

**ESSENTIALS OF  
FORMAL  
LOGIC, PP. 1-94**

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Essentials of Formal Logic, pp. 1-94 by Michael J. Mahony

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**MICHAEL J. MAHONY**

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LOGIC, PP. 1-94**



# ESSENTIALS OF FORMAL LOGIC

BY

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## PREFACE

This little book has been compiled for beginners who intend to complete a full course of philosophy in two years. In such a course Formal Logic is supposed to be finished by the end of the first three months. This requirement demands not a treatise, but a text-book on Formal Logic, which will comprise the essentials of the subject and serve as a basis for further development and illustration in the hands of an experienced teacher.

Conciseness is one of the chief aims of the book. This characteristic respects the individuality and freedom of the teacher, while for the sake of the student, thoroughness, it is to be hoped, is not sacrificed. Hence controverted points and sometimes examples which the judicious teacher no doubt will suggest are omitted.

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to the admirable Latin works of J. S. Hickey, O. Cist., and C. Frick, S.J. Some of the examples illustrative of the forms of reasoning have been taken or adapted from the more exhaustive treatise in English of G. H. Joyce, S.J.

Fordham University,  
Feast of St. Michael, 29th Sept., 1917.

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**FINIS**

## FORMAL LOGIC

### Preliminary Notions

1. PHILOSOPHY. The word "philosophy" means the love or study of wisdom. By "wisdom" the ancients meant the knowledge of all things human and divine which make for right living, as well as the causes by which these things are related or hang together. Hence the aim of philosophy is to answer, in as far as reason is capable of doing so, the last *why* of all things that are. Philosophy is therefore usually defined: *The science of all things from the point of view of their highest or last causes, in so far as this knowledge can be attained by the light of natural reason.*

2. EXPLANATION OF THE DEFINITION—  
"Science" is a knowledge of a thing through its cause. A cause in its widest sense is that by which a thing *is, becomes, or is known*. Philosophy, then, is a science because, like all other sciences, it furnishes us with a systematized body of truths which, resting ultimately on self-evident principles, are united to one another like the links of a chain by an orderly process of demonstration.

"of all things"—Each of the other natural sciences treats of some special department of things, as chemistry, astronomy, medicine, etc., while philosophy takes in a larger field of vision. It embraces the sum total of all things in one complete view.

"highest or last causes"—This characteristic of philosophical knowledge which aims at answering the last "*why*" of all reality differentiates philosophy from