

had prevailed in the philosophical schools anterior to the Revolution, the refined hedonism of Helvetius and Holbach, with no feeling of reverence for a higher or a Divine order, nor even a real belief in the dignity of man, did not contain the germs of a new development. On the other side the sentimental belief of Rousseau and his disciples among the leaders of the Revolution—the doctrine of the natural goodness of man—had been falsified when, in the breaking up of all social restraints, a general warfare set in. The work of the restoration of society was much more important than the thoughtful investigation of the deeper ethical questions. Thus a reaction set in which reverted to older and obsolete forms and, alongside of it, a somewhat superficial eclecticism, an importation of foreign theories, many of which were ill adapted to the existing wants.¹ The

counted all save the eldest son of a noble house as commoners. No impassable line parted the gentry from the commercial classes, and these again possessed no privileges which could part them from the lower classes of the community. Public opinion, the general sense of educated Englishmen, had established itself after a short struggle as the dominant element in English government. But in all the other great states of Europe the wars of religion had left only the name of freedom. Government tended to a pure despotism. Privilege was supreme in religion, in politics, in society. Society itself rested on a rigid division of classes from one another, which refused to the people at large any equal rights of justice or of industry." (J. R. Green, *loc. cit.*, vol. iv. p. 296.)

¹ We find all through the eighteenth century in England and at

the turn of the centuries in France, the marks of the influence which the progress of the natural sciences and natural philosophy had upon the minds of the foremost thinkers. English thought, however, gradually liberated itself from the repeated attempts or suggestions to conduct ethical inquiries *more geometrico vel mathematico* and adopted the more fruitful method of the natural sciences which led to the cultivation of psychology. In France, on the other hand, it was exclusively the purely mathematical—called there geometrical—methods which impressed thinkers like Condorcet, Laplace, and, later on, some of the extreme radical socialistic thinkers, and really stood in the way of psychology, of which Maine de Biran was the only genuine representative. Comte later on recognised, in the course of the development of his positive philo-