

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE, 1916.¹

I.

PHILOSOPHICAL activity in France has not been completely checked by the war. Our principal reviews appear as in the past;² the teaching of philosophy, in spite of losses, has perhaps gained from the present catastrophe a new lease of seriousness and force. But books, properly so-called, become more and more rare.

Even some of those which did appear last year were written in happier times and delayed in their publication by material difficulties or by the cautiousness of editors who believe—perhaps wrongly—that at present the public will read only works on the affairs of the present time. This opinion, or prejudice, has produced strange results: I know of a little volume on the history of the sciences, containing nothing war-like, which has yet just appeared under a martial title. Conversely, if one is looking at the present time for traces of French philosophical activity, one finds them everywhere in the innumerable publications on the war, from magazine articles to books—which are often themselves collections of articles.

In the first place, the war has produced a moral effect worthy of a philosopher's attention. It has been a striking demonstration of the fact that the practice of morals unites men, while the

¹ Translated from the French by Dr. Katherine E. Gilbert.

² The *Revue de Métaphysique* even published this year a supplementary number devoted to Malebranche, in honor of his second centennial.