

viz., a more detailed definition of what this ethical conception, the Good, really is; for it is not philosophically satisfactory to be merely referred, for the solution of all the higher problems, to a conception expressed by a word which has so many unreconciled meanings: not even in the face of the fact that it has served as an ideal which has governed through thousands of years the speculations of thinkers and the efforts of practical reformers alike, without ever having received a clear definition. This latter task is exactly what thinkers not only in Germany but still more in this country, and latterly also in France, have set themselves to perform, and this not only as a scientific problem but as a growing practical desideratum of the thought and culture of the age. To this age with its more practical tendencies Lotze did not belong; he still remained with one foot in the purely speculative, or as Germans would say, the purely scientific age of philosophical thought, and spent many years of his life, partly in refuting the errors of scientific materialism, partly in saving from complete loss the great inheritance of the idealistic systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. The moral danger to society which lurked not so much in scientific as in commercial materialism and in pessimism became glaringly visible only when Lotze was half through his academic career. After the death of Schopenhauer in the year 1860 the writings of this thinker and those of Hartmann and later of Nietzsche became for a time the all-absorbing subject of popular philosophical interest. This explains why the philosophy of Lotze has remained more in the