

*The Philosophy of Santayana: Selections from the Works of George Santayana.* Edited, with an Introductory Essay, by IRWIN EDMAN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. lvi + 587 pp. \$2.50.

No reader with the slightest curiosity concerning the philosophical writings of Mr. Santayana can complain any longer of a lack of convenient and well-paved avenues of approach. Since 1920, many such inquirers have found their way to the original works through the *Little Essays* selected and arranged by Mr. Logan Pear-sall Smith. But where the latter's principle of selection was primarily literary, Professor Edman's is philosophical, even to the extent of sacrificing some passages of special eloquence in order to include others which "would better represent the total movement of the author's general philosophy." Where Mr. Smith used as his unit the paragraph or essay-fragment, the present anthologist includes, where possible, essays or chapters from books in their entirety. In behalf of the method used earlier, however, the remark of the late Professor Palmer might well be recalled, to the effect that Mr. Santayana is at his best in aphoristic sentences, is somewhat less effective in paragraphs, still less in chapters, and least of all in whole books. Professor Edman has the great advantage of being able to include the post-war publications, although chapters from *The Life of Reason* comprise just about half of the book. His judicious samplings cover all of the four decades of Mr. Santayana's career as an author, fortunately including a dozen of the poems; and while there are bound to be differences of opinion about favorite passages, few will dispute the judgment that the best of his work is within these covers. The introductory essay is sympathetically and beautifully composed in a style that, by contagion perhaps, seems often to be perilously imitative of the master whom it celebrates.

H. A. L.

*Wesen und Wesenserkenntnis. Untersuchungen mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Phänomenologie Husserls und Schelers.* WILHELM PÖLL. München: Ernst Reinhardt. 1936. ix + 207 pp. 4.80 M.

Pöll has written an excellent monograph on the present state of the problem of essence and the cognition of essence. Coming himself from the training of Catholic philosophy which has always been interested in these problems even when their full significance was forgotten, Pöll discusses with fine understanding the position of the phenomenological school. He starts from the opinions of Husserl and Scheler, but he is broad enough to take into serious consideration the special investigations of the younger members of the school, of

Spiegelberg, Hering, and others. I do not believe that Pöll gives a final solution to the difficulties of evidence, of knowledge of essence, of the difference between essence and idea, but his book is valuable as a clear statement of the difficulties and for his sober discussion of those problems which have often been obscured by other general philosophical points of view.

M. A. G.

*Wahrscheinlichkeit Statistik und Wahrheit. Einführung in die neue Wahrscheinlichkeitslehre und ihre Anwendung.* (Zweite, Neubearbeitete Auflage.) RICHARD VON MISES. (Schriften zur Wissenschaftlichen Weltauffassung, Band 3.) Wien: Julius Springer. 1936. viii + 282 pp. RM. 16.

Professor von Mises (now at Istanbul) has considerably rewritten and enlarged by almost a hundred pages the first edition of his excellent book. One must go far to find its equal in the clarity with which the fundamental ideas of probability are set forth, in the enormous range of applications of the theory surveyed, and in the forthright honesty with which the logical difficulties of his frequency interpretation of probability are considered.

Most of the new material is devoted to discussing the larger methodological and philosophical issues of the author's statement of the frequency theory of probability. Of special interest are the reformulation of his Axiom of Irregularity and its defense against a large number of critics; and the brief but stimulating discussion of the relation between "infinite collectives" (required for the *calculus* of probability) and the collectives with which we must deal in fact in trying to control the *predictions* of probability theory. The sane and penetrating analysis, without any nonsense whatsoever, of the issues of contemporary "indeterministic" physics and of its bearing upon determinism and causality, should also not go unmentioned.

As is well known, the von Mises theory of probability is not capable of treating many topics usually included under this head by many philosophical writers. In this restriction lies its strength, though perhaps some will say its weakness. But advocates of a more comprehensive theory should really face the challenge of producing, black on white, a theory as fruitful and illuminating as this and allied theories; otherwise their words will fall upon the deaf ears of research workers in the sciences. There still remains much to do before the methodology of probability can be regarded as being in a satisfactory state. Meanwhile, it would be desirable to have this first-rate popularization of a difficult subject by a master in the field made available in English.

E. N.