

of knowledge, like that of Laplace, was to be found in mathematical astronomy.¹

14.
Reaction in
British
thought.

As a great change came over the ideals of human knowledge about the middle of the nineteenth century in Germany, so likewise a reaction set in in this country though somewhat later. It is frequently suggested that this was brought about largely through the tardy influence of German literature and philosophy.² But though this has no doubt been considerable, especially since

¹ I have in the first volume of this history (p. 237) given extracts from a pamphlet entitled 'On the Alleged Decline of Science in England' (1831) which bear upon this subject. It was published anonymously, but is known to have been written by Dr Moll of Utrecht. *Inter alia* he refers to the exclusive culture of the higher analysis promoted by the great teachers at the Ecole Normale and to the discouragement of classical studies. See also page 149 as to the fate and the temporary suspension of the 'Académie des Sciences morales et politiques.' The idea that the philosophical sciences should be entirely founded upon the physical and natural sciences was not original, though it was fundamental in Comte's early positivism. "We find it everywhere at that time, with Vicq-d'Azyr, who treats psychology as a branch of physiology; with Destutt de Tracy, who considers Ideology as a simple chapter of Zoology; with Volney, who gives to his 'Catechism of Natural Law' the sub-title 'Principles of Morals'; it is the last word of the sensationalism of the age, as it is of that of to-day. To these contested views Saint-Simon joins others which are extremely paradoxical and which border on the ridiculous. . . . God appears to him

(he does not say whether in a dream or otherwise) in order to declare to him that Rome, the Pope, and the Cardinals have ceased to receive His inspirations, and that He will in future communicate them to a sacred college composed of twenty-one sages elected by entire humanity, and presided over by a mathematician. . . . The great Council will have, above all, the mission to study gravitation, the only law—if we may believe our author, who in this agrees with Charles Fourier—to which the universe is subjected, &c., &c." (Ferraz, 'Histoire de la Philosophie en France.'—'Socialisme, &c.,' 3rd ed., 1882, p. 8 *sqq.*)

² "The German mind, awakened into *a priori* speculation by Leibniz, continued in it on the new lines of Kant, and from Kant to Hegel tended steadily towards the speculative construction and systematic unity of absolute all-explaining Idealism. This philosophy, introduced into Britain at first by Coleridge and by the criticisms of Hamilton, has . . . gradually transformed our insular manner of thinking, and inverted, for the time, Locke's 'plain, historical' matter-of-fact procedure" (Fraser in 'Locke,' "Blackwood's Philosophical Classics," p. 286).