



The Contingency of the Laws of Nature (Paperback)

By Emile Boutroux

Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, United States, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. This volume, which was originally presented to the Sorbonne as a dissertation (1874), revived in 1895 and now translated, is a brilliant presentation of some ideas now long current. M. Boutroux treats the problem of contingency with that delightful dialectic of which the French are masters. The fundamental thesis of the book is that phenomena are not subject to the laws of nature. The laws express only the relations that are due to their previously realized nature (p. 155). The contingency of the laws of nature is indicated, among other things, by the mutability of species and the impossibility of accounting for living and conscious beings by the operation of physical and physiological laws. The positive result which M. Boutroux reaches is the fact of human freedom. He considers that the Beings of nature have a further task than merely to continue in existence. They must realize an ideal. In order to realize this ideal, which is highly developed in man, we find him endowed with free will, which is the power to choose between good and evil. The...

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