

and that in the discovery of this common ground consists the progress to a higher conception, which again requires to be subjected to the same process of contrasting and harmonising, of going out of and resuming itself in a higher unity. The peculiarity with Hegel is that this process is not only a process of human thought, but is emblematical, a conceivable image, of the development of the highest content itself. This, at the time, novel and fascinating general conception was applied in many particular instances; the general process being illustrated by an extraordinary wealth of examples drawn from all the existing regions of knowledge. Foremost stood history and, in the large region of history, principally that of society, art, religion, and philosophy. In fact, it may be said that many of the modern branches of the history of culture, civilisation, and the higher manifestations of the human mind were for the first time systematically treated and co-ordinated to a living whole in the writings and lectures of Hegel.

The extraordinary impression which Hegel's philosophy made in an age when the mind of the nation was in a state of ferment, but when it also put forward its greatest creative efforts, is not difficult to understand. For this philosophy came forward in many ways as a realisation of the ideals of that period. It understood the greatness of Goethe and Schiller and the aims of the Romantic movement, without following the latter into the dreams and vagaries of the purely imaginary. It had at the same time a full appreciation of the strictness of scientific method and of the critical spirit which was then slowly but surely making itself felt in many de-

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Reason of
Hegel's
success.