

resist the seductiveness of the French style and method.”¹ Accordingly M. Taine maintains that “the fever of demolition and reconstruction remained superficial and momentary in England. Deism, atheism, materialism, scepticism, ideology, theories of the return to nature, proclamation of the rights of men, all the audacities of Bolingbroke, Collins, Toland, Tindal, and Mandeville, all the darings of Hume, Hartley, James Mill, and Bentham, all the revolutionary doctrines remained there, greenhouse plants confined here and there in the isolated cabinets of a few thinkers: in the open air they quickly degenerated after a short blossoming, through the heavy competition of the older vegetation which still occupied the land.”²

This older vegetation was the inductive spirit, the healthy common-sense and the constitutional life of the nation which then already “slowly broadened down from precedent to precedent.” Locke had something else to do than to work out a system of philosophy by drawing out with slender logic the extreme conclusions of a theory which worked with the two conceptions of sensation and reflection and started with the human soul as a *tabula rasa*. His writings on questions of government, on toleration, and education, had the object not of upsetting but of reforming the existing political and social conditions. The extreme consequences of his line of reasoning, drawn by Hume, were — when the appeal to common-sense was allowed — easily refuted by Thomas

¹ See H. Taine, ‘Les Origines de la France Contemporaine’ (L’Ancien Régime), 15th ed. 1887, p. 331, &c.
The above quotation includes a

passage from Joseph de Maistre referring to French style.

² Taine, *loc. cit.*, p. 330.