogen, but that he meant to say that it was the essence of water, and that it was really composed of these two elements, and not of any other, he goes on to say: "The animal is in organic nature the iron; the plant is the water, for nature begins with the relative separation of the sexes, and then ends in this separation. The animal decomposes the iron, the plant decomposes the water. The female and the male sex of the plant is the carbon and the nitrogen of the water." These are two examples of the philosophy of Schelling, which was believed at that time to be the science by which Germany could be regenerated, by which the generation which had then just recovered its independence would be put on a firm mental basis. The followers of this system were called to the Court of Prussia, and there Hegel, the philosopher, continued in a similar manner to teach doctrines which nowadays seem to be but a farrago of nonsense. Hegel says, for example, on the chemical process: "If electricity was the broken magnetism, because the opposite poles are independent bodies upon which the positive and negative electricity is distributed, and if the point of indifference is the explosion of an indifferent light by itself, then is the chemical process, on the other hand, the totality of the shaping. We have two independent bodies which belong more to the one or the other extreme; to the metal on the one hand or the sulphur on the other, which meet in an indifferent medium; and by abandoning their abstract one-sidedness in which they decompose the medium combine to a third body which is the totality and the neutrality of the opposites, the dynamical process in its highest perfection."

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Dividends paid to Proprietors..... 60,000
Bad and doubtful debts of Agents, written off..... 144
Balance carried down..... 99,944
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LIABILITIES.
Rest, 1803 to 31st December, 1874..... £460,854
Balance of Profit and Loss, 31st December, 1875, brought down, 99,944

Rest, 1803 to 31st December, 1875..... £560,798
Add Capital Stock, 31st December, 1875..... 700,000
Unsettled Losses..... £124,298
Bills Payable..... 20,271
Unclaimed Dividends..... 1,572
Tradesmen's Bills &c..... 1,291
Commission and Expenses due to Agents..... 19,623
National (of Ireland) Insurance Company, re-insurance account..... 745
167,800
£1,428,598

ASSETS.
British Government Securities..... £413,993
Bank Stock..... 23,968
City Bonds, London..... 36,535
Dock Bonds and Stock (London and St. Catherine, Mersey and East and West India)..... 67,789
Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co's Debenture Bonds..... 12,500
General Steam Navigation Co's Preference Shares (1874)..... 10,000
British Railway Debentures and Stock..... 202,196
Loans secured..... 31,885
Freehold Offices in London, &c..... £116,841
Leasehold Houses in London..... 9,616

Imperial Fire Shares held by Four Trustees of the Company..... 126,457
Loans to Bill Brokers, secured..... 2,092
East India Railway Debentures and Stock..... 40,000
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236,616
Cash at Bankers'..... 1,259,873
Bills Receivable..... 10,930
Due by Agents and Branches of the Company..... 14,277
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