

Neither the social question, in the narrower sense of the word, nor the economic question demanded, therefore, that special attention which they respectively enjoyed in France and England.

Germany, however, possessed through her universities and educational system great liberty of thought and a great organisation for intellectual work, which, in the absence of more practical problems, furthered philosophical speculation on the one side, historical learning and research on the other. It was therefore natural that the third special problem, that of the origins and history of Society, should be there taken up as worthy subjects for academic teaching and study.

28.  
Problem of  
History of  
Society in  
Germany.

In spite, however, of this partial but tolerably well-marked division of labour connected with the sociological problem, it is well to recognise that the centre from which the great impetus emanated, both so far as practical and theoretical treatment are concerned, was undoubtedly France, and that her politics as well as her literature have during the last one hundred and fifty years exerted an enormous, perhaps the leading, influence over the whole region of sociology, and this not only in Germany and England, which we are specially interested in, but also over other European countries and in the United States of America.

24.  
Centre of  
Sociology in  
France.

During the second half of the Eighteenth Century the philosophical literature of France brought into prominence two very different but equally stimulating conceptions, both of which exerted great influence on the thought of the neighbouring countries, though in very different directions. The first was the idea of