

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW

PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE, 1937-1938

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DURING the period from July 1937, to July 1938, and since André Lalande's authoritative report in the *Philosophical Review* a year ago, French philosophy has shown a rich and varied activity, though of a type somewhat different from that which characterized it in other years. The Universal Exposition at Paris in 1937 therefore the occasion for numerous congresses, and philosophy therefore had more than the usual number of outward manifestations in the form of official ceremonies, meetings, and public discussions, which were lacking neither in brilliance nor in usefulness.

In particular, the Ninth International Congress of Philosophy, admirably organized by the president, Émile Bréhier of the Sorbonne, and by the secretary, Bayer of the University of Caen, was extremely successful. Dedicated especially to Descartes (1937 marked the third centenary of the publication of the *Discourse on Method*), the Congress brought together nearly fifteen hundred delegates from forty countries, and the papers, published just before the opening of the Congress in twelve octavo volumes,¹ form a unique document on the state of contemporary thought. They are grouped around six subjects: (1) the existing state of Cartesian studies; (2) the unity of science: methodology and scientific methods; (3) logic and mathematics; (4) causality and determinism in physics and biology; (5) reflexive analysis and transcendence; (6) value: norms and reality. It would doubtless be false to pretend that there is a real unity in these volumes, either in doctrine or in tendency or point of view. However, in an interesting and suggestive study dedicated to the Congress,²

¹ Paris, Hermann et Cie.

² Bruges, Imprimerie S^{te} Catherine, 1938.