

conceived as a mode of the other. We cannot help matters by listening to Hegelisers who would deftly explain the relation of thought and brain motion by the platitude that they are 'abstract aspects of a concrete organic unity,' for it is precisely the fact of an organic unity of disparates that calls for explanation, and the statement of the problem can scarcely be accepted as its solution. Now when confronted with this sort of problem in the past, science has always adopted one course; knowing that continuity must exist between two related elements, and not being able on account of their disparateness to express one as a mode of the other, it has posited a *tertium quid* as homogeneous with both elements and hence the basis of their continuity. The soul with its processes or *Vorgänge* is thus to be posited as the medium by which brain motions occasion the consciousness which reflects them. If this is at all a fair statement of the matter, it would seem clear that Professor Lipps is directly at war with himself when, after positing as the basis of the conscious *Ich-gefühl* a similarly simple real soul whose *Vorgänge* are continuous with physiological stimuli, he proceeds to deny that these intermediary processes are in any degree homogeneous with, or modifiable by the conscious contents which they are admitted to occasion.

But Professor Lipps's article is interesting not so much for its possible failure to prove the epiphenomenality of consciousness, as for its success in proving the *psychische Vorgänge* and in applying them to special cases of psychical causality. His hypothesis seems, as we have already said, to be a very real step toward making psychology an explanatory science by raising its empirical laws to that plane of *Anschaulichkeit* or quantitative continuity which according to Kant is the goal at which every science should aim. To this goal the physical sciences are fast attaining, and, if we may trust Professor Lipps, there is no reason why psychology alone should continue to be burdened with the categories and methods of obscurantism. The paper will be welcomed by all who sympathize with the Kantian ideal of scientific method and with Herbart's fine confidence in the applicability of that ideal to the phenomena of mind.

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*A History of Modern Philosophy.* DR. HARALD HÖFFDING, Professor at the University of Copenhagen; translated from the German edition by B. E. MEYER. London, Macmillan and Co. 1900.

There are several points of view from which a review of such a work as this may be written. The critic may regard it as his func-

tion to indicate the completeness or incompleteness with which the author has succeeded in gathering up and displaying the philosophical opinions of the greater and the lesser lights that have an admitted right to be enumerated among the philosophers; he may dwell upon the skill, or the lack of it, with which the genesis of successive systems of thought has been traced, and the sense of proportion which is exhibited in the space allotted to the discussion of schools, of individual men, and of opinions; he may criticise the bulk and the exactitude of the author's information, the thoroughness of his acquaintance with the original writings which constitute the true history of speculative thought, and the keenness of his insight into the real meaning of passages whose obscurity has been a stone of stumbling to many generations of students; he may point out the originality with which the matter which is presented has been set forth, and may congratulate the author upon his gift of literary expression, not forgetting to abuse the translator for this or that blunder in the rendering of passages which have lost their true character in putting on another dress.

But Professor Höffding's excellent work has been for some little time before the public. It has received a good deal of criticism of this sort, and it is not my intention to add to it. I wish to dwell rather upon the purpose which he has held before him in the production of these volumes, and to indicate the significance of his method for the study of philosophy, not as literature or biography, but rather as science—science in the broad sense of the word, which does not limit its use as it is too often limited by the unthinking.

Dr. Höffding points out with justice that it is wise to devote much attention to the history of philosophy. In this field the past cannot be ignored as it seems possible to ignore it when one is cultivating many scientific disciplines. There is no established body of doctrine which we have a right to impose upon the student as authoritative. He who would attain to a just estimate of the problems of philosophy as they present themselves to our age must approach them with a mind enriched by a knowledge of the forms which they have taken in the past, the shapes which have been given to them as a result of the labors of the great reflective minds of the race. Only then can he hope to distinguish between the accidental and fleeting, and the relatively permanent; between the passing prejudice or misconception of a day, and that which may turn out to be a true insight into the nature of things and worthy of being regarded as a contribution to scientific truth. Such historical studies reveal that several factors influence the treatment of the problems of philosophy. Dr. Höffding recognizes the following:

1. The personality of the philosopher. As we are not in the realm of exact knowledge, we may expect the personal equation to be large, and, in fact, we do find that it is very large.

2. The observations which are taken as a basis for the construction of a philosophical system. For example, the development of the natural sciences has been of the greatest importance for modern philosophy. Its leading problems seem to be determined by the fact that these sciences have arisen. Historical circumstances, and intellectual movements of many sorts, may be seen to be responsible for the turn which philosophic thought has taken at many a critical point in its history.

3. The consistency with which initial assumptions are laid down and maintained, and their logical consequences deduced from them.

The exposition and criticism of the systems treated of in the two volumes before us turn upon these three points, but these points are not given an equal amount of attention. The author attaches most weight to the first two. He thinks that inconsistency in a great thinker 'is often nothing but the natural consequence of the fact that his genius displays itself in *several* lines of thought, although he may not himself have been able to follow these out far enough to discover their mutual contradiction' (Introduction, p. xvi). He regards it of importance that each of these lines of thought should be developed, while freely admitting that it is desirable that depth of thought and consistency should be united.

That the position taken by Dr. Höffding in his introduction is not belied in the body of his work, a careful examination of his volumes will reveal. It should be observed that this makes his book rather a history of human culture, presented in the form of a series of spiritual biographies, than a critical history of philosophy written with a strictly scientific aim. I do not, of course, mean to maintain that a recognition of the personal equation may not be of value in philosophy as elsewhere, nor that a knowledge of the historic background of a system may not help us to understand the real significance to the writer of statements which, to a man in a different intellectual environment, must remain obscure. But I do mean to point out that it is one thing to discover how a man came by a thought, and quite another to estimate its value as a contribution to human knowledge. If, in writing a history of philosophy, we devote our attention largely to the former, our work is anthropological, historical, biographical, but it is scarcely philosophic. If we take philosophy seriously, and make it our first aim to attain to a clear and unprejudiced view of the problems with

which it concerns itself, we shall not overlook the personal equation and the historic setting of a philosophical system, but we shall regard any attention paid to these as merely preliminary, as a something wholly subsidiary to the most important part of our investigation. The problems presented to reflective thought are not new. There has been no such general and indubitable progress in reflection that we are justified in approaching the philosophy of a Plato or an Aristotle as merely matter for interesting historical investigation. The absorbing question is whether the initial assumptions which it seemed to such a man reasonable to lay down may be accepted, in part at least, by ourselves. In weighing such assumptions, we must be influenced, not merely by their seeming agreement or disagreement with the facts of experience as we see them, for we, as well as those who have preceded us, may misinterpret our experience; we must be influenced also by a realization of the consequences which seem to follow from such assumptions, and we may find that the men of the past have traced such consequences with great labor and ingenuity. By this labor and ingenuity we may profit; and he has not labored in vain who has shown that a road which many may be tempted to travel, leads to no desirable goal or ends in an *impasse*.

I feel, therefore, justified in entering a friendly protest against the conception of the history of philosophy embodied in these volumes. It concerns itself, it is true, with what men have thought and how they have come to think it; but it does not sufficiently recognize the great importance of the distinction between coming to think a thing for no better reason than that it appeals to one's psychological idiosyncrasies, or is suggested by this or that book or by this or that social or religious movement, and coming to think it because one's genius for reflection enables one to see with clearer vision than is granted to most men the problems which human experience lays before us, and the possible solutions which may be found for them. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the full meaning of a conception as it presented itself to a philosopher of constructive genius may be very inadequately portrayed if we depend largely upon an indication of the sources from which the man has borrowed, and overlook the fact that it may mean to him much more than it did to those from whom he has taken it. What it really meant to him can only be determined by the most careful examination of its place in the man's own system of thought. The fact that other men have had a more or less similar conception, and have used the same word to represent it, may be positively misleading. Neither Aristotle, nor Augustine, nor Thomas, nor Bruno, nor

Spinoza, nor Kant, coined for himself, by a free act of intellectual creation, the conception of God. Each appropriated something that he found ready to hand, and he appropriated also a word in common use. Is it possible to attain to a just estimate of what the word meant to any one of these thinkers if we pay attention chiefly to his psychological peculiarities and to the materials which he inherited and with which he was compelled to begin his construction? Must we not come back to his own system, and strive to obtain a comprehension of its real structure? In other words, must we not dwell upon his initial assumptions and the consequences which he found it possible to draw from them? If we assume that every time a philosopher uses the word God he means what was meant by those who preceded him when they employed the same word, we are in danger of falling into an error analogous, at least, to that into which we should fall did we assume him to mean what we mean when we use the word.

The defect of method upon which I have dwelt in the preceding pages does not, of course, make itself equally apparent in all parts of Professor Höffding's work. There have been ages in which men have borrowed largely from the past and have not greatly modified the content of that which they have borrowed. There have been times when the broadening and deepening of existing conceptions have seemed to be the inevitable result of a rapid development in the field of natural science. There have been eclectics whose opinions can be well understood when we take into consideration the two factors upon which Dr. Höffding mainly dwells. Any man can read with profit his fine chapters upon 'The Renaissance and the Middle Ages' and upon 'Humanism.' Nor can one complain of his treatment of such a writer as Montaigne, who was not a man of constructive genius, nor one whose opinions form a whole each part of which loses much of its significance when divorced from the rest. But it is a different matter when Professor Höffding treats of such a thinker as Bruno.

When one has pointed out the profound significance of an abandonment of the mediæval homocentric world-scheme and of the adoption of the Copernican system with what seem to be its implications and suggestions; when one has dwelt upon the antagonism of the newly-liberated mind to the Aristotelian doctrine that had long held it in bondage; when one has traced certain conceptions and forms of expression to the influence of the Platonic doctrine, or to the speculations of Cusanus or Telesio; it does not follow that one has made plain to the reader the actual course of Bruno's argument in his most

important work, the dialogues 'Della Causa, Principio ed Uno.' Here Bruno has an argument; he does not merely express opinions. He argues loosely, he more than once changes his point of view, he depends upon quibbles which cannot easily be understood by one who is not familiar with the scholastic distinctions against which Bruno rebels; but he always argues, and it is perfectly possible for the patient student to attain to a comprehension of the transitions in his thought. There is, however, no other way of attaining to this than by a careful examination of his processes of reasoning. It is of little value to sum up his conclusions in general statements; to tell us that 'at every single place, in every single particle, the world-soul works as a totality.' A man may hold this perfectly well without being a Bruno at all, and without even comprehending Bruno's argument to show *how* such a thing can be possible, and what can be meant by this dynamic ubiquity. One may read and reread Dr. Höffding's discussion of Bruno's 'Fundamental Philosophical Ideas' (Vol. I., pp. 130-139), and yet obtain no clue to the rhapsodic utterances which compose the latter part of the third dialogue. Yet he who does not possess such a clue does not know Bruno. He is in danger of making him too modern a man; that is, he is in danger of making him what he was not.

A similar criticism may be made touching the treatment accorded to Spinoza. I know of no book likely to be studied by those who occupy themselves with the history of speculative thought which presents more difficulties than the 'Ethics.' To most readers it is practically a sealed book, so far as the actual structure of Spinoza's thought—the true course of his argument—is concerned. They gather from it certain luminous ideas, and they certainly read it not without profit, but they rise from its perusal with the vaguest possible notion of the bony structure, if I may so speak, of Spinozism. There are many pages in which the course of the argument is not apparent, and which they have followed with uncomprehending eyes. Professor Höffding's exposition of the 'Fundamental Concepts of the System' (Vol. I., pp. 307-314) will not give such pages a meaning, nor will any account of the life of Spinoza or of the sources of Spinozism take the place of a clear and systematic exposition of the course of the reasoning which unfolds itself in the 'Ethics.' I ask anyone who doubts this statement to see for himself whether anything that Höffding says will afford a clue to the meaning of such passages as the following: 'Ethics,' I., 5; Epistola, L.; 'Ethics,' I., 8, schol. 2; 'Ethics,' I., 13, and I., 15, schol. And yet the comprehension of these passages and

such as these is of the utmost importance to the comprehension of the conception of immanence and its place in Spinozism, which is much the same as saying that it is of the utmost importance to the comprehension of Spinozism itself.

I have chosen to speak of Bruno and Spinoza because it is in treating of such thinkers as these that Professor Höffding's method of writing the history of philosophy seems to be at its worst. I have felt free to dilate upon what I regard as a defect, and to pass over many excellencies, because the merit of the work is incontestible, and is generally admitted. Within the limitations made necessary by his method, Professor Höffding has written an excellent book, learned, clear, interesting and sympathetic. I have read it, and I shall again read it, with pleasure. But one may say all this and still hold that it is a book of one class rather than of another—a book for the general reader who wishes to know in a general way the opinions which men have held and to understand how they could come to hold them, rather than a book for the serious student of philosophy, to whom biography and history are, after all, matters of minor importance, though they are matters which the accomplishment of his purpose makes it impossible for him to leave out of account. There can be no doubt that the book is the more readable for being what it is, and that it will appeal to a larger circle than it would were it written upon a different plan. For one thing, the somewhat superficial treatment accorded to the doctrines of many philosophers makes it possible to mention, at least, a large number of men who would have to be omitted altogether in a work no larger than this one which attempted to treat philosophical systems in a thorough and analytic way. Of such men one likes to know something, and one is apt to feel defrauded when they are passed by in silence. Professor Höffding's work fills a place, and an important place, among books which treat of the *placita philosophorum*. I sincerely hope that many will read him, and that the *leves gustus in philosophia*, which he affords the reader, will lead some on to the *pleniores haustus* which must be sought for elsewhere.

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*Ethics Descriptive and Explanatory.* S. E. MEZES. New York and London, The Macmillan Company. Pp. xxi+445.

Professor Mezes' work is, I think, the most important, if not the first, systematic attempt to construct a positive or purely scientific theory of ethics, and to give a naturalistic account of all the aspects