

SHORTER NOTICES

Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. By Ludwig Wittgenstein. With an introduction by Bertrand Russell. New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922. 189 pp.

The final number of Ostwald's *ANNALEN DER NATURPHILOSOPHIE* (1921) contains an article by Mr. Wittgenstein, a former pupil of Mr. Bertrand Russell, dealing with the nature of logic and with its relations to mathematics, philosophy, and natural science in a manner so original and profound as to make its publication an important event. The book in hand presents that essay in the original German, along with an English rendering of it under the editorship of Mr. C. K. Ogden of Magdalen College, Cambridge. The original and the translation are printed side by side, facing each other, and that is well, for the original contains many sentences that are not sufficiently clear to admit of quite confident translation.

Of the book's 189 pages 23 are occupied by Mr. Russell's introduction, the remainder being equally divided between the German version and the English one. So it is seen that the work proper is physically very small—only 83 pages. But it is far from small scientifically. Not only does it present "a theory of logic which," in Mr. Russell's opinion, "is not at any point obviously wrong" (notwithstanding it rejects as unsound some of the tenets hitherto held by the English logician) but it contrives to deal in a fundamental way with other great matters.

How can so small a work be so big? What is the art involved? The answer is found in a variety of considerations.

One of them is that Mr. Wittgenstein's thinking is confined to fundamentals. His book is addressed to none but the most seasoned of thinkers. The author will be content, he tells us, if only one person reads his book with understanding and pleasure.

Again, there is no index, no table of contents, no division into chapters, no bibliography, no specific acknowledgement of indebtedness to others save that of having been stimulated by "the great works of Frege and the writings of my friend, Bertrand Russell"; there is hardly any comparative criticism, setting the author's thought in relation with the thought of others, whether past or contemporaneous; and no clear indication of such parts of his work as he may deem to be new or original, "because," says he, "it is indifferent to me whether what I have thought has already been thought before me by another."

But the chief secret of his being able to deal effectively with so many great matters in so brief a space, is to be found in the temperamental quality of his style. Wittgenstein is a mystic—a logical