

dren and representatives of that unspeakable epoch. Such were Friedrich, Mirabeau, and Danton, George Washington, Samuel Johnson, and Robert Burns, Watt and Arkwright; and, for more than half of the century, and for more than half his work, so was Goethe himself. It sounds strange to accuse of unmitigated grossness and quackery the age which gave us these men; and which produced, besides, "Robinson Crusoe" and "The Vicar of Wakefield," the "Elegy in a Churchyard" and the lines "To Mary" and "To my Mother's Picture," Berkeley's Dialogues and Burke's Addresses, Reynolds and Gainsborough, Flaxman and Stothard, Handel and Mozart. But one remembers that according to the Teufelsdröckhian cosmogony, great men are dropped *ab extra* into their age, much as some philosophers assure us that protoplasm, or the primitive germ of life, was casually dropped upon our planet by a truant aerolite.

A century which opens with "The Rape of the Lock," and closes with the first part of "Faust," is hardly a century of mere prose, especially if we throw in Gray, Cowper, and Burns, "The Ancient Mariner" and the "Lyrical Ballads." A century which includes twenty years of the life of Newton, twenty-three of Wren's, and sixteen of Leibnitz, and the whole lives of Hume, Kant, Adam Smith, Gibbon, and Priestley, is not the age of mere shallowness; nor is the century which founded the monarchy of Prussia, and the empire of Britain, which gave birth to the republic in America and then in France, and which finally recast modern society and formed our actual habits, the peculiar era of quackeries, bonfires, and suicides. Measure it justly by the light of scientific history, and not by the tropes of some Biblical saga, and it holds its own beside the greatest

epochs in the modern world; of all modern eras perhaps the richest, most various, most creative. It raised to the rank of sciences, chemistry, botany, and zoology; it created the conception of social science and laid its foundations; it produced the historical schools and the economic schools of England and of France, the new metaphysics of Germany, the new music of Germany; it gave birth to the new poetic movement in England, to the new romance literature of England and of France, to the true prose literature of Europe; it transformed material life by manifold inventions and arts; it transformed social life no less than political life; it found modern civilization in a military phase, it left it in an industrial phase; it found modern Europe fatigued, oppressed with worn-out forms, uneasy with the old life, uncertain and hopeless about the new; it left modern Europe recast without and animated with a new soul within; burning with life, hope, and energy.

The habit of treating a century as an organic whole, with a character of its own, is the beaten pathway to superficial comparison. History, after all, is not grouped into natural periods of one hundred years, as different from each other as the life of the son from that of his father. Nor, whatever the makers of chronologies may say, does mankind really turn over a new page in the great record, so soon as the period of one hundred years is complete. The genius of any time, even though it be in a single country, even in one city, is a thing too marvellously complex to be hit off by epithets from the minor prophets or Gargantuan anathemas and nicknames. And as men are not born at the beginning of a century, and do not die at the end of it, but grow, flourish, and decay year by year and hour by hour, we are ever entering on