

## NEW BOOKS

purpose, he constantly strove to adapt his borrowings to his overwhelming conviction of God's revelation of Himself through Christ. It is this fact, maintains Mr. Stacey, which explains the originality and dynamism of his thought both then and now.

RONALD GRIMSLEY.

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*The Idealist Tradition.* Edited, with an introduction and commentary, by A. C. EWING. (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press. Pp. 362. Price \$5.50.)  
*Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre.* Edited, selected and introduced by WALTER KAUFMANN. (London: Thames and Hudson. Pp. 319. Price 12s. 6d.)

These two books are both constructed on the same plan. *The Idealist Tradition* is to be the first of a series; *Existentialism* stands by itself. Each book presents the principal features of one important philosophical point of view by means of a series of extracts from the works of distinguished adherents of that point of view. In each there is an introductory essay dealing with the character and history of its particular type of philosophy. *The Idealist Tradition* also has a full bibliography, which should be very useful to any serious student of Idealism.

Dr. Ewing does not define "Idealism," but outlines a number of philosophical views to which the term "idealist" is generally applied. His introduction is very lucid and concise. Making the selections cannot have been an easy task. Many idealist writers are very obscure; and most of them are more effective in the large-scale depiction of a comprehensive view of things than in brief arguments on particular points. A conspicuous exception is Berkeley, from whom one can extract an adequate and excellently-argued exposition of his theory which will go into nine pages. Another exception is Leibniz, whom Ewing has surprisingly excluded. The judicious selections from Kant manage to get into forty-four pages a large proportion of Kant's distinctive views, and his reasons for them. With Hegel the difficulties are at their worst; and here the editor has boldly and properly decided to print brief expositions of Hegel's main doctrines by Caird and Royce instead of the enigmatic words of the master himself. The other selections are from Schopenhauer, Green, Bradley, Bosanquet, Royce, Rashdall, Howison, McTaggart, Croce and Blanshard. There are also criticisms of important idealist views by Cook, Wilson, Moore, Russell and Nagel, which help to clarify the issues in which idealist philosophers were polemically involved. The book as a whole adequately covers the main theses and arguments of idealist philosophy.

Prof. Kaufmann's task is still harder, since the term "Existentialism" has no clear meaning, and any selection to illustrate it can only represent one of many possible interpretations. Kaufmann's selection has two unexpected features. He excludes all recent Christian existentialist writing; and he includes a long extract from Dostoevsky, and short ones from Rilke and Kafka, none of whom would be naturally described as a philosopher. Of the other authors represented, Jaspers and Sartre get about half the book between them; the extracts from Jaspers include the first translation of "On My Philosophy," those from Sartre include a complete short story. There are also short passages from Kierkegaard (not very adequately represented), Nietzsche, Heidegger and Camus. This selection is difficult to defend if one regards Existentialism as a doctrine, or as a group of related doctrines. It is clear that this is not the editor's view. He himself speaks of the selections as "telling a story." To me the connection between the various extracts seems to be the expression of a mood—a mood of dismay and bewilderment at the queerness

## PHILOSOPHY

and inconsequence of the world, at its refusal to make the kind of sense we would like it to make (the sort of sense given by scientific explanation does not satisfy the existentialist). From this point of view one can justify the rather one-sided selections from Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, which do not present the general viewpoint of these authors, but do present their expressions of the existentialist mood. One can see also that the most telling expositions of this mood are likely to be in the concrete imaginative form of fiction rather than in the abstract argumentative form of theory. Indeed, in these selections the novelists do seem to have something to say, and make their point, whereas the theorists, using the technical language of philosophy, almost completely fail to communicate anything. Kaufmann is very likely right in picking out the common factor in "existentialist" writers. But the effect is to lay a much stronger stress on the existentialist's denials than on his affirmations.

What purpose is served by books like these two? They are not big enough for works of reference; as expositions they cannot help being scrappy and disorderly. They will be most useful to the rather casual reader who wants to get a general impression both of idealist or existentialist philosophy in general and of the personal style of thinking of some distinguished writers; or they will serve as boxes of samples to readers who may be thinking of studying these writers more deeply.

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*The Mind of Santayana.* By RICHARD BUTLER, O.P. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956. Pp. 234. Price 21s.)

This book sets out to give us a critical appraisal of the "mature synthesis" of Santayana's philosophy; and the author, under express direction from Santayana himself, has concentrated mainly on five out of the thirty odd volumes written by Santayana during his lifetime. These five are *Scepticism and Animal Faith* and the four books collectively entitled *Realms of Being*.

Santayana's philosophy is a curious amalgam of materialism and transcendentalism and the fulcrum upon which everything turns, somewhat precariously, is his notion of "essence." It is to the explication and criticism of this notion, therefore, that Mr. Butler, again at the bidding of Santayana himself, has mainly devoted his attention. Unfortunately this notion, which has long been a shuttlecock in traditional philosophy, and still exercises neo-scholastics and existentialists, becomes particularly complex and obscure in Santayana's thought—as the following quotation from the book under review will reveal:

Santayana, in (his) first formal presentation of the notion, said that the "object of pure sense or pure thought, with no belief super-added, an object inwardly complete and individual, but without external relations or physical status, is what I call an essence." In his five-volume synthesis, Santayana described essence in various terms and phrases: *all possible terms in mental discourse, ideal terms at the command of fancy, nameless phantoms of feeling and intuition, every specious object actually present to intuition, some sensuous or logical term, datum, appearance, image, feeling, being, form, form of being, description, an ideal theme.* Specifically he employed the term essence to describe such items as *color, pain, beauty, blue, sound, sky-blue, the form of a hollow sphere, B-flat, and nausea* (pp. 74-5, original italics).

After some detailed discussion of the various points raised by these diverse descriptions, Mr. Butler reduces Santayana's meaning of the term essence to the following: *the quiddity of any being whatsoever . . . without reference to any*