

**THE MATERIALISM OF THE  
PRESENT DAY,  
A CRITIQUE OF DR.  
BÜCHNER'S SYSTEM**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649154197

The materialism of the present day, a critique of Dr. Büchner's system by Paul Janet

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**PAUL JANET**

**THE MATERIALISM OF THE  
PRESENT DAY,  
A CRITIQUE OF DR.  
BÜCHNER'S SYSTEM**



---

*The following Works, translated from the French,  
will be published in this Library :—*

H. TAINÉ.—English Positivism. Study on J.  
Stuart Mill.

H. TAINÉ. — English Idealism. Study on  
Thomas Carlyle.

CH. DE REMUSAT.—Religious Philosophy.

AUG. LAUGEL.—The Problems of Nature.

---

*Also Now Ready.*

H. TAINÉ.—The Philosophy of Art.

---

PK  
535  
Em

# THE MATERIALISM

OF

## THE PRESENT DAY.

A CRITIQUE OF DR. BÜCHNER'S SYSTEM.

BY

PAUL JANET.

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE, PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
AT THE PARIS FACULTÉ DES LETTRES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH  
BY GUSTAVE MASSON, B.A.  
UNIV. GALLIC, ASSISTANT-MASTER OF HARROW SCHOOL.

LONDON:

H. BAILLIÈRE, 219, REGENT STREET.

NEW YORK:

MELBOURNE:

BAILLIÈRE BROTHERS, BROADWAY. | P. F. BAILLIÈRE, COLLINS ST., EAST.

PARIS: GERMER BAILLIÈRE, RUE DE L'ÉCOLE DE MÉDECINE.

MADRID: BAILLY BAILLIÈRE, PLAZA DEL PRINCIPE D'ALFONSO.

1866.

The right of Translation is reserved.

## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

---

Since the time when the late M. Royer-Collard dealt in France the first blow at the philosophy of the Condillac School, the Sorbonne has never lacked spirited and eloquent advocates to maintain the true principles of metaphysical science against the inroads of Sensationalism and Materialism. M. Victor Cousin, M. Damiron, M. Jouffroy may be named amongst the most distinguished; the hand of death has recently struck down M. Ad. Garnier and M. Saisset; but their places are already filled, and the standard of sound teaching is still borne aloft, despite the transient favour which the followers of Hegel and of Auguste Comte enjoy at the present time.

It is impossible to deny that doctrines considered as finally exploded are once more reappearing, favoured

by the extraordinary progress accomplished in the various branches of Natural Philosophy during the last half-century. But the very circumstances amidst which we are placed have brought forward fresh champions of the truth, and the following pages, on this account, cannot but prove interesting to our English readers.

The author, M. P. Janet, Member of the French Institute (*Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques*), and Professor of Philosophy at the Paris *Faculté des Lettres*, is well known on the other side of the Channel by various works on ethical and metaphysical science. His admirable volume *La Famille*, published in 1857, brought him at once into reputation; and, since that time, he has never ceased, by his pen, or in the lecture-room, protesting against the errors of the modern materialist school.

It is obvious that the questions discussed in the present critique are of universal importance; they appeal to serious students everywhere, and the refutation which M. Janet gives us of M. Darwin's theory on the Origin of Species will, no doubt, be particularly noticed.

The utmost care has been taken to render this



translation as accurate as possible, and I have ventured to add, here and there, a few supplemental notes, exclusively of a biographical character.

GUSTAVE MASSON.

Harrow-on-the-Hill.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

---

The following volume is the reprint of two articles which appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* during the months of August and December, 1863 ; articles to which I have made long and important additions. Under its present form, I think I may venture to give this work as a tolerably complete critique of Dr. Büchner's *Matter and Force*, a kind of hand-book of materialism, which has met with great success in Germany, and which, recently translated, seems to have also been rather popular amongst us. Materialism, coming back to us from Germany, is certainly one of the most singular phenomena of the times. That great country has been hitherto the favoured land of mysticism and of idealism ; its acquaintance with atheism had taken place only at the supper-parties of Frederick II, the majority of whose guests were French. The Germans now send back to us that coarse system of philosophy which, a century ago, we were diffusing throughout Europe. They are weary