

that his own position must be definite and known, not to coerce or even to convince students to agree with him but that they may feel that these problems can reach a state of peaceful progress toward satisfactory answer. Hence the author frankly avows himself "an objective idealist," and that is a very safe philosophical attitude for a teacher of young men. Professor Fletcher is to be congratulated and his book ought to be widely used and useful.

W. O. CARVER.

**A Brief History of Modern Philosophy.** By Dr. Harold Höfding, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Copenhagen; Authorized Translation by Charles Finley Sanders, Professor of Philosophy at Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa., Author of the English Translation of Jerusalem's Introduction to Philosophy. New York, 1912. The Macmillan Company. x+324 pages. \$1.50.

This translation is from the original edition of 1905 and it is a good thing to have the work accessible to English readers. Höfding has analyzed quite fully the modern movement of philosophical thought in Europe. The work is too brief to give much more than an analysis, but such an analysis is a splendid guide to the student and a splendid summary for the scholar. Some of the more recent movements have come to be better understood and their tendencies are more marked than at the time of the preparation of this work. Possibly some modification of the late phases would be needed.

One ventures also to suggest that the influences of Eastern thought might have clearer recognition.

Höfding's influence in modern philosophy is such that his interpretation of the history is of primary importance.

W. O. CARVER.

**The Principle of Authority in Relation to Certainty, Sanctity and Society.** By P. T. Forsyth, M.A., D.D. George H. Doran Company, New York and London. 475 pages. \$2.50 net.

No writer of this generation has more thoroughly analyzed the evangelical experience of redemption through Christ than

Dr. Forsyth, the author of this notable book. The principle of authority is discussed, as the title indicates, in relation to certainty, sanctity and society. I give in outline the leading points in the development of the argument.

Since Kant's day the notion of reality has displaced that of truth, the ethical has displaced the merely logical or theoretical quest for the meaning of the world. Facts rather than *a priori* principles of thought became controlling in research (p. 5). In Christianity the ethical has its primacy. God, the Holy, is the sole basis of the ethical. Philosophy cannot justify the moral ideal. Revelation must bring it to us. In Christianity revelation is redemption, a creative act of God in the soul. (p. 6-8). God, who, in and through Christ recreates us, manifests Himself thus as our religious object and as our final authority, and at the same time He makes us free. Religion requires reality in its object and God becomes real to us in the making of our personality, its recreation in redemption. The religious object is as real to us as our personality, which is the subject of its creative activity. Our certainty of God then is in a sense our certainty of ourselves, (pp. 31-32). Now God acts upon us through the revealing, atoning, redeeming cross of Christ. Our certainty is not a certainty primarily as to a truth but as to our state in a moral universe. It is not the certainty of an opinion or of an inference or judgment. It is rather the certainty of a reality in us, and acting upon us. Our assurance is not based on our experience but upon the object we experience (pp. 46, 47, 58).

Regeneration, which is God's miracle in us, is thus the basis of His authority, (p. 65). Only those who have the evangelical experience can understand the nature of this authority. In religion authority is absolute. Everywhere else it is relative. It goes back to the historic revelation of God in Christ and in particular to Christ's cross. And the cross is the atoning act of the all-holy One, and his method of dealing effectively with sin and guilt, and so of reconstituting the universe in the moral terms of the Christian redemption. Guilt, atonement and redemption are central in the problem of authority (pp. 75 ff.).

From the preceding it will be clear to all who are familiar with the issues of modern philosophic and scientific thought that Dr. Forsyth transfers the ultimate problems from the rationalistic to the experiential realm. In chapter V. he insists that theories of knowledge must wait on facts. The nature of the reality itself, not formal theories of how we know things, must determine our attitude. No psychology of knowledge can affect this conclusion. Our knowledge of God who meets us and redeems us is not the same as our knowledge of an object in nature. Through Christ God comes to us and thus the most real of all forms of existence becomes a part of our knowledge. Theology is the description of the experience of God and his redeeming grace which comes to us in Christ.

In chapter X. the author argues that the footing of religion is the real, not our experience, but what we experience. There is no access to the last reality save in the evangelical experience. The last reality is realized by a metaphysic not of being but of mercy, not of ethic but of the redeeming conscience of Christ. Existence is not a quantity but an act, an eternal moral act, an act of redemption (pp. 207 ff.). It is a question whether at this point the author has not left himself exposed to the charge that he makes sin and redemption therefrom essential constituents of being itself. He does not elaborate the point, but it would have been well to safeguard it.

The limits here do not admit of comment on the third section of the book. It abounds in fine insights, and in many a trenchant paragraph the author exposes the fallacies of the modern ideals of unlicensed liberty, of a tolerant kindly and useful God, and of comfort and success rather than strenuous effort and passion for the holy life. For the individual and the Church the Gospel of the grace of God is the outward authority which cannot be transcended. I would especially commend to the reader chapters XIX. and XX. on *The Theology of Certainty and Theocentric Religion.*

This book is the work of a courageous prophet who brings to the age a message it sorely needs. In his passion for the truth he advocates he elaborates his points sometimes almost to wear-

ness. But he is never empty. It is the reiteration of amplitude of material, clearness of vision, and depth of conviction.

E. Y. MULLINS.

**Social Idealism and the Changing Theology.** By Gerald Birney Smith. The Macmillan Co. New York, 1913. 251 pages. \$1.25 net.

The title of the volume before us suggests its leading thought. "Social idealism" means that modern ethics is becoming increasingly social as contrasted with the onesided individualistic ethics of the past. "The Changing Theology" means that this modern socialization of ethics cannot be supported by the ecclesiastical ideal of authority in theology. There is an excellent account of the rise of the ecclesiastical ideal in chapter I. When it arose men were unable "to develop out of their own resources satisfactory generalizations for the guidance of life." The whole of the moral life came thus under the authority of the Church and ecclesiastical ethics held supreme sway during the middle ages.

This ecclesiastical ideal has been discredited in modern times by several marked movements: 1. the development of a secular theory of industry in which wealth is regarded in a new light in relation to the Kingdom of God; 2. the secularization of politics which renounces papal and ecclesiastical control in the state; 3. the changed position of the church in a secular state; 4. the secularization of modern scholarship according to which learning is no longer dominated by priestly and ecclesiastical control; 5. the rise of a secular ethics which renounces *a priori* principles in discovering ethical standards and seeks rather to discover the ethical needs of man in the evolution of the race through "an accurate analysis of that evolution, the sort of conduct which furthers the normal and wholesome progress of social and individual life." (p. 89); 6. the historical explanation of religion. There is not space here to outline the argument under these six heads. The general position of the author appears in the preceding statements.

In chapter three there is a suggestive discussion of the moral challenge of the modern world. This challenge is due to the