

thought would be so much prettier—Es wäre doch immer hübscher wenn man die Kinder von den Baumen schüttelte.

This volume contains the exposition of the fundamental theory of Humanity as the Great Being; a general view of the affective life, or the definite systematisation of the Positive System of Worship; a general view of the intellectual existence of man, or the definite systematisation of the Positive doctrine; a general view of man's active existence, or the definite systematisation of the Positive life; and a general view of the last phase of the transition—a philosophical estimate of the present in its relation to the future and the past. It ends with a final invocation of "the noble and tender-hearted lady, my patroness and exemplar," to whose sacred memory he offered what he calls justly "an exceptional dedication," at the commencement of the first volume. Nothing is so distasteful to us in Comte's writings as these sentimental ebullitions concerning the divine Clotilda. And we know nothing so suggestive of the organisation and machinery of Roman Catholicism as his systematisation of the Positive System of Worship; he has taken its scaffolding to build up Positivism in place of Christianity.

Essai de Psychologie: La Bête et l'Homme. Par le Dr. EDOUARD FOURNIÉ. Paris: Didier et C^{ie}. 1877.

This essay is intended to form the first part of a work which, when completed, is to have the ambitious title of "A Philosophy of the Sciences;" the second part of it being entitled "Science." Because the same word is often used in psychology by different authors in different senses, and thereby obscurities, confusion, and sterile criticism are occasioned, the author begins with a chapter in which he defines, with laborious care, and at considerable length, the meaning of the expressions which he makes use of in his psychological vocabulary. We set ourselves to study these elaborate definitions with an earnest desire to profit by them, but we must confess that we were sadly disappointed, for they are extremely vague, and do not seem to show so much understanding of his subject as the author's pretensions entitle us to look for. For these pretensions are by no means humble: throughout the book we find him discussing his conviction that he has cleared up obscurities and settled difficulties which have troubled philosophers ever since philosophy began. And the mis-

fortune is that when we try our best to understand the service which he claims to have done, we often fail to do so; words of learned sound and vague meaning doing duty for explanations of things. His idea of simplifying obscure facts is to slide confidently over them on vague and somewhat dogmatic assertions. We attempted honestly to read the book by beginning at the beginning, and going steadily on, but our attention wandered so frequently that the attempt was abandoned.

One of the author's dogmata which has surprised us is, that "animals do not understand"—that intelligence is exclusively human. The elephant, the dog, and the monkey entirely destitute of intelligence! The way in which he supports this opinion certainly seems to show that, whether such animals have understanding or not, he does not understand them, and warrants a grave doubt whether he understands the subject which he writes about. We should like him to explain by what faculty the Arctic fox, which sees comparatively little of man, and cannot therefore benefit by the collision of intelligence, achieves such a clever trick as the following:—When several of its companions have been trapped it gets cunning and will not come near the traps, and the hunter is then obliged to devise a new method to kill it. He suspends a loaded gun between two poles stuck in the snow, and attaches to the trigger a long string, one end of which he carries forward under the snow in a line with the gun, fastening the bait to its other end in such a position that when the fox seizes the bait and so fires the gun it is shot. When this fate has befallen a few foxes, the animal executes a clever turning movement, and attacks the enemy in the flank; for it digs a trench in the snow at right angles to the bait, lies down in it, and, seizing the bait, fires the gun, whereupon it trots off unharmed with its prize. If that clever trick does not show understanding, it is hard to say what understanding is.

Dr. Fournié is medical officer to the National Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and we have been not a little surprised to find that he thinks very little of the method of teaching the deaf and dumb to speak and to read speech by observation of the motions of the lips, and that he relegates it to a very subordinate position in the education of them. He declares that the basis of education should be to develop their intelligence by its natural instrument, which he considers to be gesture-language, and to have translated

into this language all the ideas conveyed by writing. The articulation of sounds may be cultivated, as a sort of crown of instruction in those who show an aptitude to that sort of exercise.

Théorie du Fatalisme (Essai de Philosophie Materialiste.) Par B. COMTE, Professeur de droit civil à l' Université de Jassy. 1877.

We welcome this essay, which comes to us from Roumania, where they are doubtless thinking now of other things than philosophy. In it the author attempts to prove that all the phenomena of the world, whether physical, moral or intellectual, are governed by fixed natural laws; that, consequently there is no such thing as so-called *free-will*, human or divine, and no such thing as *chance*; and that in this world, so far as we know, there is nothing but *matter*, which obeys fixed laws in all its infinite movements and transformations. In order to carry out his purpose, he proposes to pass in review successively—(1) Physical and physiological phenomena; (2) Social phenomena; and (3) Psychological phenomena. Certainly he does pass very rapidly over the first class of phenomena, devoting to them a short chapter which consists of exactly seventeen lines and one-third of a line, and containing 127 words! His reason for this brevity is, that the phenomena present no difficulties in the way of the theory which he upholds, and that he thinks it better to discuss at length the phenomena of the second and third orders, which do present difficulties. The second class, however, does not occupy him long, being disposed of in a chapter of ten short pages. The bulk of the essay is devoted to the consideration of psychological phenomena.

In this psychological part the author's aim is to explain through the play of mechanical forces, physical and physiological, all the faculties of the mind, not excepting the highest creative imagination and the consciousness of self. It will not excite surprise that he claims the right to use hypotheses in the accomplishment of his aim. Many of his readers will be apt to think that, with such license as he has taken in this respect, it is possible to explain anything, however difficult, and at the end of all to be no nearer an explanation than at the beginning. He seems to us to be suffering a little from Herbert Spencer on the brain, and to have carried the method of explanations that explain nothing to something like a *reductio ad absurdum*.