

ciples which underlie the methodical treatment of the various departments of knowledge, or must have for its special object the task of removing the contradictions which these fundamental principles exhibit. The latter is especially the object of Herbart's metaphysic and of the metaphysical part of his psychology.

In the empirical conceptions which we use in science and in common life he sees manifold contradictions, and he defines the object of metaphysic as being to elaborate, to remodel, to "work up" the whole body of these ideas in such a way that the contradictions disappear. In doing so he is led to a pluralistic as opposed to a monistic view of the ultimate Reality. Without being able to define the latter, he conceives it accordingly as a plurality of "Reals" which are simple in their nature and cannot be further defined. Our thought and knowledge turns entirely upon the relations in which these ultimate "Reals" or atoms of existence stand to each other.

As I have had occasion to show in an earlier chapter, Herbart's realistic philosophy had considerable influence in correcting the abstractions of idealism and bringing back philosophical thought to the level of detailed practical research. So far as systematic philosophy is concerned, his influence combined with that of the opposite school to produce an entirely altered conception of the object and task of philosophy. Of this altered conception the greatest, and by far the clearest, exponent is Hermann Lotze.

38.
Altered
conception
of the
task of
philosophy:
Lotze.

Although Lotze does not profess — and thinks it impossible for the human mind — to solve the philosophical problem, the complete unification of thought and