

under the Second Empire and long after, whose intellectual preferences had never been tainted by these dangerous principles ?

It should be remembered that the French have a tendency hardly found in the other European nations, and seldom met with in England, to be carried away by their intellectual notions ; all their popular movements, all their Revolutions were made in accordance with theories recklessly acted upon. A great deal of the fascination which the French nation exercised, along with the dread it inspired in Europe during the twenty years which followed 1789, arose from this uncompromising enthusiasm about ideas and consequent propagandism.

On the other hand, it is a fact that many French people ignored or disliked the popular writers who are representative of the Second Empire ; they had conservative views in morals and often in religion, and many a foreigner must have been surprised at finding them so remote from the type he imagined. All this is true. But it is a law of history that a country is moulded by its Government, because most individuals are passive, and even when they are not so, do not easily discover the means of raising a protest ; the press is on the side of the majority, and makes it the more difficult for the dissenting few to express their feelings.

In fact it is impossible to contradict two statements concerning the historical development of France during the last forty years, which bear out the principles I have just recalled. In the first place, it is universally admitted that the eight or nine Chambers which succeeded one another since 1876 were advanced. Their philosophy was not only anti-clerical—that is to say, opposed to the