

the Abbé Lemire, deputy from the department of Nord. The idea of convening in free and open assembly the rank and file of the Catholic clergy seemed a dangerous one, and likely to lead to the emancipation of the priests from the necessary and natural tutelage of their bishops. The clergymen who attended the congress, seven or eight hundred in number, disclaimed any such design, however, and discussed in their meetings only affairs which touched their particular mission, and did not wish to be understood as desirous of ventilating questions of theological instruction or ecclesiastical discipline.

To outsiders the cardinal point of interest involved is whether this first Congress is to have a successor, or, in other words, whether a periodical congress of the Catholic clergy will be permitted in the future, and become an established institution. If it is, then a new force and a new organ in church matters will have been created. But every organisation of this kind expresses itself in definite functions and is bound to grow and expand; and while it is impossible to foresee exactly what its ultimate shape will be, it may be safely predicted that there will in such an event be many significant changes in the church affairs of France.

PARIS, September.

LUCIEN ARRÉAT.

FRENCH BOOKS ON PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE.

The French publishing house of Félix Alcan announces a series of expository works on the systems of the *Great Philosophers*. It will constitute in its totality a voluminous history of philosophy, with emphasis placed upon dominating ideas and theories conceived as centers of intellectual and spiritual radiation. The editor of the series is Dr. Clodius Piat, Professor in the École des Carmes. M. Piat is an abbé, and this fact will doubtless lend color both to the character of the series and to the selections made for treatment. As for his own choice, there is nothing of this apparent, he being the author of the initial volume, on *Socrates*, a philosopher whose doctrines he has expounded in a simple and intelligent manner. (Pages, 270. Price, 5 francs.) The second volume of the series has also appeared and is by Théodore Ruyssen, sometime Fellow in the École Normale and Professor of Philosophy in the Lyceum of Limoges. M. Ruyssen's book is the work of a scholar; and we have been unable on hasty examination to discern anything approaching to a theological bias in his treatment of the great German philosopher *Kant*. (Pages, 391. Price, 5 francs.) Two other volumes are announced for immediate publication, one on *Avicenna* by Baron Carra de Vaux, Professor of Arabic in the Catholic Institute of Paris, and another on *Malebranche* by M. Henri Joly, editor of the series of *Biographies of Saints* which has been noticed in *The Open Court*. The remaining thinkers to whom volumes are to be devoted in this series are Saint Anselm, Saint Augustine, Descartes, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Saint Bonaventura, Maine de Biran, Pascal, Spinoza, and Duns Scotus. It is interesting to note the increased interest which is being taken in educated Catholic circles in the study of the history of philosophy, and it is to be hoped that the above-mentioned books will find numerous readers among their followers.

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The same publishing house issues another *Historical Collection of the Great Philosophers* which is of a different stamp. It contains the excellent translations of Aristotle and Plato, by the late M. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire and Victor Cousin; critical studies of Socrates and Plato, by M. Alfred Fouillée and M. Paul Janet; and studies in Greek science, by M. Paul Tannery. The latest volume to appear

in this series is one by M. G. Milhaud, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Montpellier, entitled *Les philosophes-géomètres de la Grèce*. M. Milhaud, whose studies in logic and the history of science have gained for him a favorable reputation, considers here the relations between Greek philosophy and mathematics, from Thales to Plato, and defines the general bent which mathematical studies impress upon philosophical thought. The work is divided into two parts, the first of which is devoted to the predecessors of Plato, and the second, which takes up the bulk of the work, to Plato himself. For students of the philosophy of science the work will be attractive reading.

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In his *Formes littéraires de la pensée Grecque*, M. H. Ouvré, Professor of Literature in the University of Bordeaux, has attempted the herculean task of explaining the character and import of one of the most significant periods of literary history by an analysis of its psychological, æsthetic, and social causes. He has written, not a history of Greek literature, but a philosophic treatise showing both the real and the logical concatenation of the various forms in which the literary thought of the Greeks has expressed itself. He discusses the subject under ten headings beginning with an investigation of the origins of Greek thought, and pursuing his researches through narrative and lyric poetry, prose, philosophy, the drama, history, written discourse, etc. He finds in literature the crowning work of man and believes that the achievement *par excellence*, even of our own epoch, is not science and science alone, but by the side of science and perhaps above science, poetry. His book is an erudite work, and persons who enjoy this species of investigation will find it of interest. (Paris: F. Alcan. Pages, vxi, 573. Price, 10 francs.)

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Something similar in aim is the work of M. Georges Renard, entitled *La méthode scientifique de l'histoire littéraire*, the fruit of twenty-five years of study and instruction in the University of Lausanne. The author seeks here to determine precisely what the history of literature means, and also what portion of it can be subjected to scientific method. He believes it possible to rise from particular to general truths in this domain by a consideration of the myriad relations which connect literature with its environment, as well as to formulate the law which governs variations of taste. His illustrations are drawn mainly from the evolution of French literature, but afford suggestive material for the study of literary history generally. (Paris: F. Alcan. Pages, 500. Price, 10 francs.)

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THE INGERSOLL, LECTURESHIP ON IMMORTALITY.

The Ingersoll Lectureship on the Immortality of Man was established at Harvard University in 1893 by a bequest of the late Caroline Haskell Ingersoll. Every year, some person, clergyman or layman, irrespective of denomination or profession, is appointed to give the expression of his personal views regarding this deepest spiritual craving of humanity. Prof. William James, the brilliant Harvard psychologist, was made lecturer for 1898, and his lecture now lies before us as a book bearing the title *Human Immortality: Two Supposed Objections to the Doctrine*. (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Pages, 70. Price, cloth, \$1.00.)

Professor James has treated the problem in his usual apt and delightful man-