

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

OUTLINES OF MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM. By *Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki*. London: Luzac & Co., 1907. Pp. xii, 420. Price, 8s. 6d.

"The object of this book," the author says in his preface, "is twofold: (1) To refute the many wrong opinions which are entertained by Western critics concerning the fundamental teachings of Mahāyāna Buddhism, (2) To awaken interest among scholars of comparative religion in the development of the religious sentiment and faith as exemplified by the growth of one of the most powerful spiritual forces in the world."

From this it is apparent that the author does not intend to treat the subject as a dead faith whose existence is in history. According to him, the Mahāyāna Buddhism is a system of living faith governing millions of souls in the far East. And he tries in these *Outlines* to explain its leading tenets through numerous quotations culled from various Mahāyāna texts, which mostly exist in Chinese translations and are therefore more or less inaccessible to Western scholars of Buddhism.

Mr. Suzuki is not, however, polemic in his protest against the Western interpretation of Mahāyānism. His method is historical, and this is what makes his book the more valuable to students who are interested in Buddhism, not only as a religion most powerful in the East, but as throwing considerable light on the development of our religious consciousness.

While full of significance and inspiring thoughts, Mahāyānism has been considered by some scholars rather a degenerated form of primitive Buddhism, and, therefore, not worth so much laborious investigation as the latter. But our author vigorously protests against this, for he says that Mahāyānism "is an ever-growing faith and ready in all times to cast off its old garments as soon as they are worn out." (P. 15.) He insists on having this school of Buddhism treated as an organism endowed with considerable vitality and power of assimilation. He does not wish to see Mahāyānism shelved in an obscure corner of the general Buddhist library as hitherto done by European scholars. Mr. Suzuki is not satisfied with the work done by Edkins, Beal, Wassiljew, Nanjo, etc.

The book is divided into three main parts: (1) Introductory, (2) Speculative Mahāyānism, (3) Practical Mahāyānism.

In the introductory part, Mr. Suzuki treats of the two principal schools of Buddhism: Mahāyānism and Hinayānism, and characterizes in general what constitutes the essentials of Buddhism and then specifically and historically those of Mahāyānism as distinguished from the other school or schools.

In this last chapter, the Mahâyâna Buddhism as conceived by Sthiramati, and Asanga, and the Yogacârin is expounded.

Speculative Mahâyânism is considered in Chapter III, Practice and Speculation; IV, Classification of Knowledge; V, Bhûtatahâtâ (Suchness); VI, The Tathâgata-Garbha and the Alaya-vijñâna; VII, The Theory of Non-ego; VIII, Karma. From Chapters IX to XIII, the Dharmakâya, the Doctrine of Trikaya, the Bodhisattva, the Ten Stages of Bodhisattvahood, and Nirvana are more or less systematically treated.

The book has an appendix consisting of Mahâyâna hymns taken from various texts in Chinese translation, among which there are many striking ones, deeply religious and yet quite philosophic.

According to Mr. Suzuki, the central idea of Mahâyâna Buddhism is the Dharmakâya as constituting the essence, life, truth, and goodness of this universe. The conception of Dharmakâya is highly pantheistic, but the Mahâyânists believe in the progressive realization of ethical ideas, which saves them from nihilism as well as from the doctrine of *laissez faire* or non-resistance.

Mahâyâna Buddhism has developed chiefly with Nâgârjuna and Asanga in India. In China it branched off into many minor schools among which we may mention T'ien Tai (Tendai in Japanese), Hua Yuen (Kegon), San Lun (sanlon), etc. In Japan it has produced a sect called Shin Shu whose teachings remind us in many respects of the Christian doctrine of salvation. Every one of them is full of interest when systematically studied, showing how similarly develops religious consciousness under similar conditions all the world over. It is most desirable that our author with his extensive knowledge of Chinese Buddhist lore will some day give us a systematic survey of all those Mahâyâna sects.

It goes without saying that this book on Mahâyânism being the first of the kind is most valuable to students of Eastern religions and scholars of human thought in general. Especially to those who have known Buddhism only through Western writers, this book is indispensable, as throwing light on the Mahâyâna Buddhist thoughts not yet quite known to them and on the spiritual nourishment of Oriental peoples whose inner life is supposed to be hidden from Occidentals.

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DIE RELIGION. Einführung in ihre Entwicklungsgeschichte. Von C. Schaarschmidt. Leipsic: Dürr, 1907. Pp. 252. Price, 4.40 m.

Professor Schaarschmidt of Bonn is well known for his critical work on Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz, and writes this new book on the history and philosophy of religion from the point of view of a liberal Protestant Christian who is well versed in historical facts and scientific methods. The book is divided into two parts: the first or preparatory part in which the author deals with the origin and concept of religion, giving a valuable anthropological and ethnographical introduction. Part II treats of the development of religions from naturalism to spiritualism, and, in the latter, from polytheism and a limited monotheism to the universal monotheism of Christianity. The Appendix gives a comparison of many tenets of Christianity and Buddhism, pointing out with care in each case, however, the supremacy of Christianity in the author's opinion.