

it is the invariable characteristic of the German theology and philosophy. Attila deliberating whether he should overthrow the empire of the east or west—England, aspiring to overspread the Western and Southern hemispheres, reveals that mingled spirit of poetry and adventure, from which the whole idealism of the Germans has taken its rise. In their robust race is combined the heroic spirit and the wandering instinct—they unite alone the Iliad and the Odyssey of modern times."

Perhaps you will excuse a further reference to the Germans in general, from another French writer of less subjective tendencies than Michelet. Madame De Stael in her celebrated work, *De L'Allemagne*, writes substantially as follows:—"The Germans are a just, constant, and sincere people, with great power of imagination and reflection without brilliancy in society, or address in affairs, slow in action, adventurous in speculation, often uniting enthusiasm for the elegant arts, with little progress in the manners and refinements of life, more capable of being inflamed by opinions than by interests; obedient to authority rather from an orderly and mechanical character, than from servility, too prone in the relations of domestic life to substitute fancy and feeling, for position only; not unfrequently combining a natural character with artificial manners, and much real feeling with affected enthusiasm, often exposing themselves to derision, when, with their grave and clumsy honesty, they attempt to copy the lively and dexterous profligacy of their southern neighbours."

The genius of the Celts, and above all, of the Gauls is vigorous and fruitful, strongly inclined to material enjoyments, in other words they are more realistic than the Germans, or as a Kantist would say, the French are of all European nations the most gifted with understanding, and the most destitute of reason.

The Germans are just the opposite. But the nation which is used as a standing contrast to the Germans, is the Greek, of classic history. The Greeks were thorough realists. Unlike the Semitic nations, they never attained to more

than a child's conception of deity. They, too, were an understanding not a reasoning race in a Kantian sense, they never invented anything, but everything they touched they brought to perfection. The present to them was what the life to come is to the Christian, their representative hero Achilles would rather labour on earth, toiling in the fields, than sway the sceptre in Hades. I am aware that of late very successful attempts have been made to disprove the theories of Buckle, Michelet, and other subjective writers, as to the essential difference of races—and I am inclined to accept all sweeping generalizations on this subject with a large amount of reserve. We know that if the Greeks began with Homer as realists, they ended with Plato and the Alexandrian school of writers, as the most exalted of idealists. On the other hand, the Germans in the early ages showed as much attachment to nature and to sensuous pleasure, as ever the Greeks did. The Minnesingers sang the joys of love and life with true Hellenic feeling. Their great national epos, the *Nibelungen Lied*, is as thoroughly pagan and realistic as the Iliad. The doctrine of the worthlessness of the world and the nothingness of life troubled the German warriors of the 13th century, as little as it did the followers of Agamemnon. And coming down to modern times, if we find Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel and Schleiermacher, stand out as the representatives of idealism, we also find Lessing and Goethe as the embodiment of an opposite realism.

The literature of Germany is perhaps the most characteristic possessed by any European nation. It has the important peculiarity of being the first which had its birth in an enlightened age. It is a singular fact that the country to which we are indebted for the art of printing, for the invention of gunpowder, and for the Protestant religion—the country of Copernicus and Kepler, of Luther and Leibnitz, had, to a comparatively recent period no writer in her own language known to the neighbouring nations. In the middle of the 18th century, however, when the materialism and atheism of Voltaire, D'Holbach and the Encyclope-