BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.


The author makes no special claim of originality in furnishing a new textbook on psychology. Whatever differences may mark it as distinct from others of its class, Professor Pillsbury has set forth in the first paragraph of his preface as follows:

"The aim of this volume is to present clearly the accepted facts of psychology. Throughout, emphasis has been placed upon fact rather than theory. Where theories conflict, the better one has been chosen, the others merely neglected. This may seem dogmatic in places, but in a text dogmatism is preferable to confusion. The point of view is on the whole functional: more attention is given to what mind does than to what it is. With this goes an emphasis upon the outward manifestations of consciousness and upon the behavior of others to the subordination of the individual consciousness. Nevertheless, use is made of the results of structural psychology wherever they throw light upon function or are interesting for themselves. The position, it is hoped, combines the advantages of the rival schools."


Without chapter headings, table of contents or index, without even a secondary title or preface, it is difficult to gain an adequate idea of the purpose and scope of this book without a careful and consecutive perusal which we cannot give it at this time. On a cursory examination it seems to attempt an historical investigation of the subject. The author's conclusions are summed up on the last page as follows:

"The doctrine of creation from nothing is not a revelation, and has been taken for such only by a misinterpretation consequent upon faulty translation of the opening passage of Genesis.... Those who are not trinitarians may rest with the conviction that the proof of either the creation or the emanation of matter (and of soul too) is beyond our reach, and that we need not try to decide between which is not of importance for our salvation, or for any other purpose, and between which, in fact, there is at bottom no great difference."


This book emphasizes the practical value of Christ's teachings as applied to the various social and industrial problems which confront us to-day. While attempting in some degree to present remedies for current evils, the author does so in the spirit just indicated instead of following the teachings of economic or philosophical schools. The subjects discussed as indicated in the titles of the chapters are as follows: Responsibility of Citizenship; Was Christ an Anarchist?; Was Christ a Socialist?; The Kingdom of God; Non-Resistance; Marriage and Divorce; Crime and the Criminal; Wealth; Labor; Sunday Observance; International Controversies; Social Reconstruction. The
author belongs to a law firm in Buffalo and writes for the laity from the layman’s point of view.


This “contribution towards the science of religion” distinguishes man from brute creation by defining him as “creative energy.” The author believes in the fundamental truth of the laws of conservation of energy and of the survival of the fittest and is convinced there is a personality behind the evolutionary creation of the universe as surely as there must be a personality behind the invention of the telephone. He does not believe that man is a creature created by God, but is himself a creator begotten of God his Father. He agrees with Haeckel, that “Man’s physique, its life and faculties, are fundamentally the same as that of the ape, from whom man derived them,” but does not think it follows that “therefore mechanical evolution is established as the sole factor in cosmic history.”

Professor Royce has published a collection of essays on a variety of subjects which he has collected under the name “William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life” (New York, Macmillan, 1911; price $1.50). He says concerning them in the preface:

“The final discourse on ‘Immortality’ approaches the familiar problem in a fashion different from that chosen for the purposes of my Ingersoll lecture on the same topic (published by the Riverside Press in 1900), and thus forms a sort of supplement to the Ingersoll lecture. The present way of dealing with the concept of immortality also gives me the opportunity to sketch anew some of my general idealistic theses, and incidentally to repudiate the frequent and groundless assertion that my own form of idealism regards time as ‘unreal,’ or the absolute as ‘timeless,’ or the universe as a ‘block’….I have ventured to make the honored name of William James part of my title. The first essay is a tribute to his memory. The others show, I hope, that, if I can oppose his views, I owe to him, as teacher, and as dear friend, an unfailing inspiration, far greater than he ever knew, or than I can well put into words.”

Dr. C. D. Spivak and Sol. Bloomgarden have published in a handy volume of 340 pages a Yiddish Dictionary which explains Hebrew words in Yiddish. The original title reads:

אֲדָוִית וּעָבָרֵבָו

The introduction (pp. V-XI) is followed by some indispensable comments on the Hebrew words which are used in Yiddish (p. VII ff.), and by other explanations on Yiddish grammar. The book is published by the Yehoash Society, 85 Canal Street, New York City. For people who take an interest in Yiddish we will state that any German who is familiar with the Hebrew alphabet can puzzle out the meaning of Yiddish, for Yiddish is actually German, as spoken by the Polish and Russian Jews. It is interesting to notice how certain odd pronunciations have here become fixed, and so we can see that even dialects have their own rights to determine what is correct. The spelling appears at first sight ponderous to a German but one grows quickly accustomed to its queer formations.