

Review

Reviewed Work(s): A Syllabus of Ethics. by William M. Bryant

Review by: Josiah Royce

Source: *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Oct., 1895), pp. 117-118

Published by: The University of Chicago Press

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2375631>

Accessed: 09-09-2018 16:42 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<https://about.jstor.org/terms>



The University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *International Journal of Ethics*

fairness, and make his work an extremely thoughtful one; but in matters that concern speculative skill of a constructive type this book is often, to the present reader's mind, distinctly unsatisfactory.

JOSIAH ROYCE.

A SYLLABUS OF ETHICS. By William M. Bryant, M.A., Instructor in Mental and Moral Philosophy, St. Louis Normal and High School. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co., 1894. Pp. 82.

Briefer, but in its chosen form more finished than the *Syllabus of Professor Dewey*, this little work, by the author of the treatise entitled "The World-Energy and its Self-Conservation," and of several other philosophical essays, represents, with a somewhat individual and relatively independent development, an idealistic ethical theory. This sketch, the author tells us, "has been prepared with a view to meeting the needs of the St. Louis Society of Pedagogy in so far as one of the Sections of that Society is organized for the express purpose of studying Ethics." The concept of "self-realization" is central in the discussion. "Conscience is a fundamental aspect of mind in its totality" (p. 28), and so is no separate faculty. It develops with the whole mind, and is not an initially perfect guide. On the other hand (p. 34), "Man (in so far as he is mind) must be conceived as descending from (that is, arising through, and constituting the culminating aspect of) the creative self-unfolding of the primal perfect mind," and so "must be credited with fundamentally the same characteristics as those inhering in the primal mind itself." And "self-determination is the central characteristic of that mind." In "deliberation" man learns to repeat this character of the primal mind; but deliberation, in its developed form, involves a conscious and as such a conscientious conforming to law,—a submitting of conduct to reason. Accordingly (p. 40), "Virtue consists in a *normal life*,—that is, it consists in practical and progressive conformity on the part of the individual to the universal norm or type of human life." And this norm is of necessity identical with the "divine law." The specific virtues, on their subjective side, are defined as temperance, courage, and justice. The "objective aspect of Ethics"—*i.e.*, the theory of rights and duties in their social aspect—is discussed from p. 47 on. The little treatise is, to the present reviewer's mind, a little too fond of an ineffectively abstract manner of statement, which is increased by the great brevity to which the author has here con-

demned himself. He would be more satisfactory were his statement lengthier and more concretely illustrated.

JOSIAH ROYCE.

MORALITY AND RELIGION: Being the Kerr Lectures for 1893-94.

By the Rev. James Kidd, B.D., Minister of Erskine Church, Glasgow. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895.

The Kerr Lectures are a foundation in the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland. They are delivered triennially by distinguished ministers of this denomination. It may be said at once that, if this course and that of Professor Orr, which preceded it, are to be taken as specimens of the work which the lectureship is to accomplish, it will prove one of the most valuable foundations of the kind. The main characteristic of the book before us is its analytical grasp. Mr. Kidd takes hold of a problem and does not let it go till he has surveyed it from almost every possible side. He also has ideas of his own with respect to it, and he holds by these with most admirable tenacity.

The plan of the book is both simple and effective. In Part First, entitled *Morality*, the author discusses "Conduct and Motive;" "The Moral Ideal." In Part Second, entitled *Religion*, he treats the Religious Sentiment exhaustively. In Part Third he examines the relations between Religion and Morality at length; while in Part Fourth, which is more distinctively theological, he considers the "*Testimony of Christ*" in its bearings upon the subject under review. To readers of this *JOURNAL*, Parts First and Third are of most direct interest; though, curiously enough, I am inclined to think that the best portions of the book are the Second and Fourth Parts. Here, in a semi-theological sphere, Mr. Kidd seems most at home, and speaks with greatest authority. Of these two portions the Second is better than the Fourth. It is less dogmatic, less sentimental. Probably many will be attracted by its criticism of recent Gifford lectures, and some will find themselves in substantial agreement with Mr. Kidd's strictures. But, whether they agree or not, they will be compelled to admit that Mr. Kidd is a man to be reckoned with. His book is undoubtedly the most effective and authoritative statement on the subject it discusses which has yet been published.

No one can fail to be struck by the independence, the characteristic caution, the wide learning, and the religious spirit of this new