

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

LOTZE AS A FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF JAMES'S RADICAL EMPIRICISM AND PLURALISM¹

THERE is something akin to an intellectual tragedy revealed between the lines of Lotze's philosophy. Every page thereof testifies to the author's versatility, sensitiveness, intellectual penetration, dialectical dexterity, and deep moral earnestness—the stuff of which great philosophical immortals are made. But even these powers fell short of enabling him to direct the turbulent intellectual currents of the mid-nineteenth century to a center about which the scattered spiritual energies of that time could be rallied. The same intellectual climate that proved the making of such a misanthrope as Schopenhauer, and in opposition to which Nietzsche roared his defiant "Yea!", placed upon Lotze the seal of ultimate frustration. Compromise, conciliation, and a belaboring patience over-complicate and blunt every major issue which his comprehensive system handles. One is tempted to venture that had Lotze walked in the immediate footsteps of a sure and great master, he might have played Aristotle to someone's Plato, or Hegel to another's Kant.

The lack of decisiveness did not prevent Lotze's philosophy from being one of the most provocative and influential in Continental, British and American circles up to the War. True, his doctrines lacked that unity and finality which invites acceptance or rejection *in toto* and makes possible a "school". But his genuine feeling for the worth of both the practical and the theoretical spheres of experience, coupled with the extreme patience and thoroughness of his dialectics, made it possible for him to illum-

¹ This is the third in a series of four studies of Lotze's influence on William James. The first, "Lotze's Influence on the Psychology of William James", appeared in the *Psych. Rev.*, XLIII (1936) 235-257. The second, "What James's Philosophical Orientation Owed to Lotze", appeared in this REVIEW, XLVII (1938) 517-526. The fourth, "Lotze's Influence on the Pragmatism and Practical Philosophy of William James", will appear shortly elsewhere.