

ENGLISH PHILOSOPHERS

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P R E F A C E

BY

THE EDITOR.

THE appearance of the first instalment of the Series of English Philosophers affords the Editor an opportunity of defining the position and aim of this and the succeeding volumes. We live in an age of series: Art, Science, Letters, are each represented by one or more; it is the object of the present Series to add Philosophy to the list of subjects which are daily becoming more and more popular. Had it been our aim to produce a History of Philosophy in the interests of any one school of thought, co-operation would have been well-nigh impracticable. Such, however, is not our object. We seek to lay before the reader what each English Philosopher thought and wrote about the problems with which he dealt, not what we may think he ought to have thought and written. Criticism will be suggested rather than indulged in, and these volumes will be expositions rather than reviews. The size and number of the volumes compiled by each leading Philosopher are chiefly due to the necessity, which Philosophers have generally con-

sidered imperative, of demolishing all previous systems of Philosophy before they commence the work of constructing their own. Of this work of destruction little will be found in these volumes; we propose to lay stress on what a Philosopher did rather than on what he undid. In the summary will be found a general survey of the main criticisms that have been passed upon the views of the Philosopher who forms the subject of the work, and in the bibliographic appendix the reader will be directed to sources of more detailed criticism than the size and nature of the volumes in the Series would permit. The lives of Philosophers are not, as a rule, eventful, the biographies will consequently be brief. It is hoped that the Series, when complete, will supply a comprehensive History of English Philosophy. It will include an Introduction to the Study of Philosophy, by Professor H. Sidgwick.

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