

BOOK REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTES

THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE.

Douglas Clyde Macintosh, pp. 503. The Macmillan Company, New York and Toronto, 1915.

This is a stimulating introductory volume to the Theory of Knowledge and Scientific Method by a Canadian thinker, who is at present connected with the Faculty of Theology in Yale University. Owing to its numerous subdivisions of the problem, as well as minute criticisms of many representatives of idealistic and realistic, dualistic and monistic epistemological theories, it is not possible to give any adequate idea of its contents in a brief notice.

The general problem is treated under two main divisions: (1) the problem of immediate knowledge or acquaintance, in which figures prominently the problem of perception, pp. 13 to 365; and (2) the problem of mediate knowledge or truth, including the problem of methodology, pp. 369 to 496. Throughout the volume the attempt is made to show, both by negative and constructive arguments, and in the main, as we think, successfully, that there is mediate and yet valid knowledge of reality, just and only because there is, in the first place, immediate knowledge of it.

The detailed examination of various types of dualistic, agnostic (in the philosophical sense), idealistic and realistic theories, chaps. II to XIII, prepares the way for the author's own realistic theory, which is both critical and monistic; and by this is meant the very defensible doctrine "that the object perceived is existentially and numerically identical with the real object at the moment of perception, although the real object may have qualities that are not perceived at the moment; and also that this same object may exist when unperceived, although not necessarily with all the qualities which it possesses, when perceived," p. 311. Considering that these are among the characteristic features of the Critical Realism, developed by Alois Riehl, out of a positivistic interpretation of the Kantian theory of knowledge, it is surprising that this thinker should be dismissed in an early chapter as an epistemological dualist, and hence agnostic. For Riehl, while retaining things-in-themselves (not *the* thing-in-itself!) as an integral part of a theory of experience, holds that we know these in and through phenomena, or the objects of experience, and expressly disclaims any doubling of the objects as a result. Mr. Macintosh himself retains things-in-themselves (as all thinkers must who do not dissolve reality into modes of individual consciousness), and says of them, "they are knowable in part," p. 327. This is the view of Riehl, as it is of Mr.