

PHILOSOPHY

- PAUL KECSKEMETI. *Meaning, Communication and Value*. Chicago University Press (London: Cambridge University Press.) 1953. Pp. 349. 64s.
- Journal of the Society for Psychological Research*, Vol. 3, No. 676. July-October, 1953. Pp. 184. 4s.
- H. A. HODGES. *Languages, Standpoints and Attitudes*. (Ridell Memorial Lectures, 24th Series.) Oxford University Press. 1953. Pp. 68. 5s.
- C. A. COULSON, F.R.S. *Christianity in an Age of Science*. (Riddell Memorial Lectures, 25th Series.) Oxford University Press. 1953. Pp. 53. 5s.
- S. DE ALTUBÉ. *La fonction de la douleur*. Own publication. 1953. P. 60. No price stated.
- VARIOUS AUTHORS. *Phénoménologie: Existence*. Armand Colin, Paris. 1953. Pp. 208. Fr. fr. 550.
- J. DEFEVER, S.J. *La Preuve Réelle de Dieu: Étude Critique*. Édition Universelle (Desclée de Brouwer) Brussels and Paris. 1953. No price stated.
- MICHELE-FREDERICO SCIACCA. *La Philosophie Italienne Contemporaine*. Paris: Emmanuel Vitte. 1953. Pp. 296. Fr. fr. 1500.
- BRICE PARAIN. *Sur la Dialectique*. Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1953. Pp. 244. Fr. fr. 400.
- MARTIN HEIDEGGER. *Kant et le problème de la Métaphysique* (trans. A. de Waelhens & Walter Biemel.) Paris: Librairie Gallimard. Pp. 302. Fr. fr. 640.
- GEORG SIEGMUND. *Der Mensch in seinem Dasein*. (Philosophische Anthropologie) Erster Teil. Freiburg: Verlag Herder. 1953. Pp. 247. No price stated.
- THILO RAMM. *Ferdinand Lassalle als Rechts- und Sozialphilosoph*. Westkulturverlag Anton Hain: Meisenheim/Wien. 1953. Pp. 224. D.M. 11.
- LEONE VIVANTE. *Elementi di una Filosofia della Potenzialità*. Florence: Vallecchi Editore. 1953. Pp. 112. L. 500.
- LUIGI PEREGO. *La Natura e il Soggetto: Contributo ad una concezione neorealistica del Soggetto*. Milan: Fratelli Bocca. 1953. Pp. 186. L. 800.

CORRESPONDENCE

DEFINITION OF THE WORD "FACT"

To the Editor of *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

Whilst approving the principle that words of universal use should have a clear and precise meaning as suggested by Mr. G. Burniston Brown in the report of his address printed in the *Journal* for April, 1953, I cannot approve his definition of the word "fact" (i.e. propositions which are verifiable). It is my opinion that "fact" should be confined to the description of occurrences taking place "now."

If we accept Mr. Brown's assertion that past and future occurrences are hypotheses it is obvious that only occurrences immediately observable can be considered as facts; in which case propositions are statements inferred from facts.

The proposition "Napoleon died at St. Helena" is hypothetical and is a particular instance of the general inference contained in the proposition "All men are mortal." To draw a comparison therefore between a particular statement such as "Napoleon died at St. Helena" with a general inference such as "Sodium chloride melts at 801° C" is quite wrong. To be logical it is necessary to compare the historical statement with a particular scientific experiment which requires to be dated, and once such a scientific experiment has taken place it becomes historical and hypothetical equally with all other past occurrences.

The proposition "All men are mortal" cannot be verified: neither can the propositions of science. What is verified are particular instances which serve to confirm our belief in the general inference. If you deny the identity and validity of historical statements you deny the same of each and every scientific observation or experiment.

Yours faithfully,

A. D. MACKAY.

3 Parkhill Road, Glasgow, S.1.

June 4, 1953.