

that he should have been the first among the then living thinkers to take up the soul problem when it reached its acute form in the beginning of the second half of the century, and that a large portion of his writings should be devoted to effecting a clearance in the materialistic controversy.

The circumspection which is characteristic of his dealing with this as with many other polemical questions explains how he was frequently misunderstood, classed now with the materialists, now with the obdurate metaphysicians, and again called a disciple of Herbart or of Leibniz, or of other earlier or latter-day thinkers. Again, he has, though uninfluenced by them, some points in common with the French eclecticists; adopting, as he

51.  
His circum-  
spection.

answers by insisting on three points. First, the existence of phenomena of consciousness which are utterly incomparable with those of the outer world; secondly, the existence of a unity through which they are connected; and thirdly, the active principle for which we claim a certain amount of freedom. He admits that the last is not a proven fact, as the two former ones are, but that it acquires its importance through the overwhelming ethical interests which attach to it. The problem of the soul is thus for him not a purely scientific one, as is the case with other subjects of research—it is one in which we have a special interest for reasons which lie beyond both the empirical and the metaphysical, the descriptive and the explanatory, treatment of the subject. At the end of his earliest tract he sums up the object of psychology in words something like these: a complete psychology would have to put and solve the following problems, (1) a dialectic deduction of the phenomena of

psychical life, and an interpretation of their ideal importance in the significant totality of things; (2) a consideration of the phases of development of psychical life. This would include an investigation whether a reality is conceivable, the inner nature of which is not essentially psychical; (3) a description of the physical and mechanical conditions with which in our observation the life of the soul is connected, a physiology of the soul; (4) a mechanism of psychical life, leaving it doubtful whether this applies in all individual cases and is not dependent on subjective coefficients; (5) a psychology of individualities such as has been hitherto left to works of fiction; (6) a confirmation of our ideas referring to the fate of souls in the totality of things (see 'Kleine Schriften,' vol. ii. p. 203). These problems remained before the mind of Lotze through all his writings, but he is fully aware of the limits placed in the way of the solution of some of them.