

sought and found its supreme object of veneration in the God of the historical religion, which it philosophically conceived as the Absolute. The second sought and found its object of veneration in Humanity, in mankind at large and as a whole. The former was, as all popular and metaphysical religions have been, transcendental, opposing to the limited and lower world which surrounds us on this earth, the unlimited and higher region of heaven; this idea being expressed in the most varying forms, from the narrowest sectarian to the largest and deepest intellectual, religious, and poetical view of the Divine, and *vice versa*, from the vaguest and most abstract definition of the Absolute, to the most concrete and living Christian belief in a Heavenly Father. The other view naturally opposes all transcendentalism, destroys both the religious and the metaphysical aspects: it seeks and finds the object of its thought, and the region of its practice, on this Earth, within the conditions which surround us here in time and space.

33.  
Idea of  
progress.

This view had at the time received a great reinforcement and new resources through the idea of historical progress recently introduced into philosophical literature by some of the prominent thinkers in France. There then happened, what has happened before and after in dealing with smaller or larger problems: what had seemed insoluble, if one regards only the Here and the Now, acquired the appearance at least of being intelligible if traced into a remote past or projected into a distant future: in one word, if one adopts the dynamical, as opposed to the statical view. This attitude is in reality the same as that which Christian theology assumed