aggression while it defeats rational argumentation. For two centuries the picture began to look far more promising, only to be shattered by Hitler's genocide. But now a new era has begun. We eagerly await the publication of Vol. II which will bring the story almost up to date as well as bring indices for the whole work. No doubt an English translation should make this invaluable documentation available to an even wider public. This would be a fitting monument for K. H. Rengstorf whose recent death has taken from us an outstanding scholar.

Ulrich Simon


This book is an admirable account for students. It also should be read by all professional philosophers interested in Kant as a summary to bring together and remind them of essential points and also perhaps to suggest to them new ones. I have one serious quarrel with the book and only one, its small size, which is probably however rendered necessary by the conditions of the series but prevents the author from dealing at all adequately with the numerous problems raised, as he would no doubt be the the first to admit.

There is something unsatisfactory about reviewing a book of this type since a summary of a summary is not usually a very illuminating production, and I shall not try to produce one. The chapter which will most interest the average reader of Religious Studies, ‘God and Immortality’, is particularly well done and more sympathetic to Kant than I should have expected or is usually the case with modern commentators. But in the last paragraph of the book Acton remarks ‘I should mention that... I have said very little about his (Kant’s) general philosophical point of view, but have, as far as possible, discussed his ethical theories in relation to the moral beliefs of ordinary men. We have seen that Kant himself approved of such a course and adopted it himself in the early part of the Groundwork. But it should be emphasised that he also interpreted moral principles in terms of his Critical Philosophy as a whole, so that a full discussion of his ethics would have to be carried out in this context. (p. 65) He puts his finger on one of the two main difficulties in Kant’s account of freedom, namely that free action must according to his account ‘be removed from the sphere of causal necessity and at the same time possess spatial and temporal properties which cannot be attributed to the merely intelligible or noumenal world’ (p. 50) but omits to enlarge on it, and does not even mention the other main difficulty about Kant’s view of freedom, namely his identification of free action and moral action, which raises apparently insuperable difficulties about what Kant
emphasised so much elsewhere, namely, our responsibility for immoral action.
In summing up Kant’s account of ethics he blames him chiefly for having
had so little to say about innocent ideals, the adoption of any of which is
per se good and permissible but, unlike the performance of duties, not
obligatory (p. 63).

A. C. Ewing

James F. Ross. Philosophical Theology. Pp. x+ 326. (Indianapolis and New
York, Bobbs Merrill Co. 1969.) $8.50.

This book is accurately described by its author as ‘the beginnings of an
analytic reconstruction of scholastic natural theology’. For Dr Ross ap-
proaches his material from the standpoint of someone schooled in modern
philosophical logic. His problems are those of such writers as Aquinas, Duns
Scotus and Leibniz. But he is more concerned to defend the spirit than the
letter of any doctrine associated with the scholastic tradition. His book
begins, for instance, with a fresh assessment of what it is to prove something.
He rejects the view that the premises of an argument which is to establish
its conclusion must be self-evident. Instead he suggests that, in addition to
being formally valid, such an argument must satisfy two further conditions.
(1) It must be possible for more than one person to know the truth of the
premises. (2) The premises of the argument must be assessible by reference
to some method generally followed by those engaging in the science in ques-
tion. He is, to make his own arguments conform to (2), careful not to rely
upon distinctions and theses not widely accepted by analytic philosophers.

The centre-piece of the book are some forms of Modal Argument for the
existence of God which Dr Ross considers ‘adequately establish the existence
of a being which is properly called “God”’. He is concerned to establish, that
is to say, that if God’s existence is possible God must exist. Much of the latter
part of the book is taken up by analyses of God’s attributes, e.g. omnipotence
and goodness. These have considerable interest in their own right. But they
also contribute to the main argument because they do something to show
that there is no internal inconsistency in the idea of God, hence that God’s
existence is possible. The earlier chapters prepare the ground for the versions
of Modal Argument which are presented. There is a full discussion of the
Humean view that all existential propositions must be contingent, a view
which is incompatible with a premise of one of the arguments put forward,
namely, that a self-explanatory being is possible. There is also a detailed dis-
cussion of the relation between ‘real’ and ‘logical’ modalities. It is suggested
that the latter is the indispensable one and that the former can be defined in
terms of it. On this account a state of affairs can be said to be really possible