

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

PHILOSOPHY IN FRANCE (1905).

I.

PRAGMATISM, which has been making such a stir in English-speaking countries, has presented a somewhat different aspect in France. It was favored by the earlier works of the 'neo-critical' school, of which Charles Renouvier was the head. This school has always ardently defended the doctrine of free will. It is with this school that we must connect the work of M. Boutroux on *La contingence des lois de la nature* and *L'idée de loi naturelle dans la science et dans la philosophie*; and M. Boutroux's ideas have, in their turn, exercised a great influence on the epistemological conceptions of M. Poincaré, his near relative and friend. Something of the same indeterminism is found in M. Bergson's doctrine; and when these writers are considered as a whole, it is evident that they belong to the same movement of thought,—the reaction against Hegelianism, and the cult of science which has dominated in France since the decline of the metaphysics of the school of Cousin. And it is known that the theories of MM. Le Roy and Wilbois, in their turn, are related not only to the scientific doctrines of M. Duhem, but also to M. Bergson's philosophy, although the latter has distinctly refused to subscribe to them in their entirety.

By a very natural affinity of ideas, which we now understand better after a lapse of years, it was also the neo-critical school which introduced Mr. William James to French philosophy. His reputation in France dates from his studies on 'Effort,' published in *La Critique Philosophique*, edited by M. Charles Renouvier. It has sometimes been said that M. Bergson received his primary