

General Discussion of Arguments Against Pleasure As the Goal / Good / Guide Prior to Epicurus)

Post by "Cassius" of March 1, 2018 at 7:48 AM

R. G. Collingwood (1889–1943)



by Simon Blackburn

Collingwood was the greatest British philosopher of history of the twentieth century. His experience as a practising historian of Roman Britain led him to believe that the besetting vice of philosophy is to abstract propositions away from the context of the practical problems and questions that gave rise to them. Until we know the practical context of problems and questions to which a proposition is supposed to be an answer, we do not know what it means. In this respect his concern with the living

Applying this doctrine to the interpretation of historical texts, Collingwood insists that you cannot know what a philosopher meant by a doctrine until you know the question to which the doctrine was intended as an answer and how that question arose. Immediately it follows that you cannot tell whether propositions contradict each other unless you know that they are answers to the same question. This is not only a doctrine of the interpretation of the past, but also a doctrine of the present.