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By
WINCENTY LUTOSŁAWSKI

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TO EVA AND MARJORIE,
FRIENDS OF MANY LIVES,
THIS WORK SHOULD APPEAR
AS THEIR OWN, BEING BORN
OF OUR MEMORABLE TALKS
IN CARBIS BAY, AUGUST 1928

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PREFACE

THIS is the outline of a course of metaphysics, given first at the University of Kazan (1890–93), then at Cracow (1899–1907), at Geneva (1912–16), at the Sorbonne in Paris (1919), at the University of Wilno (1919–29), at the University of Posen (1921), at the Universities of Warsaw and Lwów (1923) and on many other occasions elsewhere. The theory of matter was first published in Polish in June 1921 in the *Nowy Przegląd Literatury i Sztuki* (Warszawa, Biblioteka Polska), and then in English in July 1929 in the quarterly, *The Monist*, Chicago. The full course contained in addition a theory of personality, of which the first chapter appeared in Jan. 1922 in vol. xxxi (N. 121) of *Mind*. The full Theory of Personality will form a sequel to this and the two preceding works of the author, *The World of Souls* (1924) and *Pre-existence and Reincarnation* (1928).

These four volumes and a work already written on the *Discovery of God* form one whole, the final outcome of a life devoted to the understanding of Reality. It seems that the need of such an understanding is steadily growing, though the last great synthetic effort of Charles Renouvier, who, having passed his 86th birthday, gave in four volumes 1899–1903 the results of his thought, remains little known outside a small circle of readers in France.

PREFACE

In England the thinker whose works in many respects show the closest relation to my own thought is Dr F. A. M. Spencer, to whom I am greatly indebted for the care expended on the manuscript and proofs of my two latest works. His exceptionally valuable suggestions have greatly improved my text and I should like all my readers to become acquainted with his works, which may be considered as a spontaneous English confirmation of Polish thought.

In his *Meaning of Christianity* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1912, 2nd ed. revised, 1914) he shows that each soul must pass through many incarnations, so as to develop, in union with God, that spiritual life which will eventually enable it to overcome death. In *Human Ideals* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1917) he indicates how all human progress should be directed to the birth and development of this spiritual life. He emphasizes the persistent solidarity of the individual ego with human society, both national and international, so that only through the perfecting of humanity as the Kingdom of God can each human being become perfect as a child of God.¹

¹ The other works of Dr Spencer are: (1) *The Ethics of the Gospel*, in which he makes a brief survey of the ethical teaching of Jesus and indicates its bearings upon modern life, handling the themes with a wise and scholarly frankness which makes it most interesting reading; (2) *Civilization Remade by Christ*, in which he shows that this teaching contains principles for the solution of many of the main problems of civilization. Here he combines a wide treatment of great themes with concreteness of handling and definite reference to the teaching of Jesus; (3) *The*

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That Poland may have a message for the English-speaking world is after all not more surprising than the acknowledged truth that Palestine had a message for the Roman Empire, which needed three centuries to be accepted. I hope the Polish message will reach its goal more easily, as it is merely an expansion of the old Gospel truth.

My preceding books have created a stream of personal correspondence from readers, which I value very much. I appeal to the wider circle of readers of this book to make themselves similarly known, so that, since contemporary life on the whole is tending in the opposite direction, I may gauge the effect produced by this voice in the wilderness.

W. LUTOSŁAWSKI

JAGIELLOŃSKA 7, m. 2

WILNO, POLAND.

April 2, 1930.

Theory of Christ's Ethics, in which he gives a deeper and more detailed treatment of the Gospel ethics. He argues that Jesus had in view a thorough reconstruction of society, including the formation of an international brotherhood for securing peace. He demonstrates the psychological truth of the attitude of Jesus to the great instincts of human nature and of his diagnosis of moral maladies. He relates the ethics of Jesus to His offer of redemption and eternal life. Finally, he indicates how the philosophical conception of absolute value and the *summum bonum* is elucidated by the great ideal of Jesus, which He called "the Kingdom of God". In all these points Dr Spencer wonderfully confirms the teaching of the Polish philosopher Cieszkowski, whom he certainly did not know when writing the above three volumes, published by Messrs Allen and Unwin since 1925.

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