

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

The Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers: The Gifford Lectures in the University of Glasgow, 1900-1 and 1901-2. EDWARD CAIRD, LL.D., Master of Balliol College, Oxford. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1903. 2 vols.

Dr. Caird always writes in a masterly and interesting way. It is needless, therefore, to write a commendatory notice of his last volumes. Every one interested in theology and philosophy will know that he can not forego the pleasure and profit that these lectures afford. They deal with more technically philosophic subject-matter than his lectures on 'The Evolution of Religion,' and therefore afford more opportunity for the enforcement of absolute idealism, of which he is *facile princeps* expositor in England. In fact, that is his one subject, whatever subject-matter he takes up. His masterly work on Kant's philosophy might well be entitled 'Through Kant to Hegel.' His lectures on 'The Evolution of Religion' is an application of the same philosophy to the historical phenomena of religion. Greek philosophy gives him the genesis of absolute idealism. Here he is most thoroughly at home with his subject. Thus there comes to a reader of his works a sense of repetition. It would be ungracious to say that he is always saying the same thing over. It would have to be added that he always says the highest truth, and says it well. He is always saying and proving that the real is, through and through, the rational—that absolute self-consciousness is the only really real. He is glad to use the conception of evolution in his expositions. But one quickly finds that it is the philosophical rather than the scientific conception of evolution that he uses. It is the way of the spirit in thinking experience out of its *sub specie temporis* to the *sub specie aeternitatis* point of view, rather than any evolution in the subject-matter itself. The evolution is not in the eternally real, but in our gradual, and, I may add, which he would not, in our asymptotical apprehension of the absolute. There is only one real experience. There are many faltering onward steps in man's knowing it as it is for God. The key-word he uses in tracing this evolution is that of *abstraction*. Everything seen *sub specie temporis* is seen away; because it is seen as partial, or as an *abstraction*. Only as experience is seen *sub specie aeternitatis* is it seen aright, as a total, a *res completa*, or concretely. Degrees of reality come from degrees of knowing. *Sub specie aeternitatis* there are no degrees of reality. Thought and being are identical. The real is the rational. God is all in all—the one total experience. Absolute idealism has the task of showing the logical process from the *sub specie temporis* to the *sub specie aeternitatis* point of view. If this can not be done, then we have agnosticism or mysticism, not philosophy. Dr. Caird does not minimize the task. He rejects any '*facile monism*,' as he knows that at best it must be a *difficile monism*. Hence he emphasizes the natural dualism against which Greek philosophy waged such a strenuous, and not altogether winning, fight. That is what he finds in Greek philosophy

—in Plato and Aristotle—an unresolved dualism. One must question whether he does not overemphasize their dualism and minimize their monism. Or, accepting his interpretation, one must then ask whether he himself thinks clearly and cleanly and speculatively through to a monism, or whether he does not glide over the bridge of mysticism to the goal. Dr. Caird is strenuously opposed to pantheism. But one always feels, in reading his works, that this antagonism comes of his religious and moral training, and that his victory is rather ethical than speculative. Surely in these volumes where he treats of Neo-Platonism, he comes to do what Professor Royce does in his Gifford lectures. That is, he greatly enlarges the concept of thought, taking in the religious and ethical elements.

He concludes his fine chapter entitled, 'Does the primacy belong to reason or to will?' by saying, 'the general result to which our argument brings us is that neither the theoretical nor the practical life can be viewed as the exclusive source of that higher consciousness which is manifested in religion and philosophy' (II., 381). Either view, he asserts, is a false abstraction. That is, the purely speculative, logical, philosophical point of view is insufficient, leading, as it did with the Neo-Platonists, to an emptying of the consciousness of God of its peculiar meaning and content (II., 382).

And it is only thus that Dr. Caird, like Dr. Royce, is saved from going the abstractly speculative road to a negative absolute. The crux of the problem is to see the world of becoming, of evolution, the time and space world, as organic elements of the one true reality—to know God, not as a unity that transcends all finite, partial, abstract existences, but as a Being who realizes Himself in the whole process of nature and spirit (II., 312)—a unity that is eternally self-differentiating and yet maintaining itself in and through all its dualistic, polyistic forms. All absolute idealism must deny absolute reality to the world of scientific knowledge. Science is a grade of knowing that gives a grade of reality—but not the real reality. There are many abstractions, but only one concrete. All finite thought, including scientific knowledge, deals with abstractions. All philosophy is essentially theology, as Aristotle saw, because it is an explication of the one concrete experience. I confess to finding more speculative theology—less dualism—in Greek philosophy than Dr. Caird allows. And I also fail to find in later idealism any great advance upon the central speculative conceptions of Greek philosophy.

In his chapter on the final results of the Aristotelian philosophy, he finds a deadlock in Aristotle's conception of God as self-consciousness, as related to the world of genesis. The changing world of *processes* is regressively traced back to the unmoved mover. But there is no passage from this to the world of motion. He says, 'We may hide this from ourselves by speaking of self-mover with Plato, or an unmoved mover with Aristotle, or a *causa sui* with Spinoza; but this is only a disguise for the fact that we have made what Aristotle calls a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*, a change to quite a different category or way of explanation.' This is a hard saying and one questions whether, if this be true, modern idealism does not commit the same fault.

As for Dr. Caird's masterly treatment of Plato and Aristotle and the Neo-Platonists, it goes without saying that no one can afford to miss his fine critical exposition of these masters of those who know. He treats fully of the development of the idealism of Plato, whom he calls 'the first systematic theologian,' who yet failed to attain a full reconciliation of the opposite lines of mysticism and dualism. He gives a chapter on Plato's doctrine of the immortality of the soul and idea of God. He shows how the severe critic of Plato, Aristotle, is a most faithful disciple, but holds that he is ultimately more dualistic than Plato himself. This is, at least, disputable.

His last chapter, on 'The Influence of Greek Philosophy upon Christian Theology,' will be read with deep interest. Profound as the influence was, Dr. Caird declines to see it to be a secularization of the Christian faith. Greek philosophy supplied the necessary form for the work of reflective thought upon the Christian consciousness that gave the Church its theology. But yet Dr. Caird thinks it brought the bane of dualism into Christian thought and deepened the gulf between the human and the divine. This seems like a far-fetched cause, when the cause is so near at hand—immanent in the Christian consciousness itself. In this chapter, too, one sees that Dr. Caird regards Neo-Platonism as the logical development of Greek philosophy. This at least will open the question for another estimate of philosophy and for a different reading of the development of Greek philosophy and Christian theology. It seems to me to vitiate the view of philosophy as a progressive way of the spirit of man to the spirit of God.

J. MACBRIDE STERRETT.

COLUMBIAN UNIVERSITY.

Rationality and Belief. A. K. ROGERS. *The Philosophical Review*, January, 1904, pp. 30-50.

This article attempts 'an adjustment of the relative claims of the logical and extra-logical factors in belief.' The discussion starts with a definition of reality as being 'at bottom a postulate of the will.' At the foundation of all belief lie our active needs. What satisfies our needs is real; if it can be used as a means for doing something that our nature impels us to do, we believe in it. All else remains in the form of mere floating images. But further, to give full objectivity to what we feel as real there must occur some clogging of the smooth functioning of things. This brings out the consciousness of the distinction between means and end, and thus the separation between self and the world arises. A further development from the same cause is the distinction between the objective thing and sensation. Finally social contrasts help to bring out the consciousness of our ends, and social agreements develop the distinction between the illusory and the real.

The practical inference from this postulate character of all reality is that spiritual values, which we also believe in on the basis of practical needs, have as much right as have our beliefs in the facts of physical life.

Now if reality is a postulate, then emotion, which is feeling directed