

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE, 1913-1914.¹

LOUIS COUTURAT is dead. During the first days of the war, when the bustle and commotion on all high-ways was at its height, the carriage in which he was traveling was run down by a heavy automobile, rushing at top speed. He was killed at once. The public at large can have no idea of the extent of this loss. But those who are engaged in the study of logic, logistics, mathematical philosophy, and the philosophy of language, know that in these fields he held first rank in France. His first-hand information on some questions was unique; but it was surpassed by the power and quality of his mind. He had in him none of that surface originality which displays itself in unexpected formulas and striking phrases to pique the attention. But he possessed the rarest kind of originality: he illuminated every study that he undertook. With a natural gift for deductive reasoning he united that absolute moral rectitude which never accepts a dubious compromise, even in the most abstract thought, and that tranquil confidence in truth which knows that "reason will always be right in the end." And this is why all his works impart the charm of fine and sincere clearness,—a quality which hostile critics of the French mind often regard as the opposite of profundity, but which, on the contrary, is inseparable from true profundity, such as is shown by solid, conscientious, precise intellects, who do not take delight in accessory complications but always go directly to what is *essential*.

To begin with, as a brilliant student in the literary section at

¹ Translated from the French by Dr. Alma R. Thorne.