

TABLE IV

Amount recalled.....Shortness of first practise period.....r	=.186
Amount recalled.....Amount done during minutes 4-8.....	.231
Amount recalled.....Rate of work during last five minutes of first practise period355
Amount recalled.....Rate of work during last five minutes of second practise period533

A. T. POFFENBERGER, JR.,
Secretary.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

The Great Problems. BERNARDINO VARISCO. Translated by R. C. LODGE.
New York: The Macmillan Company. 1914. Pp. xi + 370.

Varisco's "Great Problems" is a vigorously written and closely reasoned book. It will be differently appraised according to the different philosophical points of view of its readers; but few will deny the soundness of Varisco's definition of philosophy (p. 4) as "the search and knowledge of the supreme truth" and the correctness of his formulation (p. 8) of its aim "to render full reason for everything."

In the first of several appendices Varisco defines his present standpoint in technical terms. "To make an indeterminate profession of idealism," he says (p. 295), "is . . . like signing a blank cheque, and I have no wish to do so." In particular, he disavows every form of idealism which leads to solipsism. But with this qualification he asserts positively "I am an idealist."

A brief outline of some of the more significant teachings of the book will define more closely Varisco's type of idealism and will also provide a basis for comment. He is first concerned to defend the possibility of philosophy, conceived as search for ultimate truth, against the "critical doctrine" that reality is unknowable. "With the assertion," he says (p. 16), "that the 'beyond' is unknowable comes the affirmation that it exists. A 'beyond' of which we know the existence is not an absolutely unknown thing—is not unknowable. . . . Positive knowledge," Varisco concludes, "contains, without doubt, the solution of the Great Problems. . . . But . . . in order that positive knowledge may lead us where we wish to go . . . we must make a well-thought-out use of it" (p. 21).

Philosophical theory, Varisco proceeds, must be based simply on facts: "We must refrain from any theory which goes beyond the fact" (p. 48). And the fact first discovered is that a body, a so-called "external reality"—an inkstand or a flower, for example—is a complex of properties, that is, of sense-perceivables. But, a sense-perceivable, as, for instance, the red color of the flower, is "numerically one" (p. 32) with a sense-percept (my sensation of redness). In a word, a body is "nothing but a group of facts

of consciousness" (p. 46; *cf.* pp. 47, 290), a "unity of sense perceivables."

Following upon this discovery of the identity of bodily property and sense-percept is the reasoned conclusion, emphasized and reiterated by Varisco, that two subjects are conscious of identically the same sense-perceivable: Titus and Sempronius, for example, see the same color. Varisco's argument, often repeated (*cf.* pp. 37 ff, 227, 291-293) may best be condensed from his own statements. Any other conclusion, he points out, would involve us in solipsism, and the fatal objection to solipsism is that it would render "quite impossible" the "undoubted fact of communication" (pp. 37-38). Solipsism, Varisco is at pains to show, follows not only from the subjectivist doctrine that "the existence of the object consists in my having" a percept (p. 39), but from the dualistic teaching that the percept is "a modification of the subject determined in it by the action of an external cause" (p. 40). For if either hypothesis "were true I should be absolutely enclosed within myself . . . without possible escape. In such a case no personal subject could know *or suspect or suppose* the existence of any other personal subject, which is contrary to the truth (p. 227; *cf.* p. 292). The strength of the argument lies in the words which I have italicized. For the argument against solipsism is thus based not on an imagined assumption of the existence of other selves, but rather on the indisputable awareness, whether or not an illusion (p. 51), of these other subjects.

Varisco has so far sought to establish the existence of many subjects having sense-perceivables "in common." He conceives these subjects and sense-perceivables as "determinations of the one Being" (p. 239), as included in a "Universal Being" which "must itself be a subject" (p. 238). The argument for this conclusion is never adequately formulated, but is perhaps implicit in the statement (p. 233): "the unity of concrete objects is 'concluded' from the absurd results we obtain if we assume that [they] are not essentially connected."

The emphasized characters of this Universal Being are its fundamental unity and its observed variations. Indeed, "the variation of the universe has its root in an intrinsic requirement of Being" (p. 234). The determinations of "Being," or "concrete objects," are described as relatively independent "centers of spontaneity," or monads, and are of the following varieties: (1) "common monads" (p. 241) bound together in bodies "by laws other than the unity of consciousness, in substance by causal laws" (p. 240); (2) subjects (or unities of consciousness), which unify their sense-percepts, recollections, feelings and (notably) volitions (p. 241 and Chapter III.). Among subjects, the "purely animal" or "psychical" subject is sharply to be distinguished from the rational subject, the personal, self-conscious I (*cf.* p. 241 and Chapter IV.).

The comment which follows will supplement, at certain points, this very summary account of Varisco's teaching. Attention has already been called to the insufficiency of the argument (in the reviewer's opinion, readily supplied) to the existence of a Universal Being. The entire discussion of Being, in Chapter VII., suffers from a confusion of "qualita-

tive" with "numerical" identity. (The terms are not Varisco's.) Thus Varisco says (p. 239): "The monads as determinations of the one Being, are included in it. And they include it because each of them exists." The first sentence correctly states the inclusion of the monads within the One, the second incorrectly expresses the homogeneity, or qualitative identity, of the parts with the whole.

The main weakness of the book lies, however, in the reviewer's opinion, in the conventional and defective conception of consciousness. The elaboration of this criticism demands a more detailed statement of Varisco's position. In Chapter II., he sharply distinguishes the subject, or unity of consciousness, from the body or unity of sense-perceivables. The sense-perceivables are, he says, "independent" of the subject (p. 63) and may "realize" themselves "apart from any subject whatever" (p. 51). The law which unites them differs from the law which constitutes the unity of consciousness (p. 35). The subject seems to be treated, throughout the first four chapters of the book, as a sum of elements (sense-percepts, memories, feelings, and activities). Indeed, these are often referred to as "constituent" elements—for example, in the statement (p. 58): "the same sense-perceivables constitute my body and me—my body, so far as they are connected by a physiological law, me, so far as they are connected by the unity of consciousness." In later chapters, however, Varisco modifies these accounts of "subject" and of "body." On the one hand, with Chapter V., on "Values," he introduces a new view of the subject. Value exists, Varisco reiterates, only for the subject—for the satisfied and the dissatisfied and, above all, for the willing subject. "Every valuation presupposes," he says, "a volition which takes up a position and seeks satisfaction" (p. 139). The valuing self, however, can not, it now appears (p. 130), be a mere aggregate or "bundle of sense percepts and recollections, . . . variable in accordance with a certain law." Rather "it has" the percepts and recollections, "it lives," "it acts." "Sensations, representations, manifestations of activity, feelings," Varisco says (p. 152), "presuppose the subject of which they are the determinations. They would vanish if the subject vanished." This fundamental subject, however, the subject of cognition and not of mere feeling, is distinguished as personal self or "I" from the simple "animal" self, or unity of consciousness.

Along with this enriched view of the subject goes a conception of body which, as our preliminary summary has already shown, more closely allies body with the subject. Bodies, in truth, like subjects, are determinations of Universal Being. Bodies, like subjects, are centers of spontaneity, monads. The unity which binds them, the causal law, is not so different as at first appeared from logical law, the principle of the internal consistency of judgment; for causal laws too, "have their root in the unity of Being" (p. 240) which is Thought.

None the less, to the very end, Varisco retains the mythical conception of a "fact of consciousness" which is something other than a self or a self's consciousness, the self-contradicting hypothesis of an unconscious self, the belief that a monad can be "analogous to a subject," "comparable

to a subject," even a very simple kind of subject (p. 246) without, after all, fully being a subject. He sees clearly that the existence of anything "extraneous to consciousness, heterogeneous to consciousness, must absolutely be excluded" (p. 291), but he is blind to the fact that consciousness exists only as personal. He is, therefore, obliged to leave unsolved "the Greatest problem," whether Universal Being, or "the divine, . . . is or is not a unity of consciousness . . . transcendent with respect to the individual consciousnesses" (p. 268). Had Varisco fully carried through his analysis of actual experience he would have discovered that only as unity of consciousness, or self, can the Universal Being be either a subject or even qualitatively identical with a universe which is through and through consciousness.

The reader of this notice is referred to "The Great Problems" itself for further detail of Varisco's doctrine—in particular for his admirable treatment, in Chapter VII., of "accidentalness, however alogical in itself" as "the result of an intrinsic logical requirement of being" (pp. 235 ff), and his theory that evolution and change really characterize different systems even while "the whole remains always the same in spite of the variation of its parts" (p. 246).

In conclusion, a word must be said about the skill of the translator. The writer of this notice has had no chance to compare this version with the Italian—and has not once missed the privilege. The translator has transmitted to us the individuality of the author through the medium of an unlabored and spontaneous style.

MARY WHITON CALKINS.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE.

Problems of Conduct. DURANT DRAKE. Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company. 1914. Pp. xiii + 455.

This book makes very pleasant reading; it is widely informative; it is genuinely inspiring. If such qualities do not represent the maximum of achievement in ethical text-book writing, they certainly come near it. These merits are due to a persuasive sanity eminently characteristic of the author, to his thoughtful awareness of the multitudinous problems that press for solution upon modern civilized society, to his forceful yet winning manner of writing.

Undoubtedly the noteworthy feature of the book is its extensive treatment of present-day practical problems—problems that concern particularly American social life and hence confront the American college graduate. The limits of a review prevent any detailed consideration of the author's views upon the various questions which he takes up in the two thirds of the book devoted to "personal" and "public" morality. Besides greater moral problems, such subjects as smoking and intercollegiate athletics, gambling and yellow journalism, pacifism and party loyalty, consumers' leagues and the single tax, are all thoughtfully and profitably discussed. Two chapters are deserving of special comment because they depart markedly from the procedure commonly adopted in text-