

we cannot recognise the existence of any scheme of retribution. With the admission of this highest problem of philosophy and its ultimate insolubility for the human intellect,<sup>1</sup> Lotze reminds us of the many in-

<sup>1</sup> The principal passages in Lotze's writings which refer to this subject are to be found, first, in the Lecture Course on Philosophy of Religion (§§ 75-83) where the grave problems are pointed out "which arise out of the actual existence of evil, for the order of things it corresponds to, the ideal of God [as metaphysically explained], would have to be the faultless realisation of the highest Good. All answers which are wont to be given in the form of a Theodicy are quite inadequate." These answers attempt first to deny or minimise evil, but the real evil, according to Lotze, does not consist in the absence of a good but in the pain which this absence creates. It is equally useless to call evil merely relative, and to maintain that from the Divine point of view the existing disharmony disappears, for to finite beings the sorrow of this disharmony would not equally disappear; and "lastly, it is incorrect to consider physical evil merely as something accidental or accessory. It is not only intercurrent, but the whole existence of the animal kingdom is systematically founded upon the destruction of one by the other, and this with a cruelty which is anticipated in the natural impulses of the different kinds." Other attempts to solve the problem are criticised, and the whole discussion summed up in the following words: "The results of our reflection constitute exactly the ground on which at all times pessimistic views have grown up; these may eventually admit what might theoretically be established regarding the one comprehensive Power which we must

assume in order to make the course of things intelligible, but they, on the other hand, deny our right to transform this conception of power through the predicate of goodness into that of the Deity; they rather see in the course of things nothing but the blind unfolding of a primordial ground which does not work for the realisation of happiness, but which, in individual minds, becomes conscious of its misfortune, and leaves nothing but the longing for annihilation. One may see in this an extreme exaggeration, a complete ignoring of the good things which, after all, reality presents along with the evil ones; but it must be admitted that *theoretically* it is impossible whilst discarding pessimism to prove that optimism which follows consistently from our religious conception of God. . . . If, in the face of this and fully renouncing every theoretical proof, we are nevertheless convinced of the truth of the religious belief, we consider this conviction as a resolution of the character. And religion really begins for us with this theoretically indemonstrable but nevertheless actually admitted sense of obligation, of being controlled by that Infinite Reality, the truth of which we cannot theoretically demonstrate." The second important passage will be found in the fifth chapter of the 9th Book of the 'Microcosmus,' in which Lotze desires to "lay stress upon the decisive and altogether insurmountable difficulty which stands in the way of his [highest philosophic] Belief being carried out scientifically —i.e., upon the existence of evil and sin in nature and history."