German Schools of History

MACAULAY once lamented that there were no German historians in his time worthy of the name; and now M. Darmesteter tells us that they are ahead of other nations by twenty years. A perplexed person might read Professor Wegele's '*Deutsche Historiographie*'¹ without being quite sure which is right. Nine-tenths of his volume are devoted to the brave men who lived before Agamemnon, and the chapter on the rise of historical science, the only one which is meant for mankind, begins at page 975, and is the last. Before this century the Germans had scarcely reached the common level even in the storage of erudition. Their provincial histories could not be compared with those of Burgundy, of Brittany, or of Languedoc; they had nothing equal to the *Annals* of Bologna or of Milan, to Machi's '*Life of Saint Dominic*,' or even to Secousse's '*Charles of Navarre*.' History was subordinate to other things, to divinity, philosophy, and law; and the story worth telling would be the process of emancipation by which the servant of many masters rose to be a master over them, and having become a law to itself imposed it on others. The beginning was made by Niebuhr, and none of those who followed and strengthened the powerful impulse which he gave rival the best of their countrymen in perspicuity and grace.

When Germans assert that their real supremacy rests with their historians, they mean it in the sense of Bentley and Colebrooke, not of Machiavelli and Saint-Simon, in the sense in which the bishop of Durham and Sir Henry Maine take the lead in England, the sense in which M. Fustel de Coulange calls history the most arduous of the sciences. A famous scholar, enumerating the models of historical excellence, named Humboldt, Savigny, Grimm, and Ritter, not one of whom had ever written history proper, in the common, classical, literary use of the term.

The better part of the ground has been occupied already by those who have celebrated German achievement in other branches of literature. Neander, Boeckh, Baur, Schwegler, Lassen have

¹ *Geschichte der deutschen Historiographie*. Von Dr. Franz X. von Wegele. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1885.

their record elsewhere. Excepting Niebuhr and Ranke, Professor Wegele has had to deprive himself of his best materials. The division of labour removes almost every man who was an historian and something more.

Historical writing was old, but historical thinking was new in Germany when it sprang from the shock of the French Revolution. Condemnation of history had been the strongest plank in the platform of 1789. The evils exposed in the *cahiers* were not accidents of the age, but the bequest of malignant forces at work for centuries. Irresponsible power, the caprice of war, slavery, intolerance, arbitrary arrest, the deadly prison, the inhuman aggravation of the pains of death, had been the steady produce of elaborate design. The men who struck at the misery inflicted by traditional authority believed no dogma so firmly as that of the folly of their ancestors. The supreme object of their striving was to depose and to degrade a tyrant who, at his best, was blind and ignorant and cruel, and who, moreover, was dead. Their sternest resolve was that generations of astrologers, sorcerers, and torturers, of legislators unable to read, of sovereigns only able to kill, that the wisdom of the *code noir* and the statute book of George II should not be suffered to reign over Watt and Hunter, over Lavoisier and Laplace, Smith and Kant; and the most vigorous of the revolutionary thinkers, Jefferson and Sieyès, studied both to banish the past and to prevent the present from again overshadowing the future. It was under this flag that the armies conquered Germany, destroying and transforming, and left no institution standing but the monarchy of Frederic the Great.

The romantic reaction which began with the invasion of 1794 was the revolt of outraged history. The nation fortified itself against the new ideas by calling up the old, and made the ages of faith and of imagination a defence from the age of reason. Whereas the pagan Renaissance was the artificial resurrection of a world long buried, the romantic Renaissance revived the natural order and restored the broken links from end to end. It inculcated sympathy with what is past, unlovable, indefensible, especially with the age of twilight and scenes favourable to the faculties which the calculators despised. The romantic writers relieved present need with all the abounding treasure of other times, subjecting thereby the will and the conscience of the living to the will and conscience of the dead. Their lasting influence was out of proportion to their immediate performance. They were weak because they wanted strictness and accuracy, and never perceived that the Revolution was itself historic, having roots that could be profitably traced far back in the ages. But they were strong by the recovery of lost knowledge, and by making it possible to understand, to appreciate, and even to admire things which the judgment of rationalism

condemned in the mass of worthless and indiscriminate error. They trifled for a time with fancy, but they doubled the horizon of Europe. They admitted India to an equality with Greece, medieval Rome with classical; and the thoughts they set in motion produced Creuzer's 'Comparative Mythology' and Bopp's 'Conjugations,' Grimm's enthusiasm for the liberty and belief of Odin's worshippers, and Otfried Müller's zeal for the factor of race.

As long as the romantics were a literary school, running æsthetic canons in opposition to Goethe, they remained unconscious of the active principle within. Dante and Calderon, Nibelungen and Sakuntala, were not so near the core as Burke's maxim that wisdom and religion dictate that we should follow events, and not attempt to lead, much less to force them. When their ideas came to be taken up by reasoners, they were found to involve a system of scientific definitions charged with interminable consequences. Their philosopher was Schelling, who married Schlegel's wife, and who, condensing the vapour of the school into something like solid propositions, taught that the state does not exist for purposes of men, and is not governed by laws of their devising, but by the cosmic force above.

Upon this aphorism, Savigny, the jurist of the party, developed the historic method of jurisprudence. The sovereign legislator is not the government, but the nation. Law, like language, proceeds from its primitive nature and its experience and is part of its identity. The deliberations of lawgiving consist in ascertaining not what is best, but what is consistent with usage. Laws are found, not made, for the treatment adapted to successive emergencies is already latent in the public conscience, and must be evolved from precedent. Laws and constitutions expand by sustenance drawn from the constant and original spring; the force preparing the future is the same that made the past, and the function of the jurist is to trace and to obey it faithfully, without attempting to explain it away.

Learning and eloquence long effectually concealed the logical defect of this doctrine. It assorted so well with the spirit of the age that it predominated for half a century against Bentham, and Hegel, and the year 1848, and is yielding slowly to the keener dialectics and deeper philosophy of Jhering. It is the strongest of all the agencies that have directed German effort towards history, viewed as a remedy for the eighteenth century and the malady of vain speculation. When Laboulaye described it as a school that had no masters in France and only one disciple, who was himself, it was controlling Germany.

In the mind of Savigny and his followers their doctrine made for progress and independence, but not for liberty. The notion that each generation of men is powerless over its own fortunes, and receives them subject to inherited conditions, combined well with

the rooted conservatism of the country. But it possessed that property of the works of genius, that it could be carried out in opposite directions. If the nation is the source of law, it is reasonable to infer that national consent is a normal element in legislation, and that the state ought legitimately to take its limits from the nation. Niebuhr, in unguarded moments, drew one of these inferences, and Dahlmann the other. And it came to pass that the historical school, having abolished the law of nature which was the motive of 1789, instituted the law of nationality, which became the motive of 1848.

Bishop Stubbs informs us that history is likely to make men wise, and is sure to make them sad. In the long chapter of the melancholy historians no figure is more tragic than Niebuhr, the politician, as Savigny was the civilian, of the school. He had flashes of admiration for the English government as it appeared under Eldonian auspices; but when the world went off the ancient ways, he lost his temper and his spirits, and his end was a warning to weaker men to keep their studies apart from the hopes and fears of life. Had he survived, he would have been what Radowitz became, the king's intimate adviser. The inflexible qualities which repelled his colleagues and spoilt him for a statesman fitted him for a critical historian. His passion for truthfulness was such that he defied Stein to show that he had ever subscribed himself the obedient servant of a man he did not respect. With his high notions there was no writer whom he could trust, and neither ancient nor modern veracity could stand before him.

The first edition of his 'Roman History,' afterwards repudiated, began the evolution of historic science. It exhibited the theory that truth is not buried underneath tradition—that, although the Romans had forgotten the early state of their institutions, the processes of history are so well defined that it is possible to work back from the known to the unknown, from effect to cause, and so to recover the unrecorded past. This was the visible sign of the new doctrine of fixed lines, invariable laws, and overruled action of men. It indicated a mode of certainty which did not depend on the credit of historians. When they have been tested to the breaking point, the critic comes in and begins his proper work. The right sphere of these operations is the primitive obscurity. They could not flourish in the daylight, and Niebuhr never showed that he knew how to apply them to events and characters told by contemporaries. When he filled the meagre outline of Manlius by transferring to him the character of Mirabeau, he gave the example which Stanley followed when he put Lord Shaftesbury into the Reformation, and Mr. Golightly into the Jewish monarchy. The weighty volumes, crowded with doubtful but suggestive matter, won so little popular success that he laid them by for many years.

When he rewrote them, under the spur of contradiction, and in the midst of a vigorous intellectual movement which was partly his work, they found less favour than the finished productions of Savigny. The historical school penetrated everywhere and remodelled every branch of legal study excepting ecclesiastical and comparative law, which resisted the national principle. But the work of Niebuhr's life stood still. There was a temporary reaction in favour of Roman views of Roman history; and he had been dead for twenty years before he began to be superseded by innovators bolder and better appointed than himself. Schwegler's early death deprived Germany of the one man who combined real philosophic talent with the rarest critical faculty. Mommsen, whose book was begun at the same time as Schwegler's, realised that union of qualities which Macaulay described when he said that Niebuhr would have been the first writer of his time if his talent for communicating truths had borne any proportion to his talent for investigating them.

The fruit of the 'Roman History' ripened for Greece. The men who made it known in this country were Thirlwall and Grote; it sent Otfried Müller to historical studies; and Boeckh dedicated to Niebuhr a work which has stood the test of time better than his own. Under the powerful sway which Boeckh exercised in Prussia for fifty years, Hellenic studies obtained the lead. A deeper scholar than Niebuhr, an historian, which the Saxon philologists disdained to be, he abandoned Rome to jurists and politicians, and primitive times to romantic theorists. His own taste was for the hardest possible facts and the clearest proofs. Like Niebuhr, he believed that antiquity is covered over with error, which will shrivel like a parched scroll, and that hidden truth will be brought to light. But instead of the incommunicable genius of conjecture he set to work with a new organon, and substituted improved evidence for dazzling guesswork.

Inscriptions had been always a source of dire confusion, for it paid local antiquaries to forge them, and two hundred consuls were invented by a single impostor. Niebuhr dismissed this branch of inquiry wholesale, saying that nobody could be expected to master it. Boeckh showed that it could be made an instrument of discovery as efficacious as the boldest ingenuity, and it became, in his firm and patient hands, the corner-stone of the building. Besides showing the way of reaching truth even beyond Thucydides, he was an illustrious example of the historian who puts himself out of sight and displays what is certain, suppressing rigidly his personal sentiments. The tone of elegiac and cathartic poetry is one thing: the epic tone is another. After hearing his course on ancient philosophy, I asked him why his lectures were more interesting than his books. Boeckh answered benignly, 'Because I give my

finished researches to the public, and keep my own views (*die ideale Anschauung*) for the students.'

The 'Public Economy of the Athenians' is almost the only history produced before the critical epoch which still stands, unshaken and erect. The critical epoch lies between 1824 and 1828. To mark the distinction between what was planted in those five years and the wild growth that preceded them, is half the work that Professor Wegele had to do.

In natural gifts and in acquirements the earlier writers were not, upon the whole, inferior to those who, with better opportunities, have made them a prey to dumb forgetfulness. It is matter of legendary notoriety that Schlosser consumed so many thousand volumes in a given time. The 'Symbolik' of his colleague Creuzer is a mine of learning animated with ideas. Voigt was among the first who, either from the easy indifference of rationalism or from the manifold interest of romanticism, released the medieval papacy from the dilemma of good or bad. Few of those who have come since Luden can write so well. Raumer earned the praise of having written readably on the middle ages, and made it known that there was much to be learnt from the Italians. Many writers of this epoch had qualities not cultivated afterwards by men of sterner stuff, and addressed their style to readers less learned than themselves, who preferred a clean text to perpetual dissertation. All the works of Schlosser deserve the malediction which Mr. Morley pronounced on one of them; yet there was a blunt integrity about him, and his influence upon men so superior to himself as Gervinus, Rothe, and Bernhardi proves, what his writings do not, that he possessed some higher quality. Luden made a name for patriotism; and Raumer was a liberal, often in tepid water for his opinions. Of the three periods into which the attitude of Germans towards the middle ages has been distributed, the contemptuous, the admiring, and the intelligent, these men generally represent the second. In point of trustworthiness they are near the level of their French contemporaries; of Thierry amplifying 'Ivanhoe,' Barante transcribing Monstrelet, and Michaud flogging all the dead horses of the First Crusade. Waitz and Leo said of them that they could read texts but never studied them; and they stand condemned as men who did not know how to distinguish authentic knowledge from second-hand, and were at the mercy of their informants. They are gathered to the geographers who made charts before Columbus.

A new art of employing authorities came in with Ranke in 1824. Müller's 'Introduction to the Science of Mythology' quickly followed; Gieseler and Neander began their histories of the Church; and Menzel, after an inferior book on the middle ages, published the first volume of what was long the best modern history of Germany.

Niebuhr prepared the new edition which is the pillar of his fame, in 1827; and in 1828 Stenzel adapted to the Gregorian epoch the canons of criticism which Ranke had made obligatory on every serious writer. These seven or eight works were the symptom of a great transition.

Ranke has not only written a larger number of mostly excellent books than any man that ever lived, but he has taken pains from the first to explain how the thing is done. He attained a position unparalleled in literature, less by the display of extraordinary faculties than by perfect mastery of the secret of his craft, and that secret he has always made it his business to impart. For his most eminent predecessors, history was applied politics, fluid law, religion exemplified, or the school of patriotism. Ranke was the first German to pursue it for no purpose but its own. He tried to make the generality of educated men understand how it came about that the world of the fifteenth century was changed into the Europe of the nineteenth. His own definite persuasions regarding church and king were not suffered to permeate his books. It was meritorious in Boeckh, but not heroic, to contain his feelings about the Attic treasure and the setting of Arcturus; but Ranke was concerned with all the materials of abiding conflict, with every cause for which he cared and men are willing to kill or die.

He expects no professional knowledge in his readers, and never writes for specialists. He seldom probes to the bottom the problems of public life and the characters of men, and passes dryshod over much that is in dispute. As he writes history, not biography, he abstains from the secrets of private life; and as he writes history, not dogma, he never sorts men into black and white according to their bearing in vital controversies. His evildoers escape the just rigour of the law, and he avoids hero-worship as the last ditch of prehistoric prejudice. He touches lightly on matters pertaining to the jurist and divine, but he has not their exclusiveness. His surface is more level than theirs, but his horizon is wider. The cup is not drained; part of the story is left untold; and the world is much better and very much worse than he chooses to say.

Ranke was profoundly influenced by Niebuhr; and the example of so wise a man sinking under the load of political disappointment impressed him with the belief that it is well for people generally to disconnect their scientific and their practical life. Niebuhr's treatment of history required men as able as himself, and as familiar with the play of institutions, but boded disaster in weaker hands. Ranke brought his art down to a lower capacity. In the preliminary measure of testing authorities, he showed that it is possible, by careful analysis, to learn whence a writer obtains his facts; and this part of the work is often almost mechanical. It depresses the study of history to a level with the collation of texts, and admits

a large and useful body of workers who would make a mess of the three first Muses, or the first decade of Livy.

The task of analysing character is more complicated. There is a peculiarity about the revision of historians that excludes them from the benefit of the common law that innocence must be assumed until guilt is proved. The presumption which is favourable to makers of history is adverse to writers of history. For history deals considerably with hanging matter, and nobody ought to hang on damaged testimony. The life of the witness must be subjected to closer scrutiny than the life of the culprit. He is condemned when he is suspected; doubt is decisive against him. When Father Paul relates that Luther's arguments were thought to be unanswerable at the court of Rome, but were resisted in order that authority might be upheld, he appeals to the diary of Chieregato, which has not been produced. The story, therefore, stands and falls with his own credibility. Nobody has a right to adopt it who is not able to vindicate the character of Sarpi. There is a test of credibility, and consequently a rule of right and wrong, which everybody must acknowledge, because without it there is no such thing as evidence, and the code which is applied to books applies to events. The maxims by which we judge the statements of Cæsar or of Clarendon enable us to judge their actions. The principles are the same, though the rigour in employing them is unequal.

True impartiality is no respecter of persons, and judges resolutely regardless of the judgment of others. Ranke's merciful abstinence from strong language, his reserve in passing sentence, correspond to two governing facts in the movement to which he belongs. Germans, like other people, have certain hereditary landmarks not good to disturb, certain names too closely associated with national glory to be exposed to profanation. Luther is one of them, and Frederic, and Goethe. Döllinger's double-edged saying, that the nation recognises its own nature in Luther (*ilr potenziertes Selbst*), became popular; and the passionate temper of the Reformation tracts no more repels his countrymen than the violence of More, of Milton, or of Grattan interferes with their credit here. Gratitude to the king, pride in the poet, tell in the same way to exclude the vulgar standard and to check unruly speech touching such matters as divine right, arbitrary power, and ethical neutrality. There is, if not depreciation of the moral currency, impatience of the language men utter in censuring equals. The public feels a shock of incongruity when the president of the Bavarian Academy accuses an emperor of the murder of a Bavarian prince, or when Dahlmann crudely says that the sovereigns who divided Poland were as guilty as the Terrorists.

The infallible conscience, the universal and unwritten law, the principles of eternal justice, are precisely those eighteenth-century

phantoms against which the romantic and historical school rose in defiance. The belief that men carry about them the knowledge of good and evil is the very root of revolution. Those who, in the words of De Maistre and the Prussian conservatives, desired, not the counter-revolution, but the contrary of revolution, decreed that the mighty past shall not be measured by present rules and the categorical imperative. Mankind varies and advances in ethical insight; the virtue of to-day was once a crime, and the code changes with the latitude. If King James burnt witches, if Machiavelli taught assassination as an art, if pious crusaders slaughtered peaceful Jews, if Ulysses played fast and loose, we are exhorted to remember the times they lived in, and leave them to the judgment of their peers. Mobility in the moral code, subjection of man to environment, indefinite allowance for date and race, are standing formulas from Schlegel to the realistic philosophy.

Although Ranke practises moderation and restraint, and speaks of transactions and occurrences when it would be safe to speak of turpitude and crime, he kept himself above the indifference and the incapable neutrality of those who held, with Gerard Hamilton, that there are few questions on which one may not vote conscientiously either way. This was the infant shape of impartiality. The Italians, said Raumer, justify the cities of Lombardy; the Germans justify their emperors: both are right and both are wrong. Raumer was not a strong man; but there were many in his day who admired such abdication as the triumph of fairness, and discarded human responsibility. On a solemn occasion Ranke declared that the modern to whom, after Niebuhr, he was most in debt, was Fichte. Of Fichte's philosophy there is little either in Ranke's sixty volumes or elsewhere now. But as the most advanced apostle, since Butler, of the efficacy of conscience, he opposed submission to impersonal forces, and no doubt strengthened Ranke in his resistance to more than one of his most famous colleagues.

Ranke acquired very early an unrivalled knowledge of historical literature, but towards 1840 he began to say that the last five centuries cannot be understood from printed books only. He did not lead the way to the archives. When an Englishman or Scotsman took a side in the revolution of 1688, he was accustomed to support himself with new documents. Austria was before the rest of Germany; and Mignet's incomparable fragment on the foreign policy of Lewis XIV surpassed all that the rest of Europe was doing. At first the narrow opening of archives was not an unmixed boon. The partial use of manuscripts was as misleading as the partial use of books. When Stein planned the 'Monumenta,' Gentz avowed the opinion that truth is not always a desirable thing, and a Würzburg professor denounced the undertaking as a scheme of obscurity. 'Tis sixty years since, and now every state

reveals its inner life: the Vatican and the *Affaires Étrangères* are as easy of access as the Frari, or the Hofburg under the generous management of Arneth; the chief archivist of Prussia, after declaring that his country has nothing to conceal, proves his sincerity by the publication of twenty-six volumes; and Treitschke adds the substantial reason that the enemies of Prussia have told the worst, making concealment at once needless and impossible. Ranke has gone along with the progress which has so vastly extended the range and influence of historians. After starting without manuscripts, and then lightly skimming them, he ended by holding that it is not science to extract modern history from anything less than the entire body of written evidence. Touching which, there are two opinions. One is, that history would be all right but for historians; that nothing is certain but what is secret and official; and that no man is so safe to punish as he that is condemned out of his own mouth. Others deem that we cannot realise events without knowing how they seemed to those who saw them; that letters deceive as much as memoirs or chronicles; that rulers of men, not uncommonly, are rogues, provided with a set of false bottoms as a precaution against curious impertinence.

Ranke was at once acknowledged by Niebuhr as the first of historians, but he did not storm the position. At the university he was outshone by Gans, the mouthpiece of Hegel, and afterwards by Droysen, the mouthpiece of imperialism. Böhmer, who so much disliked Berlin exports that he could read neither Duncker nor the 'Life of Stein,' delighted to quote the description given by satirical students of Ranke lecturing, with his jerky manner, his chin pointing upwards, his fingers catching the air. There was a conspiracy in high quarters to raise up a rival to him in the person of Raumer, whom even Jaffé at first pronounced perfection; whilst Humboldt declared in favour of the Dryasdust grotesquely treated by Carlyle, and abetted the sneers of Varnhagen. Leo used to call Ranke a vase-painter, and denied that truth is hidden in the correspondence of envoys. Gervinus preferred Schlosser; and Droysen, his only rival in influence, derided his flexibility and kinship with the variable romantics. Eichhorn deplored that there was so little to learn from his 'Reformation;' Wuttke published a tract against the 'Servian History,' and Ritter against his ways generally. Rehm, dimly remembered by the light that shone from his Arabic studies on the middle ages, considered his books unfit for a place in the library of Marburg university. Sybel thought him too lenient to Austria; and Reimann accuses him of partiality in the affairs of Poland. Whilst a Prussian conservative complained that he was neither fish nor flesh, a liberal Saxon declared that he was too good a legitimist to master the problems of parliamentary states. His 'Memoirs of Hardenberg' have not

satisfied critics who knew the inside of the Berlin archives. The 'English History' was received with cold but decent respect; and the *Grenzboten* published a hostile article on the first and weakest volume, by Bergenroth, then a new man, unfurnished with a horoscope. It has been a grievance with Villari that Ranke said, and misled Sybel's *Zeitschrift* into repeating, that he had overlooked manuscripts in his own town of Florence, which he, in fact, had cited scores of times. Panizzi objected that one of his books was not original; Green, that another was dull. Macaulay ended by resenting the threatened invasion of his prerogative, and was less favourably disposed than in the glowing days of the purple New Zealander. There was a brief opposition from the catholics. Höfler attacked the 'Popes;' a garbled manuscript of the sixteenth century was sent to press for the diminution of his credit; and Theiner assured the king of Bavaria that he had done less than justice to Gregory XIII. *Grand talent, petit esprit*, was the adverse verdict of the *Correspondant*. The Frenchman might have defended his point if it was a distant allusion to stature. When Lord John Russell was on his way to Vienna, it was reported that Frederic William IV, by a refinement of flattery, invited four eminent men to meet him who were all smaller than himself; and Ranke was one of them.

He outlived all rivalry, and well nigh all antagonism. He lived to hear Arneth declare, before the assembled historians of the south, that he alone among writers of prose had furnished a masterpiece to every country. He was hailed by Döllinger as *præceptor Germaniæ*. In his own home the dissent of militant patriotism was expressed in the words of Dove, that pure history cannot satisfy the need of a struggling and travelling nation; and when Mommsen says that the only ascertained maxim of research is that hearsay evidence is as good as the source it comes from, I understand him to mean that genius is better than schooling.

In very early days it seemed that philosophy possessed an adept who would surpass Ranke, and bridge the afflicting chasm between fact and law. Leo had belonged to the most turbulent set of students in the time of Sand, when he came to Berlin, obtained the friendship of Hegel, and disparaged Ranke by reviews, and by encroaching on his domain. With other men the question is, how they came to succeed: the wonder in the case of Leo is, how such abilities contrived to miss not only the first place but the first rank. He scorned the tame spirit, the obscure labours, the negative results of fleshless scholars whose cares are bounded by scholarship, who aim at no target, and are incurious of things to come. He was always combative, homiletic, clamorous for quick returns, and, like men too eager, verbose and violent. He shed his Hegelian skin in the middle ages, and emerged from them detesting the three

last centuries as an epoch of selfishness and decay. History became subservient to politics, to a policy of reaction against economists, humanitarians, and all men seeking happiness before authority. Having written too many books not destined to live, he made up his mind to abandon a hemisphere that was going wrong, and set about reducing his baggage and packing all he knew in a traveller's kit. This was the origin of Leo's 'Universal History,' still, after half a century, the most thoughtful of the books that bear that ambitious title. What more he did during the restless remainder of his life for royalism and religious union is written in water. He is the most remarkable of all the men who, being partisans where partiality is discredit, failed through the want of discipline. Gfrörer, who was superior to him and perhaps to all men in historic grasp, is equally destitute of authority. But Gfrörer, though the most reckless and unsafe of guides, is as vigorous a stimulant in medieval study as Germany has possessed, and of the fourteen or fifteen volumes which he wrote from Charlemagne to Hildebrand, not one can be spared.

Without the training and habits of the new school even the learning of Neander fared not much better than the talent of Gfrörer and Leo. He was probably the best-read man living, towards 1830; and he introduced into the permanent literature of his country a serious spiritual element that was wanting. For the romantic scholars were still incurably tainted with the vice which, outside of morals, bears no harsher name than inaccuracy; while the church historians in possession considered religion with a professional eye and were more secularly minded than professors of profane arts, such as Lachmann or Carl Ritter. He not only tried to bring within reasonable compass and under the control of ideas what used to straggle through forty-five and even eighty-five volumes, but he was profoundly in earnest; and it was of him that Tholuck said that the orthodox are generally the most pious. He had more heart for the interior life of saints than for the border history of church and state. His knowledge, deep and massive as that of a later Benedictine, was seldom new, and with his traditional habits he was like a ghost in the company of Boeckh and Ranke. Among books which he took faithfully as he found them, deeming with Mr. Freeman that manuscripts begin to be useful after they are printed, many were interpolated, incorrect, assigned to the wrong men. Schweighauser's saying that for centuries no real care had been taken of classical texts was almost equally true of ecclesiastical; and the work of Wolf and Bekker scarcely began for them until Neander was dead. When the 'Annals' of Baronius were reprinted, De Rossi reminded the editor that the primitive church presented no longer the same outlines as in 1567, or in the days of Pagi, and offered, unfortunately in vain, his aid as an annotator. Since Neander a deeper spirit of inquiry

has possessed itself of his topic and is working changes as considerable as in all the time since Baronius. He spent his last days in a forlorn endeavour to trace the Bohemian revolution to Bohemian causes, telling much that nobody knew about a very obscure time. For, like all men before Shirley, he entirely mistook Wyclif. In our day Lechler and Arnold, Matthews, Buddensieg, and Loserth have published a new Wyclif, and a new pedigree of Hus, and the same transforming effect of the scientific approaches has befallen or yet awaits every chapter of Neander.

The tendency of the nineteenth-century German to subject all things to the government of intelligible law, and to prefer the simplicity of resistless cause to the confused conflict of free wills, the tendency which Savigny defined and the comparative linguists encouraged, was completed in his own way by Hegel. He displayed all history by the light of scientific unity, as the manifestation of a single force, whose works are all wise, and whose latest work is best. The *Volksgeist* of the new jurisprudence was less dazzling than the *Weltgeist* of the new philosophy, with the smallest allowance of hypothesis for the largest quantity of phenomena. Science was propitiated with visions of unity and continuity; religion, by the assurance of incessant progress; politics, by the ratification of the past. Liberty and morality were less well provided; but it was the epoch of the Restoration.

An ambiguous use of terms concealed the breach between pantheism and Christianity so well that the most learned catholic layman of the time rejoiced at the coming of a new era for religion. The breach with experimental science betrayed itself by the contempt for Newton in which Hegel was of one mind with Goethe and Schelling and Schopenhauer; but there were scientific men who, to the disgust of Humboldt, accepted the *Naturphilosophie*. Its defects were visible when Hegel's lectures appeared after his death, and the system went down under the assault of inductive science. But his influence on historical study has not gone down, and it is the one thing on which he retains his grasp. The *lex continui* was a central idea with Leibnitz, who discovered it, for it was the point in common between his anticipation of Darwin and his anticipation of Hegel. In the same double sense it was renewed by Haller, and obtained some superficial acceptance through Herder, until it came to govern entirely the Hegelian notion of history.

Hegel did not shine in expounding public transactions, excepting cases like the French revolution, where the individual is swallowed up in the logic of events. He moved awkwardly in the presence of human agents, and was unskilled in playing his pawns. The quest of the *vera causa* failed with men, but it was beyond measure successful, away from the world of sense, in explaining the action and succession of ideas.

The history of philosophy had taken rise before Hegel was born, and was secreted in books not destitute of plodding merit, but unreasonably dead and dull. Under the magic wand systems fell into an appointed and harmonious order : *λαμπάδα ἔχοντες διαδώσουσιν ἀλλήλοις*. The progress of speculative thought has been made, by less systematic and coercive successors, one of the luminous spots in literature, to the damage and exclusion of more essential things. For the marrow of civilised history is ethical not metaphysical, and the deep underlying cause of action passes through the shape of right and wrong. Hegel did not promote the study of morals, and Germany fell behind the French eclectics, until, in the revolt of the last ten years against utilitarians and materialists, the growth of ethical knowledge has become, for the first time, the supreme object of history.

The main line of the Hegelian succession passed to the divines. It was of the essence of pantheism to transcend national limits and the conditions dear to jurists. Where one considers the British constitution as a plant of Teutonic growth, drawing life from ideas common to all the conquerors of Rome, or traceable to hazy customs on the Elbe, the other accounts it a phase of monarchy, a fragment from a sphere that is above race. In the same way, Hegel regarded Christianity as an episode in a natural process that began before the christian era, and continued beyond the uttermost boundaries assignable to churches, as one step among many to be taken by mankind. The propositions issuing from this view of religion supply the work of the Tübingen school. They teach that the origin of the christian faith is in the gradual action of antecedent causes ; that it has been substantially true to itself in the formation of dogma, and has accomplished its mission of providing fuel for the flame of a higher philosophy.

On his first acquaintance with Hegel's writings, Strauss ceased to believe, and the motive of his book was to justify his disbelief with arguments derived from the scholarship of the day. But the soil that reared him was philosophic not historic. His reason for rejecting the gospel was metaphysical, though his argument was historical. The newest discovery was that certainty may be attained behind the back of historians, after finding whence they get their facts and with what mind they state them. Strauss renounced the attempt, and denied the possibility.

But the critical phase, if it did not prompt the 'Leben Jesu,' contributed to its success by encumbering the business of reply. In those days the Nepaul transcripts were bewildering Europe with the spectacle of a lasting and widely spread religion sprung from an obscure and legendary, if not a mythical origin. Stapfer, the Swiss apologist, levying an argument from the lake and the fell, likened Strauss to the inventor of paradox, who presumed to doubt

the story of William Tell, and was confounded by the indignant scholarship of Uri. Just then, that vivacious ghost was for ever laid by the reverent hand of a zealous conservative, ultramontane, and patriot, who exposed the fable and restored the real history of Swiss independence in a manner which showed that the lessons of Bonn and Berlin had penetrated to the forest cantons. A greater man than Stapfer objected to Strauss that the first century of the church was too enlightened for mythology; but the study of the New Testament apocrypha, still in its infancy, showed that the apostolic age was rich in poetic and theological fiction.

The credulity of the last generation was put to a severe strain. The clearances went on at a pace that drove people to despair, and it appeared that the crop of falsehood grew too fast for the reapers. One is tempted to suppose that the conspicuous fabrications like those of Shapira, of Simonides, of the deft deceiver of Chasles, are exceptional. It is a new revelation to learn that a crust of designing fiction covers the truth in every region of European history. The most curious of the twenty-two thousand letters in the correspondence of Napoleon, that of 28 March 1808, on his Spanish policy, by which Thiers was taken in, proves to be a forgery, and the forger is Napoleon. Whole volumes of spurious letters of Joseph II, Marie Antoinette, and Ganganelli are still circulated. Prince Eugene should be well known to us through his autobiography, the collection of six hundred of his letters, and the 'Life' by Kausler. But the letters are forged, the 'Life' is founded upon them, and the autobiography is by the prince de Ligne. The letter from the Pruth which deceived the ablest of the historians of Peter the Great, is as fabulous as his political testament. So too are the 'Monita Secreta,' the Life of the Almirante by his son, one of the trials of Savonarola, Daru's acts of the Venetian inquisitors, the most famous of the early Italian chronicles, the most famous of the early privileges and charters of almost every European country. The ancient monuments of Bohemian literature, edited in 1840 by the two best scholars of the Slavonic world, were a very recent imposture; and Saint Cyril, the apostle of the Slavonians, is credited with an account of his own life, a confession of faith, and an introduction to the gospels, none of which are authentic. At his first step in epigraphic science, Mommsen rejected one thousand and three Neapolitan inscriptions.

In the fervour of detection men were tempted to conclude with Goethe that poetry is the only form of truth, and that all history might with advantage go the way of Raleigh's book. The doctrine of the hopeless uncertainty of human testimony recommended the study of ideas instead of events, for we can follow the ideas of Abelard or Descartes under their own undisputed hand, with less risk than the

secret councils of kings. A disposition to run riot, not only to doubt where doubt means safety, but to reject where there is only ground for doubting, appeared in several directions: the 'Laws' and the 'Parmenides' were written by the second Plato; many of the 'Odes' were not composed by Horace; and Saint Patrick became an imaginary personage.

This excess prevailed in Germany less widely than is supposed. The restoring purpose, the craving for positive results, grew strong amid the devastation; exaggerated doubt was succeeded by activity in preserving, and the fictions unduly spared outnumber the truths unduly questioned. Methodical doubt had no affinity with a universal scepticism. Niebuhr, unlike Sir George Lewis who represents him to us, passionately believed in the resources of his art, accepted the discoveries of Champollion when many hesitated, and looked forward to like results in Assyria, six years before Lassen appeared. Wolf wished his treatment of Homer to be applied to the Bible, but he stopped far short of the hypothesis of Graf. In spite of his weighty advocacy, Markland's attack on the 'Epistles to Brutus' and the 'Four Orations' did not prevail. Many things which the French reject are accepted by Germans who uphold Buddha against the solar interpretation of Senart, the Pragmatic Sanction of Saint Lewis against the doubts of Paul Viollet, the tables of Malaga and Salpensa against objections which Laboulaye would not abandon until the close of his life. There is a state paper on the Juliers succession in 1609 which was admitted by Ranke, Droysen, Treitschke, and never disputed until it went to pieces in 1888. Not very many years ago a monument was erected at Pforzheim by the Baden legislature in commemoration of an event that never occurred; and the purchase of the Moabite antiquities in 1873, advised by Schlottmann in spite of Ganneau's warning, exhibits the softer side of Prussian criticism and economy. The eagerness of juniors in urging every element of improbability has been rebuked by the master, Waitz; and Giesebrecht, the only critical historian of the middle ages who is a popular classic, who occupies a moderating position between extremes, is peculiarly cautious against the solicitations of doubt. His rare mistakes have come from conservative leanings, and he has rescued letters of Sylvester II denounced by his French editor, has reinstated Lambert as a main authority for Gregory VII against a host of detractors, and has maintained in the midst of much opposition the 'Dictatus' of the pope himself. The severest repressor of overmuch doubting is Sickel, the prince of critics, who has been able to demonstrate that the skill of the forgers is less than was imagined, and that many pieces suspected thirty years ago were suspected wrongly. In earlier stages of the progress of knowledge the proper attitude is suspense, and when Maurenbrecher failed to establish

the authenticity of Charles V's 'Commentaries,' he rightly laid them aside until Ranke satisfied him.

While open questions of criticism diminish, new documents raise new problems, and nobody gets the last word. Much has come lately to light touching the partition of Poland. Who proposed it? The answer is continually shifting, and the truth goes farther off. It was Catharine or Prince Henry in 1771, Bibikoff at Christmas 1770, Joseph II in July, Wolkonsky in March. It was Count Lynar in 1769, or a mightier personage wearing his mask. Or it was Kaunitz in 1768, if not Choiseul in the same year. Panin started the idea in 1766, Czernitcheff or the electress of Saxony in 1763, Lord Stair in 1742, the king of Poland himself in 1792, or the crown prince of Prussia one year earlier. There is the same difficulty as to the man who shattered the empire of Napoleon by advising the retreat to Moscow. The idea is claimed for Alexander and Count Lieven, for five German officers at least, for the lesson of Torres Vedras, for Barclay, by whom it was executed. Or again, who was it that induced the allies, in March 1814, to advance on Paris? For that there are five competitors, a Russian, a Livonian, an Austrian, a Prussian, and a Corsican. Where we now stand, in the year 60 of renovated history, it does not seem impossible to settle some of these matters. But things were less clear during the procession of rival witnesses; and this is one of the elements which made the science of historians seem a solace for the imagination, a gallery of dissolving views, a museum of illusions in which a man of strong convictions was free to take or to leave. It was under this empire of instability that a group of Wirtemberg divines obtained the lead in critical research and kept it for twenty years.

A theologian who trod the paths of Hegel had lately introduced the study and the name of symbolism. Men who were not passionately addicted to the solutions of the sixteenth century were the better for knowing, as a matter of fact, without ulterior purpose, what it was all about, and why Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, and Socinus differed. Marheineke explained it to readers more curious of historic than dogmatic truth, who could enter heartily into every system not their own. Peace had been concluded between Lutheran and Calvinist, and a suspension of hostilities between catholic and protestant; and it was the time when a protestant publisher circulated Stolberg's 'Church History,' and Schlegel wrote to him: 'Let us shake hands like Christians across the narrow stream between us.' The first object of the new science was to explain the division of Christendom, not to justify, and not to heal it. The usefulness of this necessary chapter of history depended on the fidelity of the writer in refusing favour to his own side; and when Möhler took care, like Johnson, that the whigs should have the worst of it, Marheineke called his book a treatise

of controversy under the name of symbolism. The absence of the purely historical spirit gave Möhler his six editions and his immediate celebrity. Men came after him who restored the former tone, indifferent to peace or war. Koellner, being a protestant, wrote an exposition of catholicism, and, being a Calvinist, an exposition of Lutheranism, on the plan of describing them from within; but the public interest languished. The steps that had led up to the religious crisis of the present century were of more vital significance than the distant and inelastic formulas of the sixteenth. History, which already occupied other domains, was laying its hand on theology, and history is the knowledge of things that live and move. The process attracted more than the definition. Comparative dogmatics took the place which had been filled by the narrower treatment, and the history of protestant theology was discussed in a series of books by Dorner and Gass in Germany, and by Schweizer and Schneckenburger in Switzerland, that carry matters a good deal beyond the point reached when the conflict raged round the *Symbolik*.

While the protestants were interested in tracing dogmas down to their own day, it was the object of the catholics to trace them upwards to the seed time of the church, in order that what was imputed to them as genuine might be tested by time. The generation of 1830, which in a variety of converging ways assigned the property of growth undetermined by will or wit of man, of development without forfeiture of identity, to the civil law, the academic philosophy, and the Aryan grammar, was not tempted to deny an analogous prerogative to Christianity. The principle had already found a home in the church, and received new vigour from the mental revolution effected by the anti-revolutionary Germans. When Möhler, moved by the asperities of controversy, left Tübingen to teach ecclesiastical history at Munich, Döllinger made way for him and lectured on divinity. He directed his own historical method on theological system, and exhibited the faith of Christendom at successive stages, so that a man should stand at all the crossways, realise each problem as seen at its rising, and pass in his own mind through the experience of the church.

The men who, at Munich, were working out the law of development within their communion, lived in acute and unappreciating hostility to the Suabian divine who was digging a theological bed for the teaching of the Suabian philosopher. The real importer of pantheism with its consequences into history, the man who grafted Hegel on Ranke, was Strauss's master, Baur, the colleague whose sarcasms drove Möhler from Tübingen. He was a convert from Creuzer's nebulous method, which looks for analogy and resemblance, and he adopted with uncommon energy the view which denies the supernatural, suspects marvels and coincidences, and adjusts spiritual life

to the prosaic level of daily experience. Baur would give no opinion on the 'Leben Jesu' until that which had been for ten years the law of profane history was thoroughly applied to sacred. He undertook the work and accomplished it himself, with the aid of those whom he called the critical school, implying that all others are uncritical, and, if they admit dogmatic motives, insincere. His postulates were that the gospels must be examined as profane books are, without presumption of truth, and that space must be given for Christianity to evolve itself from the combination of exceedingly dissimilar elements. According to Baur the business of history is not so much with facts as with ideas; and the idea, not the fact, of the Resurrection is the basis of the christian faith. Doctrines are developed out of notions, not out of events. Whether or no the belief is true, he refuses to inquire. In the most characteristic passage ever written by a German historian, he declares that it is a question beyond the scope of history.

The view of the New Testament which the critics of Tübingen built up with an expenditure of intellectual force greater than Strauss had applied to demolition, was too deeply influenced by the specific negations of pantheism to live apart from their esoteric tenets. What was speculative in their system not only isolated them from the bulk of European science, but brought about divisions, and at last the dispersion of the school. Wherever their purpose was exclusively historical, they threw much light on matters which have been discussed for centuries; and their sagacity in the investigation of details has been fruitful for all men.

Their permanent action is less acknowledged in the foundation than in the development of Christianity. Baur's mastery in tracing the march of ideas through the ages, over the heads of men, was a thing new to literature. He maintained that the formation and growth of doctrine is consistent and normal, not accidental or arbitrary; and the impression made by his histories of the central dogmas appeared in many directions. Nearly half the books that have been written on dogmatic history came out in a space of six or seven years, under his impulse, and were often the work of men far from sharing his opinions. The inner circle of Lutheran orthodoxy has adopted from Tübingen the term—the Formation of truth (*das Werden der Wahrheit*), a notion which would have astonished Luther.

Baur's bitterest adversary was Ewald, whose competence in Old Testament studies was not then contested. But it is the last and most original of his disciples, a man better known amongst us than most German writers, who has set in motion that mosaic controversy which has so much analogy with the views of Tübingen. From the days when he mingled imprecations against Gesenius with his prayers until he denounced the *Culturkampf*, Ewald had

been steeped in dissent, and his fame had suffered diminution before the treason of Wellhausen.

The low political vitality of the Thirty Years' Peace was favourable to calm studies. It was the time when Goethe was amazed that any sane person should think the revolution of July a topic of interest, and when William Humboldt, the most central figure in Germany, the confidant of Schiller and Goethe, of Wolf and Niebuhr, who had fought Talleyrand at Vienna on the memorable day on which legitimacy was born, who had forged the link between science and force by organising a university at Berlin, and who, until the murder of Kotzebue, had been the pride and the hope of intelligent Prussia, devoted the maturity of his powers to Malay roots. Those were the days in which the familiar type of the German scholar was generated, of the man who complained that the public library allowed him only thirteen hours a day to read, the man who spent thirty years on one volume, the man who wrote upon Homer in 1806 and who still wrote upon Homer in 1870, the man who discovered the 358 passages in which Dictys has imitated Sallust, the man who carried an electric telegraph from his house to the church and carried it no farther.

Primarily, he was a Greek scholar, bounded by ancient horizons, and his mind was not seldom shaped by some favourite classic, as were Boeckh by Plato, Creuzer by Plotinus, Trendelenburg by Aristotle, and Roscher by Thucydides. More rarely he carried the dry powder of philology into the early christian conflicts, or the chaos of the first, the Teutonic, middle ages. On the modern world, with its unsettled and unsettling questions, and its inaccessible information, he sternly turned his back. He loved to settle on a space he could hope to exhaust by giving his life to it, unmindful of Godfrey Hermann and his dictum: *Est quedam etiam nesciendi ars et scientia*. Like Hegel, who comfortably finished his book at Jena during the battle, and, starting for the publisher's in the morning, was surprised to observe that the streets were full of Frenchmen, he did not allow the voices of the striving world to distract him. Often he had risen, by mere energy and conduct, from crushing poverty, had gone barefoot to school, or had begged his way like Hase across the Fatherland; and he remained frugal and austere, cultivating humble obscurity and the golden gift of silence, and marrying, as Feuerbach did, upon an income of forty pounds. With that genius for taking trouble which Ritschl called the way to everything, he was not sensitive to genius of any other sort. The extreme subdivision of labour narrowed his view, and gave an unusual scope and value to diligent mediocrity. Dull men built themselves an everlasting name at which we wonder as we wonder at the glory of Grant; and the excessive talent of Stahl and Lassalle was suspected, as a Jewish

glitter, wanting substance. Walter, standing still on the old ground of Niebuhr, scoffed at that marvel of ability, the 'Geist des römischen Rechts'; and W. Sickel's 'Verfassungsgeschichte,' the most brilliant account of early institutions ever written, is scorned by the accepted teachers. 'Too clever to make a good administrator' is a judgment of Napoleon's; and Metternich invokes the international epigram, *L'esprit sert à tout et ne mène à rien*.

The scholar of the old school was an open adversary and a candid friend. Aristotelian Brandis, who was remarkable for social amenity, writes of his early fellowship with Bunsen that they disputed 'without effeminate sensibility' (*ohne wehleidige Schonung*); and the Breslau students were gratified with the sight of Passow in the *Professorencarcer* for insulting Menzel. Thiers said to Senior: 'I may call my opponent a villain, though I know him to be honest.' Not so in Saxony, where the courts have decided that it is lawful to call a book foolish, but not to call the author a fool.

The leaders of the movement that sprang up in the second quarter of the century were animated by the conviction that the genius and learning of the modern world went to work the wrong way, and missed its aim, not from incapacity, but from interest, influence, and prejudice. It was their belief that literature had long been an arduous and comprehensive conspiracy against truth, and that much envenomed controversy could be set at rest by exposing the manifold arts that veil substantial falsehood—suppression, distortion, interpolation, forgery, legend, myth. The Germans came late upon the scene, and did not claim to be better than those who went before them; but they would begin their work over again—*expurgata jam et abrasa et æquata mentis area*—warned by example to escape the sources of error. By extreme patience and self-control, by seeking neither premature result nor personal reward, by sacrificing the present to the far-off future, by the obscure heroism of many devoted lives, they looked to prepare the foundation of the kingdom of knowledge. *Plurimi transibunt et multiplex erit scientia*. They trained themselves to resist the temptations by which others had suffered, and stood to win by moral qualities. There was so much rough material to hew, so much time to recover, that they renounced making points and drawing conclusions. The politic Briton, with a practical object in view, avoids needless provocation to dissent; and the studious German tried to exclude contentious matter, and to adjust theory to fact, on the maxim, *On s'arrange plus facilement sur un fait que sur un principe*.

Their literary dogma, that truth is worth living for, and honesty, in fact, is the best policy, yields to nobody now the fresh emotion of discovery. Lanfrey writes that the only patriotism of

historians is sincerity; and the best of the French reviews has said the same thing in its prospectus. *Nous ne prétendons servir qu'une cause, celle de la science—Le livre seul est l'objet de la critique; l'auteur pour elle n'existe pas.* A clever fellow assured Lasker that he lied no more, having observed that it is less profitable than it used to be, and that truth, on the whole, answers better. Half a century ago, when every member of an election committee was understood to vote with his party, when a cry of derision went up at the hyperbole that property has duties as well as rights, when one prime minister considered that rich men ought to know how poor men vote, and another said, *On ne trompe personne quand on trompe tout le monde*, such principles were not yet trivial, and were enjoying the short span which Schopenhauer assigns to truth, between the paradox of yesterday and the commonplace of to-morrow.

Late in his life Thiers said of Napoleon, *Il faut convenir que c'était un scélérat et un fou.* He had concealed his opinion in twenty volumes. Guizot having discovered certain scandal about a queen (who was not Queen Elizabeth) by the advice of the duchess de Broglie suppressed it. Quite lately, the president of a great assembly avowed that impartiality is a merit only in presidents. When Tocqueville spent a lifetime in declaring the advent and the natural history of democracy, without betraying the intensity of his fears, and kept his religious opinions so well out of sight that the suppression of one or two letters has been enough to conceal them altogether; or when the bishop of Chester mentions, with becoming pride, that a man may read his books and take him for a radical, they illustrate a phase of literary character which was specially developed by the Germans in the studious and pacific days before 1848. And Mr. Freeman's proposition, that historic criticism and historic fairness are hardly possible when a man writes simply as a partisan of the papacy, would be accepted by them without the implied restriction. By what secret channels error filters into the mind, most people have read in Bacon, and may read much better in Spencer. The ideal historian adumbrated by Rothe, Kampschulte, Roscher, Dümmler, Löning, Gierke, Gass, is a man armed at all these points, and the discipline that makes him opens further visions of penetrating ethics, not obvious on the beaten track.

Among the historians of that epoch the most eminent, though he never wrote a page of history, was Böhmer, the librarian of Frankfort. Dumas's enthusiasm for the author of the 'Girondins' broke out in the words: *Il a élevé l'histoire à la hauteur du roman*; and of Böhmer it can be said that he raised drudgery to the rank of a fine art. For the centuries to which he confined himself, from the eighth to the fourteenth, he made it a precept that truth dwells

in documents, and not in chronicles or lives. The author of a grant or a state paper knows what he is doing; the author of a book does not. In one case history is told by those who make it; in the other, by those who hear of it from other people. The chronicle is a mixture of memory, imagination, and design. The charter is reality itself. When Thierry was overworked, he refreshed his mind with the glossary of Ducange; and there is no better reading in German than the prefaces of Böhmer, and his 'Regesta' as completed by the Innsbruck professors. He makes all mediæval literature subsidiary to the charters, and relieves his terse and telling abstract with illustrations from the historians as well as with points of his own. As the citizen of a republic, whose mental life was spent among the records of mediæval empire, as a protestant who sought the society of catholics, he had the advantage of a central and independent position. But his warmest sympathies were with the institutions which had vanished in his lifetime, with the church whose tenets he rejected, and he delivered his sentiments with a petulance and malice which no other reputation could have withstood. Waitz, and the northern scholars whose modes of thought he flouted, voted him a prize, as the foremost historian of the day; and Ficker, who has carried forward his work with better training and at least equal solidity, devised a theory for his benefit, which maintains that prejudice is consistent with veracity. Like Stälin, who had his 'Württembergische Geschichte,' the best of provincial histories, corrected by a priest, Böhmer gravitated towards the catholic south, and was the chief of a scattered party of Guelphic scholars which has not survived. When he died, in 1863, the romantic school to which he had imparted the dignity of exact learning, went below the horizon.

The chief promoter of mediæval studies was the modern Ranke. He had been famous for ten years before his influence was established, for the strongest men who came up were carried away by Hegel. In 1834, when the lieutenants were dividing the empire, Ranke set the reign of Henry I, the imaginary Fowler, as a subject for an essay. Giesebrecht and Köpke competed, and were defeated by Waitz, who has just revised the third edition of his biography, fifty years after it gained the prize. This was the foundation of what has been for so long incomparably the first school of history in the world, not for ideas or eloquence, but for solid and methodical work. Ranke discouraged men from approaching the passionate discussions and buried materials which were his own domain, and directed them to the times before the thirteenth century, the sources of which occupy a limited compass, and were just then in process of being threshed out for Pertz. It was a time that could be studied in the same cool temper as the weights and measures of Babylon, and had some analogy with the things taught by Boeckh. But no

philologist had Ranke's mastery of the detective arts. Even Drumann, when he came to Boniface VIII, proved ignorant of technical rules, while, on the other hand, the canons which Nitzsch and Nissen applied to Rome were formed in the medieval school. It supplied the best editors of the 'Monumenta,' eclipsing Pertz and his legal coadjutors, beat up all the libraries of Europe, and gradually obtained the control of the historical reviews. The Annals of the medieval empire are the most perfect achievement of these men. They were slow to quit the libraries for the archives; but a younger generation, working at Munich on the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and laying half of Europe under contribution, has solved the harder problem of making state papers the backbone of modern history.

The weak place was the nineteenth century until the revolution of 1848 compelled attention to the problems of the day. Droysen had already proposed a series of books on recent times, to be laid down on the lines of Dahlmann, which should fuse past and present, and treat politics and history as one. In connexion with this plan, which was not carried out, Häusser produced the first serious work on the fall and the rise of Germany, between the death of Frederic and the overthrow of Napoleon, a work which hardly justifies the considerable influence which the author exercised without his pen, but which marks a new era as a plea for Prussia from a southern and an avowedly liberal hand.

The next Heidelberg writer prophesied a democratic, not a Prussian future. Gervinus personates the average German, the average middle-class German from the smaller towns of the smaller states, crowded with indisputable information, sceptical and doctrinaire, more robust than elastic or alert, instructive but not persuasive, with a taste for broad paths and the judicious forcing of open locks. He began his 'History of the Nineteenth Century' at the lowest ebb of national sentiment, and he left it, a fragment in eight volumes, when reviving nationality discarded his dogmas. Schlosser, the master in whom he persistently believed, confessed that the world moved away and left him superfluous and obsolete. The same experience darkened the last days of Gervinus, who thought that Cavour must fail, that Bismarck was a new Polignac, who kept his place among the vanquished of 1866, and died disowning the results of 1870. He had been a power in the land before 1848, when he applied the reigning theory to literature, and exhibited every writer limited and bound to fixed surroundings, and every poem a barometer. He rescued the realm of imagination from the wild will of poets and the incalculable sceptre, and brought a new region under scientific cultivation. Julian Schmidt and other vigorous men have enlarged his notion. The better part of the nation's mind works in pursuit of truth, and its thought, its knowledge, its

errors, constitute the object of literary history as well as those things which may be lawfully told in verse. The flowery empire of æsthetics did not flourish under this amalgamation as it had done in less practical days. The best work is a history of Italian literature; but of the greatest living critics—Haym, Bernays, and Scherer—not one is great alike in the tracing of ideas, in perfect knowledge of biographical and bibliographical fact, and in taste.

Gervinus and Sybel exhibit the contrast between north and south, and between the time before and after 1848. Sybel had learnt to make war on confusion and fiction in the strict medieval school; but his mind was essentially modern, his interest lay in practical directions, and he opened the way to the later, inexhaustible, and almost unattempted centuries. He studies the Revolution in the light of a vast disturbance of the permanent policy of cabinets, without mercy on its picturesque and passionate element. The Reformation was in fact a blow struck at reforming catholicism, more than at the supine advocacy of things as they were; and this historian, without unction or sympathy, deploras the Revolution as a catastrophe that threw back intelligent progress for half a century. He began these studies forty years ago with two essays on Burke, whose letter to Mercer embodies much of his philosophy. Both in his history and in his review, Sybel adopts the dogmatic terms of Burke and Savigny; but he is never lost in theory. Although his introductory chapter anticipated the 'Ancien Régime' with no better help than Tocqueville's article in the *Westminster Review*, the depth and soundness of his work was not perceived until his gradual discoveries in many archives awakened controversy and provoked a flood of answering matter.

The year 1848, which sent more than one hundred professors to Frankfort, had been detrimental to the British and Baconian maxim, that knowledge is power. In Sybel they were united; for he was learned in the wisdom of universities, and eminently conversant with the working of political forces; a man of life and action, an expert such as had not been seen. He became the first classic of imperialism, and helped to form that garrison of distinguished historians that prepared the Prussian supremacy together with their own, and now hold Berlin like a fortress. If any one will make a list of their names, he will see that such a phalanx was never arrayed before, and will also detect one of the *arcana imperiæ*, by which the rude strength centred in a region more ungenial than Latium was employed to absorb and to stiffen the diffused, sentimental, and strangely impolitic talent of the studious Germans.

Things were different heretofore, when history, not yet woven into the web of national greatness, was carried on by private enterprise. Men living in a small way, with a dim political background

were not often practical, but were generally disinterested. Göttingen, Tübingen, and Heidelberg had some advantages for historical teaching over Berlin, where 'William Tell' was a forbidden play. Among their leisurely professors were men who found, like Dahlmann, that the great Frederic stuck in their throats, like Gervinus and Ewald, who repudiated Dahlmann's precept, that what their country wanted was force before freedom. The disconcerting verdict of events ruined their credit as readers of the signs of the times. Apart from the convenient popularity of the maxim, *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*, it was apparent that the past had not revealed to them its inmost secret, and they were disparaged, as investigators of irreclaimable dry bones. The men who took betimes the side of the big battalions, showed superior penetration into the things beneath the sun. They brought history into touch with the nation's life, and gave it an influence it had never possessed out of France; and they won for themselves the making of opinions, mightier than laws. The most clear-sighted of those who resolved, after the failure of the Revolution, that the future of Germany belonged to Prussia, was Droysen.

Ten years before the fire-and-sword despatch revealed Count Ferro, while intelligent adherents of Greater Germany argued that without Austria there could be nothing but a magnified Prussia, Droysen affirmed that unity could never come from liberty and the vote of parliaments, that it required a power strong enough to crush resistance at home and abroad. The rest of his life was devoted to Prussian politics and the imperial arts; and he was one of that central band of writers and statesmen and soldiers who turned the tide that had run for six hundred years, and conquered the centrifugal forces that had reigned in Germany longer than the commons have sat at Westminster. He had learnt classical scholarship in the school of Boeckh, and had acquired from Hegel the habit of abstract thought and that preference for the Hellenic empire which is adversely noted in the 'History of Federal Government.' In spite of his Macedonian proclivity, his earliest pupil testifies that he was always a liberal, meaning a promoter of secondary liberties. Whatever element of the kind was in him, was fostered by his residence at Kiel, in a land flowing with political excitement, the early home of gratuitous education. To sustain the faith and the practice of patriotism, he published his lectures on the time between the Stamp Act and Waterloo, a book full of views and turbid cleverness. He passed on to his own domain with the biography of the grim warrior whose defection prepared the ruin of Napoleon, and whose son fell in the last action of the revolutionary war, refusing quarter, and exclaiming that his name was York. The long 'History of Prussian Policy' followed, and brought popularity and power. Being asked by what subtle charm he and

the intimate advisers had changed the plain soldier of the last generation into the mightiest of conquerors, Droysen replied that it was nothing but the stern sense of duty (*die verfluchte Schuldigkeit*). He made this the note of Hohenzollern history. Their success lay in diplomacy and war, and the narrative is international, not domestic. The affairs of Europe from the Great Elector to the eve of the Seven Years' war have never been told with so large a knowledge of politics; and the later volumes are more effective than the parallel work of his illustrious rival. Ranke, who discards the teleological argument of history, whose feelings are so well under control that he dilates on the disasters of 1806 more than on the triumphs of 1757, had neither his popular fibre nor his official sanction. Fastidious readers doubt at last the swiftness of Achilles and the piety of Æneas; but to those who do not require conviction, the sagacious advocate of Prussian monarchy is as persuasive as the avowed defenders of other causes, of parliamentary government or federal democracy.

The one writer of history who is more brilliant and powerful than Droysen is Treitschke. Droysen's grasp of his materials began to relax when he came to Frederic; but Treitschke never flags, and is always vehement, certain, and overwhelming. As a political essayist, long ago he broke the spell of superiority which, until the death of Stahl, belonged to the religious and the strict conservative world. He was predestined for Berlin by his first conspicuous act; for he had attacked, and it was thought had refuted, the notion of a separate science of society, as the sphere of religion, morality, economy, and knowledge, as a vast immunity, organically distinct from the state, and able to control it. The idea, which comes from Harrington, and was pronounced by John Adams the greatest discovery in politics, had been made by Lorenz von Stein the key to the Revolution, in a work exposing the economic cause of political science, with Hegelian formalities which contrast unhappily with Treitschke's gleaming style. For he writes, with the force and the fire of Mommsen, of a time remembered by living men, and pregnant with the problems that are still open. He marshals his forces on a broader front than any other man, and accounts for the motives that stir the nation, as well as for the councils that govern it.

Treitschke's 'History of Germany' belongs to a series that has made up for the long delay in approaching the present century, in which England, from the regency to Victoria, was allotted to Pauli. Reluctance to compete with Ranke had led him to abandon his former work, and in the stronger currents of his own country he drifted from his English moorings. In the last year of his life he was thinking of a compendium embracing his thirty years' study of every part of the history of England in one or two volumes.

His book on the nineteenth century suffers by comparison with the powerful mixture prepared by Mr. Cory for the patient Asiatic, and is not equal to the Spanish or Russian histories in the same collection.

Bernhardi's 'Russia' carries us from the unrealities of scholastic history, from the complacency of satisfied philosophers and the adoration of *Bonus Eventus*, to the most penetrating and relentless censure of the thoughts and deeds of men. The author combines what was never combined before by a writer of history, long and intimate initiation in secrets of state, with military science and the knowledge of an original and profound economist. He redresses the inclination to think that what is explained is excused, that all ideas are reasonable and all events opportune, and gives a prominence, suggesting early contact with the dissatisfied Heidelbergers, to the imponderable and unaccountable elements of human weakness and folly. His principal work is oddly diversified with episodes on the British constitution and on Adam Smith, besides a slight sketch of universal history; and it is time that his account of 1815, composed without the papers of Talleyrand and Metternich for the congress, or of Gneisenau and Grouchy for the campaign, should be rewritten. Bernhardi is the ablest of the German writers on Napoleon. The affinity that may be discovered between the first consul in the plenitude of his own ideas, before the peace of Amiens, and much that is peculiarly Prussian, does not disarm this admirer of Frederic and friend of Moltke, and he dispels even the illusion of the war in Champagne. He also gives literary expression to the judgment of the Prussian staff on Wellington. At Vienna the duke departed from the policy of Castlereagh, joined Talleyrand in pleading the Saxon cause, and assured Metternich that Prussia was likely to become the most dangerous power in Europe. Talleyrand recorded the scene twenty years later with satisfaction tempered with surprise at so gross a mistake. This was the feeling which Wellington took with him to Belgium; and Gneisenau informed the officer sent to attend him that he was an excellent commander, but as false as the wildest Hindoo. From that day until his administration in 1830, it was a standing maxim at the Berlin foreign office that the duke might always be counted upon to desert a friend.

Probably there is no considerable group less in harmony with our sentiments in approaching the study of history than that which is mainly represented by Sybel, Droysen, and Treitschke, with Mommsen and Gneist, Bernhardi and Duncker on the flank. Up to this moment it is the best found and the most energetic of all; and as there is no symptom of declining favour and authority, it is important to understand along what lines of reasoning men so eminent, so quick to inquire into every new thing, have adhered to

maxims which it has cost the world much effort to reverse. The theory of the political historian is distinct from the plea of the partisan. The historian displays the laws governing human life: it is not his duty to expound a private view, or to explain, like the wise Castilian, how much better the universe would be contrived if he had been consulted in time. He attends to the ship's course, not to the passengers. The forces to be reckoned are those which, in the long run, prevail. The historian justifies only that which is just by the judgment of experience. It is the heresy of history to choose a side that seems good in our eyes, to reject the appointed course and the dominion of law, in order to degrade the life of nations under the anarchy of casual and disconnected causes. Consistency in the powers that direct the world is the supreme acquisition of all German thought. It is not partiality, but renunciation of party feeling and personal preference, to hold that the world works well, that what lives permanently in the light and strife of civilisation lives rightfully, that whatever perishes has earned its fate. Wyclif revived a very ancient saying when he wrote: *Ponat talis fidelis spem et causam suam in adiutorio altissimi, et non est compossibile quod vel persona vel causa pereat*. It is the philosophy of Emerson proclaiming 'the skill with which the great All maketh clean work as it goes along, leaves no rag, consumes its smoke.' And does not a living classic write: 'Somehow or other it is always the Eternal's wisdom which at last carries the day'?

There is no escape from the dogma that history is the conscience of mankind unless for those who reject the collective growth, the canons that rivet the future to the past, and take their stand aloof with Archimedes. All the successions of thought during three generations constitute the shaft whose shining point is made by the Berlin interpreters of enlightened and triumphant Germany. They are the legitimate dynasty, reigning by right as well as by force, inheritors of the line that comes down from Burke to the last stage of evolution and selection, who have set up the reign of imperishable moral forces for an intermittent Providence, the play of passion, and the blind will of man. Their doctrine proceeds as logically from the scientific as from the political experience of the country. And it is held, practically, even by men who do not stand with both feet within the charmed ring that binds history to politics; by Mommsen, when he scouts the idea of explaining Roman conquests by Roman perfidy; by Waitz, when he said that a censor of the Reformation had no right to pit himself against his nation; by Kurtz, who establishes a presumption in favour of the church against the sects because the sects came to unspeakable grief, and in favour of the Reformation against Rome because the reformers were successful.

To be without party is to be without principle, according to that saying of an English statesman, that a man who denies party belongs to a party he is ashamed of. To be impartial is to follow a very wide induction, to acknowledge the manifest destiny of monarchy, with a mind prepared, if it must be, to follow 'the tramp of democracy's earthquake feet.'

There is no palliation of inaccuracy; but there are no men more accurate than these, and few more watchful of the springs of error within. Renan has said that hardly any one but Littré could confess a blunder without loss of dignity. If that Napoleonic sentiment prevails in France, it is a point of inferiority to the neighbouring rival. The puerile temptation of consistency, the weak reluctance to contradict what disciples are repeating on their authority, is inevitable among the chiefs of the many schools into which German scholarship is apt to crumble. Stronger still is the assurance that historical science is moving with the vigour and rapidity of a natural law, and that its teachers can no more stand still than chemists or biologists.

Ranke read before the French Institute his retraction of a mistake about the memoirs of Richelieu. Treitschke elaborately corrects an error into which Arndt had led him, an error concerning the disappearance of spoons, which had been exposed with insult. Gervinus used to call the '*Philosophie der Griechen*' a singular instance of a faultless book; hundreds of improvements in the last edition show that Zeller is himself of a different opinion. When Berghaus said that Humboldt had 'invariably fixed' the longitude of Callao, the philosopher required him to strike out the word. There are, he said, no invariable fixtures. Albrecht, the jurist, was a man of one book, and his literary position depended on a treatise concerning a difficult point of early law. In 1858, 1869, and 1872, his conclusions were successively demolished by three different writers. To the first he wrote that the ruin of essential portions of his structure did not in the least interfere with his satisfaction. The next time he said that he did not mind even if it was to be the deathblow of his book. At last he admitted his defeat, and added that he had long expected it. So pleasant a temper has not been granted to every German. When Reinhold said that a philosopher should bear in mind that he may err and be ready to learn from others, Fichte told him that he spoke like a man who had never been convinced in his life.

The last twenty years have made the Germans careful in the economy of force, and they waste less powder in salutes. Their soldiers were on the Loire when they began to say that their scholars were to be no more the humble servants of the foreigner. Nothing, said Mommsen, is so hollow as the pretence of humility. 'We are not modest by any means, and do not wish it to be thought of us.'

The *National-Zeitung* confessed that its countrymen, though not envious, are slow to acknowledge merit, and added that hundreds of Germans remain unknown, who in France would lead science and society. Würtz's exaltation of Lavoisier, and Schärer's highly discriminating estimate of Goethe, were received with indignation; and Rümelin's able but unceremonious book is one among many signs of rising impatience at the old enthusiasm for Shakespeare.

As early as 1849, Prince Albert said to Bunsen that self-sufficiency was the German rock ahead. The historians generally escaped this peril and welcomed every proof of superiority. During many years Pauli regularly introduced the Rolls publications which were undermining the work of his life, and admitted that there were points on which the 'History of the Norman Conquest' surpasses everything yet written on the middle ages. Ewald preferred Selden to all his followers in Syriac. Lehrs declared that he could make nothing of the political life of Greece until he read Grote. The Prolegomena to Tischendorf's last text have, I believe, been committed to an English hand; and Bailleu says that the best lives of the greatest modern Germans, of Frederic, Stein, and Goethe, are those which have been written in England. Rosenkranz thought Damiron superior to the German historians of philosophy; Böhmer rated Delisle's 'Philippe Auguste' above every German book of the same kind; and Boeckh, irritated just then by the absurdities of Gerlach and the temerities of Mommsen, said that Wallon's 'Histoire de l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité' was better than what his own countrymen were doing in philology. A reviewer of Guerry declares him at least the equal of Roscher in learning; and Roscher places the 'Réforme Sociale' of Le Play at the head of books on social science. The best Frenchmen—Rénier, Rougé, Le Blant, Molinier, Riant, A. Rambaud—stood or stand just as well on one side of the Vosges as on the other, although Bekker never forgave Cobet's utterance that Germans were *doctiores quam saniores*. Madvig's supremacy among Latinists was admitted by Halm, in spite of the Danish depreciation of Mommsen. Harnack, writing in the principal theological review, judges that his country possesses no history of early Christianity as good as that of Renan, nothing equal to Hatch on the primitive constitution of the church, or to the 'Introduction to Ecclesiastical History' of a Flemish Jesuit. A less perfect courtier than Bunsen would perhaps have made a better fight.

When the euthanasia of metaphysic anticipated by Carlyle was setting in about 1850, physical science came forward as its rival, and history as its heir. The philosophers themselves turned into historians, and beat their speculations into facts. Their lecture-rooms were empty, and Schelling confessed to a traveller that the end had come: *La pensée allemande est aujourd'hui dans*

un cul-de-sac, et je ne vois pas qui pourra l'en tirer. Braniss conceived that religion, which had been brought low by the negations of thinkers, would be restored by the affirmations of scholars; and others said that history is the only unassailable revelation. Belief and unbelief both led to the same conclusion: Kuno Fischer opened his great work on modern metaphysics by defining philosophy as the self-knowledge of history; and Schaarschmidt, on the opposite side, calls philosophy and history one and the same thing. One of the philosophical reviews declared that the history of the systems was a substitute for the systems themselves; and even the laggards of *à priori* science were won by the assurance that the philosophical idea is the substance of all history. The historic mind had always glowed beneath the metaphysical ice cap. Goethe described it as one of his last steps in mental progress to have the unseen past always present; and he had approved the fine piece of idealism, since copied by Renan, in which Humboldt denounced the prosaic improvements which would make Rome a place unfitted for the spectres who are its worthiest inhabitants. Gerlach, the leader of the Prussian conservatives, used to say that what he had admired most in England was Mr. Speaker's wig. For when he spoke of it as a time-honoured relic, an historical-minded Englishman told him that it was nothing of the sort, but quite a modern institution, not two centuries old. At Göttingen one day a protestant was defending the celibacy of the clergy, and saying that without it catholicism would lose its identity. A catholic replied: 'We were used to married priests so long that it is the law of celibacy which we feel as an innovation.'

The scientific era had its own lesson for historians. The world proceeded on its new path with increasing velocity, there was no stopping, and no step backward; and the law of progress, which had been a crude and vague speculation, became a manifest reality. With this new aspect of the life of men and of societies, a conception of history arose of which Du Bois Reymond is the prophet. The future depends on truths and forces being, and to be, discovered. The past survives only by supplying available material that may be a guide for science and an equivalent of power. The function of history is to reveal its own futility, to display the conquest of the ancient realm of uncertainty, probability, inheritance, by irresistible demonstration. Bourbons and Habsburgs go over to the Egyptian kings, and make room on earth for the monuments of a dynasty that begins with Copernicus and will never pass away. All else is ballast to be discharged, and the Greek exercise must surrender to conic sections. As mere denial of history, the new conception is an old one. But by promoting the neglected history of scientific ideas, it promises greatly to enrich both historians and philosophers.

Forty years after Savigny's 'Vocation' made Germany a nation of historically thinking men, every branch of knowledge had felt its influence. It had penetrated jurisprudence by the end of the French war; language, with the first volume of Grimm's 'Grammar' in the edition of 1822; geography, when Ritter drew the spark from Humboldt; philosophy, when Hegel lectured at Berlin; art, with Schnaase's 'Letters from the Netherlands'; theology, with Baur's work on the Atonement; and canon law when Richter was made, instead of Stahl, the adviser of the Prussian government in church and state. Until 1840, political economy was almost the only science in which Germany followed, with unequal steps, the lead of France and England. The change came when Roscher, who had been the ripest of Ranke's scholars, a man more perfectly endowed with historic instinct than Niebuhr or Baur, was set to train practical economists for the kingdom of Hanover. He united in an eminently receptive mind the better strains of the German character—the wide and not absorbing sympathy, the impartial attentiveness to the several sides of questions, the notion that error is not done with until it has been made to yield a residue of truth, confidence in the general reasonableness of things, regulation of private opinion by universal experience. Abstraction was already losing its strong grip, and experimental methods were obtaining sway. 'The history of a science,' said Goethe, 'is the science itself;' Trendelenburg spoke of definitions as the end, not the beginning, of knowledge; and Say told Decandolle that he had acquired the art of observing social physiology from the naturalists. These fluid notions were much in the air. Hermann, the strictest of dogmatists, being asked what to read, advised men to learn the making of the science in the economic articles which appeared from the beginning in the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* Reviews. The prodigy of Roscher's reading and his historic bent of mind urged him to detach propositions from their place in the system, in order to trace their career in literature and the experience of nations. He required that the inductive argument shall meet and justify the deductive. He turned from the solid conclusion to the process which led up to it, from the discovered law to the law of discovery, the ineffectual anticipation, the simultaneous attainment, the contested reception, the disputed priority. If the full-blown precepts of developed science which accompany the mature, the normal, and therefore industrial epoch of national life were not clear formerly, Roscher explains the defect not by the fault of men groping in the dark, but by the fact that political economy, which exists for mankind, varies with the progress of events, and is subject to the conditions of youth and age. He distinguishes physiology from pathology, insists on the phenomena proper to epochs of decline, and notes with especial care the teaching of nations that have

carried the experiment of existence to its conclusion. Starting with the idea that the ancients understood distribution better than we do, and that truth is often older than error, he has expanded and enriched professional literature with the study of all the economic notions in the civil and the ecclesiastical code, in Erasmus and Luther, Bacon and Burke. The worst use of theory is to make men insensible to fact; and facts, as they existed before Salmasius vindicated five per cent., or Gournay spoke the winged words, are nearly as good for instruction as the things that have been since the discoveries of 1776, 1798, 1815, and 1835.

With little less than Buckle's appreciation of Adam Smith, Roscher's memory, crowded with instances of the power of self-sacrifice, disinclines him from the doctrine which refers economic facts to the simplest and most universal of human motives, and he derives laws and theories from causes deep in the entire structure of society, and from combinations of human and spiritual influence. He came at a time when several candid generalisations of primitive liberalism were withering under the mathematical touch of comparative statistics, and is always ready to find a grain of wisdom in the oddities of our ancestors; and the saying of ancient practitioners that the lancet produced much the same results upon the generation that is past as its disuse upon the generation that is passing, is Roscher all over. Though he deems protection a mark of weakness, and its prolongation a mark of incapacity, he admits the use of temporary sacrifices in the training of resources. With Adam Smith he rejoices at the enactment of the navigation laws, and with Cobden at their repeal; he feels with Garrison about emancipation, but is vividly conscious of conditions in which slavery is an instrument of civilisation. He expounds with intelligent admiration the colonial system by which this country has changed the face of the world, but he studies with equal care, he admires in another way, the system by which Spain preserved where we destroyed. Absolute monarchy is the note of first or second childhood, but absolute monarchy rescued the peasants. Monopolies are a mistake; but the monopoly of the Oporto Company saved port wine.

The best of the economists who last preceded Roscher admitted that in dealing with poverty their science failed. Mill thought that want in any sense implying suffering may be completely extinguished; and Roscher added that precept must be modified by fact. His disciples went on to argue that the principles of the classic teachers on the theory of population, of rent, of the source of wealth, lead beyond their conclusions. With Roscher's doctrine of relative truth, the impregnable stronghold was hard to keep against the assault of sympathy and the prickings of that delicate conscience which is defined, a conscience unequal to the struggle of

life. He dwells complacently on the immeasurable progress of this age, on the enlarged sphere and accepted duties of the state in respect of misery, education, overwork, health, and help to the weak, and judges that the social advance cancels the socialist programme. 'Socialism,' said Dunoyer, 'is merely the present system logically carried out.' On the other side, if it is right that the state should do so much, the reign of the log was usurpation and the ancient ways were wrong. Then the indictment brought by Considérant and Engels against the society of 1840 is just, and the order of things which produced so much sorrow was criminal. So vast a change is not development but subversion, the departure of one principle, the development of another. In all that pertains to the past, the party now dominant in the universities, and destined, after calculable intervals, to dominate in literature and law, pursues the ideas of Roscher, and completes his work. In practical things it does not accept, as he does, the Frenchman's saying: *Je n'impose rien; je ne propose même pas: j'expose*. His contemplative, retrospective spirit, borne backward by sheer weight of knowledge, is not easily roused by the spectacle of error, suffering, and wrong, and is slow to admit the guilt of omitted acts and the responsibility of states for all they might prevent or cure. He has attended as much to problems and their solution in other times as to the problems and solutions of his own; and the service done by his enormous influence to political economy, which Mr. Cliffe Leslie and Mr. Ingram have described, is far less than his services to the cause of intelligible history. A large number of the most valuable works on England proceed from the movement he has promoted. The academic socialists are proceeding to reconstrue history, making property and the social condition the determining factor, above the acts of government or the changes of opinion; and this is by many degrees the most important addition made of late years to historic science.

The successive schemes have been less a modification than an enlargement of the definition, and the best would be one that should complete and combine them all. The idea that the fine arts are a result of all that is at work in nations led to an attempt to focus their entire life, and the design of a history of civilisation grew out of the history of art. Burckhardt's 'Renaissance' and Friedländer's 'Sittengeschichte' are the only works in which the intellectual view of the subject has been adequately studied; and in both, the political, and therefore the practical, element is weakest. One man is living who has an equal grasp of the moving and the abiding forces of society. More than thirty years ago, before Burckhardt or Friedländer, Buckle or Symonds, Riehl, a scholar quickened by journalism, a student of art, an original political writer and teacher of social sciences, began to lecture on the history

of civilisation, revealing to his fortunate audience new views of history deeper than any existing in literature. There is always much going on in lecture-rooms beyond what is yet deposited in books ; and if Professor Riehl has gone on as he began in 1854, there are materials for a new and curious chapter of German historiography. The newest chapter, and one of the most curious, should concern the histories which the Germans have not written, the threads they have dropped, and the points on which they yield to the superiority of other nations. My object has been to show neither their infirmity nor their strength, but the ways in which they break new ground and add to the notion and the work of history.

ACTON.