

of the mysterious cat with keen interest. The silhouette designs by Mr. Hopkins are quite ingenious, and elucidate the text very happily.

The Appletons have published in good library form M. Henri Van Laun's new work on the French Revolutionary Epoch,\* in two volumes. Mr. Van Laun is a story-teller rather than a historian. He is intelligent and industrious, and generally accurate in his statements and information. His book presents a very agreeable, though one-sided picture of French affairs generally from the early times of the first Revolution down to the episode at Sedan and the downfall of the Second Empire. In his treatment of subjects which come properly before his notice, and which are necessary to the continuity of his narrative, M. Van Laun exhibits the utmost desire to be impartial and fair. In most cases he is successful, though in some notable instances he has allowed his feelings to outweigh his better judgment and some of the facts of history are strangely perverted to suit the harmony of the author's views. French politics, however, have many sides, and as party feeling always runs high in France, and extreme men are the rule rather than the exception, M. Van Laun may justify his position—on the score—perhaps, of convenience, or the exigency of the party to which he owes allegiance. M. Van Laun has not gone very fully into details. He has rather aimed at giving a somewhat rapid glance at the social character of the French people, their moral and religious life, the general aspects of the country, its political, military, and scientific career, and the mass of material which makes up the history of France during the past hundred years. In his estimates of men and in his study

of the revolutionary epoch, the author presents a picture of unequal merit. He is happy in the concentration of his material, but he appears to fail altogether in the formation of those brilliant and picturesque bits of colouring which so delight the admirers of Ma-caulay and Froude and the historian of the Crimea. His work is extremely useful, however, and many will like to read the latest utterances of a skilful writer on a subject which is always interesting. M. Van Laun acknowledges his indebtedness to Carlyle and M. Taine, and Lavallée, and Lock, and de Goncourt, and Michelet, and Quinet, and some other authors of reputation for assistance in his summaries of the events he describes. M. Taine's fine and spirited *Ancien Régime* has been of much value to M. Van Laun, his introduction and a portion of the first chapter being mainly a summary from that able work. Other quotations, almost equal in length, are made from the same author, all of which are gracefully accredited to the proper source. The chapters which treat of comparatively recent events, for the work is carried forward to the year 1870, give to the book its chief interest and value, and it will be much prized on that account. The author deals rather spiritedly with living issues, and the story of the Franco-Prussian War is very ably told. As a specimen of the historian's style, which is simple and devoid of all rhetorical flourish, we give here his account of the events in Paris which followed the reception of the news announcing Napoleon the Third's defeat at Sedan :—

‘In the evening the news of the disaster of Sedan arrived in Paris; large crowds went to the Louvre, the residence of General Trochu, and to the Legislature, and loudly demanded the deposition of the Emperor. Towards midnight an official proclamation was published, announcing the capitulation of Sedan, and the captivity of Napoleon III., whilst stating at

\* *The French Revolutionary Epoch.* Being a History of France from the Beginning of the First French Revolution to the end of the Second Empire, in two volumes. By HENRI VAN LAUN. New York: D. Appleton & Co. Toronto: Hart & Hawkinson.