

CURRENT POINTS AT ISSUE.

MENTAL EVOLUTION.

MR. ROMANES is right when he says in his latest work that the evolution of mind "is perhaps the most interesting problem that has ever been submitted to the human race," and Mr. Stout is equally correct in stating that it is a "most difficult as well as interesting problem, and its difficulty, so far as he has yet dealt with it, has, in his opinion, proved too great to be surmounted even by the courage and ability of Mr. Romanes." This, from a believer in mental evolution, means much, but we do not see how he could have said otherwise. There is a large collection of interesting though unverified anecdotes, but they are in a setting of unsound philosophy, incorrect psychology, and limping logic. Both the *London Quarterly Review* and *Mind* agree in condemning the manner in which his work is done. We are told that "even when the child becomes capable of expressing its ideas by gestures and articulate sounds, it does not on that account rise above the intellectual level of those animals which possess a rudimentary language, because the signs are at outset only signs of receipts, analagous to animal gesture." This is pure imagination, for surely a child, even at so early an age, may have a concept, and the gesture be an expression of that and not of a receipt. Besides, as the friendly Mr. Stout points out, he does not explain the origin of concepts at all, but assumes a full-blown concept to explain the origin of concepts.

We undoubtedly possess a small number of mental faculties similar in kind to those possessed by the lower animals, but this goes a very short way towards proving that the mind of man can be evolved from these brute faculties, or towards showing that our mind does not differ in kind from theirs. The weakest part of Darwin's *Descent of Man*