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who are familiar with the history of philosophy. Had the book been written by a man of less renown in his own field than Haeckel, it would not have received much attention or had any influence. But the standing of its author as a biologist, and the fact that a lot of smaller men have for years been incoherently muttering the views which this book boldly proclaims, makes it worthy of the attention which Professor Paulsen gives it.

FRANK THILLY.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI.

The Doctrine of the Will in Fichte's Philosophy. By JOHN FRANKLIN BROWN. [A Thesis presented to the Faculty of Cornell University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.] Richmond, Ind., Cullaton and Co., 1900.—pp. 105.

In this book the author presents a study of Fichte's doctrine of freedom and a criticism of the same. He finds that the key to the great idealist's entire philosophical system is to be found in the words 'unity' and 'freedom,' that Fichte's craving for logical consistency led him to monism, and the demands of his intensely moral nature caused him to accept individual freedom, conceptions which as held by him are contradictory. In his psychological analysis, Fichte finds the essential nature of consciousness in activity, in will, as modern psychology does. "He does not believe in the existence of an Ego-in-itself, of a self apart from all conscious states; nor would he, on the other hand, resolve the self into either discrete mental states or a stream of consciousness. Rather would he say that the self is the persistent activity which is in all conscious states, but which is more than they. In so far, then, his psychology provides for a real individual self-hood, a personality, which is the only guarantee of individual freedom such as he describes." In his monistic metaphysics, however, the case for freedom is not so satisfactory. If we take monism seriously, and make the individual a manifestation of the absolute, it is hard to see how individual freedom is possible. If we regard the absolute as being resolved into the non-ego and the individual egos, we may perhaps retain individual freedom, but we lose the personality of the absolute and get pluralism. "It is," says Dr. Brown, "avowedly on ethical, or, as Fichte says, practical grounds that he decides in favor of freedom. The appearance of freedom in consciousness might conceivably be shown to be mere appearance. Disregarding ethical considerations, the reality of freedom corresponding to the appearance of it, can be neither proven nor disproven. The necessary consciousness of man that he has power over nature and over himself, that he is capable of vice and virtue, and conscious of opportunity and responsibility, that he has within himself the power to change the natural order of things,—this consciousness of his own peculiar dignity, as man, is the deciding factor in favor of freedom. It is not absolute demonstration, but it gives ground for a rational faith in the reality of that freedom for which man as moral most earnestly longs."

Dr. Brown's essay is good so far as it goes, but it does not seem to me to go far enough into Fichte's system. In order to understand Fichte, one must read him through to the end. His thought develops, his conceptions become clearer and more definite as he proceeds. His idea of God is an evolution, he works towards his standpoint by gradual stages, and it takes him years to complete his system. Dr. Brown does not seem to take account of those writings in which the conception of God reaches its completion. "The fiction of the pure Absolute as nothing but pure activity," he says, "as nothing but freedom to come to consciousness in individual consciousnesses, or to remain forever 'nothing,' does not impress one with the dignity of such an Absolute, for it is undoubtedly unconscious, merely nothing." But Fichte's God as conceived in such works as *Die Bestimmung des Menschen*, *Anweisung zum seeligen Leben*, *Thatsachen des Bewusstseins*, and others, is certainly not a mere nothing, a mere power to become conscious in individual consciousnesses, but a living reality. "It is His light through which we behold the light and all that it reveals to us. In our minds He still creates this world, and acts upon it by acting upon our minds through the call of duty as soon as another free being changes aught therein. In our minds He upholds this world and thereby the finite existence of which alone we are capable, by continually evolving 'from each state of our existence other states in succession. When He shall have sufficiently proved us according to His supreme designs, for our next succeeding vocation, and we shall have sufficiently cultivated ourselves for entering upon it, then, by that which we call death, will He annihilate for us this life, and introduce us to a new life, the product of our virtuous actions. All our life is His life. We are in His hand, and abide therein, and no one can pluck us out of His hand. We are eternal, because He is eternal.'" ¹

On page 58 the German word *Stahlfeder* is translated by *steel pen*. This, however, is not the meaning of the word in this place, as the context shows. A *Stahlfeder* is a *steel spring*. The force of Fichte's illustration is lost by Dr. Brown's rendering. On the next page, the word *independent* should be *dependent*; "This is the nature of the thing, which is not at all *dependent* on it."

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Introduction to Sociology. By ARTHUR FAIRBANKS. Third edition, revised. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1901.—pp. xvii, 307.

The changes in this edition are not such as to call for special comment; but the appearance of a third edition is a testimony to the value of the work, and also to the general interest in social studies among the students and thinkers of America. Dr. Fairbanks treats sociology as a single science, yet there is little if anything in this book that does not belong to

¹ *Bestimmung des Menschen* (Eng. trans.).