

line of philosophic thought. To this he drew attention in the above-named work upon French thinkers, and still more in the Introduction to his 'History of English Literature.' Like Comte, he connects psychology with physiology; but with him physiology no longer meant the vitalistic physiology of Bichat, but the experimental physiology of Claude Bernard. He did not share Comte's belief in phrenology, and yet he accepted a mechanical explanation of sensation and put it forward in his work, 'De l'Intelligence' (1870).

This work formed, as it were, a landmark in the history of French psychology,—the beginning of a new life of that science in France.<sup>1</sup> In it also he revives that connection which existed between the earlier French psychology of Cabanis and Broussais and the medical sciences, notably the study of pathological states. In fact, Taine's psychology has a pathological flavour. But so far as the subject of this chapter is concerned Taine's most important contribution is to be found in his attempt to explain and understand historic events and persons by looking at their surroundings. He has adopted and enlarged an idea thrown out by Comte, that of the *milieu* or environment.<sup>2</sup> To this he has added two other factors

54.  
His theory  
of environ-  
ment, race,  
and epoch.

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, vol. iii. p. 270 u.

<sup>2</sup> The word *milieu* is one of the terms by which Comte's influence has become perpetuated in the history of French thought, but he did not create it as he did the other two watchwords of his system—Sociology and Altruism. He took it over from biology, but thinks it necessary to defend the use and extend the meaning of the term: "Il serait superflu, j'espère, de motiver expressément l'usage

fréquent que je ferai désormais, en biologie, du mot *milieu*, pour désigner spécialement, d'une manière nette et rapide, non seulement le fluide où l'organisme est plongé, mais, en général, l'ensemble total des circonstances extérieures, d'un genre quelconque, nécessaires à l'existence de chaque organisme déterminé. Ceux qui auront suffisamment médité sur le rôle capital que doit remplir, dans toute biologie positive, l'idée cor-