

BOOKS.

Rudolf Eucken: His Philosophy and Influence, by Meyrick Booth, B.Sc., Phd. Jena (Fisher Unwin, 3/6). We are grateful to Dr. Meyrick Booth for this admirable bird's-eye view of the philosophy of the great thinker of Jena. The introductory historical sketch shows what the thinkers of the past have done towards the solution of "the great and ancient problem of 'nature and spirit.'" After a masterly summary of Greek thought the author concludes that the Greek world had finally "failed in the central task of philosophy and life, namely the *reconciliation of nature and spirit.*" This was a task left for Christianity and, strangely enough, Eucken, who brings into focus and interprets Christianity with a comprehensiveness and force hitherto

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unattempted, remains a theist in spite of his own infallible reasoning. Dr. Booth's survey of post-Christian Philosophy, short as it is, is illuminating. It is no slight task to gather up and bring into relief and set in order the diffuse teaching of the great thinker and this task, possible only to a philosophic mind which has undergone philosophic training, Dr. Booth has performed with singular success. He writes with the loyalty of a disciple but with the discrimination of a thinker who knows what he believes and why he believes it. It is impossible to cover all the ground embraced in this luminous and very readable volume, but we should like to point out two or three of the principal theses of the philosopher which are practically identical with the theory and support the practice of education on which we have been working this score of years and more. We have not space to discuss more than two or three of such parallels, but indeed, the whole body of Eucken's thought seems to be singularly like that upon which the P.N.E.U. is founded, although the German thinker has not yet treated of education. Eucken's conviction that all progress is spiritual progress, that the material progress upon which we pride ourselves is as though it did not exist so far as the effect upon personality is concerned, that the bettering of the condition of the poor which we have made our rather easy religion is not after all a thing that matters much, though it must be accomplished as a matter of course,—we, too, have endeavoured to set forth and pursue on the lines of humane learning. Another great theory, to which Eucken gives the name of *Activism*, is that every spiritual attainment, whether of mind, heart or soul, is the result of struggle, effort against opposition. This is the thought which underlies our method of requiring children to struggle with their books and know for themselves what they read, without the various explanatory devices usually employed by the teacher. As for what the author calls Eucken's defective treatment of psychology, we are in agreement with the philosopher himself. All wholesome living is outward bound and upward reaching and the psychology which teaches a man to prey upon himself, upon his own private and personal, intellectual, emotional or religious experiences, is apt to set up morbid and neurotic conditions. That way madness lies. We rejoice in so wholesome and yet so spiritual a philosophy as that of Eucken, rejecting equally Materialism on the one hand and Pragmatism on the other; and we are deeply indebted to Dr. Booth for his presentation of Eucken as a philosopher of life. We cannot do better than end with a few of the forcible sentences in which he sums up for us the meaning of 'Eucken.' "Our philosopher perceives that only through the recognition of an *independent spiritual life* can the chaos of modern opinions be made to give way to a satisfying and comprehensive syntheses of life. Eucken has not come forward to offer men a fresh set of intellectual opinions. His object is to influence their *lives*. 'The intellectual conflict,' he says, 'is an affair of outposts; the real

conflict is between ways of living.' He is deeply convinced that the peoples of to-day, devoting themselves predominantly to the pursuit of material things, intent upon the improvement of their environment, and intoxicated by the triumphs of technical science, have increasingly lost touch with central realities without which their lives, however comfortable, can have no meaning or value."

The following notice has just reached us:—Professor Eucken, the famous philosopher of Jena, recipient of the Nobel prize, will be entertained at a Public Dinner by his friends and admirers, at the Savoy Hotel, on Thursday, May 28th. The Right Reverend Bishop Boyd Carpenter will preside. Those desiring further particulars should apply to Professor Eucken's Publishers, Messrs. Williams & Norgate, 14, Henrietta Street, W.C.

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The Saviour of the World, by Charlotte M. Mason, Vol. VI. (Kegan Paul, 2/6).

"Sometimes we forget to consider what behoves us as scholars to whom is set the task of learning to understand and apply the Unique Philosophy included in the Christian Religion. It is to earnest and devout students, of any age, of all sorts and conditions, who set themselves to form a vivid conception of the Life among men, and labour to understand the Teaching, of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I would venture to hope that this little volume may be acceptable." The following press cutting will indicate more fully the character of a work which the author would gladly see in familiar use in P.N.E.U. households, as it goes to the root of that which we commonly describe as 'P.N.E.U. thought':—"Like the former five volumes, the present, and sixth, instalment of Miss Mason's elaborate poetical version of the Gospel story may be loosely described as a paraphrase and expansion of the Scriptures. Here the story is about the training of the disciples and it is wrought out with a fulness of detail that allows none of the opportunities afforded by the canonical narrative to go unused. The poetical embellishment of the story is well helped out by the photographs of famous sacred pictures—Old Masters, most of them—by which the book is graced. The handling of the familiar material displays in this accomplished singer a remarkable versatility in the management of all the more dignified English metres from the romantic couplet to blank verse, and many felicities in the choice of a particular metre for a particular matter; and this good quality in the poem's form has a counterpart in the serious devotional spirit that animates the lines. To call the work a paraphrase of Scripture is, in a certain sense, to minimise its best effect. All its graceful and dignified art in the versifying of its high theme gives body to a thoughtful philosophy of the character and office of a disciple, and the religious lessons which the poem passes on in its own way are made a basis, however indirect, of eloquent persuasions and discussions about how one learns best from a teacher who knows more than oneself. Such a book must both please and profit a devout reader."—*The Scotsman*.