

The Princeton Theological Review

OCTOBER, 1916

DOES MY NEIGHBOR EXIST?¹

Kant has said that there are some questions which should never be asked, and there is apostolic authority for the injunction to "avoid foolish questions". Only the fool has said in his heart that he is alone in the universe; but since philosophy has seriously raised the question of the existence of my neighbor and of the way in which I may come to know him, it may be not without interest to notice (i) how the problem has emerged, (ii) the importance of the problem for modern philosophy, and (iii) some leading solutions that have been offered.

I. Our social environment is no doubt the most important factor in our every-day life. The belief in the existence of other men's consciousness, as Clifford has said, "dominates every thought and every action of our lives." On the other hand there is a sense in which we not only die alone, as Pascal says we do, but live alone as well. One man's thought and feeling is not directly accessible to the consciousness of another, and each man has an unsharable feeling, to use James' language, "of the pinch of his own individual destiny as he privately feels it rolling out on fortune's wheel."

Yes! in the sea of life enisled,
With echoing straits between us thrown,
Dotting the shoreless watery wild,
We mortal millions live alone.

How for the philosopher this "unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea" is to be crossed or bridged is the question before us in this paper.

Some of the problems of philosophy are perennial and

¹ This paper was read at a conference of former students in the division of Philosophy, Psychology and Anthropology at Columbia University, April 18th, 1916.

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

Faith and Life. "Conferences" in the "Oratory" of Princeton Theological Seminary. By BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD, a Professor in the Seminary. New York and London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1916. Crown 8vo, pp. VIII, 458.

As intimated on the Title-Page, this volume consists of addresses made in the "Oratory" of Princeton Seminary at the weekly "Conferences," which, during the first century of the Seminary's life, were accustomed to be held on Sunday afternoons for the purpose of familiar discussion of Scripture passages. Forty-one of these "Conference Talks on Bible Texts" are printed here. They are in the main expository in intention. The passages discussed are drawn at random from all parts of Scripture, but the reader will perceive at once that the needs of young men preparing for the ministry of the Gospel have been primarily in view. An effort has been made to bring into prominence the deeper currents of Christian faith and life. The addresses are here printed in the hope that they may prove useful in wider circles than those to which they were first spoken.

BENJ. B. WARFIELD.

Princeton.

The Afflictions of the Righteous as Discussed in the Book of Job and in the New Light of the Gospel. By W. B. MACLEOD, Minister of the Candlish United Free Church, Edinburgh. George H. Doran Co. pp. XIV. 297. \$1.50 net.

The Preface indicates the purpose and method of the book. "So far as I am aware the present work endeavors to conduct the study of this ancient book along lines which have never been followed by any previous writer on the subject. Hitherto it has been the usual practice to examine each speech in detail in the order in which they occur, a method which is admirably adapted to the minute exegetical study of the text, but which has several obvious disadvantages when the object in view is to obtain a comprehensive grasp of the great questions discussed, and to make a just and true estimate of the comparative value of the opposing arguments as a whole.

Now the chief feature in the new method which is introduced in the following pages consists in this, that while due consideration is given to the individual characteristics of each speaker, and to the original elements which he contributes to the debate, and while the difference between Job's method of arguing with his friends and his remarkable way of expostulating with God concerning the same high themes is brought into clear relief by separate treatment, yet the different groups of arguments which represent the different positions discussed with reference to the problems of human suffering and the normal government of the world are each focussed into a unity, and finally condensed into a series of propositions."

No thoughtful study of this wonderful book which deals with the profoundest problems of life can fail to yield some measure of inter-