

prescribe the lines on which the desired unification of the nation could be secured. Events took their own course, and the great statesman who was the central figure of the new era of European history may be excused the scorn with which he has sometimes treated these theoretical politicians.

8.  
Leading  
scientific  
ideas mostly  
very  
ancient.

The leading ideas which I select as marking the progress of scientific research in our century have, with few exceptions, hardly been discoveries or inventions of this age. Some of them are very old. The ideas of attraction, which in the hands of Newton and Laplace have led to such remarkable results, are of great age, and were familiar to the philosophers of Greece and Rome; the same can be said of the atomic theory, which in the hands of Dalton became such a powerful instrument. The principles of energy and its conservation can be traced back to the writings of Newton and Leibniz, and even to earlier thinkers. The same may be said of the modern ideas on heat, of the molecular theory of gases, and even of Lord Kelvin's vortices; whilst the views which through Darwin have revolutionised the natural sciences have been traced in the suggestions of much ear-

not so. When the professors turned their backs on science in order to turn to politics, they imagined politics were now only beginning: with the wonted pride of learning they saw in the administrative class only labourers and clerks; for to them parliaments and freedom of the press were identical with politics. The mouthpiece of Germany was in the universities, as that of France was at the bar; they only heard each other: was it therefore unnatural if they

thought the German professors composed the German nation, as the French lawyers formed the French nation? And indeed public opinion in Germany was that of the professors. . . . The learned newspaper writers imagined the spirit of the age spake in them; no wonder that they overestimated the importance of this spirit and of this so-called public opinion" (ibid., p. 254). See also Treitschke's 'Deutsche Geschichte,' vol. v. p. 408, &c.