

the British mind has always recoiled with a characteristic confidence in the dicta of common-sense, but also with a feeling of reserve and of reverence for differing individual convictions. We do not meet in this country with that cheery and light-hearted philosophy which runs through many of the classical writings of the French encyclopædists and naturalists, nor with that profound and imposing sense of serious inner conviction which impressed Hegel's audience and Schopenhauer's readers, contributing so much to the success of their teaching; nor, lastly, with that oracular announcement of secret and hidden truths which was peculiar to Schelling and his disciples. The three just named characteristics of English philosophical thought: the absence of radicalism, of system, and of continuity, joined to undoubted originality in individual instances, are reflected more than anywhere else in those detached and sporadic discussions of the religious problem: the problem of the Spirit. Whereas, on the Continent, notably in Germany, this problem forms, as I have tried to show, the important centre of the entire philosophical movement, it can hardly be maintained that this country has, up to quite recent times, done more than contribute fragments to the discussion.<sup>1</sup> But a few of these frag-

<sup>1</sup> We are impressed very forcibly with the fragmentary and inconclusive nature of British thought on the subject before us by a glance at the table of contents of a recent work by Professor Alfred Caldecott, 'The Philosophy of Religion in England and America' (1901). It is, so far as I know, the only attempt to present in a compact and readable form the sporadic

meditations on our subject which are scattered through English literature. The number of names—some of the very first importance—is not less impressive than the number of types under which their very varying contributions are marshalled. Of these types the author finds no less than thirteen. The contributions come from all departments of literature, from purely