

age of chivalry, its deep-seated, all-pervading and all supporting religious sentiment. This lack of sympathy with the noble character of the religious feeling of the age constituted the chief limitation of Scott's elevated genius.

The high wave of the revolutionary feeling with its tumultuous claims, began to recede about the third decade of the present century, at least, within the realm of English poetry. In France, however, and the other continental countries, the spirit of the revolution took deeper root, and for years, the extreme reform tendencies to which it gave birth, exhibited themselves in the productions of the different writers of the main-land. This is especially exemplified in the later works of Victor Hugo, whose life exhibits the opposite development of that of Wordsworth. The former from an ardent upholder of the church and state, in his earlier years, became the great apostle of ultraradicalism in France, the most potent force in the literature of the movement.

Towards the end of the third decade of our century, a decided revulsion of feeling manifested itself in England, even in its literature. On the continent, the distant rumbling of the revolution was still heard, and occasionally, a flash of lightning divided the darkened horizon, but in England these spasmodic outbursts hardly created an echo. The visionary hopes born of the French revolution, had never found much favor with the mass of the English people. Even in the early days of that great movement, when the cry of liberty rang throughout the whole of Europe, and every throne was tottering before the blast of popular fury, England enjoyed comparative tranquillity. The sober sense of its people, at that time, found utterance in the glowing orations of Edward Burke, the noblest champion of established rights. A man of transcendental ability, he reversed the tide of English feeling, when at the height of its revolutionary frenzy. Calm and sound in his judgment, and unmoved by the varying winds of political belief, the cause of justice, mercy and truth found in him a zealous and uncompromising advocate. His genius exerted in defence of the established form of government, was a power before which the Jacobinism of William Blake wilted into insignificance, and even the youthful Republicanism of

Coleridge and Wordsworth felt its restraining influence. Twenty years later, when the French republic had been strangled by imperialism, and the empire had been crushed by the coalition of kings, Edward Burke's political theories found their embodiment in the chivalrous tales of Sir Walter Scott. No influence of any single individual was of itself, more instrumental in reconciling the hearts of Englishmen with the established order of things, than this glorious revival of an almost forgotten past, in the romances of the great Scottish bard.

The spirit of revolt in the sphere of politics and social order, had early allied itself especially in France, with a spirit of negation in the field of philosophy and religion. In England this spirit found expression in the writings of Shelley and its passionate side was reflected in the verse of Byron. But the excesses in this direction now called forth a reaction, which on the continent and notably in France, resulted in an enthusiastic revival within the Catholic church, whereas in England it manifested itself in the so-called Oxford movement, in which Coleridge and Wordsworth, the former apostles of revolution, became the prime movers.

In its subsequent development, transcendentalism gradually lost its connection with revealed doctrine and allied itself with the idealism of Fichté and Hegel and the vague pantheism of Goethe, which phase is especially reflected in America in the writings of Emerson and Parker.

But with its abandonment of contact with revealed truth, transcendentalism lost its hold upon the general public, whereas the current of false scientism, in opposition to which it had been called into existence, broadened and deepened with the progress of the age, and became the dominant feature in the English literature of our own time.

In the field of practical research, Charles Darwin became its ablest supporter and Herbert Spencer its most noted expounder in the field of speculative thought. From their joint labors more than from any other agency, at least in England, sprang the theory of evolution, the most fraudulent and the most pernicious doctrine that ever fastened itself upon a credulous age. This assertion does not of course refer to the evolution