SURVEY OF RECENT PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

PHILOSOPHY.

Professor G. Dawes Hicks.

The work that is of chief moment in philosophical research is rarely or never that which produces the greatest stir in the world or raises the most lively discussion. On the contrary, it is the quiet, plodding work of the investigator who is content to remain outside the noisy conflict of tongues that counts for so much in the estimation of the public and figures so largely in the popular periodicals. The instance which will at once occur to everyone is the case of Hume. Hume was probably the most profound and original speculative intellect that Scotland, the land of metaphysicians, ever produced. Yet his penetrative and epoch-making book fell still-born from the press. In our own day, the labours of Adamson and of Shadworth Hodgson illustrate the same thing. Both these men toiled on, patiently and conscientiously attempting to get to the root of fundamental problems, but their names were hardly known outside a narrow circle of readers and thinkers. To its lasting credit the University of Edinburgh publicly recognised the importance of their work, but no other university did. At the present time a similar situation is to be observed in German philosophical reflexion. Beyond question the most fruitful contributions to philosophical research of recent years have come from Alexius Meinong, in Graz, and Edmund Husserl, in Göttingen. Neither of these investigators has constructed a huge Weltanschauung—and, as the years go by, that will be considered less and less as a duty incumbent upon the philosophic inquirer—but both have been for long scientifically at work upon specific philosophical problems, and have thus added materially to the sum of human knowledge. Meinong’s Gesammelte Abhandlungen are now in process of publication (by Barth of Leipzig), and I hope to have an opportunity of referring to them when the publication is complete. Here, however, I wish to call attention to the important Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung, the first volume of which, in two parts, consisting each of over four hundred pages, has just been issued under the editorship of
Professor Husserl (Halle: Niemeyer, 1913). The reasons for instituting the new Zeitschrift, as it is called, are simply and plainly stated in a short preface. Mention is there made of the rapid increase of workers in the field of what Husserl describes as phenomenology, of the growing conviction that philosophy ought to be pursued in a strictly scientific spirit, and of the need for an organ that shall represent those who are thus engaged in seeking for philosophic truth. The Jahrbuch opens with the first portion of an extremely elaborate and significant work by Professor Husserl himself, bearing the title "Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie." The author tried to indicate the method and the scope of phenomenological inquiry in his well-known book, Logische Untersuchungen, published twelve years ago, but the conception was then new, and, notwithstanding the care and exactitude with which it was formulated, grave misunderstanding has prevailed in regard to its meaning and import. Phenomenology has, for example, been taken to be a special branch of psychology. But, however essential it may be to psychology as supplying the latter with its fundamental notions, it is no more itself psychology than geometry is natural science. Psychology is an empirical science, and the term "empirical" implies, in this connexion, that, on the one hand, psychology is a science of what Hume called "matters of fact," and, on the other hand, a science of realities—that is to say, of real occurrences which are related to other real occurrences in time and space. In contradistinction therefrom, pure phenomenology is not a science of "facts" but a science of essence (Husserl coins from the Greek term eidōs the barbarous phrase "eidetic" science), and the phenomena with which it deals are characterised as non-real (irreal). Phenomenology is a Wesenslehre, a theory not of real but of transcendentally reduced phenomena—phenomena which, in other words, have been "purified" of just that which would confer reality upon them, and give them, at the same time, a specific position in the real world. The "plain man" is sure to flounder hopelessly when he is told that the fundamental science which lies at the basis of all the other philosophical sciences is a science concerned with entities that cannot be said to exist. But the slightest reflexion ought to be sufficient to remove such incredulity. A precisely similar statement holds good with respect to the physical sciences. They all rest upon the science of mathematics, and certainly mathematics has not for its subject-matter existing entities. Indeed, one may lay down quite generally the proposition that existing realities can only be known, in the strict sense, by means of entities which cannot themselves be said to exist. And what Professor Husserl's contention amounts to comes, I take it, to this, that the ultimate science in philosophy must be the science of those entities through and by means of which all other entities can be scientifically investigated at all. Whether this fundamental science is appropriately called phenomenology is another, and a relatively unimportant, matter. Husserl has selected that title apparently because he holds that the standpoint in question is reached by a process of "reduction" from phenomena—by purifying phenomena,
that is to say, of those elements that do not belong to the sphere of Wesen or essence. Professor Husserl’s work is to be divided into three books, and Book I. only is contained in the present issue of the Jahrbuch. It is throughout a resolutely strenuous piece of argument. In this book, the general theory of phenomenological reductions, which reveal to us consciousness as transcendentally purified and its correlative essences, is dealt with, and an attempt is made to obtain definite ideas of the general structure of this purified consciousness, and of the groups of problems, the lines of research, and the methods which belong to the new science. The author shows how the contingency of empirical fact is related to a necessity of essence the nature of which can be determined without implying the smallest assumption as to the existence of any one specific individual fact. Every judgment concerning essence can be converted into an equivalent and strictly universal judgment upon the particulars that fall under this essence as such. And this means, in other words, that the empirical sciences must rest in the long run upon an a priori theory of objects (“Ontology” Husserl now proposes to call it, in preference to Meinong’s term, Gegenstandstheorie), and upon the logical principles which such a theory of objects involves. All the same, the principles of phenomenology are not for us a priori in the sense of being given prior in time to experience. They do but bring out the truths of distinctions which are directly given in sense-intuition itself. And in this connexion Husserl is enabled to make very clearly manifest the error committed by ordinary empiricism. Immediate apprehension (Sehen)—not sensuous apprehension merely, but immediate apprehension generally—is, no doubt, the ultimate source of all rational assertions. But to maintain straightway that all judgments can be shewn to be grounded on experience without having first of all examined the nature of judgments in their radically different forms, and without having then inquired whether such a contention does not turn out to be ridiculous, is a procedure of a priori speculative construction, and speculative construction of a kind by no means improved because this time it happens to emanate from an empiricist. Ask the empiricist to exhibit the source of the validity of the universal propositions he is constantly assuming, such, for example, as that “all valid thinking is grounded upon experience,” and he will at once become entangled in obvious absurdity. With equal clearness can the error committed by idealism be exposed to view. Essences, or essê, the idealist will argue, are notions, and notions are mental formations. Now, certainly essences are “notions,” if by the term “notions” one understands, as that ambiguous word enables us to do, just essences. But in that case it is nonsense to speak of notions as mental formations. Numbers, for example, are said to be notions. But is not the number “two” what it is whether we “form” it or whether we do not? No doubt, I may carry out my act of counting; I may “form” my ideas of “one and one”; and, in this sense, I may have one idea, or several ideas, or no idea at all of one and the same number. Obviously, however, this very circumstance forces us to distinguish the idea of two from the number
two, which itself, like all the other members of the numerical series, is a timeless entity. Nay, even a chimera is not a mental existence. A centaur exists neither in the mind, nor in consciousness, nor anywhere else, and it is only because we are continually confusing the process of imagining with what is imagined that we blunder so egregiously in this reference. So in respect to essences. In a spontaneous act of abstraction, it is not the essence, but the consciousness of it that we "form"; and there is no more justification for identifying the consciousness of an essence with the essence itself, and for thus psychologising the latter, than for identifying our consciousness of a horse with the four-legged beast in the shafts. As against both these erroneous theories, Professor Husserl would defend what he calls the principle of all principles—the principle, namely, that whatsoever is given to us in direct immediate apprehension (as in its living reality, so to speak), is to be simply accepted for what it is given as, but at the same time only within the limits within which it is given. Furthermore, he would constitute a fundamental distinction between the way in which we are aware of being as itself living experience (Erlebnis), and of being as thing. The former is perceptible as immanent in the act of perception; the latter is always transcendent, and never itself forms part of the stream of living experience. Even for a divine consciousness, a thing would not itself be an Erlebnis; it would not, that is to say, be immanently known. And in the finite consciousness there is of the thing no picture or sign which is immanently apprehended in the place of the thing itself. On the contrary, and notwithstanding its transcendence, the spatial thing is, in its living reality, itself directly given to consciousness. It is given, however, subject to the conditions imposed by the circumstance that consciousness is in a state of perpetual change and flux; it is given, too, in various settings and in different perspectives. As given, it shadows off (abschatten is the suggestive verb used) in manifold directions. Hence arises the antithesis we draw between the thing itself and its appearances—an antithesis which is ultimately traceable to the fact that the thing is an element in a complex system of realities continuous with one another, and is by us, on that account, only partially known. But Professor Husserl insists—herein running counter to a well-known contention of Kant's—that the antithesis between appearance and reality has no relevancy with respect to consciousness itself. My own inner life, as I immanently perceive it, is given absolutely as it is—not only in its essence, but also in its existence; it has no aspects or sides which present themselves now in this way, now in that. Doubtless, I can think either truly or falsely about it. But that which is there in immanent inner perception is absolutely there, with all its qualities, its intensity, and so on. Ein Erlebnis schattet sich nicht ab. I must break off here, and have only so far touched the fringe of Professor Husserl's masterly piece of analysis. But I trust I have said enough to indicate its great value for all students of philosophy. To the other essays in the Jahrbuch I can only refer in the briefest way. Professor A. Pfänder makes a contribution, "Zur Psychologie der Gesinnungen." It is
a painstaking attempt to determine the nature and the kinds of mental
dispositions. He finds them to be, in their general character, feelings, and
to be built up of feeling, but, nevertheless, to be essentially different from
feelings of pleasure and pain—a difference which he tries to emphasise by
describing them as centrifugal streams of feeling. There follows the first
part of an essay, entitled “Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale
Wertethik,” in which the author, Dr Max Scheler, criticises, with fairness
and yet with acuteness, the central position of Kant’s practical philosophy,
that the moral law is purely formal. Kant, it is urged, was right in
rejecting any attempt to base the goodness or badness of an action upon
its relation to an end, even a final end, but he was mistaken in supposing
that all material values exist only in relation to a will directed to an end.
Further, it was an error, on Kant’s part, to confine the a priori factors to
the rational side of consciousness. The feelings and emotions, it is con-
tended, have likewise their a priori aspects. Then, Dr Moritz Geiger
offers some interesting “Beiträge zur Phänomenologie des aesthetischen
Genusses.” Ästhetic enjoyment is regarded by him as the disinterested
contemplation of the fulness or richness of the object. This does not
mean that the contemplation is devoid of interest; on the contrary, a
high degree of interest is a condition of intense enjoyment. Again, the
contemplation must be disinterested, not the enjoyment. For enjoyment
of all kind, in virtue of its being an affection of the self, is necessarily
interested enjoyment. Finally, Dr Adolf Reinach writes on “Die apriori-
sischen Grundlagen der bürgerlichen Rechts,” and maintains that in the
science of law we have synthetic a priori judgments in Kant’s sense similar
in nature to those of pure mathematics and pure physics. On the whole,
this first volume of the Jahrbuch must be pronounced one of the most
noteworthy productions of recent years that we owe to German philosophy.

An Italian thinker, Dr Bernardino Varisco, sketches in Logos (iv. 2)
the “Grundlinien einer Theorie der Erscheinungen,” which seems in certain
respects to have affinity with the monadism recently worked out in this
country by Dr James Ward. Dr Varisco maintains that by reflexion upon
experience we are led to conceive of reality as consisting of a multiplicity
of conscious subjects, differing greatly in degree of development but not
in essence from one another, and together forming an interconnected system.
Unlike Dr Ward, however, he hesitates to extend this system downwards
below the confines of animal life. The material world he regards as
appearance merely, as having no existence apart from the thought of
apprehending minds. We distinguish certainly in our thought the sub-
jective process of thinking from that which is its content, but, contends
the author, process and content are essentially inseparable. Appearances
are Vorstellungen that arise through the mutual co-operation of the activity
and will of the experiencing subject with the activity and wills of other
experiencing subjects. A somewhat similar point of view appears to be
reached by Professor Karl Skopek, of Vienna, in an article on “Die Begrün-
dung einer idealen Weltanschauung” (Arch. f. system. Phil., xix. 3), who,
however, approaches it through means of a historical discussion of various philosophical systems. I cannot find that either writer really grapples with the serious difficulties confronting him. Dr Varisco offers no ground whatever for the assumption that the material world is a complex of Vorstellungen, and to the objection that because the material world is only knowable to us through means of thought we cannot conclude that its being is identical with the being of thought, his only reply is that the being thus ascribed to the material world cannot, at any rate, be separated from the thought of being, otherwise the contention that the material world (which includes its being) exists would not have the smallest significance. "For example," says Dr Varisco, "when it is said that a man has two hands, it is absolutely necessary that the notion two should be a characteristic of the whole formed of the hands of the man." Here we have an example of the fallacy which Professor Husserl, as I have said above, takes great pains to expose. The notion "two" is certainly an ingredient in the knowledge that a man has two hands, but it is a gratuitous assumption to assert that the notion "two" is a characteristic of that fact itself. In an article on "The Last Phase of Professor Ward's Philosophy" (Mind, July 1913), Professor J. H. Muirhead criticises Dr Ward's monadology from the point of view of absolute idealism. The author urges (a) that Dr Ward fails to render explicable how, from a world of self-determining monads, united merely by their coexistence, the start can be made towards that union and co-operation which has actually come about in the course of history. For, in order to account for the development of the devotion to common ends, the fact of the mutual implication of self and others in a totum objectivum from the first has to be assumed, and this involves the idea of an enclosing unity which cannot be harmonised with the assumption of the ultimateness of the plurality. The author urges (b) that, in order to show that we have a guarantee of the ultimate supremacy of the Good over evil, Dr Ward has virtually to admit a principle at work which requires the transformation of the apparently original plurality into an essential interdependence. There is, so Professor Muirhead argues, no possibility of explaining the real world that history reveals on the basis of a conception of the individual which rests on taking activity, conation, self-initiated process, for an ultimate. On the other hand, in an interesting article in the Church Quarterly (July 1913) on "Time and Eternity," Miss H. D. Oakeley comes to the conclusion that absolute idealism, as presented in Dr Bosanquet's Gifford Lectures, does not yield a satisfactory interpretation of the religious consciousness. No theory, she insists, which makes the transience of time unreal, whilst trying to save it for reality as an order, can avoid robbing the temporary experience of its peculiar meaning and value. The relentless logic which compels the whole (i.e. the best) to appear as the final stage of a logical process, rejecting all that does not fit in with its form of universality in difference,—time, separate personality, the contrasts of good and evil, teleology and mechanism—seems to her untrue to our deepest convictions. Mr
J. W. Scott, writing on “The Pessimism of Creative Evolution” (Mind, July 1913), has an indictment of like import to prefer against the philosophy of Bergson. The cross-sections which, according to Bergson, intellect makes in the stream of movement are literally “nothings” in that movement itself which is reality. The things which in this life of merely snapshot views we count as most precious are irrelevancies to the *élan vital*; they simply drop out; and there thus clings to Bergson’s speculation all the pessimism of a theory which banishes a large portion of human values from the realm of being.

Professor Paul Natorp discusses a thorny question in his essay on “Philosophie und Psychologie” (Logos, iv. 2). He contends that in respect to its fundamental principles psychology belongs to philosophy, and that, since the process of objectifying necessarily presupposes as the ground of its possibility the conscious subject, psychology, when conceived in a broad and scientific way, would form, not indeed the basis of philosophy, but its culmination, and, in a certain sense, its last word. In an able treatment of the “Prinzipienfragen der Denkpsychologie” (Kantstudien, xviii. 3), Dr R. Hönigswald raises some weighty objections to the experimental investigations of Bühlcr and others upon the nature of thought-processes. His criticism centres upon the contention that in reporting their introspective observations the *Versuchsperson* were constantly liable to the temptation of mistaking the contents of their thought-processes for the processes themselves, of supposing that they were recording actual *Erlebnisse* when, as a matter of fact, they were recording what they thought about those *Erlebnisse*. And he emphasises the vast amount of work there is yet to be done in determining exactly the relation between word and its meaning in the operation of thought.

The Marburg School has for a long time been insisting upon the close affinity between the Platonic and the Kantian methods of philosophising, and in a suggestive paper on “Platos Erkenntnislehre in ihren Beziehungen zur Kantischen” (Kantstudien, xviii. 3), Siegfried Mareck summarises the points on which the thinkers referred to have laid stress. Plato, he reminds us, characterised sensation as the ἀνεποίημεν, the perfectly indeterminate, which only obtained significance as an element in the unity of knowledge, and Kant’s conception of a “manifest of sense” is a characterisation of like kind. For Plato as for Kant intuitions without notions are blind. And the epistemological function of the “ideas” is similar to that of the Kantian “categories of the understanding.” Professor R. Falckenberg’s *Vortrag* on “Hermann Lotze: sein Verhältnis zu Kant und Hegel und zu den Problemen der Gegenwart” (Z. f. Phil. u. Phil. Krit., cl. 1) is interesting on account of the way in which it is shown how Lotze prepared the way for the work of Husserl and Meinong.

Professor G. Simmel’s article on “Das individuelle Gesetz” (Logos, iv. 2) is a valuable contribution to ethical reflexion. He lays stress upon the consideration that the individual life is not merely subjective, but that, without in any way losing its individuality, is, as the embodiment of moral
obligation, essentially objective. The false Verzeichnung between individuality and subjectivity must be given up, as also that between universality and conformity to law must be given up. And thus we shall be enabled to form a new synthesis between conformity to law and individuality. Mention of Professor Simmel leads me to record the appearance of a most delightful and stimulating little volume of his on Goethe (Leipzig: Klinkhardt und Biermann, 1913), in which he tries to indicate the philosophical significance of Goethe’s life and activity.

G. Dawes Hicks.

University College, London.

THEOLOGY.

The Rev. Professor James Moffatt, D.Litt.

Writing in The North American Review upon the threadbare theme of “English Literature’s Debt to the Bible,” Mr W. G. Perry finds three factors in the Bible itself, independent of translation, which make it a source of strong emotional impulse. “In the first place, its substance is essentially poetic. A considerable part of it is definitely lyrical, as in the Psalter and the numerous songs embedded in its narrative portions; an even larger part is filled with the ecstasy of vision, as in the prophetic books and the Apocalypse; . . . its wisdom books and philosophical essays are very distinctively logical and constantly flash into purple passages that make their appeal solely to the feelings. . . . In the second place, this emotional pulsing is made more noticeable by the form of the Hebrew sentence. Its sentences consist of single propositions that are short and vary little in length. This gives to its prose a rhythmic beat, not unlike the swing of the verse in our poetic composition. A third striking quality of the Hebrew is its total lack of abstract words; hence, abstract thought and emotion can find expression only through concrete terms, and constant recourse is had to figurative language to make such expression possible.” This estimate is obviously based in the main upon the Old Testament. It raises problems of Hebrew style and metre which are being discussed on more technical lines both on the Continent and in Great Britain. Thus, the recent interest in Hebrew metre and poetry, among German scholars, coincides with the publication of several English studies in the same subject. Dr G. A. Smith’s Schweich lectures, it is good to learn, are not his last word on Hebrew poetry; he half promises a larger work. Dr G. B. Gray has began to publish in the pages of The Expositor his Oxford lectures, and Professor Gordon of Montreal has issued a volume on The Poets of the Old Testament (Hodder & Stoughton). The last-named book includes Ecclesiastes and Proverbs, but not the poetical passages of the prophets; it contains special studies of Job and the Psalter. Dr Gordon seems to favour Budde’s development of the hypothesis thrown