

Principal Caird's book is professedly a mere *Introduction*. Indeed our only regret at the appearance of this new edition is that the author has not seen his way, in the ten years that have elapsed since the original publication of the work, to develop these "prolegomena" into a substantive treatise on the subject. A better introduction, however, from the author's peculiar point of view, could not be desired. Any one who is in perplexity about the meaning and scope of the "Philosophy of Religion" may be confidently commended to Dr. Caird's exposition, as luminous as it is profound. It may be questioned, of course, whether a philosophy of religion is possible, whether the two notions—philosophy and religion, are not reciprocally exclusive. But if the task of philosophy is the explanation or thinking out of experience, it is difficult to see why it should not attempt the explanation of the higher as well as the lower forms of that experience, of the religious as well as of the moral and intellectual life of man. Let the attempt be made at all events; even if it ends in failure, and in the insight into the necessity of the failure of such an inquiry, the labour will not have been in vain.

The standpoint from which the inquiry is undertaken is all-important. Principal Caird's standpoint is that of the Hegelian philosophy. In the preface he makes full acknowledgment of his indebtedness to Hegel's *Philosophie der Religion*; and indeed his own work has simply been to strip the Hegelian metaphysic, especially in its application to religion of its somewhat repellant native dress, and to present it to his countrymen clothed in a garment of the easiest and most idiomatic English. The "general reader," it is to be feared, will still find Hegel difficult, it may be even unintelligible. But after the labours of the two Caird's in the elucidation, and in a sense popularization, of Hegelian thought, there is little excuse for the student who still finds it all "forbidden ground."

It is impossible here to follow the writer in his argument. The book itself is a mere summary, and will not bear further summarising. But a single criticism of the Hegelian philosophy of religion, here so persuasively presented, may be allowed, viz: "That it is for the most part merely abstract and formal, and misses the real content and fibre, so to speak, of the religious life and consciousness." The cause of this defect is that the moral or practical basis of religion is not sufficiently recognised. The attempt is made to found it on man's intellectual nature and necessities. Man, is an imperfect or finite being, who yet is conscious of his finitude or imperfection, necessarily seeks to transcend the finitude of his own nature, and longs for reconciliation—at-onement—with the infinite. Such a religion is the 'religion' of a merely intellectual being; it is not the religion of man, in all the pain and conflict of his life, and all the deep and crying needs of his nature. The deepest of these needs are moral rather than intellectual—the need of moral strength and of Divine consolation. There is indeed a sense in which the Hegelian admits that religion is the outcome of man's moral necessities. But even here the real nature of the moral case is overlooked; it is simply because man is finite in his moral as in his intellectual nature, that he needs religious satisfaction. For Hegelianism can recognise no real and positive evil in the universe. But is it not in the presence of this evil, and in the moral situation arising from its presence,