

Reviews.

Materialism: By C. W. RICHMOND, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of New Zealand. Wellington: Lyon and Blair.

This is an elaborate attempt to prove that the hypothesis of the Materialist is insufficient to account for Mind. "The first cause of the Materialist is matter in motion—nothing more—and I ask again is such a cause of things conceivably adequate to the production of the known effects?" Is this a fair statement of the question? What recent exponent of the Materialistic theory has spoken of a first cause, or of such cause as matter in motion merely? But the essayist qualifies almost to the extent of self-contradiction, and, noticing Professor Clifford's theory of Mind-stuff, says: "No theory which disperses sentiment and intellect amongst the atoms composing our bodily frame can account for that conscious unity which is the most intimate of our convictions. Mind as it exists in the atoms is supposed to be something less than human: that being so, the summation, or fusion of their immediate intellectual forces, or even the bringing of these forces to a focus, were any such process imaginable, do not give us the required effects in the production of human consciousness." There is a pretty little fallacy mixed up in this statement. If instead of the words "less than the human," we substitute "potentially containing the human," we have the atomic theory more accurately stated; and now it will be less difficult to arrive at the "conscious unity" by the evolutionary process. Mr. Richmond uses metaphysical terms which the materialist rejects. What is meant by "creative power," or, "at the beginning a cause adequate"? Referring to his own illustration, can he find the "cause adequate" of water, in oxygen and hydrogen, without the chemical synthesis or analysis? If the atoms potentially are endued with properties out of which mind may be evolved, we see no more difficulty in "conscience unity" than in the identity of a tree. But Materialism has been almost unmaterialised by the "brilliant induction" of Darwin. Experiment has not revealed atoms, or discovered their properties, but it is moving in that direction in trying to find out some more hidden property in the gases than any yet brought to the test. In the meantime the Materialist has taken up new ground, and even changed his name, in consequence of the light thrown on Nature by Evolution. Mr. Richmond glows with enthusiasm in his description of the Darwinian hypothesis, yet, strange to say, concentrates his attack on the well-worn "matter" of the Materialist, overlooking the legitimate product of Darwinism, the Monistic theory of the Universe, in which neither Matter nor Spirit has place. The oneness of the Universe, of Spinoza, involves a potency equal to every form, to all the phenomena, and what we term Thought is one of the presentations. It appears more difficult to conceive the evolution of the higher from lower forms of life, than the spontaneous generation of life from the "sentient atoms." Having apparently granted the former, Mr. Richmond logically has no need to stumble at the latter.

Natural Religion: By the author of *Ecce Homo*. London: Macmillan & Co., 1882. Second Edition.

The brilliant author of this the latest sensation in the religious world has undergone a rather marked development since he elicited the admiration of Mr Gladstone for *Ecce Homo*. Lord Shaftsbury's judgment was sounder than the great statesman's when he expressed, in rather strong terms, his opinion that that work was the most dangerous and "the vilest ever vomited out of the mouth of hell." He meant that the author, denied under a gloss of words, the godhead of Christ. Mr Gladstone thought differently, and he was wrong. In the work which is now exciting so much attention, the author gets rid of supernaturalism, and finds a Natural Religion and a Natural Christianity, corresponding in its nature to the worship of Art or Science, and analagous to what is called Culture. The word Religion, he thinks, is a better term than Culture, and expresses more fitly the Higher life—a life purely human and this-worldly. The author does not appear

to differ much from the views held by the Positivists, finding one of the highest objects of worship in Humanity. "We have remarked in short," he says, "that both the Old Testament and the New lose that appearance of obsolescence which ecclesiastical formalism has given them, and stand out as true sacred books and classics of mankind, so soon as in the former Nature is written for God, and in the latter Humanity for Christ." (Page 246). This is clear enough to dispel any haze that may have gathered round his definitions in other parts of the work. The author's idea is that the Hebrew conception of religion in the Old Testament underwent a continual development, and he deplors the fact that Christianity has, for several centuries, forgotten the lesson and, instead of looking forward, has been looking back. The faith having become stereotyped, the world is moving away from Christianity, when the latter should have kept pace with the world, and remained the teacher. The book is full of rich thought, and will make its impression on minds capable of receiving impressions.

Science and Religion: By MR JUSTICE HIGINBOTHAM. Dunedin: Joseph Braithwaite.

This attempt to reconcile Science and Religion is made by throwing overboard the dogmas of Christianity. A reconstruction of the Christian system is sought in the ethical teachings of Jesus, all creeds and confessions being rejected. "If," says the author, "we except the first articles in the earliest and the least exacting creed, the Apostles' creed, which is a superfluous repetition, we shall find scarcely anything in the creeds and standards, increasing as they multiply in the number and oppressiveness of their arbitrary dogmas, that is not an unauthorised addition to the primitive simple doctrines." The fall of Adam and "the doctrine of hereditary guilt are not so much as mentioned once by the founder of Christianity." The laity, who have become indifferent to the creeds and systems, are "the only instrument by which reform can be effected." The progress of Science has made the old beliefs about God and Religion inadequate to the intellectual wants of the age. Science and Religion would be united by placing the latter on a free basis without creeds, articles, and standards. The new religion is to be found in the "profound philosophy, and also in the sublimest life, of Jesus of Nazareth, the Light of the World." The lecturer fairly represents the intelligent lay mind in the Protestant Churches, and as the lecture was delivered under the auspices of a Presbyterian clergyman in an orthodox church, it may also represent the opinions of a small section of the clergy. That part of the Christian testimony with which Science is in collision, such as the Resurrection, is ignored, though it is as much the "primitive simple doctrine" as the maxims contained in the Sermon on the Mount. The orthodox clergy may well reply, 'You effect your reconciliation by rejecting all that the church deems vital in the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.' Mr Higinbotham would find some difficulty in his rejoinder. We have no doubt the lecture is calculated to widen the 'purpose' of the age. Men are more influenced by sentiment than logic.

Deacon Jones was happy, indeed, when he was told that his daughters, dear girls, had gone to the revival. Their mother didn't tell him that it was a revival of "Pinafore."—Transcript.

A witness who had been called to give evidence as to the defendant's character, testified that he had always moved in good society. "What do you mean by good society?" asked the Court. "Society in which it is fashionable to speak evil," promptly answered the witness.

As in walking it is your great care not to run your foot upon a nail, or to tread awry and strain your leg, so let it be in all the affairs of human life, not to hurt your mind or offend your judgment. And this rule, if carefully observed in all your deportment, will be a mighty security to you in all your undertakings.—Epictetus.