

An Outline of Philosophy, with Notes Historical and Critical. By JOHN WATSON, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons. Pp. xxii, 489.

This is a second edition of the book published by Prof. Watson in 1895 under the title, *Comte, Mill and Spencer, an Outline of Philosophy*. The two titles give some indication of the general nature of the book. As an "outline of philosophy" it has something to say on most of the chief problems of metaphysics or philosophy proper; but it does not directly deal with psychology, logic or economics, and it hardly does more than touch upon the questions of political philosophy, æsthetics and the philosophy of religion. Thus it does not profess to give a "complete system of philosophy," but it is offered as "a manual, which cannot do more than awaken an interest in philosophical problems, and indicate the lines on which in the opinion of the writer they may be solved". It need hardly be added that these lines are the lines of Idealism as it is expressed in the writings of Green and of Mr. Edward Caird. The method of the book is suggested by the original title. The various subjects are treated in logical order, proceeding from the most abstract to the most concrete, while the discussion is throughout kept close to the history of philosophy, each section being developed by exposition and criticism of some notable thinker. Thus Prof. Watson might have added to the names in his original title those of Darwin and Kant. In this new edition the historical element is strongly reinforced by the addition of nearly 200 pages of "notes historical and critical," dealing with specific problems in the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel and Lotze. There are obvious educational advantages in such a method as that which Prof. Watson has adopted. By the continual discussion of other theories he prevents the systematic exposition of his own opinions from taking too dogmatic and absolute a form; and, on the other hand, as the general plan of the book is not chronological but logical, the student is enabled to realise the unity of the great philosophical problems much more thoroughly than if he were to read an ordinary "history of philosophy," which resembles too much a mere list (or *catalogue raisonné*) of systems. Yet Prof. Watson's method has its dangers, and the very excellence of his work may be its undoing by tempting students to content themselves with his admirably lucid expositions and to neglect the "first-hand study of the authors" on which he rightly insists.

The book falls naturally into five main parts, discussing (1) the problem of philosophy in general, including such questions as the relation of philosophy to the special sciences and the relativity of knowledge (with special reference to Comte); (2) the philosophy of nature, including geometry, the science of numbers and the physical and biological sciences (with special reference to J. S. Mill and Darwin); (3) the philosophy of mind, or the problem of the relation between subject and object (with special reference to Mr. Spencer); (4) moral philosophy, including the problems of duty, freedom, the *summum bonum*, and rights (with special reference to Kant); and (5) the philosophy of the absolute, including the philosophy of religion and æsthetics (again with special reference to Kant). Obviously this is an immense deal of ground to cover in a single volume — too much to make a complete success possible. Yet, taking into consideration the magnitude of his attempt, Prof. Watson's achievement is remarkable: he has certainly succeeded in putting all the main issues very clearly before his readers. Occasionally, but not often, he allows

himself to commit the sin that doth so easily beset a lecturer, that of reiteration and labouring his point. And, on the other hand, there are portions of the book (*e.g.*, the note on the Association of Ideas and the chapter on the Philosophy of the Absolute) where the discussion is either too condensed to be useful to the student or too general to be adequate to the subject. Of course the improvement of the book in this respect would mean its enlargement, and even the most comprehensive books have spatial limits.

Without attempting to discuss the book in detail, one may remark upon the excellence of Prof. Watson's exposition and his acute yet sympathetic criticism in the chapters and notes which refer to Descartes and Kant, and in the notes on "The Platonic and Aristotelian Criticism of Phenomenalism" and on the views of Aristotle and Hegel regarding the principle of identity. This last note and the note on Descartes and Kant are the most valuable parts of the new material in the volume. The treatment of Mr. Spencer's position is also very clear and fair, and the exposition and criticism of Mill is on the whole very good, although on particular points (*e.g.*, the question of the inconceivability of the opposite as a test of truth) Prof. Watson's argument seems to some extent open to objection. In the new matter there are several things which, apart from their general value, will be of special interest to readers of *MIND*. In a note on "Agnosticism and Scepticism," Prof. Watson argues acutely against the scepticism of Mr. Alfred Sidgwick, as expressed in an article in *MIND* (N.S., vol. iii.), and in another note on "The Feeling Soul" there is a very interesting appreciation and criticism of Mr. Bradley's remarkable article in *MIND* (O.S., vol. xii.), in course of which, with much justice, Prof. Watson suggests that Mr. Bradley's position seems to imply the introducing into Psychology of the "preformation" theory of development, which has been discredited in biology. Again, in an admirable discussion of Lotze's theory of knowledge, Prof. Watson traces to the influence of Lotze the distinction which Mr. Bradley draws between ideas as 'events' and as having 'content,' a distinction which, in the form in which it is made, has had a baneful effect on the argument both of the *Principles of Logic* and of *Appearance and Reality*. Mention ought also to be made of the note on "The Problem of Human Freedom," in which there is some excellent criticism of the Kantian element in the work of T. H. Green. Such discussions as these make the book much more than a mere manual for students. While the main argument runs on familiar lines, it has the freshness that comes of contact with present questions.

R. LATTA.

The Mental Affections of Children: Idiocy, Imbecility, and Insanity.
By WILLIAM W. IRELAND, M.D. London: J. & A. Churchill;
Edinburgh: James Thin, 1898. Pp. ix., 442.

In his book on the *Mental Affections of Children: Idiocy, Imbecility, and Insanity*, Dr. Ireland continues the studies of his former book, *Idiocy and Imbecility*, incorporating part of the old material. Like the earlier book, this is written mainly for the practical alienist; but it is not without material for theoretic study, and Dr. Ireland does "not yet despair of receiving some little attention from the students of psychology in Great Britain" (as well as America). He writes out of the fulness of a long experience among idiots and imbeciles; his many contributions to his selected region of studies have found recognition in all the standard