

first of all of literary Nationalism, but also of Nationalism without any reference to literature. Thousands of volumes in the past twenty years have expressed the joy of their authors at feeling themselves in community with the historic tradition of their country, and there are hardly any French works of this period in which the reflection of the same consciousness does not appear. As this kind of literature became more successful it also became freed of its original selfishness; and while we have seen it reach to the expression of self-sacrifice in the works of a grandson of Renan, Ernest Psichari, we have also seen it attain to the perfection of its effect, in the death of the same Psichari, killed on the battle-field at the beginning of the war, and in the life of admirable self-denial which Barrès himself has led of late years.

The reader must now see for himself what a gulf there is between the unreality of the humanitarianism preached by Michelet and the wide-awake attention of Nationalism to the destinies of France; between the sombre stoicism which Naturalism was at its best, or the cynicism it was at its worst, and the brave optimism of most contemporary writers. Bearing in mind the transformation I have just outlined, it is easy to understand how shocking any mention of France as a corrupt and decaying nation must have been to people who really knew what path the national genius had followed in the last thirty years. They realized that France was more French than she had been since the early days of Napoleon I, when militarism, yet in its glorious youth, had not become tyrannical, and they felt that only an occasion was lacking to reveal the wonderful rejuvenation.

The occasion, of course, was the war; but the war only