

67.  
J. M. Guyau.

exposition enriched by a vein of genuine poetry : this was Jean Marie Guyau (1854-88). Like Fouillée, but some years before him, he began his studies in contemporary ethics with a criticism of the English school (1879). His first constructive effort which followed is characteristically an æsthetical treatise, with which we have already become acquainted in the last chapter, which dealt with the problem of the Beautiful.<sup>1</sup> He there treats of art from the ethical and social point of view. This treatise, which appeared in 1884, was immediately followed by a treatise on Ethics (1885), and then by one on the Philosophy of Religion (1887).<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the critical position he took up to the Ethics of Naturalism as developed in this country, Guyau was much influenced by the writings of this school. He has notably recognised the great difficulties which beset all naturalistic ethics—viz., that they fail to explain the facts of obligation and sanction, of 'the Ought' as distinguished from that which is. Similarly he recognises in all religious philosophy the difficulty of explaining or justifying the existence of a definite religion, with creed and dogmas, as the outcome of the religious temper or spirit. His method of meeting these difficulties, of solving the antinomies and dilemmas, the dualisms and paradoxes, is a much shorter one than that of Alfred Fouillée. It consists in eliminating them; he does not want to destroy morality or faith; he wishes to

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 113 *sqq.*

<sup>2</sup> The ethical works of Guyau are : 'La Morale d'Épicure et ses Rapports avec les Doctrines Contemporaines' (1878); 'La Morale Anglaise Contemporaine' (1879);

'Esquisse d'une Morale sans obligation ni sanction' (1885); 'L'Irréligion de l'avenir' (1887). All these works have appeared in many editions.