

philosophies of bygone ages, notably of Plato, Spinoza, and Leibniz. The systematic unity, however, of these ideas had been broken up, they existed as scattered fragments of an edifice which had fallen, but which it was the duty of the philosophical mind to reconstruct on broader and safer foundations and with more careful workmanship. On this task the philosophical mind has spent its labours ever since, not only in Germany but also in the neighbouring countries. In consequence of this the character of modern philosophy has become to a large extent critical and eclectic. In many instances it has not gone beyond the limits of a critical and historical survey of the valuable materials handed down by former ages and prepared by the original efforts of ancient and modern thinkers. But we must not forget that criticism can lead to no valuable and positive result unless the point from which it is undertaken is clearly defined, and that history cannot be written except in the light of definite ideas and convictions which are implied if not expressly stated.

37.
New eclectic
spirit.

The philosopher who during the third quarter of the nineteenth century approached the philosophical problem in the critical and eclectic spirit just indicated, but who, at the same time, possessed more than any other the firm individual position and the central conviction which was to irradiate all his writings, was Hermann Lotze. In him we find united almost all the best characteristics of recent thought, with perhaps one exception, and it is probably just this one defect in his philosophical attitude which has been the cause that his works did not, for a long time, receive that attention which they deserve and

38.
Lotze.