

most European countries the work of national unification and consolidation, and the struggle for political independence, have retarded internal reforms; nor have theorists been able to agree in what form of social organisation liberty and equality could consistently live side by side. Their teaching must indeed command special attention as one of the many forms of the philosophic thought of the age; but a wide gap separates theory from practical politics, which have been largely occupied with wars and diplomatic feats, or, when they really dealt with social problems, have had to be content with awkward compromises between prejudices and institutions of bygone ages on the one side, and legitimate demands for freedom on the other.

88.
Revolution-
ary theories
not practi-
cal.

Though much practical thought and much labour have been spent in achieving even these moderate results, I feel that they really fall outside of my programme. Wherever either science or philosophy steps out of the quiet regions of the study, the lecture-room, and the laboratory, or wherever religious faith leaves the secret recesses of the believing soul to solve the problems of life or to perform the work of the day, the line is crossed which I have felt obliged to draw around the following sketch. Not that I do not recognise this borderland, where the spirit subdues matter, where thought becomes useful, where the idea attains reality, this field of strife and endeavour, of patient toil and slow victory, as by far the most important subject of history, and as that in which our age has probably excelled every earlier period. But an account of this side of nineteenth-century life could ill afford to limit its view to the three principal countries of the Old World. For where are discovery and invention at this moment more at home