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I.

RECENT DISCUSSION IN MATERIALISM.

THERE are phases of contemporary materialism which have little in common with the doctrines of ancient and mediæval materialists, and which in point of subtlety and philosophical attractiveness are quite in accord with the advanced position of nineteenth century thought. The idealist of to-day flatters himself that he avoids the inconsistencies of Berkeley and Fichte, so the materialist smiles at the mention of Priestly, D'Alembert, and Holbach. But these growths respectively in idealistic and materialistic thought have not been parallel. Idealism has tended in the last thirty years to withdraw its gaze from the thought-ultimate as a monistic conception, to perception as a dualistic relation, that is from cosmic to psychological idealism; while materialism has tended in quite the opposite direction, *i. e.*, from the crude postulate of matter in bulk to the search for an ultimate materialistic principle, that is from psychological to cosmic materialism. Each has strengthened its flank and the battle is now joined between psychological idealism and metaphysical materialism.

Spiritualism has gained vastly by this change of base. As long as the ontology of spirit rested upon a dogmatic assertion of universal mind, there was no weapon at hand wherewith to attack the corresponding assertion of universal matter. I have as good right to assert an universal as you have and *chacun à son goût* is the rule of choice. But now that philosophy is learning to value a single fact more than a detailed system, and is sacrificing its systems to the vindication of facts, it is spiritualism and not materialism which is profiting by the advances of science. Materialism has appealed to the metaphysics of force, spiritualism has appealed to consciousness

volume. The larger head-bands were designed by Mr. C. M. Jenckes, of Portland, Me., and by Mr. G. W. Edwards, of New York. The paper is by the Browns, of North Adams, Mass., and the binding was done by Mr. William Matthews, of the Grolier Club.

The happy possessor of these volumes will prize the pure white of the velum binding, stamped with a gold impression of the seal of the Bishop of Durham. He will admire the hand-made paper, whiter and better than any made in other lands, the exact register of the type, the firm strong presswork, the rich vermilion of the rubricated initials, and the full rich black of the ink. He will rejoice in the perfect proportion of the page and margin and the rough edges of the uncut leaves. In fact, even the doubter as to booklore will gladly acknowledge that there is an education in the possession, handling and reading of such volumes not to be had from common books. The thorough and loving work, unstinted in the preparation of both contents and container, gives pleasure to the senses and weight to the words as, to use De Bury's own thought and Prof. West's rendering, "written truth discloses itself plainly to the sight, and, passing through the open portals of the eyes, the antechamber of perception and the halls of the imagination, enters the chamber of the understanding and reclines upon the couch of memory, where it engenders the eternal truth of the mind."

Princeton.

WILLIAM M. SLOANE.

The following books also require notice:

The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry. Fourth Thousand. Revised and Enlarged. 8vo, pp. 252. And *Appreciations, with an Essay on Style.* 8vo, pp. 254. By Walter Pater, Fellow of Brasenose College. (London and New York: Macmillan & Co., 1890.) These volumes are a delightful series of essays on literature and literary biography in the translucent style which makes all that Mr. Pater writes so charming. The former is a fourth edition, the first having appeared in 1873, but it has lost nothing of its freshness, and its singularly happy presentations of the salient characteristics of different phases of the Renaissance have been rather accentuated than superseded by the elaborate works of Mr. Symonds and others in the last fifteen years. Under the felicitous title of "Appreciations" we have a series of studies in English literature, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, Sir Thomas Browne, Rossetti and several of Shakespeare's plays being the principal subjects. They are thoroughly enjoyable from cover to cover.—*Master Virgil.* By J. S. Tunison. 8vo, pp. viii, 250. (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1890.) This entertaining study of Virgil as he was regarded in the Middle Ages has passed to its second edition, and as the only work on the subject in English, it has richly deserved its popularity. Our chief criticism of it is that it is not something more than it is. The author has rather written about his subject than supplied the real want—a thorough treatise where English readers can find full information on Virgil as a master of the *ars magica*. As it is we must still go to such sources as Comparetti's "*Virgilio nel Medio Evo*," if we want to really know what was believed of Virgil by the later Middle Ages. In the chapters on Virgil and the Devil, in Literary Tradition, as a Writer on Magic, as a Man of Science, as the Savior of Rome, as the Lover and as a Prophet, we have an interesting analytical study of the various aspects in which the poet was regarded, and a strong side light on the difficult subject of the pervasive symbolism of the Middle Ages which so affected the revival of learning.—*Martin Van Buren. To the End of His Public Career.* By George Bancroft. 8vo, pp. vi, 239. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1889.) This appreciative and entertaining biography by the great

master of the Colonial and Revolutionary periods of our history, was written many years ago, and "the manuscript was seen by Van Buren, who pronounced it, as a record of facts relating to himself, authentic and true." Owing to the warmth of party feeling at the time of its preparation, Mr. Bancroft laid away the work till a more favorable moment for its publication arrived. It now appears after a revision which involved "no change that could affect Van Buren's approval of it." It is scarcely necessary to say that it is an able and scholarly, if a somewhat slight, work. Mr. Bancroft arbitrarily fixes the close of Van Buren's public career at his retirement from office, thus closing his sketch with 1841.—*The Kansas Crusade*. By Eli Thayer. 8vo, pp. 294. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1889.) We have here a valuable treatise on an important episode of the struggle against the spread of slavery from the pen of an actor. The influence of the "Emigrant Aid Company" has long been recognized as one of the most potent factors in determining the result in favor of free soil, and Eli Thayer was the life and soul of that organization. "The mission of this book is to supply the missing links" in the accounts heretofore given and to direct the attention of students especially to the work of the emigration societies. It is vigorously written and contains much severe criticism on the positions assumed by the extreme abolitionists which deserves a careful weighing even if it deals sharply with matters by tacit consent hitherto allowed to rest in an honorable oblivion for the sake of the results they helped to realize.—*The Beginnings of American Nationality*, and *Local Government in Wisconsin* embrace Numbers i-iii in the eighth series of the "Johns-Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science." The former is an analytical study of the Acts of Congress and the Colonial and State Assemblies with a view to the constitutional relations existing between them from 1774-1789. It is from the pen of Albion W. Small, Ph.D., President of Colby University, and though brief (8vo, pp. 70) it is a suggestive study of a too-much neglected subject. To it is added an entirely disconnected note of ten pages on *The Needs of Self-supporting Women*, by Miss Clare de Graffenreid, of the Labor Department, Washington, which is a sensible and earnest inquiry into one of the most important social problems of the day. Mr. David E. Spencer's study of *Local Government in Wisconsin* is chiefly valuable as carrying forward the general plan of supplying the materials for a comparative study of local government in the United States.—*The Political Problem*. By Albert Stickney. 8vo, pp. 189. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1890.) This is a study of the problem which is forcing itself on the people of the United States, symptoms of which are the Civil Service Reform, the free ballot and the Australian ballot agitations. The discussion embraces: "The Theory of our Political System;" "The Practical Results;" "The Changes Needed;" and closes with some general considerations. The theses laid down are that "any government which deserves the name of 'democratic' must secure (1) the most full, free, and healthy political action on the part of the individual citizen, (2) the supremacy of the people's will and the people's judgment, (3) efficient administration;" and that "our experience in the last hundred years" has evolved the principles that "(1) the popular assembly, or public meeting, is the organ whereby any people, that is, any number of individuals who are to take combined political action, must form and utter its common judgment and its common will, (2) administration must have one head, (3) the popular assembly must have the supreme supervision and control of all its public affairs, of its administrative methods, of its administrative head, and of its own members." The style is incisive and the arguments advanced are worthy of serious consideration even from those who, like ourselves, are unable to accept all of the author's premises or reach all of his

conclusions. This is especially the case in the discussion of the election and responsibility of the executive.—*The Scotch-Irish in America*. Proceedings of the Scotch-Irish Congress at Columbia, Tennessee, May 8-11, 1889. 8vo, pp. iv, 210. (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co., 1889.) This is the first fruits of the recently-organized Scotch-Irish Society of America. Besides the official reports it contains addresses on different phases of the Scotch-Irish influence in America by Governor Proctor Knott of Kentucky, Prof. George Macloskie, LL.D., of Princeton, Rev. Dr. John Hall of New York, Hon. William Wirt Henry of Virginia, and a number of others. The addresses are too general to possess any permanent value, but they serve to reveal the rich field which the society has for its labors.—*Western China. A Journey to the Great Buddhist Centre of Mount Omei*. By Rev. Virgil C. Hart, B.D., Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society. 8vo, pp. xii, 306. (Boston: Ticknor & Co., 1888.) This is an entertaining narrative of travels in a little-known region, presented in unexceptionable form, the book-making as to paper, type and illustrations being excellent. The author's observations on the mission fields of Western China will be found especially interesting.—*The Story of Emin's Rescue as told in Stanley's Letters*. Edited by J. Scott Keltie, Librarian to the Royal Geographical Society. 8vo, pp. 176. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1890). A well-edited and neat cheap edition of Stanley's letters to various persons, the Royal Geographical Society, etc., affording a graphic and succinct account of his great expedition. Many readers will find all the information which they desire on the subject in this little book, and will enjoy it the more for the dashing, hasty style in which most of the letters are written.—*Oxford: Brief Historical and Descriptive Notes*. By Andrew Lang, M.A., late Fellow of Merton College. 8vo, pp. xvi, 282. (London: Seeley & Co., 1890.) Though the papers which comprise this volume "do not profess even to sketch the outlines of a history of Oxford," and "are merely records of the impressions made by this or that aspect of the life of the University, as it has been in different ages," it is hardly necessary to say that the book is one calculated to charm every reader. Mr. Lang has long ago proved his capacity to make a dull subject attractive, and here he had a subject which ought to make the dullest writer agreeable. We have glimpses at "The Town before the University," "A Day with a Mediæval Undergraduate," "The Renaissance and the Reformation," "High Tory Oxford," "Poets at Oxford: Shelley and Landor," "Undergraduate Life" and other chapters with titles scarcely less prophetic of the feast prepared for well-educated literary palates. For ourselves, this little book has awakened many a pleasant undergraduate reminiscence. It is lavishly illustrated and is a beautiful bit of book-making.

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