

now I believe it is an insect." John Blackwood, in 1867, attended one of "Jowett's Jumbles," which he politely calls "an intellectual reception—there were ladies, but it was rather slow work."

Throughout this third volume the personality of the genial editor is presented as that of one who was never stiffened by experience. We miss Mrs. Oliphant's hand, of course, but Mrs. Porter has carried on the work creditably enough. On p. 232 we read, "To any one desirous. . . we recommend them to the volume." And "These correspondents . . . was a branch" (p. 315) is another slip that betrays the unpractised hand.

Leibniz: The Monadology and Other Philosophical Writings. Translated, with introduction and notes, by Robert Latta. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Henry Frowde. 1898. 8vo, pp. 437.

That a thorough and critical acquaintance with the philosophy of Leibniz is an indispensable preliminary to a successful study of Kant and to a just appreciation of German philosophy, does not, perhaps, render this publication particularly opportune; for the endeavors that have been made to resuscitate Hegel in English-speaking countries seem for the present to have failed. But, at any rate, it may be considered as opportune on account of the number of ideas, now universally esteemed as highly fruitful, which trace their origin to the Hanoverian philosopher. The Columbus of the subconscious mind, the discoverer of mechanical energy, the joint inventor of the differential calculus, and, more than all these, the great promulgator of the law of continuity (understood by himself to include historical continuity, and, as he was dimly aware, supposing an evolution of all things and all laws from a primal chaos), is a figure to excite the curiosity of thinking men of the present day.

One might, at first blush, wonder that so big a book—though the light Oxford paper makes it easy to hold—should be devoted to a writing which in Erdmann's edition does not fill eight pages. There is, however, ample justification for that. Leibniz is not yet a convenient author to study. Before the completion of Gerhardt's edition of the *Philosophical Works* in 1890, the state of things was calculated to daunt a pusillanimous student. Even now the philosophical writings are contained in seven volumes; the mathematical works (which furnish the only key to Leibniz's thought) fill seven more by the same editor, and the mathematical correspondence has yet to be printed. The historical and political writings, which ought not to be neglected, are in ten other volumes edited by Klopp; and in order to possess all of Leibniz that has seen the light, the student must procure fourteen additional volumes (seven edited by Foucher de Careil, six by Dutens, and one by Mollat), besides those which are now in course of publication. It was, therefore, a praiseworthy act, as well as a bright idea, to take that unnamed paper known as the *Monadologie*, which compresses the metaphysical system of Leibniz into the smallest possible compass, and make it the subject of a full exposition by means of parallel extracts from other writings of the same author. For Leibniz, as a writer of papers and not of books, often repeats his thought in more

and more developed forms. A true scientific man, he never held to any opinion as final and irrevocable, and he never ceased to learn and to grow.

Dr. Latta's work has been performed with erudition and good judgment. The plan once settled, the only ground of complaint with the manner in which it has been carried out is that the original French and Latin ought everywhere to have been given in place of English versions. As for the plan itself, the chief fault of it is, that, in consequence of the whole commentary being made to refer to an exceedingly compressed statement of Leibniz's metaphysical system, it hardly presents a broad view of his whole thought; and, in particular, it is a pity that the logic of so eminent and original a logician—life and soul, as it is, of his whole philosophy—should not have been more completely illustrated.

The first hundred and fifty pages of the volume are occupied with a general exposition of the philosophy, correct and full, but not deeply critical. An "estimate" thereof fills the next sixty. There will be found historical information concerning the relation of Leibniz to the scholastics and to Descartes, and concerning the relation to him of Kant, Fichte, Schopenhauer, and Hegel. Nothing is said of later German thinkers who, down to Ernst Mach, inclusive, have been influenced in no inconsiderable degree by this philosopher—at any rate, indirectly, whether directly, too, or not. What of criticism this "estimate" contains regards the subject from a Hegelian point of view; for Dr. Latta seems to be one of those Britons who clean forget the thought which is their patrimony, in their admiration for the "profoundity" of philosophers who attack the most difficult problems without having had the courage to go through the tedious investigations which should have come first. But it will hardly be thought by anybody that Dr. Latta's criticism of Leibniz is particularly strong or helpful. This is unfortunate, because, while the reasoning of Leibniz was nearly, if not quite, of the highest order, being far more accurate than that of Kant or almost any metaphysician that can be named, and abounding in luminous, simplifying, and fecund methods, yet he seems to have had a sort of blind spot on his logical retina that rendered him capable of accepting tremendous inconsistencies and absurdities. Witness his works upon the "Great Art" of Raymond Lully—a sort of Keely motor for churning knowledge out of ignorance—in which the man who swayed German thought so long maintains that all truths, theoretical and practical, can be mathematically demonstrated from two premises, one that he expresses thus: "Quod est (tale) id est, seu non (tale) vel contra," while the other is, "Aliquid existit."

He is a declared nominalist, and his theory of monads breathes nominalistic individualism. But he strangely fails to see how contrary to all this is his law of continuity; and it is still more curious that he found himself, at last, forced to revive the substantial forms of the mediæval realists. It will occur to almost every mind that for each Leibnizian monad all the rest are superfluous and non-existent—a manifest absurdity; and that so great a reasoner should not have seen the inconsistency of supposing God to be one of those monads, is quite astonishing.

In his fourth letter to Clarke, he offers, as an argument in favor of his logical "prin-

ciple of the identity of indiscernibles," the fact that a nobleman of his acquaintance, on hearing it enunciated, long searched in vain to find two leaves of trees exactly alike—not seeing that this was a much better argument against the principle than for it. For the proposition is that things precisely alike could not conceivably be two. Now, the very fact that one may spend a long time in trying to find such a case proves that it is quite conceivable. Here lies one of the capital errors upon which the Leibnizian metaphysics comes to wreck; namely, that he does not see that existence is no general predicate or intellectual conception, but is an affair of brute fact. Was it not Carlyle who said that the very hyssop that grows on the wall is there only because the whole universe has not been strong enough to hinder it? This falsifies, too, the other principle which Leibniz in the same letter lays down as fundamental, the law of sufficient reason. There is no proving existence, as he himself once remarked; for though a thing be in itself possible, it may not, in his phrase, be "compossible" with other things which have forestalled it in the struggle for existence. Leibniz fancies he answers this objection by saying that God has created the best of all possible worlds; but that this proves itself upon discussion to be a quite meaningless proposition has long been apparent. Nor is this the only such objection to the law of sufficient reason, for nobody has answered the old question what reason there can be why red and blue light should not excite each the sensation that the other does excite. But though the doctrine that everything has a sufficient reason is thus untenable, yet it still may be true that reasons ("raisonnements"), that is, final causes, should be really operative in the universe. Only, this cannot consistently be maintained by a philosopher who insists upon denying the reality of all generals; unless, indeed, he resorts to the device of supposing a Deity in whose mind those reasons and purposes should reside—his nominalism probably passing to the conceptualistic variety. But what, after all, is such a theological nominalism but the attribution to the system of generals, not only of reality, but also of life?

Such weaknesses of the logic of Leibniz are quite overlooked by Dr. Latta; although it is not easy to comprehend how they can fail to suggest themselves to any mind trained in British strictness of reasoning.

Next in the volume comes the *Monadologie*, which copious and pertinent notes, chiefly expository by parallel passages, expand to some sixty pages. The remaining hundred and fifty pages are given to sundry papers of Leibniz allied to the *Monadologie*, together with the introduction to the 'Nouveaux Essais.' But we believe we need say nothing of these, since, if our views are at all correct, it must already sufficiently appear what praise and what blame are to be adjudged to this work.

A History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century. By Henry A. Beers. Henry Holt & Co. 1899. Pp. 455.

Professor Beers is always an interesting writer, and his latest volume is a thoroughly readable collection of essays on eighteenth-century literature. We call it a collection of essays, for, in spite of the unity implied in the title, the effect of the book on the reader

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