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The Ethical End of Plato's Theory of Ideas *The Ethical End of Plato's Theory of Ideas*. By Francis A. Cavanagh, M.A. 8VO. 1 vol. Pp. 89. Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press. 1909. Price 2s.

Marie V. Williams

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proof of the existence of the Other, and incidentally of the Communicability of Kinds.

M. Diès credits the views of his opponents to their misconception of two terms, viz., the οὐσία of the Idealists (248 B), and the παντελῶς ὄν of 248 E. The οὐσία, to which Lutoslawski and others attribute motion, is the motionless ideal of the 'friends of Ideas,' and the only movement that they will allow to it, even in the argument, is that of passivity, the 'being moved' due to 'being known,' not the active energy of mind. The παντελῶς ὄν, on the other hand, is the visible world, the cosmos, which is endowed with motion in the *Philebus*, the *Timaeus* and various other dialogues. Hence it is only the first term, οὐσία, that can possibly be identified with the Ideas, and there is no justification for crediting these with any other motion than that of passivity, which is a mere ἀλλοίωσις, never the κίνησις of mental activity.

M. Diès has maintained his thesis with considerable energy, and his arguments will probably carry conviction to many. As far as the *Sophist* alone is concerned, one may agree that the evidence pointing to a view of the Ideas as 'animated forces' is inconclusive. M. Diès' opponents, however, have not built on this dialogue alone, and their method has been to identify the παντελῶς ὄν of the *Sophist* (which after all is not described in language that pictures to us a necessarily visible cosmos) with the ἀληθινὸς καὶ θεῖος νοῦς of *Philebus* 22 C and the παντελὲς ζῶον and νοητὸν ζῶον of the *Timaeus* (30 C, 31 B), which belong to the class of the ideal as surely as the πᾶν of the *Philebus* and the ὁρατὸν ζῶον of the *Timaeus*

belong to the class of the sensible. To this M. Diès has objected (p. 80, note) that because the νοητὸν ζῶον, the model of the world, has life and movement, there is no reason why the Idea of Justice should also possess them. This may be an adequate reply to those who believe that all the Ideas were possessed of life and movement, but not to those (and such there are) who hold that these Ideas are restricted to the animal world alone.

As regards the definition of οὐσία as the δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν, I am inclined to think that M. Diès has minimised its significance far too much. He considers it merely a temporary concession, a device to be cast aside as soon as formed; and yet he is at pains to show that the substance of the definition is nothing new in Platonism, and is confirmed by previous dialogues. Surely the mere fact that Plato takes so much trouble to secure a definition which will be not entirely unacceptable to Materialists and Idealists alike gives that definition considerable importance, quite apart from the argument, particularly when, as we know, he affirmed the existence of the material and visible worlds alike (e.g. *Phaedo* 79 A), and could sympathise, to some extent, with both parties. Moreover, very often the ultimately harmonious and satisfying conception arises from a conflict of opposing theories. The definition of οὐσία as δύναμις τοῦ ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν may not be a novelty in the *Sophist*, but that seems to be no reason for rating its importance in Platonic philosophy at so low a value.

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THE ETHICAL END OF PLATO'S THEORY OF IDEAS.

The Ethical End of Plato's Theory of Ideas.

By FRANCIS A. CAVANAGH, M.A. 8vo.
1 vol. Pp. 89. Henry Frowde, Oxford
University Press. 1909. Price 2s.

MR. CAVANAGH'S contention in this essay is that 'the whole purpose of Plato's early philosophy was to provide an ethical standard.' He devotes nearly half of his volume,

therefore, to an examination of the ethical systems previous to Plato, showing that their imperfections called imperatively for a 'rational and sound basis for conduct.' The following are some of the considerations adduced by Mr. Cavanagh in favour of his thesis: (1) Ethics was the subject of chief interest to Plato's master Socrates, (2) the psychological theory put forward

in the *Phaedrus* and *Republic* seems to have been designed entirely to give an acceptable meaning to the Socratic maxim 'Virtue is Knowledge,' (3) Plato's development of the notion of *φύσις* in the *Republic* and elsewhere appears to be closely connected with ethical needs, (4) the famous description of virtue as *ὑποίωσις θεῶ* in *Theaetetus* 176 A-177 A makes the ethical Ideas all-important, (5) in the passage of the *Parmenides* which is supposed to describe the theory of Ideas in its earlier stage the ethical Ideas are named as being second in importance to the logical categories, (6) in the *Republic* and the *Philebus* the study of dialectic is of greatest value because it provides the philosopher with the knowledge requisite for regulating the conduct of himself and his fellow-citizens, (7) all the contemporary arts, including rhetoric, are criticised severely by Plato (*vide Republic* and *Gorgias*) on ethical grounds alone.

From the data brought forward here it is 'abundantly plain' that the famous theory of Ideas gained perhaps its chief claim to fame from the impetus it gave to

the science of ethics. That Plato originally formulated it for this express purpose is, however, another matter. In spite of Mr. Cavanagh's evidence, it seems more likely that the first need for the theory would arise out of Zeno's denial of the possibility of predication. In settling this difficulty, which affected the concepts of all the sciences alike, Plato laid a foundation for the study of ethical concepts in particular. Mr. Cavanagh himself seems to admit this on pp. 42, 44, where he gives almost equal credit to 'the puzzles of Zeno' and 'the ethical problems suggested by Socrates' as being the stimuli which produced this philosophical doctrine.

In Appendix A Mr. Cavanagh suggests an interesting emendation of the text of *Phaedo* 99 D-E, transposing the phrase *βλέπων πρὸς τὰ πράγματα κ.τ.λ.* and reading it after *ἐπειδὴ ἀπειρήκη τὰ ὄντα σκοπῶν*. The change is rather a bold one, but the difficulties of the passage are undoubtedly lessened thereby.

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HISTORY OF THE COINAGE OF ROME.

Geschichte der römischen Kupferprägung vom Bundesgenossenkrieg bis auf Kaiser Claudius. By Heinrich Willers. Large 8vo. pp. xvi + 228. With 18 collotype plates and 33 cuts in the text. Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1909. M. 12.

It is satisfactory to learn from the preface to this volume that so competent a scholar as Dr. Willers has actually in hand the task of providing the much-needed new history of the coinage of Rome. The present is only a 'Vorläufer,' intended to dispose of a certain amount of detailed discussion which might otherwise have overweighted the main work. It falls into four parts. The first of these is a general sketch of the development of ancient coinage, with particular reference to the evolution of the Roman system; the second deals with the group of semuncial copper pieces struck between 89 and

81 B.C.; the third with the various copper issues of the period of the civil wars; and the fourth with the senatorial copper of the earliest imperial age.

Part I. is the least satisfactory section of the book. It contains a great deal that is fresh and suggestive. The point as to the influence which the spasmodic character of the Roman copper coinage had in bringing about the successive reductions of the *as* is a specially good one. But lack of space often compels the author to be dogmatic in regard to questions that are pre-eminently arguable. And it is peculiarly unfortunate that the sheets seem to have been printed off before the appearance of Haeberlin's *Systematik des ältesten römischen Münzwesens*. It is obvious that Willers would not be prepared to accept some of Haeberlin's conclusions. He is, for instance, the declared and determined foe of anything that savours of comparative metrology.