

Professor Mills is now seventy; and, though he is at times a very great sufferer from painful and incurable diseases, his general health is remarkable, as might be gathered from the above-mentioned items.

"A PUZZLING CASE."

To the Editor of The Open Court:

"A Puzzling Case" interested me very considerably. It very well shows how a person of scientific training and good moral judgment in all ordinary affairs of life, may be deceived by very simple means in case a shade of mystery be thrown about the matter. Abbott's answer ought to be deemed satisfactory,—at least it is so to me.

Fifty or sixty years ago, the "spirit-rapping" folly had its course. At the time, 1851-2-3, I was living in Chillicothe, the first capital of Ohio. Being invited to a "seance", I went, and saw through the case without difficulty. At the next "seance" I was invited to sit at the table in and as part of the mystic circle. About the third evening I began to do a little "rapping" quietly. Soon I became the chief one,—kept it up,—for months, and finally exposed the whole thing, at the close of what the "Medium" called the best "seance" that there had been in the city. I exposed and showed up the whole process before a large audience of citizens.

That ended the "cult" in that city. To me it was a very interesting bit of "psychological" history.

R. W. M.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

ORGANIZED DEMOCRACY. By *Albert Stickney*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1906. Pp. 268.

We all know that democracy is an ideal which can not easily be realized and we have here an attempt to overcome its shortcomings, but we doubt whether any reader will deem the conclusions of Mr. Stickney satisfactory.

The author says: "Democratic institutions are still in their infancy, are still almost in their rudimentary stage of development. Only during the last century can they be said to have been put to the test of actual experiment on any large scale. Their form with us to-day is almost the same as the earliest that was ever put in use. There has been slight change in the matter of form.

"Consequently, it is a virtual certainty that the political institutions of this American people—to-day—are susceptible of improvement. It can hardly be, that the first experiments in democracy were a final complete success."

The book contains chapters on "Machine Politics," "Organized Democracy," "The Cost of Machine Politics," "The Necessity of Reorganization," and concludes with "General Considerations."

We agree with the author when he says (p. 266) that "we must revise our ideas of democratic government from the very foundation"; but we fear that his ideas of reorganization have not yet been sufficiently worked out into clearness. He says: "The people's judgment must be the product of the people's united common thought. Such thought can be had only in a deliberative, popular assembly.... Vesting the supreme control of public affairs, subject to necessary constitutional restrictions, in a carefully selected body of able, experienced men, is evidently the only practicable means of securing wise control."

HARVARD PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES. Edited by *Hugo Münsterberg*. Vol. II. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1906. Pp. 644. Price, \$4.00.

Emerson Hall, the new and completely equipped home for the department of philosophy at Harvard University, was opened December 27, 1905, and this second volume of the *Harvard Psychological Studies* has an introduction devoted to the subject of experimental psychology and its history in Harvard including especially the history and description of Emerson Hall.

The studies proper are representative essays by specialists and discuss stereoscopic vision and dizziness, feelings, the feeling-value of unmusical tone intervals and the esthetics of repeated space forms, attention, association, dissociation, apperception, time-estimation, number-estimation, motor impulses and in animal psychology, the relations of neural processes, reactions of the frog and cray fish and the mental life of the domestic pigeon.

POEMS. By *Arthur Pfungst*. Translated from the third German edition by *E. F. L. Gauss*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1906.

Arthur Pfungst is a modern German poet who has a strong tendency toward the new interpretation of life such as appears in the New Thought movement and in kindred aspirations. He is not an author by profession, but only in his leisure hours devotes himself to literature, the study of oriental languages, and to writing. He has written an epic under the title "Lakarsis" and has published versified translations of the Dhammapada and other religious poetry of the Orient. A little volume of his poems which were reviewed some time ago in *The Open Court* has now been presented to the English reading public in an English translation made by E. F. L. Gauss, First Assistant Librarian of the Chicago Public Library, and it has been prefaced by T. W. Rhys Davids, formerly secretary of the Asiatic Society, and at present editor of the Pali Text Society, a Pali scholar of no mean repute and perhaps second to no one unless to the venerable old professor Fausböll of Copenhagen. Professor Rhys Davids speaks of the difficulty of translating poems in the exact meter of the original where the thought is so prominent as in the present case. Mr. Rhys Davids says: "So, gentle reader, if you come here and there across a line which seems odd, un-English, broken, or at fault, think not of a translator's error, but rather of a gallant effort to transport to our unfriendly clime a foreign rhythm."

The volume opens in the "Introductory" with these lines:

"In this life's incessant fray,
Where the floods and storms still darken,
Dare but once thy foot to stay
To the inner voice to hearken.

"Let but once the hours pass
With their fleeting pain and glee;
Do not look upon the mass,
Dare with thee alone to be."

No doubt criticisms can and will be made, but we must bear in mind that some of the idiomatic sayings which are intended for a definite thought are all but untranslatable, and we may expect that some of the little mistakes which slipped in unawares may be remedied in a second edition. Transla-

tions in verse are rarely, if ever, successful at the first attempt, and this is especially true in the case of philosophical poetry.

KANT, SCHILLER, GOETHE. *Gesammelte Aufsätze von Karl Vorländer*. Leipzig: Dürr. 1907. Pp. xiv. 294.

Karl Vorländer has made a special study of the relation of the two greatest German poets, Schiller and Goethe, to Kant, the classical personality of their age. In the book before us he discusses first Schiller's relation to Kant, with special reference to the ethical rigorism and the relation of the moral idea to the idea of the sublime. Next he treats Goethe's relation to Kant, especially his philosophical development, first before his friendship with Schiller and then Kant's influence on Goethe through Schiller. Goethe took up Kant after Schiller's death, namely in the year 1817, and remained under his influence until the end of his life in 1831. The appendix is devoted to Kant's relation to Schiller and Goethe, and also to Goethe's philosophical library now preserved in the Goethe house. The book is an important contribution to our knowledge of the philosophical development of both Goethe and Schiller.

THE HISTORICAL BASES OF RELIGIONS, PRIMITIVE, BABYLONIAN AND JEWISH.

By *Hiram Chellis Brown*. Boston: Turner, 1906. Pp. 319.

The author has condensed in this small volume the main results of Old Testament criticism and Babylonian excavations, discussing therein the history of the Israelitish origin of our religion. In reply to the traditional conception he says in the preface: "Destructive as the views herewith presented may appear to be, I believe them to be warranted by the clearer vision, the broader outlook gained by the higher, firmer ground that modern research has placed beneath our feet." The book discusses in the first part the origin and development of the religious sense. Our author's definition of religion is rather limited and seems to weaken the philosophical background of his historical expositions. He says: "The function of religion is to put man into communication with these supernatural intelligences." In the second part Mr. Brown offers a good summary of the Assyrio-Babylonian religion. The third part contains a discussion of Jewish religion, and this is by far the most extensive portion of the book. In an appendix the Code of Hammurabi has been reprinted. The book will be welcome to many who look for a popular presentation of this important subject in the history of religions, and it is a pity that it does not contain an index which would greatly enhance its value.

Beginning with this number *The Open Court* will publish from time to time a short series of mathematical puzzles and inconsistencies under the caption "In the Mazes of Mathematics," which will be contributed by Prof. William F. White, of the State Normal School, New Paltz, New York. This series will discuss the three famous problems of antiquity, a question of fourth dimension by analogy and several real or apparent absurdities in arithmetic, algebra and geometry.