

conception reminds one of Plato's doctrine of "ideas," though the author's notion is far more crude than Plato's. In fact the whole conception is remarkably crude. In his discussion of the relation between justice and love, for instance, the author takes a position which seems directly opposed to the injunction of Jesus to love one's enemies. "Justice," he says, "is the condition of love, without which love is impossible." How, then, can one love his enemy? For one's enemy can hardly be treating him justly—how, then, would he be an enemy? But space forbids our following this curious argument.

However, the crudity of the author's conception and treatment does not prevent his saying some good things. His theory is faulty, but his moral instincts are sound. If this book is our hope for the establishment of an ethical science which has the certainly and demonstrable character of mathematics, then we must bid farewell to that hope. Indeed, the effort to formulate such a science is founded upon a singular misconception of the nature of ethical values.

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**The Mighty and the Lowly.** By Katrina Trask, Author of "In the Vanguard," etc. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1915. \$1.00.

In fine phrase and glowing eloquence Mrs. Trask in this little book defends the teaching of Jesus against what she conceives to be a narrow perversion of it. There is no doubt that some men who have undertaken to interpret the Gospel in its relation to modern economic conditions have gone to an extreme which as truly misinterprets the mind of Jesus as the opposite extreme which finds in it no meaning for economic problems.

Mrs. Trask makes a noble protest against this tendency. She insists upon the inner spiritual meaning of the religion of Jesus; and does so right nobly. She thinks the modern social agitators are building up the conception of an "exclusive Jesus" just as truly as was done in the old order. There is a real danger here. She realizes, however, that Christianity has a social meaning. When Christianity is accepted "character and not condition will

be the test; quality and not circumstance will mark the differentiation.”

But Mrs. Trask does not realize that in insisting upon this truth she is in fact stating the social idea that is finding expression—often a mistaken and one-sided expression—in the social agitations of the present day. The trouble is that the present conditions in the economic life are the expression of the exactly contrary ideal. Hence the insistent demand for a change in the existing order of things. She is in danger of underestimating the spiritual significance of external conditions. Jesus was interested specifically and primarily in spiritual attitudes and relations; very true. But He was interested in external conditions also because external conditions do inevitably modify spiritual attitudes and relations, certainly in the great majority of ordinary mortals. It is this latter truth which Mrs. Trask, while she recognizes it, does not adequately appreciate. But she does a service in insisting upon the importance and primacy of the spiritual attitudes.

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**The Social Institutions and Ideals of the Bible.** By Theodore Gerald Soares, Ph.D., D.D., Head of the Department of Practical Theology, the University of Chicago. The Abingdon Press: New York and Cincinnati. 1915. \$1.50 net.

Recently there has been a growing demand for a sociological study of the Bible; and particularly has there been a conscious need for a clear and untechnical account of the development of the institutional life and ideals of the Hebrew people. Without it there is much in the Bible which cannot be understood, or at best is imperfectly understood. To meet this need this volume has been written; and right well has the author succeeded in this purpose. The treatment, while untechnical, is scientific, and the style is lucidity itself. The book is written to be used as a college text. It is not, therefore, an exhaustive treatment of the many problems involved; but it will bring clearness and order into what has been to many Bible readers a somewhat cloudy region. The author has not undertaken to discuss disputed questions of criticism; and the critical assumptions underlying the