

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

THE SOUL AND MATTER.¹

THOUGH philosophers have declared these many years that materialism is a dead issue, that world-view is probably stronger now than ever before. Not that more philosophers are confessed materialists—they are not; but that the theses of materialism, however formally disowned, are practically accepted today by a greater number of both professional and non-professional thinkers. For the social democracy of our era sweeps by its intrinsic logic toward a materialistic evaluation of human interests; and the thinker, steeped in that democracy, wishes not to re-direct, but to follow and fortify the tendency of his time.

How then does democracy lead to materialism? Through its adoration of publicity, of what commends itself to the group. One who regards society as the source of political and moral right, will like to find in social confirmation the test of truth. Now the one great phenomenon which is socially confirmed is the external world, *i.e.*, the material world. Our knowledge of that world is codified in science. Democracy, as soon as it is a little educated, worships science, the body of knowledge verifiable by all. The scientist demonstrates his results on the laboratory table, or the screen of the lecture hall; they are open to the inspection of every man, and their authority lies in the consensus of witnesses. The essence of a proper scientific experiment is that it can be repeated by another experimenter. Scientific truth is not an insight, but an exhibit open to the public. Science

¹ Read as the President's Address at the annual meeting of the American Philosophical Association held at Vassar College, December 28-30, 1921.