

Truth And Consequence In Mediaeval Logic

NEW BOOKS

ancient world, "the failure of nerve" and the turn to mysticism. He then turns to the Enlightenment which he would have us take seriously and to an outline of humanist ethics which involves him in an interesting essay on Epicurus, whom he presents without pedantry as a sympathetic figure. Next we have a discussion of Marxism and of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leading to conclusions about the "human ethos." The chief mark of the human ethos is tolerance. "There is room on earth for all temperaments and for all types."

It is in this tolerant spirit that Mr. Blackham gives in Part II his critical study of the Christian tradition, for he is not a Christian and he must regard Christianity as an enemy of much in which he believes. He is however a well-informed and not unsympathetic critic. He even admits that he may be mistaken in his humanism and thus sets an example that is as valuable as his civilized precepts.

Finally Mr. Blackham gives an "Anatomy of Attitudes" and discusses Human Progress. Under the first head he discusses Stoicism, Protestantism and Existentialism, treating these as varieties of what he calls Transcendental Individualism. This he opposes to its discredit to Humanist Individualism, dealing under this head with Epicurus, The Renaissance, Romanticism and Liberalism. A third genus of attitudes he calls Organic Theories, of which Platonism, theocracies in general, and communism are species. He concludes that some at least of these attitudes remain entitled to "their share of truth and respect."

In a final chapter on Progress, Mr. Blackham ably recapitulates the familiar difficulties, under the heads of the *economic problem*, the *political problem* and the *moral problem*. His incidental discussions of the rival ideologies are always stimulating: from all of them he turns to a form of social (though not necessarily socialist?) humanism. To this he looks for "an integral solution of the complex of historical problems which respects and uses the cosmic conditions of human existence."

Mr. Blackham's wisdom is culled from a wide variety of sources and presented in a balanced way. I hope it will not be neglected by professional philosophers. With this book and his *Six Existential Thinkers* he has provided a welcome antidote to the parlour-game type of discussion which is still too prevalent.

D. J. McCracken.

Truth and Consequence in Mediaeval Logic. By ERNEST A. MOODY. (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1953. Pp. 113.)

This study is a contribution to the important modern movement of research into the history of logic which tries to understand the logical achievements of the mediaeval thinkers in the light of the present state of the science of logic. Lukasiewicz, Bochenski and others who combine expert knowledge of modern logic with great historical scholarship have shown how very far from the truth are those who regard mediaeval logic as a petrification or thoughtless perversion of Aristotle's logical theories.

Professor Moody is well aware of the dangers involved in any attempt to express the results of mediaeval logical inquiries in the formalism of *Principia Mathematica* or similar systems. "Such attempts," he rightly says in the preface, "must be viewed as tentative and partly conjectural translations of rules and arguments presented in a word language which, though perhaps quite precise for those who have used it, is for us a foreign and only half-understood language." Yet these attempts can certainly be very useful to

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