

the truths of Christianity during the Eighteenth century at the Vatican, than at any of the head-quarters of Protestantism. In France Voltaire was educated by the Jesuits, who little guessed when handling the youth that they were playing with edged tools; and that that keen eye was looking them through and through, and seeing how all the strings were pulled. He and the Encyclopedists finished the work of destruction. David Hume tells of being at a supper party with a lot of them and finding that they hardly considered him worthy of the name of philosopher, i.e. infidel. He was the only one present who thought that there might be a God. Faith was completely eaten away, and then the mine was sprung under the fabric of Society, and the whole existing order of things was blown into the air with a crash and destruction that seemed worthy to herald in nothing less than the end of all things mundane, and the immediate coming of the Day of Judgment. So ended the Eighteenth Century, with an event which forms the second great landmark in the history of modern times. The first landmark was the Reformation; the second was the French Revolution. The key-note of the first was moral individualism: the key-note of the second was political individualism. The first principle has now thoroughly established itself. No sane man doubts it, though all its relations have not been satisfactorily determined. The second after a struggle of now three quarters of a century is pretty generally accepted, but by no means universally. A good deal of blood will need to be spilled over it yet, and perhaps another three quarters of a century elapse before Europe agree deliberately and finally to accept it. But what have we to do with the French Revolution, you ask? Was not that a matter wholly for the French, and without any more influence on general modern society, than the Taiping movement? By no means, my friend, though I confess that the estimate formed of it by the general British mind, is ludicrously disproportioned to the magnitude of the event itself and to the estimate formed by every one else; and great is the astonishment of the man who has been brought up to regard the French Revolution with simple horror as a bursting forth of the pit, and to regard it as something exclusively French, when he comes to find the importance attached to it by all Continental and not a few American and English writers. With them it is the breaking up of