

not by the historical student or the well-informed journalist, the volume before us is worthy of high praise. The author knows his subject thoroughly, is indeed too familiar with it to interpret it always to the best advantage to those who do not know it at all. The title of his book implies the faith which pervades it. He believes in the Republic, believes in progress, and believes that the events of the last quarter of a century have been a real progress toward a stable republic in France. He does not write as a mere recorder of events; he perceives their significance; each event is part in a great drama unfolded on the French stage between the years 1870 and 1894; his history is more than annals—it is the interpretation of a great historic movement. At the same time it is rather philosophical than dramatic; the author perceives, clearly and correctly, the development of moral ideas in the evolution of the French Republic; he sees the enemies against which this development has had to contend—reactionary forces on the one hand, and unrestrained and ill-regulated radicalism on the other; clericalism on the one hand, and irreligion and infidelity on the other—and he maintains a judicial and non-partisan attitude in describing the agitation through which France has passed toward peace and stability. But he is neither a portrait painter nor a scenic painter, and his work lacks that peculiar vitality which lends such a charm to the writings of Froude; at the same time it is also free from the errors into which the impressionist school of history is always liable to be led. His best chapters appear to us to be those which are of avowed purpose philosophical rather than historical—the last five, on “The Republic and the Church,” “Education,” “The Nation Armed,” “Ideas and Habits,” and “The Social Question.”

The Evolution of France¹

The defect of this volume for American readers lies in the fact that, written for French readers by a Frenchman, it assumes a knowledge of current history which only those Americans possess who have kept themselves remarkably well informed on current topics. To write so as not to weary the intelligent by repeating in dry-as-dust forms what they already know, and yet so as to inform the uninformed, and make the story intelligent to those who know little or nothing of the subject treated, requires very rare literary skill; the problem has been too great for our author. Barring this defect, which will be felt by the general reader, but perhaps

¹ *The Evolution of France under the Third Republic.* By Baron Pierre de Coubertin. Translated from the French by Isabel F. Hapgood. (T. Y. Crowell & Co., New York. \$3.)